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# INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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## INTEGRATED DECISION-MAKING

### Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies

Created by a 1993 Executive Order, the **President's Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD)** is explicitly charged with recommending a **national action plan for sustainable development** to the President. The PCSD is composed of leaders from government and industry, as well as from environmental, labor and civil rights organizations. The PCSD submitted its report, "Sustainable America: A New Consensus", to the President in early 1996. In the absence of a multi-sectoral consensus on how to achieve sustainable development in the United States, **the PCSD was conceived to formulate recommendations for the implementation of Agenda 21.** The Council's expressed mission is to:

- ⌵ develop and recommend to the President a national sustainable development action strategy that will foster economic vitality;
- ⌵ develop an annual Presidential Honors Programme recognizing outstanding achievements in sustainable development; and
- ⌵ raise public awareness of sustainable development issues and participation in opportunities for sustainable development.

Council members serve on the following Task Forces:

- ⌵ Eco-efficiency;
- ⌵ Energy and Transportation
- ⌵ Natural Resources Management and Protection;

- ε Principles, Goals and Definitions;
- ε Population and Consumption;
- ε Public Linkage, Dialogue and Education;
- ε Sustainable Agriculture.

The Council has been asked to follow up with policy recommendations.

The mission of the PCSD was prescriptive in nature, and emphasized agenda-setting rather than policy implementation. Accordingly, its Report, "Sustainable America for the Future: a New Consensus for Prosperity, Opportunity and a Healthy Environment," is not the United States' National Agenda 21. The fundamental objective of the Council was to forge a consensus among the various stakeholders (government, business and industry, private citizens, non-profits, labor etc.) and create a viable sustainable development strategy that articulated the interests and concerns of all groups. Through a vigorous consensus-building process, the report was adopted unanimously by all participants.

In 1993, the Office of Environmental Policy was created in the Executive Office of the President to better ensure that environmental considerations are appropriately incorporated in Administration policies. In addition, environmental agencies have begun to play a greater role in policy coordination through bodies such as the National Economic Council, the Trade Policy Review Group and the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee. This participation has resulted in innovative policies in such high-profile areas as trade policy, climate change and technology development. The results of this coordination can be seen in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and its supplemental agreements on labor and environment, entered into with Canada and Mexico.

### **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

US laws and regulations covering environmental protection, natural resource management and socio-economic development are administered by many federal agencies. Federal natural resource management is overseen, for example, by a number of different agencies in the Departments of Interior, Agriculture, Defense, Energy, and Commerce, among others. Environmental pollution is regulated by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA), the Department of Justice, and other agencies. While this division of labor has resulted in a clear mission on the part of individual agencies, (and the US has long had a coordinated inter-agency process for decision-making), the current arrangement has at times resulted in the fragmentation of policy approaches. Accordingly, several government-wide activities have been initiated since UNCED to identify weaknesses and improve national coordination between environmental and economic agencies and decision-making capability.

The **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)** continues to provide a broad mandate for federal agencies to create and maintain "conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony and fulfill the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans." NEPA requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision-making processes.

### **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

The President's **Climate Change Action Plan** represents another government-wide effort to strategically integrate environment and development objectives over the coming years. The plan consists of nearly 50 initiatives designed to reduce greenhouse emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000. It is estimated that these efforts will save \$260 billion in energy bills by the year 2010 while promoting

economic efficiency and competitiveness. In cooperation with other federal agencies and through meetings with federal, state, tribal and local officials, the EPA is developing a detailed set of measurable, national environmental goals in such areas as clean air, ecological protections, safe drinking water, and improved understanding of the environment.

The 1993 Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) requires strategic plans for all agencies containing long-range goals and objectives, as well as performance indicators for all government programmes. Most agencies are involved in strategic planning. A number of strategic plans put out by Agencies since Rio, including the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA), the Department of Energy, the EPA and agencies within the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, emphasize sustainable development as a conceptual framework for their activities. Several agencies, including the Department of Energy and the US Forest Service, are setting goals for achieving sustainability in the use of those resources which are the responsibility of their respective agencies. In addition, agencies are developing joint strategies to address particular issues such as pesticide management and ecosystem maintenance. In general, agencies have made a marked effort since Rio to better integrate environmental and economic considerations into their decisions. For example, agencies which have traditionally emphasized resource development (such as the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Land Management, and the US Forest Service) are now stressing the integration of conservation and resource management objectives as well as ensuring that such development is sustainable.

## Programmes and Projects

Many initiatives are largely voluntary programmes designed to spur cost-effective actions without additional regulations and bureaucracy. One of these, the **US Initiative in Joint Implementation**, jointly chaired by the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency, is a voluntary pilot programme designed to contribute to international understanding to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in different geographic regions through joint US and foreign partnerships.

The **Common Sense Initiative**, administered by the EPA, reflects another example of a targeted approach which emphasizes increased attention to partnerships. Teams made up of industrial representatives, environmental advocates and federal regulators are developing sector-specific approaches through a review of existing environmental regulations, available pollution prevention and compliance strategies, and the promotion of innovative technologies, among other activities. **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs)** are usually used for policies, programmes and projects. EIA's are required under the National Environmental Policy Act for all major federal actions that significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Approximately 500 EIAs are carried out each year.

## Status

No information is available.

## Challenges

No information is available.

## Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising

No information is available.

## **Information**

No information is available.

## **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

## **Financing**

No information is available.

## **Cooperation**

In addition to the CSD, the US has cooperated in numerous fora to promote better integration of environment concerns into development in decision-making, including Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Bolivia Sustainable Development Summit, and other international bodies and conferences. The U.S. encouraged APEC to increase its sustainable development and environment-related activities. In June 1996, President Clinton wrote to his fellow APEC leaders urging that a cooperative work programme be advanced to promote greater sustainability in the region. A work programme focusing on sustainable cities, a Clean Pacific initiative, and cleaner production processes was subsequently endorsed at the APEC Sustainable Development Ministerial in July 1996.

\* \* \*

*This information is based on the United States of America's submission to the 5th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, April 1997. Last update: 1 April 1997*

[To access the Web Site of the President's Council on Sustainable Development, click here.](#)

[To access USAID's Web Site, click here.](#)

[For the strategic plan draft of the Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\), click here.](#)

[For the EPA's Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Programme, click here.](#)

[For the EPA's Consumer Labelling Initiative, click here.](#)

[For the EPA's Environmental Goals, click here.](#)

[For information on Environmental Law around the World, click here:](#)

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## **MAJOR GROUPS**

### **Women**

### **Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

No information is available.

### **Programmes and Projects**

According to the President's Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD), expanded opportunities for women are an important component of sustainable development initiatives, especially those that give "special attention to socio-economic factors that result in disproportionately high levels of unintended and teen pregnancy among disadvantaged segments of society." There are no plans at present either for achievement of equality in all aspects of society or for establishing mechanisms to assess implementation and impact of development and environment policies and programmes on women.

The US Women's Educational Equity Act Programme promotes educational equity for women and girls, including those women and girls who suffer multiple discrimination based on gender and race. There is also a variety of federal statutes prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds based on gender and other criteria (e.g., race, age, color, etc.). Many local educational systems already promote gender-relevant knowledge.

### **Status**

The percentage of women:

- ε in government 50.2 (1990) >50.5 (Est. 1992)
- ε in Congress 6 (1992) 10 (1995)
- ε at local government level 42.8 (1991) 43.0 (1992)

### **Challenges**

No information is available.

### **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

### **Information**

No information is available.

## Research and Technologies

No information is available.

## Financing

No information is available.

## Cooperation

The **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women** was signed in 1980 but has not yet been ratified.

\* \* \*

*This information is based on the United States of America's submission to the 5th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, April 1997. Last update: 1 April 1997*

[For information on Women Watch in different countries, click here:](#)

[For information on national plans of action in the follow-up to the Beijing Conference, click here:](#)

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH

### Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies

No information is available.

### Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations

No information is available.

### Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans

No information is available.

### Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement

No information is available.

### Programmes and Projects

The role of children and youth in the national process is *ad hoc*. Various US Agencies have programmes for children and youth. For example, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), through 4-H Youth Development Programmes of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) enroll more than 5 million youth each year throughout the US in programmes dealing with such issues as Environmental Stewardship, Environmental Education, Earth Sciences and Natural

Resource Conservation.

## **Status**

Youth unemployment (16-19 years old) was 20% in 1992 and 17.6% in 1994.

## **Challenges**

No information is available.

## **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

The federal Government has also sought to reach out to children and youth through environmental education programmes such as GLOBE (Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment) which was launched by Vice President Gore in 1994/95. The goal of ensuring that by the year 2000 more than 50% of youth -- gender balanced -- have access to appropriate secondary education or vocational training has been reached.

## **Information**

No information is available.

## **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

## **Financing**

No information is available.

## **Cooperation**

No information is available.

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## **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE**

### **Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies**

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for helping train American Indian and Alaska native groups to manage their own affairs under trust relationship to the federal government. In many instances, both groups were already pursuing traditional sustainable management practices on their lands with respect to natural resource stewardship.

### **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

Indigenous people participate in national policies on an *ad hoc* basis.

### **Programmes and Projects**

No information is available.

### **Status**

No information is available.

### **Challenges**

No information is available.

### **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

### **Information**

No information is available.

### **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

### **Financing**

No information is available.

### **Cooperation**

No information is available.

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*Commission on Sustainable Development, April 1997. Last update: 1 April 1997.*

## **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

The government has included representatives of NGOs in the National delegation to every session of the CSD as well as at other major international meetings. The government also collaborates with international non-governmental organizations and other international institutions in national and regional sustainable development programmes. In the US, major group organizations participate occasionally in national and local impact assessment projects and the design and implementation of national sustainable development agenda-setting. NGOs participate in a wide range of environmental, economic, and social activities that contribute to and promote sustainable development in the US and abroad. The Government interacts with international PVOs, NGOs and other international organizations in sustainable development programmes internationally, mostly through the work of the US Agency for International Development.

### **Programmes and Projects**

No information is available.

### **Status**

No information is available.

### **Challenges**

No information is available.

### **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

### **Information**

No information is available.

## **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

## **Financing**

No information is available.

## **Cooperation**

There are also several bilateral and multilateral collaborative initiatives with international major groups in national and regional sustainable development programmes.

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## **LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

### **Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

No information is available.

### **Programmes and Projects**

No information is available.

## **Status**

Sustainable communities involving local authorities is a major area for concentration recommended by the President's Council for Sustainable Development.

## **Challenges**

No information is available.

## **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

## **Information**

No information is available.

## **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

## **Financing**

No information is available.

## **Cooperation**

No information is available.

\* \* \*

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[For information on the Sustainable Communities Task Force of the President's Council on Sustainable Development, click here.](#)

[For EPA's National Environmental Partnership Programmes, click here.](#)

[For EPA's Sustainable Community Indicators, click here.](#)

## **WORKERS AND UNIONS**

### **Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

Workers take some part in National Agenda 21 discussions and implementation.

### **Programmes and Projects**

No information is available.

### **Status**

No information is available.

### **Challenges**

No information is available.

### **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

### **Information**

No information is available.

### **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

### **Financing**

No information is available.

### **Cooperation**

No information is available.

\* \* \*

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## **BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY**

### **Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

The US believes that for sustainable development to succeed both at home and abroad, the involvement of business and industry is critical. That is why members of business and industry were included on the President's Council for Sustainable Development. There are governmental policies encouraging efficiency of resource use, including reuse and recycling.

### **Programmes and Projects**

No information is available.

### **Status**

No information is available.

### **Challenges**

No information is available.

### **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

### **Information**

No information is available.

### **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

### **Financing**

No information is available.

### **Cooperation**

No information is available.

\* \* \*

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[For the EPA's Business and Industry Partnership Programme, click here.](#)

[For EPA's Sustainable Industry Project, click here.](#)

## **SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL COMMUNITY**

### **Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies**

In 1993, President Clinton established the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) to reinvent how research and development (R&D) is conducted in the United States.

The NSTC, through the CENR, is coordinating decentralized agency programmes to address environmental issues in an integrated manner. The CENR has seven sub-committees:

- ε Air Quality
- ε Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics
- ε Global Change
- ε Natural Disaster Reduction
- ε Resource Use and Management
- ε Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Solid Wastes;
- ε Water Resources and Coastal and Marine Environments

In addition, there are three crosscutting methodological issue sub-committees: Environmental Technology; Social and Economic Science, and Risk Assessment.

### **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

No information is available.

### **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

Advice has been, and will continue to be, sought from a wide range of stakeholders from academia, industry, other private-sector groups, Congress, and state and local governments.

### **Programmes and Projects**

The above sub-committees coordinate the federal agency programmes within their particular environmental area.

## **Status**

There is some effort toward improving exchange of knowledge and concerns between the science and technology community and the general public. Refer also to "Science."

## **Challenges**

No information is available.

## **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

## **Information**

No information is available.

## **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

## **Financing**

No information is available.

## **Cooperation**

No information is available.

\* \* \*

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[For the Science Policy Council, click here.](#)

## **FARMERS**

### **Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies**

No information is available.

## **Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations**

No information is available.

## **Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans**

No information is available.

## **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

No information is available.

## **Programmes and Projects**

The 1985 Farm Bill passed by the US Congress authorized the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish a federal competitive grants programme in the areas of sustainable agriculture, research and education (SARE). The SARE programme's mission is to increase knowledge about and help farmers and ranchers adopt sustainable practices that are profitable, environmentally sound and beneficial to society.

## **Status**

No information is available.

## **Challenges**

No information is available.

## **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

## **Information**

No information is available.

## **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

## **Financing**

A total of \$23 million were appropriated by USDA in 1995 and 1996 for hundreds of projects throughout the US that will develop information for producers about how to farm more profitably while protecting the natural resource base and enhancing their communities.

## **Cooperation**



No information is available.

\* \* \*

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## SCIENCE

### Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies

In 1993, President Clinton established the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) to reinvent how research and development (R&D) is conducted in the United States.

The Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR) has seven sub-committees:

- ε Air Quality
- ε Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics
- ε Global Change
- ε Natural Disaster Reduction
- ε Resource Use and Management
- ε Toxic Substances and Hazardous and Solid Wastes;
- ε Water Resources and Coastal and Marine Environments

In addition, there are three crosscutting methodological issue sub-committees: Environmental Technology; Social and Economic Science, and Risk Assessment.

### Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations

No information is available.

### Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans

In March 1995, the NSTC, through its Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR), released a 75-page interagency strategy plan, **Preparing for the Future through Science and Technology: An Agenda for Environmental and Natural Resource Research**. The interagency plan focuses the federal R&D dollars on the most pressing societal needs of the United States. As a result of the process of developing strategic and implementation plans for the CENR, the following areas of research have been identified for enhanced emphasis in the research and budget planning cycles of the CENR federal agencies with environment and natural resources research:

- ε Ecosystem Research--to promote the efficient use of natural resources while sustaining ecosystem integrity for future generations;
- ε Observations and data management to ensure that the necessary measurements are made efficiently and that the data are widely available to all stakeholders in easily usable forms;

- ε Socioeconomic dimensions of environmental change to understand the underlying human influences on the environment and the potential responses of society to change;
- ε Environmental Technology to protect the environment while stimulating economic growth and capturing emerging global markets; and,
- ε Science Policy Tools to improve integrated assessment and risk models so policymakers can make informed decisions on complex environmental and societal issues.

## **Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement**

Advice has been, and will continue to be, sought from a wide range of stakeholders from academia, industry, other private-sector groups, Congress, and state and local governments.

## **Programmes and Projects**

The NSTC, through the CENR, is coordinating decentralized agency programmes to address environmental issues in an integrated manner.

The above sub-committees coordinate the federal agency programmes within their particular environmental area.

The Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) programme also attempts to encourage greater scientific education on environment issues at pre-college levels (see information under Children and Youth above).

## **Status**

To meet the challenge for sound and cost-effective management of the environment and natural resources of the US, the Administration has undertaken significant changes in how the US plans and funds federal research in support of sustainable development. The traditional single agency and single discipline approach to problem solving is being replaced by a coordinated, multiagency interdisciplinary approach.

## **Challenges**

No information is available.

## **Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising**

No information is available.

## **Information**

No information is available.

## **Research and Technologies**

No information is available.

## Financing

No information is available.

## Cooperation

No information is available.

\* \* \*

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# INFORMATION

## Decision-Making: Coordinating Bodies

There is an informal effort, spearheaded by the **Interagency Working Group on Sustainable Development Indicators (IWG/SDI)**, to develop a national set of sustainable development indicators. The group was created in January 1994 and has strong ties to the White House Office of Environmental Policy and the **President's Council on Sustainable Development**.

## Decision-Making: Legislation and Regulations

The Department of Energy has recently issued guidelines for compiling an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions and new and existing data sets have been used to develop and expand the Department's integrated Dynamic Energy Analysis Simulation (IDEAS) model. IDEAS provides detailed projections of US energy supply, demand, prices, cost and emissions for up to 40 years.

A number of US agencies have identified the gathering, application, and dissemination of credible data as priorities in their strategic planning process. For example, the Bureau of Economic Analysis in the US Department of Commerce has developed a framework for **integrated economic and environmental accounts (IEEAs)**.

The President signed an Executive Order on Environmental Justice on 11 February 1994 that, among other things, directs all federal agencies to ensure that low-income and minority communities have access to better information about their environment and have the opportunity to participate in shaping government policies that affect their community's health.

## Decision-Making: Strategies, Policies and Plans

The US government does not have a formal plan that addresses information for sustainable development decision-making.

The major principles in the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new 5-year strategic plan, released July, 1994, (including, in part, ecosystem protection, environmental justice, pollution prevention and partnerships) are reflected in the EPA's data collection and management activities.

### Decision-Making: Major Groups involvement

The Interagency Working Group has over twenty representatives from various departments and agencies, most of whom have some responsibility for gathering information. The same type of information is also collected at the non-federal level by state and local agencies.

In the United States, NGOs and federal, state and local level governments are leading efforts to define and apply sustainable development principles and develop indicators to measure progress. Through partnerships and outreach, however, other sectors of society are fast becoming users of sustainable development information. In addition to government sources of data and information, academic institutions, NGOs and industry are major sources of environmental information.

### Programmes and Projects

Federal, State and local governments have programmes for gathering and sharing environmental data. At the Federal level, the Mission to Planet Earth Programme, the Global Earth Observing System and the Data and Information System of the National Aeronautics Space Administration provide data about the earth's land surface, water, and other characteristics to a broad range of users. The Department of Agriculture maintains a variety of ground-based environmental monitoring networks for water quality and quantity, forest cover, and other parameters. Information collected and managed for decision-making is highly dispersed within the US government. At the federal level, a number of US agencies are responsible for collecting environmental, health, demographic, economic and social information through a variety of statistical and reporting programmes.

The Department of Energy has undertaken several initiatives to enhance data relating to energy production, importation and consumption in the United States.

### Status

Data and information pertaining to environmental quality, human and ecological health and social and economic welfare are relevant to sustainable development and are collected by a variety of government agencies and institutions. This data has not yet been integrated into a unified data management system for sustainable development.

Computer networks are generally available throughout both the public and private sectors, and many have access to international services.

#### Availability of sustainable development information at the national level

Agenda 21 Chapters	Very good	Good	Some good data but many	Poor
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			gaps
2.	International cooperation and trade	X	
3.	Combating poverty	X	
4.	Changing consumption patterns	X	
5.	Demographic dynamics and sustainability	X	
6.	Human health	X	
7.	Human settlements	X	
8.	Integrating E & D in decision-making	X	
9.	Protection of the atmosphere	X	
10.	Integrated planning and management of land resources	X	
11.	Combating deforestation	X	
12.	Combating desertification and drought	X	
13.	Sustainable mountain development	X	
14.	Sustainable agriculture and rural development	X	

15.	Conservation of biological diversity	X
16.	Biotechnology	X
17.	Oceans, seas, coastal areas and their living resources	X
18.	Freshwater resources	X
19.	Toxic chemicals	X
20.	Hazardous wastes	X
21.	Solid wastes	X
22.	Radioactive wastes	X
24.	Women in sustainable development	X
25.	Children and youth	X
26.	Indigenous people	X
27.	Non-governmental organizations	X
28.	Local authorities	X
29.	Workers and trade unions	X
30.	Business and industry	X
31.	Scientific and technological community	X

32.	Farmers	X
33.	Financial resources and mechanisms	X
34.	Technology, cooperation and capacity-building	X
35.	Science for sustainable development	X
36.	Education, public awareness and training	X
37.	International cooperation for capacity-building	X
38.	International institutional arrangements	X
39.	International legal instruments	X
40.	Information for decision-making	X

## Challenges

Hardware and software compatibilities are the key obstacles to electronic communication in the United States. Although the government retains the capability to access remote sensing data, the cost of the data is a constraint to usage.

## Capacity-building, Education, Training and Awareness-raising

No information is available.

## Information

The EPA has several data bases, including: the Inventory of Information Systems, Access EPA, The Guide to Federal Water Quality Programmes and A Guide to Selected National Environmental Statistics

in the US Government. The data are not qualified as to their relevance to sustainable development, however. The EPA and Department of Interior are completing internal surveys of their data capabilities to contribute to the development of resource and environmental sustainable development indicators. The Dept of Commerce has initiated a survey process and other agencies are considering undertaking a similar activity. The IWG/SDI is coordinating this effort.

## Research and Technologies

No information is available.

## Financing

No information is available.

## Cooperation

The major foreign sources of information for sustainable development include UNEP's GEMS, GRID, GCOCS, IRPTC and INFOTERRA.

\* \* \*

*This information is based on the United States of America's submission to the 5th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, April 1997. Last update: 1 April 1997*

[For EPA Information & Data Management, click here.](#)

[For information resources management, click here.](#)

[For the EPA's Center for Environmental Statistics, click here.](#)

[For EPA's Environmental Data Registry, click here.](#)

[OpenView For indicators of sustainable development in the United States, click here.](#)

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# INTERNATIONAL LAW

## Status

Major agreements or conventions relevant to Agenda 21 not already covered in other sections include

- ε North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation under NAFTA, 1993
- ε Convention for the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea, 1994;
- ε North Pacific Anadromous Stocks Convention, 1993;
- ε UN Straddling and Highly Migratory Fishery Stocks Convention, 1995.

\* \* \*



*This information is based on the United States of America's submission to the 5th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, April 1997. Last update: 1 April 1997*

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