

# Example of sustainable development case study

[Education](#), [Sustainability](#)



## **ABSTRACT/INTRODUCTION**

This paper has two very useful references that give a great deal of information about the topic—the United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform and the International Institute for Sustainable Development websites. They define the meaning of the term sustainable development and how it has evolved over time since the 1987 Bruntland Report and the 1992 Rio Summit, and the UN website in particular has a great deal of information about the various summits and conferences that have occurred since Rio as well as plans and actions underway from various governments and stakeholders on a wide variety of development and environmental issues. One source by John Baden is written from a neoliberal and free market perspective, and is critical of the role of states in setting sustainable development policies. There are also references to Jean-Marc Jancovici, Luc Ferry and the World Bank in the main body of the paper that should also be listed specifically in the references.

The International Institute for Sustainable Development(IISD) has a very useful source for this essay, with a website that defines this concept and explains how it has developed over time, going back to the publication of Rachel Carson’s book Silent Spring in 1962. It explores the latest proposals from the United Nations, including Agenda 21, and the various successes and failures in sustainable development over the years, including the limited implementation of the Kyoto Protocols and the recommendations of the 1987 Bruntland Report and the 1992 Rio Summit. These sources are also listed independently in the references which is an indication of their importance in the overall evolution of the sustainable development concept over the last

thirty years. This website is very broad and comprehensive in its discussion of these issues, and describes the global environment as a highly complex system involving political, economic, cultural and technological factors and also affirms that the poor must have first priority in development. These were not well-understood in the past, which is why decisions made 50 or 100 years ago with any consideration being given to the environment and sustainable development questions are still having a negative impact on the planet today. This website also has a sustainable development timeline and a fairly comprehensive list of readings, although some have limited access and require membership to be downloaded.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform is also an extremely detailed and important source for this paper that contains a tremendous amount of relevant information. Like the ISD website, it has the Bruntland and Rio reports, as well as records from later high-level governmental meetings, like the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in 1993, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Barbados Plan and the Mauritius Strategy, the 2012 Rio+20 Conference, and plans for the 2014 Conference on development. This large website also has information from all the major groups of stakeholders concerned with sustainable development, including women, scientists, NGOs, labor unions, farmers and business, and considers the problems from a wide variety of perspectives, such as biodiversity, sustainable tourism, toxic chemicals, forests, mining, mountains, desertification, islands threatened with submersion due to rising sea levels and transportation. There is a very large section on Sustainable

Development in Action, particularly after the Rio+20 Conference, with reports from UN agencies, Member States and Major Groups on sustainable transport, sustainable cities, small island developing states, family planning, renewable energy, healthcare for women and children, and the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative. As this website indicates, there is a great deal more work going on with sustainable development than simply the large summits and conferences and high-level policy decisions that receive most of the publicity.

John Baden is a self-described libertarian and free-market 'environmentalist' who heads a small organization in Montana called the Foundation for Research on Economics and the Environment (FREE). His criticisms of sustainable development and environmentalism are based on public choice theory and intense skepticism about the capacities of state to deal with major problems in these areas. He is also affiliated with the oil industry and the National Petroleum Council, so any sources like these should certainly be used with caution and full awareness about the 'neoliberal' ideology and political views of the author. From his perspective, government is mostly moved by lobbyists, bureaucrats and pressure groups to act in their own interests rather than the public good as a whole and this is especially dangerous when it interferes with the free market and private property. As always with writers from this particular school of thought, Baden would prefer to offer incentives to business and property-owners to act in an environmentally responsible manner rather than the have more government regulations and mandates. In practice, of course, this may simply mean that

business interests are given the 'freedom' to act however they wish toward the global environment, with no legal consequences.

## References

Baden, John. " L'économie politique du développement durable". From document de l'ICREI

Website: Euro92. com

Sustainable Development in the 21st Century. (n. d) from Sustainable Development Knowledge

Platform Web Site: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>

United Nations. 1987." Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development."

General Assembly Resolution 42/187, 11 December 1987.

United Nations,. (1992, Jun. 14 ). In United Nations Conference on Environment &

Development Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 to 14 June 1992 AGENDA 21. Retrieved Month. Day, Year, from <https://docs.google.com/gview?url=>

<http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/Agenda21.pdf&embedded=true>

What is Sustainable Development. (2013). from International Institute for Sustainable

Development Web Site: <http://www.iisd.org/sd/>