

Sustainable Development: Definitions and Resources

Sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

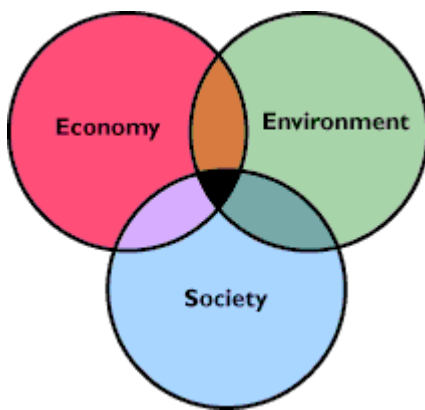
...from the World Commission on Environment and Development’s (the Brundtland Commission) report *Our Common Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

“Sustainable development,” “sustainable community,” “sustainable industry,” “sustainable agriculture.” You may have heard these words used in many different ways, but what does “sustainability” really mean and how can you tell if your community is sustainable?

Sustainability is related to the quality of life in a community — whether the economic, social and environmental systems that make up the community are providing a healthy, productive, meaningful life for all community residents, present and future.

Sustainability requires managing all households — individual, community, national, and global — in ways that ensure that our economy and society can continue to exist without destroying the natural environment on which we all depend. Sustainable communities acknowledge that there are limits to the natural, social and built systems upon which we depend. Key questions asked in a sustainable community include: 'Are we using this resource faster than it can be renewed' and 'Are we enhancing the social and human capital upon which our community depends?'

...from Sustainable Measures (www.sustainablemeasures.com)



The objective of sustainability is to find the maximum shared economic, social and environmental benefit when making public or private policy decisions or actions.

Resources:

Development Education Program, – includes learning modules.

<http://www.worldbank.org/depweb/english/sd.html>

Sustainable Measures –creating good community-level sustainability indicators.

www.sustainablemeasures.com

Sustainable Oregon - www.sustainableoregon.net

*Provided by Jennifer Allen, PhD
Portland State University, 2007*