

Progress report, compiled from the national reports to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development five years after Agenda 21 was adopted in Rio de Janeiro.

Agenda 21 implementation

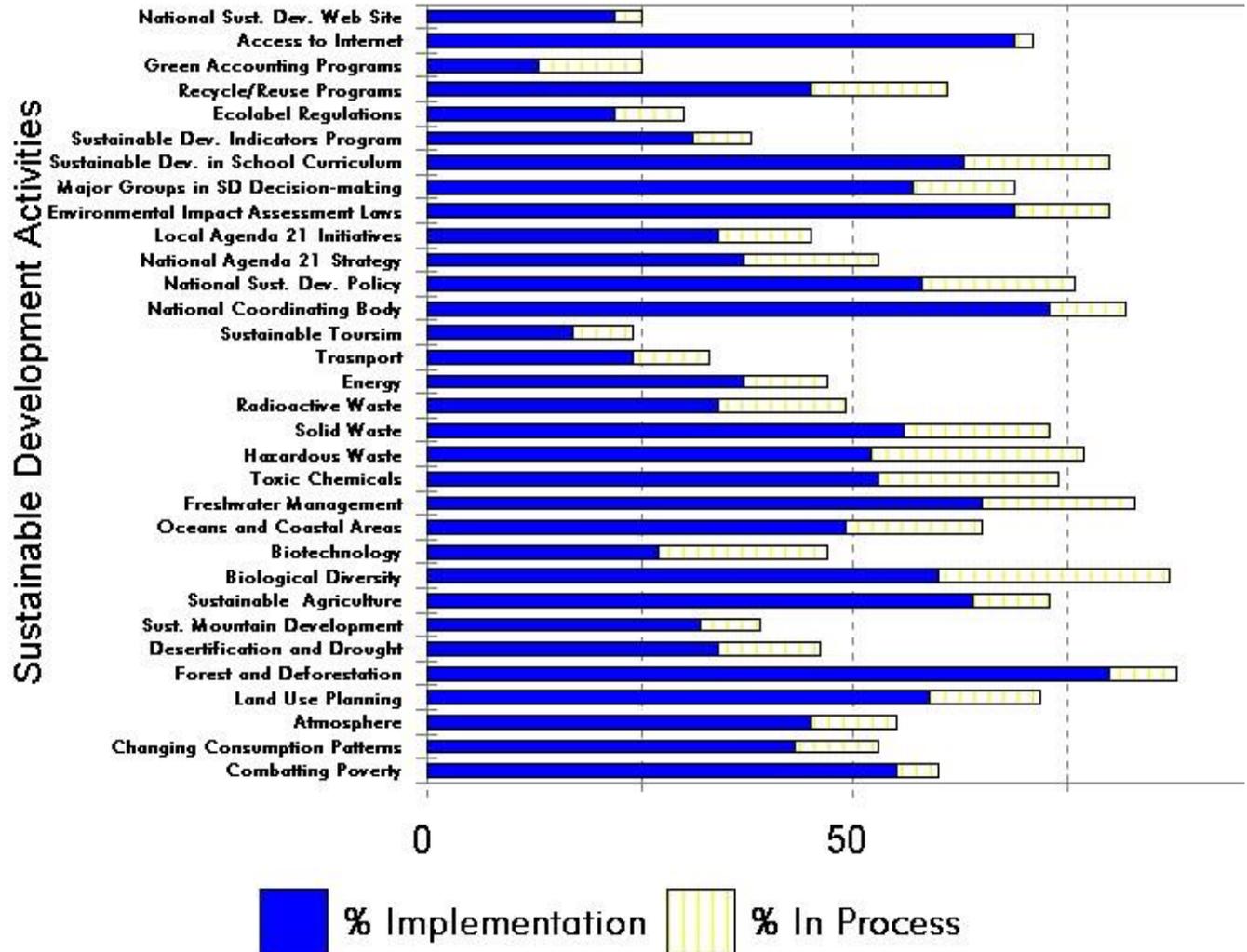
From *eco-logic*, May/June, 1998

Agenda 21 has never been debated or adopted by the Congress of the United States. Nevertheless, it is being vigorously implemented by the administrative agencies of the federal government, and by other nations around the world. More than 150 nations, including the United States of America, are participants in the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). America's participation is not the result of an international treaty, ratified by Congress. America's participation is the result of George Bush signing Agenda 21 at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, and the current administration's desire to implement its objectives.

Participating nations voluntarily submit an annual report to the CSD. In April, 1996, another massive gathering in Rio, evaluated the progress toward the implementation of Agenda 21, five years after it was adopted. Staggering progress has been made world wide, and particularly in the United States. The following chart indicates progress made toward 32 specific Agenda 21 objectives. The solid lines indicate the percentage of participating nations that have programs in place to achieve each of the objectives, or activities, listed on the left. The striped lines indicate the percentage of participating nations that are currently developing such programs. Look carefully at the program activities, and the percentage of nations that already have active programs in place for each activity; Global implementation of Agenda 21 is much very close to reality. In the United States, programs are already in place to achieve each of the objectives. The United Nations rates as "very good" the progress of the United States in each of these categories.

Agenda 21 Implementation

UN Compilation of all National Reports



The UN's analysis of each nation's report is available on the UN web site. A closer examination of what the UN has to say about the United State's implementation of Agenda 21 is most revealing. One of the 32 specific objectives of Agenda 21 is to create a "National Coordinating Body" in each nation. Of the more than 150 participating nations, 73% already have such a body, and an additional 9% are in the process of creating a National Coordinating Body. In the United States, the National Coordinating Body is the President's Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD). [The United Nations report says:](#)

"In the United States, the PCSD was conceived to formulate recommendations for the implementation of Agenda 21"

The UN report was prepared from information supplied by the U.S. State Department. The report says further:

"The fundamental objective of the Council was to forge a consensus among the various stakeholders (government, business and industry, private citizens, non-profits, labor, etc.) and create a viable sustainable development strategy that articulated the interests and concerns of all groups."

In America, the Constitution requires that consensus on public policy be hammered out in public by *elected* officials, not by 28 appointed individuals, carefully selected because of their known support of the principles expressed in Agenda 21. This UN description of the PCSD is found in a section of the report entitled "Integrated Decision-making," also known as the "consensus" process. All federal agencies have now adopted this "consensus" process to by-pass Congress and other elected bodies, to build consensus on Agenda 21 activities at the local, state, and national levels. The UN report describes America's progress in each of the activity areas in glowing terms. The report boasts that:

"The government has included representatives of NGOs in the National delegation to every session of the Commission on Sustainable Development as well as at other major international meetings."

NGOs play a vital role in the consensus process. Through the new "partnering" programs of all federal agencies, selected NGOs are funded to generate support for specific objectives, then provided a seat on the official U.S. delegation to UN meetings to demonstrate "civil society" support for UN and Agenda 21 programs.

"Most family planning interventions are conducted by NGOs such as Planned Parenthood. In preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development, public meetings were held throughout the U.S. to facilitate the participation of NGOs and individuals."

According to the report, the U.S. spent \$25 million "on the development of new contraceptive methods." The U.S. Department of Human Services is credited with changing America's attitude about contraceptives:

"In other words, policy has shifted from discouraging contraception on the basis of age and marital status to promoting it to all who do not have access to service."

"Sustainable Development in School Curriculum" is one of the 32 specific objectives of Agenda 21. This objective has been achieved in 63% of the participating nations, and in process in another 17%. In America:

"The **national strategy on education** is prepared by the Department of Education and includes such programmes as Goals 2000 and School to Work. The Biodiversity and Ecosystem Network (BENI) was launched in October 1994 to utilize electronic communication networks to foster collaboration among partners in ecosystem management. The **Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE)** was initiated to enable elementary and secondary school students to collect environmental data...through the Internet." (Emphasis in original.)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a major conduit through which Agenda 21 programs and policies flow into the United States, without the benefit of Congressional debate or decision. Many of the initiatives are introduced by NGOs, funded by the EPA through their "Sustainable Development Challenge Grant Program." In 1996, the EPA reported the following Challenge Grants.

Source: State Department report to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

Recipient	Amount	Program Title
Wilson College	48,000	Community Supported Agriculture in the Mid-Atlantic Region
Olympic Peninsula Foundation	100,000	Washington Wood Smart Certification Program

University of North Carolina Arboretum	50,000	Sustainable Craft Industry in Appalachia
New Orleans Building Materials Exchange	72,070	Building Materials Exchange in New Orleans
New Hampshire Forest Sustainable Standards Work Team	26,000	Sustaining Forestry in New Hampshire
Friends of the Rappahannock	20,000	Marketing the Economic Benefits of Sustainable Development in the Rappahannock River Watershed
Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission	20,000	Preserving Sustainability in Central Virginia Region
Nebraska State Recycling Association	75,000	EcoPark Development in Omaha
Colleton County Research Development Board	42,000	Implementing a Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development in South Carolina
Arizona State University	70,866	Sustainable Neighborhood Design for the Desert Southwest

In 1997, the EPA reported 42 "Challenge Grants," but chose not to report the name of the organization that received the money or how much money was awarded. A description of the funded projects is available on the EPA web site at the following address:

<http://134.67.55.16.7777/DC/OSE/CWeb.nsf...bbd9a46d3f852565f7004d3f16?OpenDocument>

Honest! (This file is not easily accessible, but you can try.) Some of the program titles are: Fish for the Future (Oregon); Kansas City Area Sustainable Land Use Initiative; Coastal Georgia Greenway; Building a Sustainable Community from the Ground Up (Kentucky); San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG); Community Bicycle Shop (Washington).

Social Aspects of Sustainable Development

As early as 1976, the UN adopted a policy relating to land use and population distribution:

"All countries should establish as a matter of urgency a national policy on human settlements, embodying the distribution of population...over national territory. Such a policy should be devised to facilitate population redistribution to accord with the availability of resources." (Recommendation A.1, HABITAT I, Vancouver).

The Commission on Sustainable Development's report laments "The U.S. does not have an official population policy.... The U.S. also has no specific policies to modify the spatial distribution of the population." The report applauds, however, the U.S.'s expenditure of \$25 million "on the development of new contraceptive methods," and the \$144 million spent on "all aspects of population research."

The UN report says that in America, the Department of Health & Human Services operates an Office of Population Affairs (OPA) which serves nearly 5 million people through a network of 4,800 clinics to provide "contraceptive services and supplies." Moreover, USAID works through the United Nations Population Fund to provide population control assistance in 60 countries. The report says that in America, "policy has shifted from discouraging contraception on the basis of age and marital status to promoting it to all who do not have access to services."

Education

Education is a key ingredient in the transformation to a sustainable society. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development reports that in America, "the national strategy on education is prepared by the Department of Education and includes such programmes as **Goals 2000 and School to Work**" (emphasis added). The National Environmental Education Advisory Council to the Department of Education consists of eleven individuals appointed by the EPA Administrator and includes representatives of women, NGOs, and local authorities (visioning councils). The U.S. State Department reported to the UN that:

"At the primary school level, school curricula have already been reviewed and revised, and at the secondary school level, the revision of school curricula is being undertaken currently to address environment and development as a cross cutting issue."

The State Department also told the UN:

"The U.S. has been involved in several awareness raising programmes and activities aimed at the population at large (Earth Day, industry supported campaigns, Ad Council, Program KAB, Arbor Day, GLOBE Program, Discovery Channel, National Geographic programmes, CNN, ZooQ, As it Happens, and water clean-up programmes."

*Led by the
President's Council
on Sustainable Development,
not by elected representatives
in the Congress,
the federal government is
leading the way toward
transforming society around
Al Gore's central organizing
principle of protecting the
environment — as dictated
by the United Nations.*

While land use and zoning regulations are still considered to be a matter of local control,

"the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) operates a **Land Use Systems Technology Program**, and a **Sustainable Communities Development System**" (emphasis in original). The programs are aimed at "providing overall policy and technical purview of technologies affecting all

dimensions of the ecological, land, natural resources, industrial, and development aspects of urbanization." The report says that "The U.S. played an active role in HABITAT II. USAID's urban programming approaches promote the principles of sustainable human settlements." (See *cologic*, July/August, 1996 for comprehensive reports on HABITAT II).

Agriculture

The transition from free-market agriculture to managed sustainable agriculture is well advanced in America, according to the UN report. Sustainable agriculture is defined in American law (**Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990** - 7 USE 3101) to be:

"an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that will, over the long term, satisfy human food and fiber needs; enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agriculture economy depends; make the most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls; sustain the economic viability of farm operation; and enhance the quality of life for farmers and members of rural communities, and society as a whole."

To achieve sustainable agriculture in America, the U.S. Department of Agriculture works "in concert with the President's Council on Sustainable Development" to implement several programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQUIP), and the Farmland Protection Program, which was created to purchase development rights on up to 137,600 ha of private property. The Conservation Reserve Program has an additional 36 million acres of private property out of production, at least temporarily.

Atmosphere

The USDA also funds the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) to provide information and advocacy to NGOs and the public. Other USDA programs in place to promote sustainable agriculture include the Integrated Farm Management Systems; Integrated Pest Management; Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas; and the Alternative Farming Systems Information Center. The Soil Conservation Service has been transformed into the Natural Resource Conservation Service with agents in virtually every county "to assist landowners with resource planning." A revolving loan fund has been established to assist farmers in becoming sustainable through the development through the development of "non-food, non-feed, non-traditional agricultural products" such as the "manufacture of paper from straw; manufacture of high-quality furniture from low-quality logs; the use of kenaf as a mat for seeding lawn grass making newsprint and fiberboard; and the use of milkweed as a filler for pillows and comforters."

America's efforts to achieve Agenda 21's objectives relating to the atmosphere are rated as "good." The State Department report to the UN boasts that the EPA, the Department of Energy, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are "full-fledged" members of the President's Council on Sustainable Development. "The President's Climate Change Plan includes nearly 50 initiatives..." according to the report. The U.S. supports the "conservation and enhancement" of carbon sinks, which is biomass and forests (bioregions), whether publicly or privately owned. The report boasts that the U.S. spent \$31.9 billion on air pollution abatement in 1993.

Biodiversity

Interestingly, the Convention on Biological Diversity is described as "signed in 1993, but *not yet* ratified." Nevertheless, the report says "Cooperative efforts involving various levels of government and the private sector

are underway to implement the biosphere reserve concept in several regions." The Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere Program (SAMAB), and the International Sonoran Desert Alliance, "a cluster of biosphere reserves in northwestern Mexico and Arizona," are identified as example of implementation of the objectives of Agenda 21. The Nature Conservancy is particularly identified as having "pioneered" biodiversity conservation.

To achieve the objectives of Agenda 21, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, the report identifies several federal initiatives, including: the National Biological Service; Interagency Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources; Interagency Ecosystem Management Task Force, and the Ecosystem Management Initiative.

"Ecosystem management strategies have been adopted by the Department of Interior, Agriculture, Defense, Energy, EPA, and NOAA. In some cases, broad-scale organizational frameworks are being implemented. For example, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the Department of Interior has defined approximately 50 ecosystem units across the country as a basis for future planning related to sustainable management...."

The report says that USAID provides funding to the Biodiversity Conservation Network, which coordinates NGOs and "private sector partners," as well as to the Indonesia Biodiversity Foundation, the Mexican Conservation Fund, and a \$3 million grant to Conservation International.

Forestry

"Forest legislation has recently been revised to help combat deforestation envisaged under chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and includes **The Forest Stewardship Act of 1990**; the **Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1990**; **America the Beautiful (1990)**; and the **National Indian Forest Resources and Management Act**," according to the State Department report to the UN. The President's Forest Plan adopted for the Pacific Northwest region is described as "the best example of policy following the UNCED [Agenda 21] forest principles."

The report says that the "American Forest and Paper Association, which represents 95% of the industrial forest land in the U.S., approved a set of **Sustainable Forestry Principles and Guidelines**. With the help of NGOs which continue "to draw attention to disparities between sustainable goals and current practices," and plans developed at the state level, "resource plans will ultimately bring millions of hectares of nonindustrial private forest lands under stewardship management."

Conclusion

While by no means complete, this summary of the United States' report to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development should put to rest any doubt that the Clinton/Gore Administration is, in fact, deliberately implementing Agenda 21 in America. Where laws have been revised, Congress has not been told that the purpose of the revision is to comply with the mandates of Agenda 21. Where policies can be implemented administratively, Congress is not even consulted. At the state and local level, elected officials are deliberately by-passed until local support can be generated by a "stakeholders" council, led by NGO professionals, funded by the federal government or by foundations in "partnership" with the federal government.

Agenda 21 embraces virtually every aspect of human life; it is being implemented aggressively in the United States. Congress has never examined the totality of the Agenda. Instead, Congress is fed only bits and pieces in the context of "protecting the environment." The ultimate objective of Agenda 21 is to establish "international norms" of personal behavior that are dictated by a handful of the world's enlightened elite who believe they know best how people ought to live. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development is not the result of a treaty ratified by the Senate. America participates in the UN organization by Executive Decree. Through the

Clinton/Gore Administration, America is actually driving the agenda globally, and making it possible for the UN to dictate, not only in America, but around the world, how all people must live.

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