

# **Lesson 4. Sustainable Development**

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## Learning Objectives

**After this lesson, students will be able to:**

- Compare and contrast the situation from before and the present.
- Define what sustainable development is.
- Justify a stand on sustainability-related issue.
- Define vocabulary from an audio using context clues.
- Recognize the goals and the essential pillars of sustainability.
- Rank and discuss global problems.
- Use modals to talk about initiatives to aid achieving sustainability.
- Identify and correct errors found in sentences.

# Lesson 4. Sustainable Development

How have the environmental/sustainability issues progressed over time? Are they better or worse? Provide the details.



**deforestation**



**climate change**



**pollution**



**waste disposal**



**natural resource  
depletion**



**human rights and  
social equity**



**animal rights**



**food and water  
security**

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## In a nutshell

**Sustainable development** is the idea that human societies must live and meet their needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The “official” definition of **sustainable development** was **developed** for the first time in the **Brundtland Report** in 1987.

Specifically, sustainable development is a way of organizing society so that it can exist in the long term. This means taking into account both the imperatives present and those of the future, such as the preservation of the environment and natural resources or social and economic equity.

Sources: [Sustainable Development Definition: Historical Background and Examples \(youmatter.world\)](#)

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## Debate: Is Human Activity Primarily Responsible for Global Climate Change



Overwhelming scientific consensus finds human activity primarily responsible for climate change.

Rising levels of human-produced gases released into the atmosphere create a greenhouse effect that traps heat and causes global warming.

The rise in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> over the last century was clearly caused by human activity, as it occurred at a rate much faster than natural climate changes could produce.



Many scientists disagree that human activity is primarily responsible for global climate change.

Earth's climate has always warmed and cooled, and the 20th century rise in global temperature is within the bounds of natural temperature fluctuations over the past 3,000 years.

Rising levels of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> do not necessarily cause global warming.

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## Preview Questions before listening

1. When and where was the concept of sustainability first mentioned?
2. How has the aim of sustainability from the report compared with today's?
3. What are the three essential pillars?
4. What is assumed to be inexhaustible thus needs to be protected and be used rationally?
5. "Many of the challenges that humans face can only be tackled from a global perspective."  
Support this claim.
6. How are these words related to sustainability?

Elaborate

Globalization

Cohesion

Promote

Cultures

Future

Compromise

Wealth

Industrialization

Population  
Growth

Quality of Life

Education

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Learn about sustainability in the video below:

(Listening 4.1)

<https://www.acciona.com/sustainable-development/>

Discuss the goal of sustainable development without compromising the three essential pillars as illustrated in the image on the right and as explained in the video above.



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**Discuss whether you agree with the following in accordance with the current situation in your country.**

1. Americans rank the following top 10 issues (in order of priority) as most important:

Trying to solve the problems of crime and drugs

Trying to find cures for serious diseases

Taking steps to contain the cost of health care

Trying to ensure people have jobs and decent wages

Trying to improve the quality of public school problems

Taking steps to ensure better leaders in elected positions

Taking steps to reduce the budget deficit

Trying to solve the problem of teenage pregnancies

Trying to improve the quality of our environment

Trying to solve the nation's racial problems

2. The top 10 problems to be faced in the next 25 to 50 years (in order of importance).

Spread of crime and violence to all places

Starvation in many parts of the world

Congestion of cities and highways

Divisions between rich and poor in this country

Overpopulation

Racism

Lack of jobs that pay decent wages

Severe air pollution

Severe water pollution

Health problems caused by man-made chemicals



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## **Reading: *Examples of Sustainable Development***

For too long, economic growth and development has come at an environmental and social cost. Since the dawn of industrialization, the world has seen increasingly rapid advancements in technology which has caused an accelerated pace of development beyond what the earth's natural resources can sustain. With global warming, habitat destruction, poverty and many other socio-environmental issues becoming more pressing, it is clear that we need to invest in more sustainable development practices.

### **What is Sustainable Development?**

The earliest (and thus most widely accepted) definition of sustainable development, is “development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” But sustainable development is about more than just the environment.

Sustainable Development has three major components:

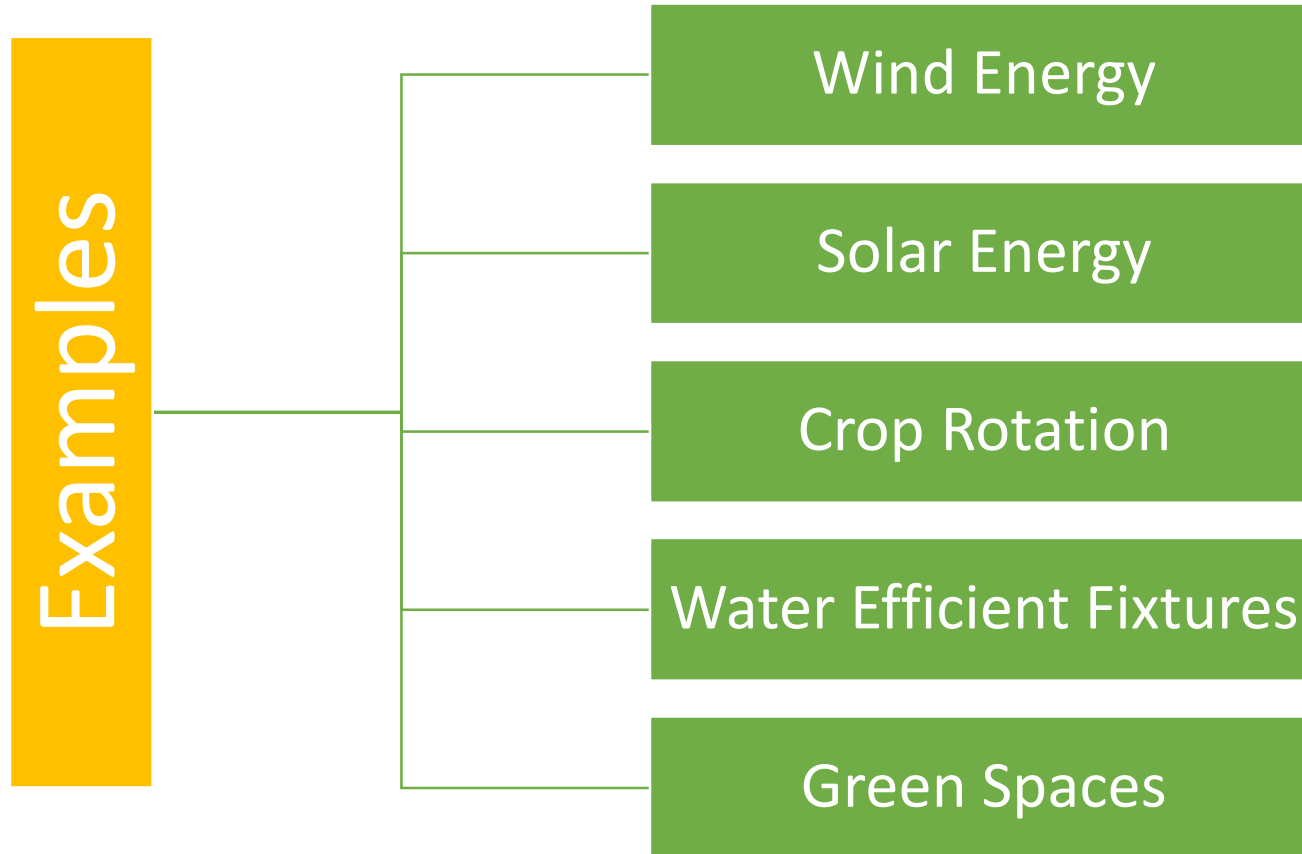
1. Economic growth
2. Environmental stewardship and
3. Social inclusion

It is about meeting the diverse needs of different communities to create a better quality of life and future for all.

*Read the full article here: [5 Examples of Sustainable Development - S U M A S](#)*

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What are some examples of Sustainable Development?



These examples are only a few of the many types of sustainable development that have the potential to perpetuate positive global change. The world is faced with a crossroad whereby we have the power now (and only now) to shift global development to be more sustainable before it is too late. As such, changes to regulations and incentives that govern development need to happen. This will make sustainable development, not only the best and most affordable option, but also the most obvious one to choose.

Source: [5 Examples of Sustainable Development - S U M A S](#)

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## ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. Does the increase in rapid advancements have a positive or negative impact on the environment? Explain.
2. What makes it clear that invest in more sustainable development practices?
3. Explain how sustainable development was discussed in the reading.
4. What does the author suggest need to happen to make sustainable development?
5. Can you provide other examples of sustainable development?

## VOCABULARY

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| A. something that is fixed or attached (as to a building) as a permanent appendage or as a structural part | 1. dawn of something |
| B. consistent and continuous speed in movement   | 2. fixture           |
| C. the process of sending power or energy from one place to another  | 3. supplement        |
| D. to move faster : to gain speed  | 4. accelerate        |
| E. based on or in accordance with what is generally done or believed.                                      | 5. industrialization |
| F. the time when something such as a new period in history begins  | 6. pace              |
| G. the process of converting to a socioeconomic order in which industry is dominant.                       | 7. conveyance        |
| H. add an extra element or amount to.  | 8. monocrop          |
| I. make (something, typically an undesirable situation or an unfounded belief) continue indefinitely.      | 9. noxious           |
| J. physically harmful or destructive to living beings  | 10. conventional     |
| K. add (a component or accessory) to something that did not have it when manufactured.                     | 11. transmission     |
| L. a cultivated crop that does not rotate with other crops in a particular field or area.                  | 12. retrofit         |
| M. the act of carrying from one place to another   | 13. perpetuate       |

# Lesson 4. Sustainable Development

Use modals *could*, *would* and *should* to talk about the initiatives we could start to achieve the following:



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**Listening 4.2:** Listen to the audio below and complete the following sentences.

1. Protecting the environment is a concern of politicians, government leaders, and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The three keys protecting the environment is informing the public, developing technology, and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ can't be recycled very easily.
4. Companies can be supported to recycle more if they are given \_\_\_\_\_.
5. One final problem is finding companies that \_\_\_\_\_.

## Post Listening Exercise

Research on any unique programs in your city or country that promotes protecting the environment.

1. Who is behind the movement?
2. What are the specific goals and benefits to environment?
3. What are the challenges?
4. Can you deem the program successful? Discuss.

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## Quotations about Sustainability

“There is no such thing as ‘away’. When we throw anything away it must go somewhere.

~Dudley Moore

We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children

~Native American Proverb

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.

~Albert Einstein

If it can't be reduced, reused, repaired, rebuilt, refurbished, refinished, resold, recycled, or composted, then it should be restricted, designed or removed from production.

~Pete Seeger

We never know the worth of water till the well is dry.

~Thomas Fuller

We are living on this planet as if we had another one to go to..

~Terry Swearingen,

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Identify the errors in each sentence and modify to make it correct.

1. His family grew up eating a <sup>A</sup> steady diet of meat and potatoes, and now they <sup>B</sup> are being reluctant <sup>C</sup> to try new foods like <sup>D</sup> enchiladas and <sup>E</sup> kale chips. No errors

2 The <sup>A</sup> sharp beak and beady eyes of a common farm chicken <sup>B</sup> can be terrifying to those <sup>C</sup> who have never seen this <sup>D</sup> animal <sup>E</sup> previous. No errors

3. It was <sup>A</sup> so nice day <sup>B</sup> that they <sup>C</sup> decided to have a picnic <sup>D</sup> in the field. <sup>E</sup> No errors

4. <sup>A</sup> A census of the island <sup>B</sup> revealed a population of <sup>C</sup> only 10,000 <sup>D</sup> people. <sup>E</sup> No error.

5. <sup>A</sup> Different conversation efforts <sup>B</sup> have been made in order to <sup>C</sup> saving <sup>D</sup> endangered <sup>E</sup> species. No error.

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6. Relying on dams for large-scale water storage and <sup>A</sup> for delivering water to places <sup>B</sup> where it does not naturally occur <sup>C</sup> have long-term effects on the balance <sup>D</sup> between groundwater and surface water and on the quality of the surrounding soil. <sup>E</sup> No error

7. During the debate, Jack <sup>A</sup> attended closely to the Green party candidate's economic plan, <sup>B</sup> which Jack thought was <sup>C</sup> better structured <sup>D</sup> than the other candidates. <sup>E</sup> No error.

8. <sup>A</sup> Today's lecture <sup>B</sup> will be on the subject of <sup>C</sup> problems environmental and <sup>D</sup> air pollution. <sup>E</sup> No error.

9. <sup>A</sup> Should we really <sup>B</sup> speak of the "breakdown" of families <sup>C</sup> when we are perhaps witnessing new family forms and a new social structure <sup>D</sup> arising late capitalism? <sup>E</sup> No error.



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1. What are some specific things individuals can do to protect the environment? What do charities do to protect the environment? What action do you think they should be taking?
2. What do you do to reduce energy consumption? What does your school or company do?
3. What do you do to save water? What could people do to save more water in the future?
4. What alternative sources of energy should we use instead? Why don't we use alternative sources of energy now?
5. Should the government try to help reduce poverty first (for example, by creating more farmland by cutting down forests) or should they prioritize protecting the environment?
6. How is equality different from equity?
7. Is poverty a choice, why or why not?
8. What changes have been brought about by promoting gender equality?
9. How can quality education aid in achieving sustainable development?
10. What is a responsible consumer like? Are you one?
11. What can you say about selective justice? Is it an issue in your country?
12. In which countries is sustainable development most important?
13. How is sustainable development linked to standard of living?
14. What problems does a lack of sustainable development lead to?
15. What questions about sustainable development would you like to be answered?

**The End**