

Environment and Sustainable Development

Introduction

Sudan has shown much commitment towards environmental protection since the mid 1970. This commitment was triggered by the outbreak of the environmental disasters, namely; desertification and drought which stricken the African Sahelian States; including Sudan during the years 1968 – 1973. Moreover, global awareness about the state of the environment and the need for regional and national cooperation to eliminate or, at least reduce the most pressing environment problems identified by the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment 1972, the Nairobi Declaration 1982 and the Proposed Legal Principles for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development adopted by the World Commission on Environment and Development Experts Group of Environmental Law (WCED) and the successive relevant regional and international conferences had contributed positively in upgrading the level of national commitment towards the protection of the environment and human health.

National Environmental Legislations

Sudan was on of the first African countries to promulgate legislations concerning protection of the environment. Studies have shown that there are about 150 Acts, orders and related regulations addressing environmental issues since 1903.

Since 1984 efforts were made to improve these laws by formulating an umbrella law with strong policy orientation that provides a basis for coordinated work. So these laws are crowned by 2001 Environmental Protection Act. This Act represents an important development in harmonizing different environmental sectoral laws. It sets environmental standards, and requires the injection of environmental dimension in development plans. The Act also calls for the protection of the biodiversity, prohibit pollution, raises environmental awareness and popular participation in setting policies and decision making. Recently the National Assembly passed the 2005, Interim National Constitution of the Republic of Sudan in which there is a clear commitment towards the environment protection. Article 11 in chapter 2 of the Interim National Constitution of the Republic of the Sudan states:

- i. People of the Sudan shall have the right to a clean and diverse environment, the state and the citizens have the duty to preserve and promote the country's Biodiversity.
- ii. The state shall not pursue any policy, or take or permit any action which may adversely affect the existence of any species of animal or vegetative life, their natural or adopted habitat.
- iii. The state shall promote, through legislation, sustainable utilization of natural resources and best practices with respect to their management.

Environmental Policies

The Sudan main objectives and priorities for sustainable development were spelt out in the National Comprehensive Strategy (NCS 1992 – 2002) which provided policy directions to all economic and social sectors. The NCS incorporates the country's environmental strategy, which states clearly that environmental issues must be embodied in all development projects. The NCS has served as a key reference document and basis for sectoral policies and measures. Among the directives of the NCS is the concern for poverty alleviation, popular participation and call for the incorporation of community based origination and indigenous knowledge in the development process.

In the field of environment and natural resources the strategy emphasizes the protection and improvement of environment that would lead to a balanced development, the national Comprehensive Strategy of the country devotes considerable attention to biodiversity conservation and encourages the private sector to invest in the conservation of natural resources. The establishment of additional protected area, public awareness involving local communities in conservation matters and strengthening cooperation with neighboring countries in the field of wildlife conservation are also highlighted in the strategy.

The major guidelines to attain sustainable development necessitates:

- a. Protection of the natural environment, its development and putting it to good use. The preparation of healthy social environment, and its development is important dimension for human dignity.
- b. Every Sudanese citizen has a right to healthy environment that guarantees health, abundance and prosperity.
- c. The better development it continues development that caters for the needs of present generation without prejudicing those of the future generations in satisfying their basic needs. Which necessitated the rational handling of natural resource for the benefit of all generation and the protection of the natural and social environment.
- d. Some environmental problems neither recognize political nor geographical boundaries which necessitated regional and international cooperation for the protection of the environment and its development in respect of international covenants and agreements.

It is thus clear that the natural strategic objective is the protection of environment in the Sudan and its improvement to help in the realization of a balanced development, to do this the following are the main objectives:

- a. Qualitative and quantitative environmental improvement for the Sudanese citizen, particularly in the rural areas that will enable him dignified honorable and prosperous living

- b. Poverty eradication is our important objective of the environmental policy of the Sudan, poverty is considered as an important factor for the destruction of the environment particularly in catering for the basic needs for the poor.
- c. Reconstruction of the tree covers to maintain the ratio of rainfall, the protection of waterfalls, soil protection against region and the prevention of agricultural and human settlement against desertification.
- d. Conservation of a balance and stability of the basic environment ecosystems which consolidate the continuous feeding of the earth and renewable natural resources
- e. Rationalization of the exploitation of water, soil forests, pasture and wild-life and their protection from pollution, over-cutting, over-exploitation.
- f. Raising the standers of environment feeding and consciousness tat enable politicians and administration to adopt environmental conservation, and allow citizens and voluntary organizations to take environmental – oriented initiatives and the solution of its problems.
- g. Application of chemicals for various purposes, their safety and sufficiency in such a way that enables protection of life and environmental safety.
- h. Up-lifting the health of the environment
- i. Raising the standard of the urban environmental. protecting it from all types of polluting and the conservation of animals and their natural environment, developing them in a way that realizes the optimal utilization and the conservation of life diversity.
- j. Safe-guard of the Nile River environmental and other rivers and the Red-sea. Develop their resources in such a way the contributes to the attainment of consolidation development.

On the basis of the decentralization and devolution of powers, after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) as post conflict reconstruction and development were need. The environmental issues must be streamlined into every decision, benefiting the process to achieve long term prosperity, economic security and sustainable livelihoods.

The ministry of environment of the Government of National Unity (GONU) and the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) in collaborator with line ministries and funded by UNEP and Nile Transboundary Environment Action Project are Conducting a National Plan for Environmental Management (NPEM). With high participation for all states two major workshops took place in Khartoum and Juba the NPEM secretariat is now embarking and consolidating the output of those two workshops to formulate a NPEM to be presented at a national workshop in June 2007 for endorsement.

Suggestions for Promotion Participation, coordination both at national and regional levels to achieve Sustainable Development.

1. The need for strengthening links and promoting regional and international cooperation with the diversification of the existing available expertise the region, that the regional cooperation and coordination can contribute effectively for integrating efforts towards achieving the goals of sustainable development.
2. Establish forums for intersectoral and multistakeholder dialogues at the regional level, particularly in preparation for global negotiations and conventions
3. Exchange of information at the regional level and promotion of networking
4. Managing the interaction between energy and the environment remains one of the major sustainability issues sustainable. To achieve energy sustainability needs:
 - i. Optimal use of energy, that contribute in future to less greenhouse gas emission
 - ii. Control local pollutants and disposing of waste from energy production and use in order to promote cleaner environment and hence protect human health
 - iii. To ensure high safety standers in the operation and maintenance of energy equipment, plants and infrastructure
5. Through cooperation and partnerships efforts should be made to support:
 - a. Financing schemes to increase access to loans and grants and to encourage private sector investment in sustainable development activities
 - b. Capacity building and technology transfer. Due to the gap in the region in technological and economic) standing, capacity building (technical, managerial, economic represents a major barrier facing us
6. To overcome the technological and financial barriers is the region, regional and international cooperation become necessary. International organization are requested to:
 - i. Develop capacity building and technology transfer programmes that contribute to sustainable development;
 - ii. Support and encourage research and development in collaboration with industrialized countries;
 - iii. Provide support to the Africa region to comply with relevant international treaties and protocols;
 - iv. Increase the quality and quantity of financing offers and
 - v. Introduce policies to engage the private sector in the development initiatives

Ismail Elgizouli
19.3.2007