

The Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development

Michael Kollmair, PhD

Programme Manager

Sustainable Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

Kathmandu, Nepal

Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development?

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- Two main core themes at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNSD 2012 or Rio+20 Summit):
- ‘*Green Economy*’ and
- ‘*Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development*’
- Also called ‘Sustainable Development Governance’

Definitions

- **Global governance** is the political interaction of transnational actors aimed at solving problems that affect more than one state or region
- Global governance is the complex interaction of formal and informal institutions, mechanisms, relationships, and processes between and among states, markets, citizens and organizations, both inter- and non-governmental, through which collective interests on the global level are articulated, rights and obligations are established, and differences are mediated

Governance

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE



- Aims
- Players
- Rules

Main Components of Global SD Governance

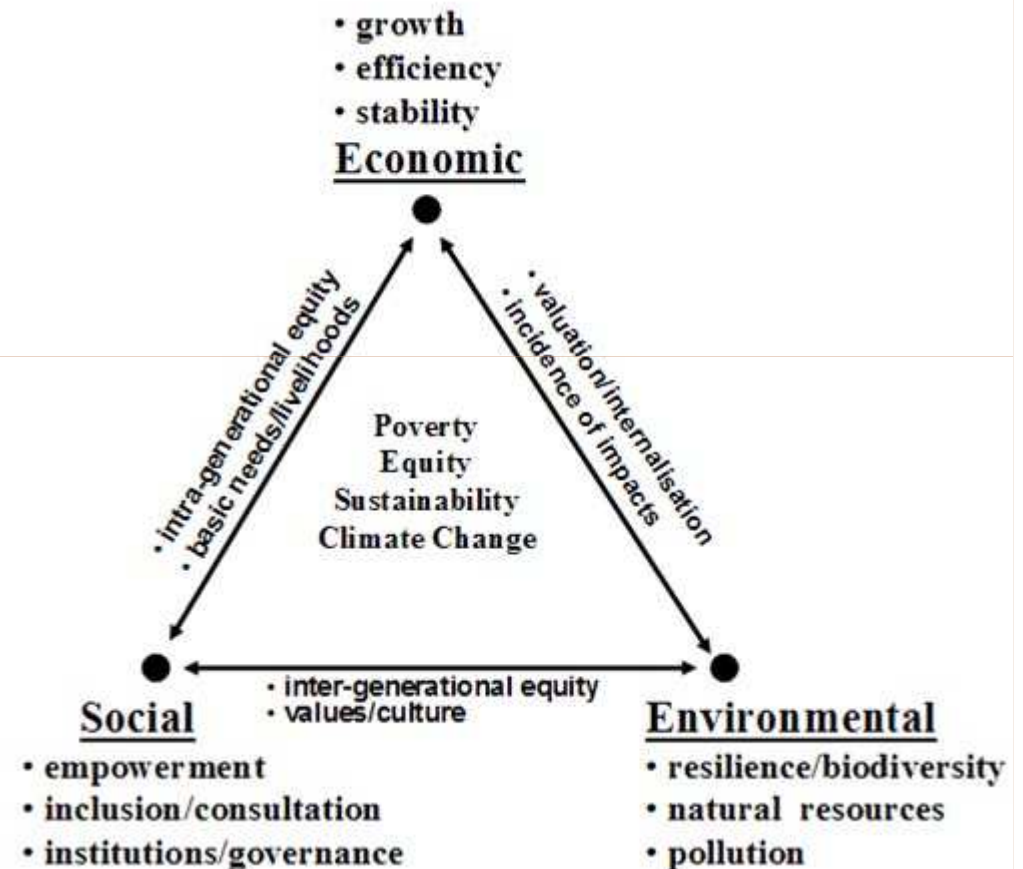
ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- **Aims** (Concepts of Sustainable Development)
- **Players** (Global Organisations for Sustainable Development Governance)
- **Rules** (Interaction rules, power relations, participation processes for Sustainable Development)

Rio 1992

- Main idea of Rio: 'Sustainable Development' (integrating three pillars: Environmental, Social, Economic development)



Organisations

International organisations, programmes and bodies that govern sustainable development at the global level:

- **Legally-binding Treaties and Conventions** including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- **Commissions**, including the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and the Commission on Social Development.
- **Political review mechanisms** including the review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 (also referred to as Rio+20).

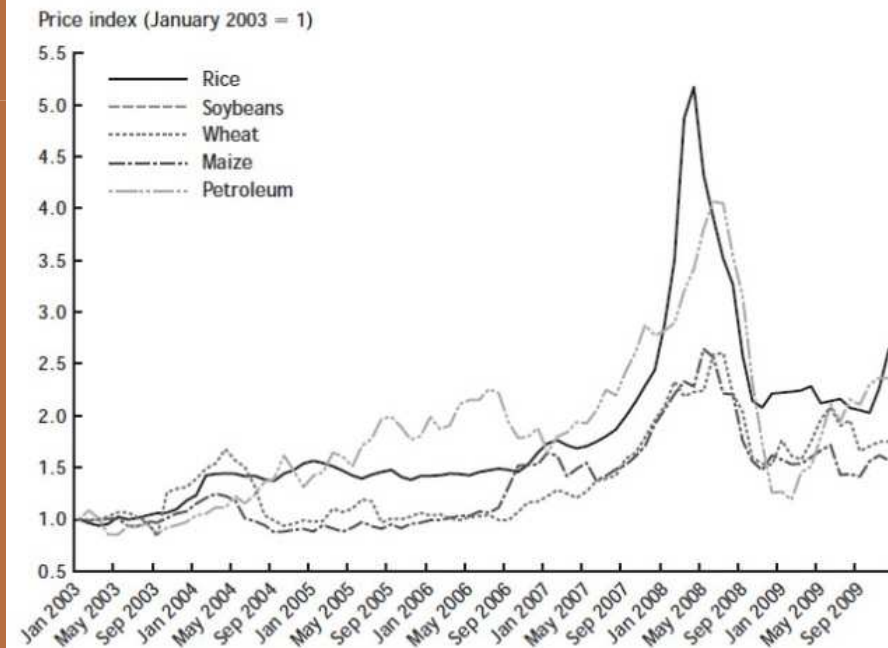
Challenges to Sustainable Development

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- 2008 Global Financial Crisis
- 2008 Food Crisis
- Impacts of Climate Change
- Accelerating Globalisation

Figure 2.3 Trends in nominal prices of cereals and oil, January 2003–November 2009



Source: Calculations by the authors using data from IMF (2009a).

Challenges

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- Complex global scale problems based on local to national scale actions
- Many international bodies with own objectives and mandates, acting somewhat autonomously, resulting in fragmented and fractured processes and agreements that govern international development issues

Changing the System

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- The rapid advance of globalisation since the first Earth Summit in 1992 has exceeded the ability of the global system to respond to the sustainability challenges
- Global governance for sustainable development is no longer 'fit for purpose'
- Establishing and developing institutional arrangements at the global level that effectively reflect new global interdependence is not easy
- It is hoped that the UNCSD in 2012 might advance some solutions in this area.

Social Pillar of Sustainable Development

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- In 2000 the Millennium Summit (New York) agreed to a common set of development targets enshrined in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- The MDGs focus primarily on the social pillar of sustainable development, advancing progress in key areas such as education, maternal health and access to basic services

Economic Pillar of Sustainable Development

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- It has long been recognised that the global sustainable development process has little or no influence over the economic pillar governance
- It is still the preserve of powerful (but less open) intergovernmental constellations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the G8 and G20, and since 2009 the Major Economies Forum (MEF)
- Many outcomes formulated in the documents from global Summits on sustainable development are hard to achieve without contribution and reform in other areas of the system

Missing Integration of Development Approaches

- A significant obstacle to achieving sustainable development globally is the lack of a coherent approach that fully integrates all three pillars of sustainable development in pursuit of an overarching goal.
- A number of different processes have emerged that address each pillar in isolation
- Even 'sustainable development' itself has become another pillar, with its own associated architecture and processes which do not necessarily represent a 'coming-together' of all three pillars.

Reforming Global Governance

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- The broader governance challenges combined with some of the specific institutional weaknesses, call for a re-think of global governance for sustainable development.
- There are a range of reforms that have been proposed – some radical, some step-wise – that all share a vision of creating a system of global governance for sustainable development that is fit for purpose

Main suggestions for change

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- The transformation of UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) into a Council for Sustainable Development, to streamline its activities and functioning commissions under one objective
- The upgrading of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to a Specialized Organisation of a World Environment Organisation (UNEO)
- Creation of an governance system for 'Global Finance for Sustainable Development' and greening the International Financial Institutions

Conclusions

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- For sustainable development to be achieved globally the environmental, economic and social pillars must be complementary rather than contradictory, and global governance systems must be designed for the effective integration of all three.

Thank you

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE



A Pocket Guide to Sustainable Development Governance

Edited by
Hannah Stoddart

Contributing Authors:
Kirsty Schneeberger
Felix Dodds
Andrew Shaw
Milena Bottero
Jack Cornforth
Robert White

FIRST EDITION:
For comment by 15th July 2011

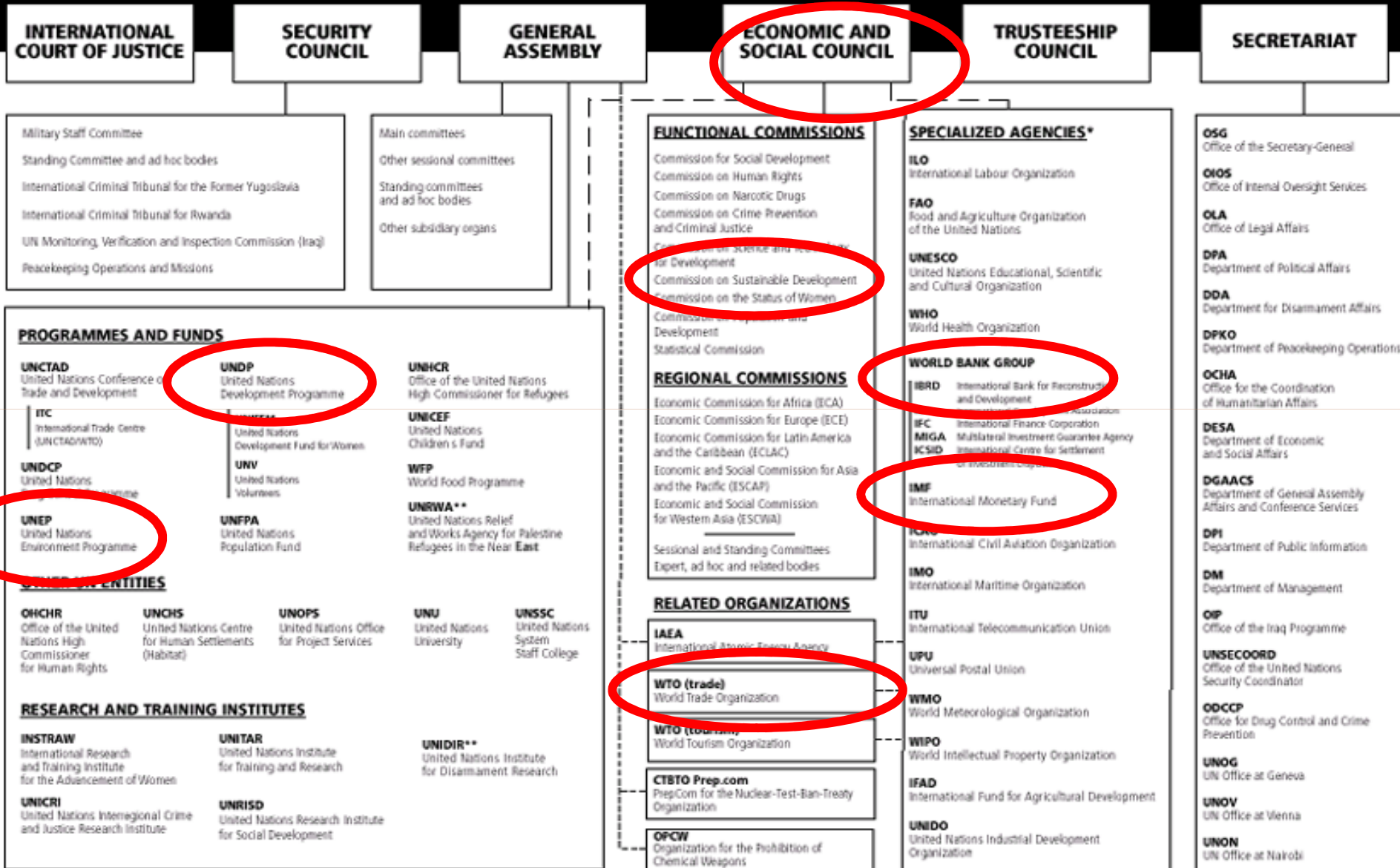
Stakeholder Forum
Commonwealth Secretariat





The UNITED NATIONS system

PRINCIPAL ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS



*Autonomous organizations working with the United Nations and each other through the coordinating machinery of the Economic and Social Council.
 **Report only to the General Assembly.

Main Organizations

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- **THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**
- *Economic and Financial Committee (ECOFIN) – Second Council*
- **THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)**
- **COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD)**
- **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT GROUP**
- **UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)**
- **THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)**

Bodies created after Rio

ICIMOD

FOR MOUNTAINS AND PEOPLE

- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)