

# Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 1992

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1 **Rio Declaration on Environment and Development**  
2 **1992**

3 Reproduced in 31 ILM 874 (1992)

4 **Preamble**

5 The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,  
6 Having met at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992,

7 Reaffirming the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on  
8 the Human Environment, adopted at Stockholm on 16 June 1972,  
9 and seeking to build upon it,

10 With the goal of establishing a new and equitable global partnership  
11 through the creation of new levels of co-operation among States,  
12 key sectors of societies and people,

13 Working towards international agreements which respect the inter-  
ests of all and protect the integrity of the global environmental and  
developmental system,

Recognizing the integral and interdependent nature of the Earth,  
our home,

Proclaims that:

**Principle 1**

Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable de-  
velopment. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in  
harmony with nature.

**Principle 2**

States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations

and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit  
their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and de-  
velopmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities  
within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the en-  
vironment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national  
jurisdiction.

**Principle 3**

The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet  
developmental and environmental needs of present and future gen-  
erations.

**Principle 4**

In order to achieve sustainable development, environmental pro-  
tection shall constitute an integral part of the development process  
and cannot be considered in isolation from it.

**Principle 5**

All States and all people shall cooperate in the essential task of  
eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustain-  
able development, in order to decrease the disparities in standards  
of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of  
the world.

**Principle 6**

The special situation and needs of developing countries, particu-  
larly the least developed and those most environmentally vulnera-  
ble, shall be given special priority. International actions in the field

of environment and development should also address the interests<sup>29</sup> and needs of all countries.

22 **Principle 7**

23 States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities.

24 The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.

25 **Principle 8**

26 To achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies.

27 **Principle 9**

28 States should cooperate to strengthen endogenous capacity-building for sustainable development by improving scientific understanding through exchanges of scientific and technological knowledge, and by enhancing the development, adaptation, diffusion and transfer of technologies, including new and innovative technologies.

**Principle 10**

Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.

**Principle 11**

States shall enact effective environmental legislation. Environmental standards, management objectives and priorities should reflect the environmental and developmental context to which they apply. Standards applied by some countries may be inappropriate and of unwarranted economic and social cost to other countries, in particular developing countries.

**Principle 12**

States should cooperate to promote a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, to better address the problems of environmental degradation. Trade policy measures for environmental purposes should not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade. Unilateral actions to deal with environmental challenges outside the jurisdiction of the importing country should be avoided. Environmental measures addressing transboundary

or global environmental problems should, as far as possible, be based on an international consensus.

35 **Principle 13**

36 States shall develop national law regarding liability and compensation for the victims of pollution and other environmental damage. States shall also cooperate in an expeditious and more determined manner to develop further international law regarding liability and compensation for adverse effects of environmental damage caused by activities within their jurisdiction or control to areas beyond their jurisdiction.

37 **Principle 14**

38 States should effectively cooperate to discourage or prevent the relocation and transfer to other States of any activities and substances that cause severe environmental degradation or are found to be harmful to human health.

39 **Principle 15**

40 In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.

41 **Principle 16**

42 National authorities should endeavour to promote the internaliza-

tion of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, with due regard to the public interest and without distorting international trade and investment.

**Principle 17**

43

Environmental impact assessment, as a national instrument, shall be undertaken for proposed activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and are subject to a decision of a competent national authority.

44

**Principle 18**

45

States shall immediately notify other States of any natural disasters or other emergencies that are likely to produce sudden harmful effects on the environment of those States.

46

Every effort shall be made by the international community to help States so afflicted.

47

**Principle 19**

48

States shall provide prior and timely notification and relevant information to potentially affected States on activities that may have a significant adverse transboundary environmental effect and shall consult with those States at an early stage and in good faith.

49

**Principle 20**

50

Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development.

51

52 **Principle 21**

53 The creativity, ideals and courage of the youth of the world should  
be mobilized to forge a global partnership In order to achieve sus-  
tainable development and ensure a better future for all.

54 **Principle 22**

55 Indigenous people and their communities, and other local commu-  
nities, have a vital role in environmental management and develop-  
ment because of their knowledge and traditional practices. States  
should recognize and duly support their identity, culture and inter-  
ests and enable their effective participation in the achievement of  
sustainable development.

56 **Principle 23**

57 The environment and natural resources of people under oppres-  
sion, domination and occupation shall be protected.

58 **Principle 24**

59 Warfare is inherently destructive of sustainable development.  
States shall therefore respect international law providing protec-  
tion for the environment in times of armed conflict and cooperate  
in its further development, as necessary.

60 **Principle 25**

61 Peace, development and environmental protection are interdepend-  
ent and indivisible.

**Principle 26**

States shall resolve all their environmental disputes peacefully and  
by appropriate means in accordance with the Charter of the United  
Nations.

**Principle 27**

States and people shall cooperate in good faith and in a spirit of  
partnership in the fulfillment of the principles embodied in this Dec-  
laration and in the further development of international law in the  
field of sustainable development.

## Metadata

### SiSU Metadata, document information

**Document Manifest @:**

`<http://www.jus.uio.no/lm/environmental.development.rio.declaration.1992/sisu_manifest.html>`

**Title:** Rio Declaration on Environment and Development 1992

**Creator:** United Nations (UN)

**Rights:** Copyright (C) 1992 United Nations (UN)

**Publisher:** SiSU `<http://www.jus.uio.no/sisu>` (this copy)

**Date:** 1992

**Topics Registered:** environmental law:convention;development

**Version Information**

**Sourcefile:** environmental.development.rio.declaration.1992.sst

**Filetype:** SiSU text 2.0

**Source Digest:** SHA256(environmental.development.rio.declaration.1992.sst)=  
6ecd48a61035152fd81c915c31942760299edfb170f55f339125cd52a03c384b

**Skin Digest:** SHA256(skin\_lm.rb)=5acda64a9532f9ef6b71693da2b471d4efac2f23-  
a8499e68de066eec8ea9b8e9

**Generated**

**Document (dal) last generated:** Tue Sep 21 16:49:47 -0400 2010

**Generated by:** SiSU 2.6.3 of 2010w30/3 (2010-07-28)

**Ruby version:** ruby 1.8.7 (2010-08-16 patchlevel 302) [i486-linux]