



UNANIMA International invites your participation in achieving a sustainable world...

**Background** The first United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, informally known as the "Earth Summit," was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 1992. Unprecedented in its size and scope (counting 172 governments and 2,400 NGOs as participants), this meeting also introduced the new concept of combining international discussion on human rights, economic development and environmental stewardship. Its outcome document *Agenda 21*, though legally non-binding and somewhat weakened by compromise, still managed to put forth the most comprehensive plan of action ever agreed to by the international community for sustainable development. Naturally, it led to many good results:

**On human rights**, some countries repealed national laws that encouraged discrimination against women (e.g. Ghana, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Turkey). *Agenda 21* also grew more international awareness of global issues like poverty, scarcity of food and water, and vulnerability of small island states to climate change.

**On economic development**, many countries created organizations to deal with sustainable development (e.g. Australia, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, India, Germany, and Russia). More countries also began to look at alternative sources of energy (e.g. Denmark, India, Spain, the UK, and the US) and increasing the availability of public transportation (e.g. Columbia, Ecuador, and the European Union).

**On environmental stewardship**, the international community began looking at the production and use of toxic chemicals (e.g. lead in gasoline) as well as at the environmental consequences of business and civic projects. Additionally, *Agenda 21* encouraged some countries to take into account the needs of local people in forest management (e.g. Thailand and Brazil).

Now, the picture before us is much grimmer. The environment bears evidence of our increasingly unsustainable path to the future. We are using Earth's resources faster than the planet can replace them and, lacking effective address, the critical impacts of climate change have proliferated. The gap between rich and poor continues to widen as the world economy remains relatively unstable. At the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, widely referred to as *Rio+20*, it is essential that we promote the basic objectives of sustainable development that have yet to be met, while safeguarding Earth and its precious resources.

# Rio+20

## *Objectives*

- Secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development
- Assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development
- Address new and emerging challenges

## *Summary of themes*

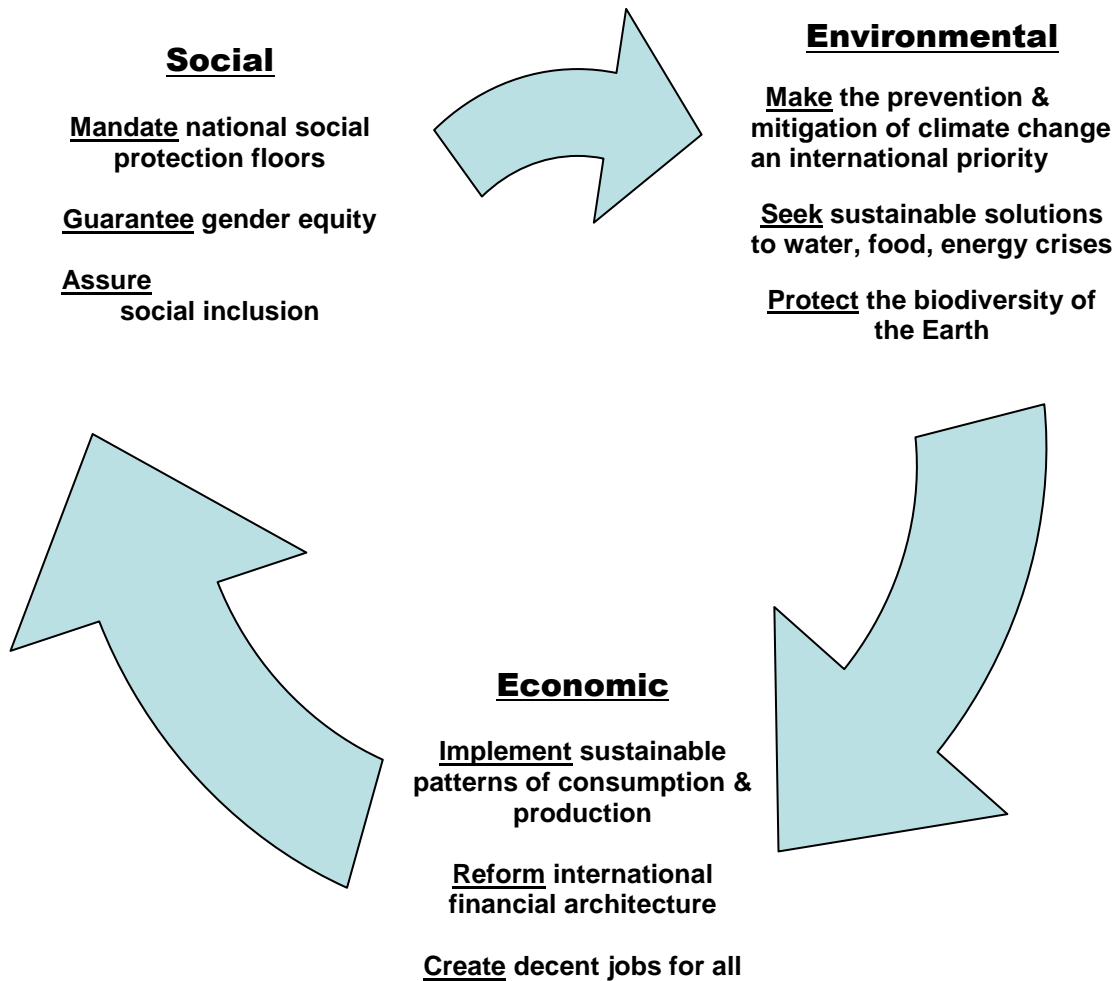
- **Green Economy** in the context of poverty eradication and sustainable development

A *green economy* is an economy that stays within the bounds of our planet's resources and links its decisions to both social and environmental needs. However, because there is no universally agreed upon definition of green economy, critics have identified several persisting loopholes for "green washing" and false solutions, as well as for promoting capitalism and protectionism favoring rich companies to the detriment of those living in poverty. They also fear the further commoditization of goods such as water, air, soil, and forests.

- **Institutional framework** for sustainable development

Such an *institutional framework* will have the capacity to assess progress made toward sustainability, hold countries accountable for commitments they have made, and oversee global efforts toward agreed-upon goals.

# Discussion Framework for Rio+20



To help UNANIMA International focus its advocacy for Rio +20 please select no more than three of the nine issue areas given in the diagram above.

## Definitions

Social Protection Floor - national policies ensuring essential human rights: e.g. water, food, sanitation, health, education, housing, & a minimum income to protect vulnerable populations against economic shock

Gender Equity - acknowledges that women & men should share the same human rights that guarantee the same opportunities, dignities & freedoms: e.g. right to own land, access to education & right to live in safety

Social Inclusion - assures that each person (particularly marginalized people such as indigenous persons, disabled, refugees & migrants) can fully participate in the rights, opportunities, resources, & the normal activities of their society.

Climate Change - changes in global climate & weather patterns & their consequences (e.g. rise in ocean temperatures & in sea levels, changes in drought/flooding patterns, & the increased intensity of storms) – especially those caused by human activities

Water, Food, Energy crises - unsustainable patterns of human use, as well as global climate changes, are contributing to water & food shortages throughout the world. Attempts to solve these problems also contribute to the overuse of unsustainable forms of energy

Biodiversity - describes the complexities of life on earth; it refers not only to living organisms such as plants and animals, but to the variety of genes & ecosystems.

Consumption and Production - the wealthiest 20% of the world's people consume over 86% of the world's goods & the trend is accelerating. These goods often are produced in unsustainable ways— using toxic materials, producing increased amounts of waste, using non-renewable forms of energy, & making our patterns of production and consumption unsustainable.

Financial Architecture - is a framework of standards designed to avert financial crises through stronger regulatory procedures & transparent accounting & auditing systems

Decent Jobs - employment that provides satisfaction & appropriate financial rewards