



Strategic Guideline on

Environment & Development

in Austrian Development Policy

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Federal Ministry for

European and International Affairs

Imprint

Strategic Guideline on Environment & Development
in Austrian Development Policy

Presented to the Council of Ministers on 8 September 2009 for approval.

Written and published by

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Vienna, September 2009

Available from:

Austrian Development Agency (ADA),
the operational unit of the Austrian Development Cooperation
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Picture on cover: © ADC/Miguel Dieterich

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People in poor regions of the world deserve a real chance to improve their standards of living. They need better access to energy and raw materials. At the same time, they are particularly dependent on nature and its resources for their livelihood. Climate change adds to their problems.

This is why it is important to find ways to minimise environmental pollution and make economical use of raw materials. It is also essential for developing countries and industrialised nations like Austria to join forces and work together in the best way to find comprehensive and sustainable solutions.

Environmental protection and development must complement and support each other. Poverty reduction and sustainable development can only succeed when we take consistent account of environmental aspects. The economic, social and cultural needs of people must be brought into line with ecological requirements. Particularly important is supporting developing countries in their necessary adaptation to the impacts of global climate change.

The purpose of the present strategic guideline is to address these aspects. Jointly drafted by the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and the Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), it is intended to provide a frame of reference for all actors engaged in environment and development. Everybody needs to contribute their knowledge and experience to preserving the environment, while actively promoting sustainable social and economic development.

Dr Michael Spindelegger

Federal Minister for European and International Affairs



The Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development marks a major milestone in the Austrian development policy and points the way forward in our efforts to master new challenges on a global scale. Preserving the environment and taking the necessary measures are of enormous importance and impinge on all spheres of life today. The strategies for ecological and sustainable practice in all the diverse operational fields must, however, be effectively cross-linked to enhance the benefits. This is why the guideline addresses the key interplay of the quality of human life with the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources and genetic diversity, as well as the contribution agriculture can make – particularly organic farming – to global development and food security.

Another priority is the implementation of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, to which the international community has committed itself. Only when each state has the equal opportunity to implement these agreements will we have the best prospects of meeting global environmental challenges with purposive action.

The strategic guideline sets a clear example for how overall policy coherence can be brought to bear on everyday cooperation. It can serve as a prototype for future whole-of-government activities.

Of prime importance is to ensure that its implementation is not confined to activities in development cooperation alone. It sets far-reaching strategic goals that need to be accounted for and advocated in policy interventions throughout government.

DI Niki Berlakovich

Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management



Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
AGES	Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations
FMAFEWM	Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
FMEFY	Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth
FMEIA	Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs
FMF	Federal Ministry of Finance
FMSR	Federal Ministry of Science and Research
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GDN	Green Diplomacy Network
GMO	Genetically modified organisms
ICPDR	International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
IWRM	Integrated water resources management
JPOI	Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
LDCs	Least developed countries
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
MDG(s)	Millennium Development Goal(s)
NAPA	National adaptation plan of action
NCB	National Commission on Biodiversity
NEAP	National environmental action plan
NGO	Non-governmental organisation

NSSD	National strategy for sustainable development
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ÖRNE	Austrian Council for Sustainable Development
PEP	Poverty Environment Partnership
PIC	Prior informed consent
POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
PRSP(s)	Poverty reduction strategy paper(s)
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SEA	Strategic environmental assessment
SLA	Sustainable livelihood approach
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
WHO	World Health Organisation
WRI	World Resources Institute

1. Summary

The state of the environment and natural resources have deteriorated continuously over recent decades. Climate change exacerbates this. Worst affected are the poorest developing countries in the tropics and subtropics. This is why incorporating the preservation of the environment and the protection of natural resources as the basis for sustainable development – also provided for in Austrian legislation – is one of the most important tasks of development cooperation. The present strategic guideline reaffirms this and aims to provide guidance to all public Austrian actors engaged in environment and development cooperation.

Challenges for development cooperation

People in developing countries are particularly dependent on natural resources. Desertification, deforestation and the loss of biodiversity have direct effects on food security and income. Insecure land rights, lack of access to environmental information and the impacts of ecological disasters pose a grave threat to their survival. Laws are not implemented properly; capacities in ministries, regions, municipalities and institutions are weak. Not least, unsustainable production methods and consumer habits in the industrialised countries have worked to the detriment of the developing countries, raising pressure on natural resources. All countries therefore bear responsibility for sustainable development on our planet.

Principles of the environmental policy in Austrian Development Cooperation

Austrian Development Cooperation is committed to the UN environmental conventions, EU policy principles and to the OECD Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. It attaches special value to acting in partnership, considering the cultural and social setting of cooperation measures and to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

In addition it seeks to do the following:

- Harnessing synergies between environmental protection and poverty reduction
- Preventing adverse and maximising beneficial environmental impacts
- Adopting integrated, multisectoral approaches, wherever possible
- Promoting local ownership and management of natural resources
- Advocating the integration of environmental protection in national development plans
- Helping to raise awareness and develop capacity in environmental protection
- Promoting a holistic approach to environmental goods and equitable sharing of the benefits of environmental protection
- Engaging in international cooperation and contributing to implementing environmental conventions
- Drawing on experience and know-how in Austrian society

Thematic operational fields and aims

Based on the challenges, principles and the strategic, geographical and thematic concentration of Austrian Development Cooperation, Austria defines its priority operational fields and aims at the interfaces between environmental and development policy as follows:

Sustainable natural resource management, combating desertification and preserving biodiversity

- Propagating ecologically appropriate, diversified agriculture and promoting organic farming
- Advocating precaution in the use of genetically modified organisms worldwide
- Contributing to securing land and use rights and to sustainable long-term land-use planning
- Securing protected areas and promoting innovative incentives for resource conservation
- Supporting sustainable forest and timber management

Sustainable chemicals and waste management

- Supporting safe handling, trade and disposal of chemicals
- Raising awareness in politics and society
- Contributing to cleaner production in agriculture, trade and industry
- Supporting sustainable waste management

Climate protection

- Contributing to improved energy efficiency and disseminating renewable energy
- Reducing emissions from land use, land use changes and forest management
- Providing assistance in adapting to the impacts of climate change
- Helping to improve the basis for informed planning, institutional frameworks and capacities

Water and sanitation

- Strengthening an integrated approach in water resource management
- Contributing to improving water quality
- Contributing to improving water use efficiency
- Promoting sustainable wastewater management and sanitation

Implementation strategy and intervention points

The implementation of the principles and aims defined in the guideline places emphasis on a strategy of incorporating environmental protection and sustainable natural resource management in development cooperation at the different levels.

The core area for implementation is the close bilateral cooperation with partner countries. The intention is to foster an appreciation of the connections between environment and poverty, cooperate with other like-minded donors and help incorporate environmental protection, adaptation to climate change and disaster risk preparedness in national policies, poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and sectoral programmes. At local level, the prime concerns are promoting decentralisation and accounting for environmental goals and measures in local development plans, development funds and projects. Equally important are strengthening local civic organisations and ensuring the broad participation of the population, particularly women and indigenous peoples, so that socially important environmental concerns are effectively included in local development.

Multilateral cooperation also offers valuable intervention points for implementation. The same holds for partnerships with organisations of civil society and the private sector. Equitable and sustainable development at global level can be only achieved if all social forces cooperate.

In humanitarian aid, care is taken to ensure that relief measures do not impair vital natural resources, that environmental protection helps alleviate humanitarian crises and effective investments are made in disaster prevention. At home, global environmental education in particular and development education in general can give a social impetus to help implement the aims of Austrian development and environment policy.

So that all these approaches and options for action can take full effect, investments need to be made to develop sufficient capacities in Austrian institutions responsible for implementing the strategic goals.

Monitoring and evaluation of strategic guideline implementation

The implementation of the Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development will be reviewed three years after it comes into effect. An informal platform will be set up with access for all Austrian stakeholders. Its task is to continuously monitor guideline implementation and define the relevant processes.

Coherence

Many Austrian actors have collaborated in drafting the strategic guideline: the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (FMAFEWM), the Federal Ministry for European and International affairs (FMEIA), the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMF), other relevant ministries and subordinate agencies and actors from civil society, the private sector and research. They all want to contribute to implementation together. With a view to coherence and coordination, efforts will be made to improve networking among Austrian environmental activities in developing countries as well. At international level, Austria is seeking to step up cooperation with other donors under the auspices of the EU and OECD.

2. Introduction

The present strategic guideline sets out the principles and operational fields that Austria intends to pursue in environment and development. It is not confined to Austrian Development Cooperation but is also aimed at including all relevant Austrian actors with a view to policy coherence, as stipulated in the Federal Development Cooperation Act (2003). The guideline identifies interfaces between environmental protection, development and poverty, sets out principles and operational fields and outlines implementation strategies and intervention points. In response to OECD's recommendation to Austria on improving policy coherence¹ and the major role of environmental protection in development cooperation, the intention is to enhance the coherence of activities at local, national and international level.

1) OECD/DAC: Peer Review of Austria 2009, Part 2, Draft Secretariat Report, p. 22: "(Austria) could deepen commitment to and move forward on PCD (Policy Coherence for Development) by publishing clearly prioritised and time-bound action agendas, clarifying mandates and responsibilities for policy coherence for development, and building a system for analysis, monitoring and reporting,..."

2) Biological diversity or biodiversity denotes the variability among living organisms from all sources, including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (cf. United Nations [1992]. Convention on Biological Diversity. Rio de Janeiro, p. 146. <http://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-un-en.pdf>)

The guideline was drafted under the leadership of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs together with the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and agreed upon with other relevant ministries and civil-society actors in detailed consultations. It is conceived as a whole-of-government strategy to enable all actors engaged in environment and development cooperation to find their bearings in this sector.

In economic, socio-cultural and spiritual terms, natural resources and an intact environment are key pillars for sustainable development. These essentials of life have, however, deteriorated continuously over recent decades. The loss of natural habitats through settlement, industrial development, the overexploitation of soils, vegetation and waters or due to waste disposal and pollution problems has increased greatly, particularly since the 1960s. Food security has become critical in some regions due to soil degradation. Conflicts over resources are on the rise. The dramatic repercussions of climate change pose a huge threat to human survival and security. Worst affected by this are the poorest developing countries in the tropics and subtropics. With climate change due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere or the loss of biodiversity², environmental problems have long reached global proportions and can only be mitigated if all nations work together.

Cooperation to avert further deterioration worldwide is now more urgent than ever. This is why incorporating the preservation of the environment and the protection of natural resources for sustainable development is one of the most important tasks of development cooperation and greater efforts are needed.

Facts and figures on environment

The global environment currently sustains 41.9 million square kilometres of forest, 35.3 million square kilometres of cultivated land, approximately 14 million species of flora and fauna and 6.46 billion people.

The state of the environment continues to deteriorate and this trend will worsen without additional protection measures in future.

A third of the world's land surface (approx. 4 billion hectares) is impaired by desertification, already directly affecting 250 million people today. 24 billion tonnes of topsoil erode every year and ten per cent of arid regions are degraded worldwide.

14 million hectares of tropical forests are destroyed every year, particularly in developing countries.

Three-quarters of commercial fish populations are overexploited worldwide. Ten to thirty per cent of the mammal, bird and amphibian species is threatened with extinction.

Forecasts predict that the global temperature will rise in the course of the 21st century by between 1.4 and 5.8 degrees centigrade, with grave effects on water cycles, farming and biodiversity and a heightened danger of natural disasters and the spread of disease.

Three million people die as a result of air pollution every year (primarily in buildings).

A billion people have no access to safe drinking water and two billion are short of water. Five million people, particularly children, die as a result of contaminated water every year.

The estimated 25 million environmental refugees in 1999 will have doubled by 2010 and risen to 150 to 200 million by 2050. The rising sea-level is likely to displace another ten million people in the next ten years.

Source: European Commission (2007): Environmental Integration Handbook for EC Development Cooperation, p. 17

The Austrian Federal Development Cooperation Act (2003) takes account of the connection between an intact environment and development and defines preserving the environment and protecting natural resources that form the basis for sustainable development as one of three primary objectives of Austrian Development Cooperation.³ The responsible use of natural resources is a fundamental principle in every activity and project financed by Austria. About one-third of bilateral programme and project funds is devoted to measures that attach priority or include environmental protection goals. Besides this, the efforts towards Austrian and international policy coherence are taking on an increasingly important role. As part of Austrian responsibility, the Austrian Sustainability Strategy defines goals in environment and development⁴ and a joint process to improve policy coherence was launched at OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) level in 2006 during the meeting of the development and environment ministers.⁵

3) Cf. Austrian Federal Development Cooperation Act (2003)

4) Cf. Austrian Strategy for Sustainable Development (2002)

5) At the meeting of the development and environment ministers, the Framework for Common Action Around Shared Goals was adopted in 2006 and further cooperation agreed on several issues (cf. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/44/27/36427017.pdf>)

3. Definition and demarcation of terms

In this strategic guideline, environment is not seen as a sector on its own but as part and parcel of sustainable development. Only a balanced strategy that comprises all aspects of sustainable development can succeed in the long run. Austria therefore adopts a so-called mainstreaming strategy for the consistent and systematic integration and promotion of environment as an issue in development cooperation at all levels.

The European Commission (EC) understands **mainstreaming** as “the process of systematically integrating a selected value/idea/theme into all domains of the EC development co-operation to promote specific (transposing ideas, influencing policies) as well as general development outcomes.”

Environment is considered to include those bio-physical resources and conditions on which human lives and activities depend, and which in turn they influence. Environment does not just perform ecological, economic and social functions; it is of intrinsic value in cultural, ethical and spiritual terms.

Mainstreaming entails an iterative process of change in the culture and practice of institutions. **Environmental mainstreaming** in development cooperation means the integration of environmental tools and approaches in the cycle of operations in order to bring about a better harmonisation of environmental, economic and social concerns.

Source: European Commission (2007): Environmental Integration Handbook for EC Development Cooperation, p. 16 adapted

The complexity of the international environmental architecture attests to the global dimension of environmental problems and the will of the international community to address these challenges together. The Brundtland Report of 1987, which coined the term ‘sustainable development’, prepared the way for a number of international summits and agreements in the 1990s.

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The demand that this development be ‘enduring’ applies to every nation and all humans.”

Source: Austrian Strategy for Sustainable Development (2002), p. 2

At the Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, the international community pledged to promote sustainable development and took a number of steps towards an international environmental regime. Besides the adoption of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, the three major, legally binding global environmental conventions on biodiversity, climate change and combating desertification were also negotiated, prepared or adopted. In addition to the general commitments of all signatories, each of these conventions along with a number of other international environmental accords also contains explicit demands on the industrialised countries to support developing countries in meeting their commitments. They therefore set an important binding framework for interventions in development cooperation.⁶

Ten years after Rio (2002) the Plan of Implementation at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg reinforced the principles of sustainable development and specified them in more detail. The Millennium Declaration of the United Nations already adopted in 2000 also confirmed international commitments to poverty reduction and support for sustainable development.

A number of strategies and plans have also been drawn up at European Union and OECD/DAC level that play a major role for positioning environment in the overall context of development cooperation. These include the European Union's European Consensus on Development and a number of action plans, on biodiversity or climate change, for example, or various guidelines and best practice publications by OECD.

⁶) A list of the major international environmental conventions as well as their objectives and relevance for development cooperation is appended in Annex 2.

4. Challenges for development cooperation

Poverty reduction and sustainable development can only succeed by consistently mainstreaming environmental issues. It is no coincidence that Millennium Development Goal (MDG)⁷ is concerned with ensuring environmental sustainability. The attainment of the other MDGs, however, also depends heavily on an intact environment and natural resource base. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005), for example, concludes that the ongoing degradation of ecosystems makes the achievement of the MDGs increasingly improbable by 2015. The following table summarises the major connections between environment and MDGs:

Correlations between environment and the Millennium Development Goals

1. Halve extreme poverty and hunger

The livelihood and food security of two billion people depends directly on the availability of ecosystem services and goods. The sustainable management of natural resources is often essential for economic development.

2. Achieve universal primary education

Children, especially girls, are often responsible for obtaining water and firewood at the expense of school attendance. Better access to sanitation in schools will increase the number of girls who enrol.

3. Promote gender equality and empowerment of women

Poor women in particular suffer from household air pollution, the burden of fetching water and firewood and inequitable access to land and natural resources.

4. Reduce child mortality

Diarrhoea and respiratory complaints are the main causes of death in children under five. The main reasons are contaminated water, lack of sanitation and air pollution.

5. Improve maternal health

Air pollution in buildings and the burden of fetching firewood and water impair women's health.

⁷ The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment initiated by the United Nations is concerned with assessing the impacts of ecosystemic changes on human well-being. More than 1,360 experts collaborated worldwide on this from 2001 to 2005 (cf. United Nations. Homepage of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment: <http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/index.aspx>).

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Up to 20 per cent of diseases worldwide are attributable to environmental factors. Preventive interventions in the environment are a major component of health care.

7. Ensure environmental sustainability

More than half of poor people live in ecologically fragile rural areas. Environmental degradation must be halted to preserve sources of livelihood.

8. Develop a global partnership for development

Many environmental problems, such as climate change or overfishing, are global concerns that can only be dealt with in partnership and international cooperation.

Source: DFID (2006): *DFID's approach to the environment*, p. 5

4.1 Ecosystem services are essential to safeguard livelihoods

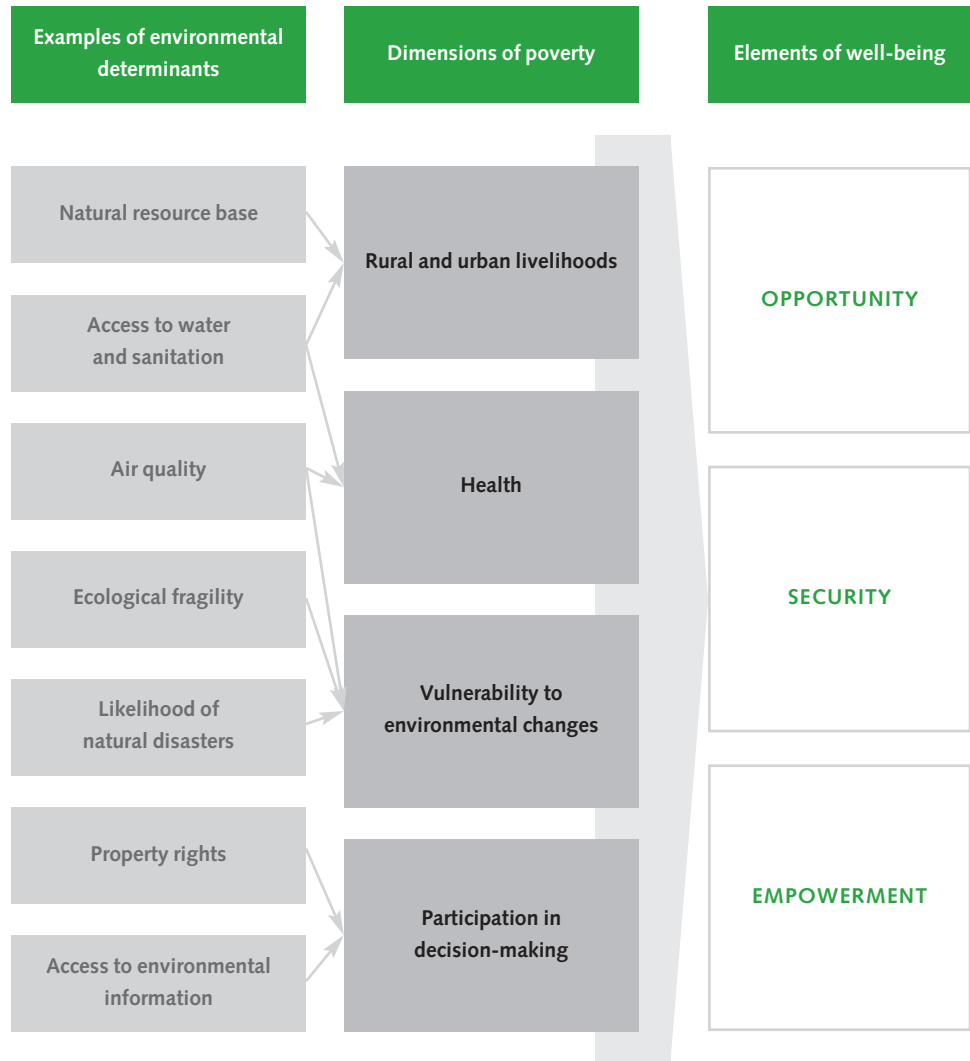
The environment and natural resources provide a number of services that are essential to secure human subsistence and quality of life, the supply of clean water, for example, or the preservation of soil fertility. The intrinsic value of the environment as a spiritual element also plays a major role. These functions are especially important in developing countries. Cultural values and identity have a close bearing on environmental aspects, especially in rural areas. In addition, many people depend directly on ecosystem services as a basis for their subsistence and income. Especially in rural areas, agriculture and forestry are the only source of food security and livelihood. In many cases, there are no alternatives available.

Their heavy dependence makes the poor vulnerable to the adverse impacts of resource destruction and degradation. Desertification, deforestation and the loss of biodiversity have a direct effect on food security, income and livelihoods. More than a billion people today already live in areas impaired by soil erosion and degradation.⁸

Women face particular difficulties. Both men and women consume, use and manage natural resources. The degradation of forests, water resources and land has direct effects on women's workload and available time, especially when division of labour by gender assigns the subsistence activities of household production to them, where they bear responsibility for water, food, fodder and energy. When ecosystem services are degraded, the time poverty or workload of women also increases, mostly at the expense of spare time for education, health and other activities.

8) UNCCD; <http://www.unccd.int>.

The following figure again highlights the connections between environmental factors, aspects of poverty and quality of life components



Source: Irish Aid (2007): *Environmental Policy for Sustainable Development*, p. 15; adapted from World Bank (2001)

4.2 Developing countries depend heavily on income from natural resources

While a large part of the gross domestic product stems from the secondary and tertiary sectors in industrialised countries, in many developing countries it largely consists of income from the primary sector. Exports of non-processed or partly processed natural products play a prime role. In the industrialised countries, only about seven per cent of the labour force works in the primary sector, whereas the average figure is 44 per cent in the developing countries. Individual countries, above all in Sub-Saharan Africa, are well above this ratio. In Burkina Faso, for instance, 92 per cent of the labour force is engaged in the primary sector and 82 per cent in Ethiopia.⁹ The degradation of resources or global environmental challenges therefore have far greater direct impacts on developing countries than on the much more diversified industrialised countries.

⁹ WRI (2005), p. 10; http://pdf.wri.org/wrr05_full_hires.pdf

4.3 Environmental changes affect the poor most

Developing countries and especially poor sections of their populations are particularly vulnerable to environmental risks and ecological disasters. On the one hand, the people often live in already degraded and polluted habitats and environmentally vulnerable areas and on the other, they lack capabilities and strategies to deal with ecological disasters. They have neither the means for preparedness nor for regaining their livelihoods after drought disasters or floods, for example, which often occur where environmental destruction has already impaired the resources and resilience of the ecosystems.

Environmental degradation and lack of access to ecosystem services, such as drinking water or clean air, contribute to the increasing spread of disease. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), up to 20 per cent of illnesses worldwide are due to environmental influences. In a developing country, the risk of falling ill due to environmental factors is ten times higher than in an industrialised nation.¹⁰ Illnesses caused by environmental hazards are still one of the most frequent causes of the high child mortality in many developing countries.¹¹

4.4 Environmental problems and governance issues often go hand in hand

The relationship between environment and poverty is closely connected to governance. Often, poor members of society can only access degraded and unproductive land and resources for their livelihood. Insecure land rights and denial of equal access due to the failure to recognise common rights and ownership contribute to further marginalisation and result in unsustainable use of natural resources. In the absence of legal certainty, no long-term investments are made to maintain soil fertility and to manage the natural resources more sustainably.

Local communities, particularly marginalised groups, such as indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities or women, are often unable to participate in decision making on their resources. They are frequently deprived of access to environmental information and environmental justice as well as to education, training and employment opportunities in the formal sector.

Generally, environmental legislation is relatively well advanced in many developing countries, but it is hardly enforced. Effective mechanisms and institutions are lacking to assure compliance and control. Capacities in ministries, regions, municipalities and institutions are weak.

There has been a marked increase in environmental offences, such as illegal forest clearance, in many countries. Often, such offences are ignored or even encouraged through institutional corruption. The local population, which sees hardly any of the profits, must bear the adverse consequences of environmental destruction.

The international environmentalist movement and active civil society have made an important contribution to the environmental debate, particularly as concerns accountability and raising awareness of the nexus between poverty and environment.

10) PEP (2008), p. 10;
<http://www.povertyenvironment.net/pep/>

11) The World Bank (2008), p. 1;
<http://extop-workflow.worldbank.org/extop/ecommerce/catalog/>

4.5 Environmental issues are security issues

Environmental problems do not stop at national borders. Cross-border pollution of ecosystems or their components, such as water and air, frequently contribute to exacerbating existing tensions and have direct effects on human security.

At international level, increasing attention is being paid to environmental destruction and the overuse and shortage of natural resources as causes of crises and conflicts. The causal chains are complex: Seldom are these factors the sole reason for crises and hostilities, but they tend to aggravate ongoing development crises and poverty. The consequences are social, economic and political unrest, displacement and migration, which make an indirect contribution to fomenting violence.

On the other hand, the sustainable use of natural resources and joint efforts to preserve the environment beyond national and social boundaries can make a constructive contribution to conflict prevention and securing peace, through dialogue and confidence-building measures and cooperation between conflicting parties, for example. The predicted wars over water, for instance, have not broken out so far. On the contrary, various forms of transboundary water cooperation have contributed to stability and peace in latent conflict regions.

4.6 Global dimension of environment

All states bear responsibility for the sustainable development of planet earth. Efforts against climate change or to halt the loss of biodiversity can only succeed at global level. Many resources of global importance, such as the tropical rainforest and other hot spots of biodiversity, are largely located in developing countries. The sustainable protection of these resources is a global issue and calls for global responsibility, while accounting for local and regional conditions.

A causal link is often drawn between environmental destruction and poverty. The fact is, however, that the major part of pollution and resource shortage is caused by wealthier classes of society or by industrialised countries. Unsustainable production methods and habits of consumption in industrialised countries have adverse effects on developing countries and raise pressure on the natural resources of supplier nations, agricultural fuels being a case in point. The industrialised countries are also the main originators of climate change, while developing countries bear the brunt of the impacts.

5. Principles of the environmental policy in Austrian Development Cooperation

Austria's response to these challenges is based on the principles set out in the Federal Development Cooperation Act and the commitments made under the declarations of Rio and Johannesburg as well as other international accords. These include commitments to the precautionary and polluter-pays principle, replacing unsustainable production methods and consumer habits – also at home – or acting in partnership and taking account of the cultural and social setting of cooperation. Special attention is paid to gender equality and the empowerment of women, based on a gender mainstreaming strategy.¹²

Added to this are the principles contained in the OECD Paris Declaration (2005).¹³ These play an essential role for improving aid effectiveness and can provide major intervention points for development geared to environmental protection.¹⁴

The following specific and supplementary principles guide Austria's response to the complex interconnections and challenges of environmental protection in development cooperation.

Harnessing synergies between environmental protection and poverty reduction

Poverty and environmental degradation are often caused by the same institutional, political and social factors. By addressing these common causes, resource conservation can harness considerable synergies for poverty reduction.

Preventing adverse and maximising beneficial environmental impacts

Important here are regional and situational analyses that examine both environmental factors and the possible interplay with the economic and social context. Similarly, impacts of development policy must be reflected within the realm of international environmental policy cooperation.

12) The gender policy document focuses on the core issues of capabilities (health, education), economic opportunities, political participation and personal security. All core areas are relevant for the sustainable use of natural resources and environmental protection (cf. <http://www.entwicklung.at/en/themes/gender.html>).

13) The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness cites five key principles: ownership, harmonisation, partner alignment, management for results, mutual accountability (cf. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/37/39/35023537.pdf>).

14) Cf. OECD/DAC, 2007: Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Implications on Environmental Sustainability, OECD Paris; <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/39/61/38441220.pdf>

Adopting integrated, multisectoral approaches wherever possible

The environment interacts with economic and social factors. This calls for an integral approach that addresses different aspects of a problem at the same time. A good instrument for this is the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA)¹⁵.

Promoting local ownership and management of natural resources

Environmental protection can only succeed if it is actively implemented and supported by the population concerned, especially as local communities can draw on valuable traditional knowledge. This is why the participatory involvement of the population in decision-making and capacity-building for and partnership with efficient local administrations and civil-society organisations are important. Particular emphasis is placed on supporting women in political and social life. They are major custodians of environmental knowledge and key actors when it comes to changes in natural resource management.

Advocating the integration of environmental protection in national development plans

The most effective way to secure environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources in the long run is to embody these in national policies and programmes, above all in poverty reduction strategies and regional and local development plans. This ensures that environmental issues are accorded the highest policy status and links them more closely with economic and social development priorities.

Helping to raise awareness and build capacity in environmental protection

Ensuring that development measures can make an effective contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources requires an adequate level of awareness, knowledge and access to information as well as adequate capacities in policymaking, administration and civil society.

Promoting a holistic approach to environmental goods and equitable sharing of benefits of environmental protection

Rehabilitation measures are frequently more costly than sustainable resource conservation. However, effective precaution fails in part because policymakers, businessmen and society seldom grasp the full social and monetary value of environmental goods and services. An adequate level of awareness and enabling social and economic frameworks are often lacking to ensure the equitable participation of the local population in the benefits of natural resource protection and conservation, for example.

¹⁵ The sustainable livelihood approach places the poor and their priorities and strategies at the centre of development planning. SLA concentrates on the main factors related to the basic needs of poor people and analyses the interconnections among them (cf. International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD]; <http://www.ifad.org/sla/index.htm> and ELDIS: <http://www.eldis.org/index.cfm?objectid=07D709380664-EE3F-F57D2FF787FF2F9A>)

Engaging in international cooperation and contributing to implementing environmental conventions

The global scale of the environmental challenge calls for worldwide cooperation. The many international and regional environmental agreements, declarations and commitments attest to this precept, which calls for a systematic approach in the fight against environmental degradation. It also demands, however, that all countries can participate and take an equal part in shaping the global cooperation. By means of these multilateral agreements, Austria disposes over an entry-point to support this global system, as is required through them. Alignment with and/or support for implementing the agreements consequently make up a firm component of development cooperation strategies, programmes and projects.

Drawing on experience and know-how in Austrian society

Directly or indirectly, many Austrian non-governmental organisations, research institutions and companies are actively engaged in development policy at national and international level or support sustainable development in developing countries through their activities. They can draw on excellent know-how, experience and resources to make a major contribution to effective Austrian Development Cooperation. This potential needs to be harnessed and enhanced.

6. Thematic operational fields and aims

In comparison with other OECD countries, Austria's share in worldwide official development assistance is relatively low, but it has an international reputation for a high standard of competence and comparative advantages when it comes to certain issues and sectors. Environmental protection is one of these competencies.

A particularly good way to ensure the visibility and maximum effect of Austrian engagement has proved to be strategic clustering, especially as part of bilateral cooperation, but, in terms of coherence, also in other areas of development policy. Efforts are concentrated geographically on a few partner countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and South Eastern Europe. The thematic focus is placed on the sectors water and sanitation, rural development, energy, private-sector development, education and science as well as governance.¹⁶

The challenges, operational principles and the geographical and thematic concentration cited in the above chapters define those aims that Austria pursues at the interfaces between environmental and development policy. Owing to the interdependence between specific problems and economic and social factors, it is in part difficult to draw clear dividing lines. The general thematic operational fields are thus classified as follows.

6.1 Sustainable natural resource management, combating desertification and preserving biodiversity

There are many different reasons for the ongoing degradation of vital natural resources. The development and effective implementation of national land use and forest laws and long-term regional development and land-use plans is needed, accounting for the interests of the poorest parts of the population. Of key importance here are sustainable resource management, combating desertification and preserving biodiversity, also in connection with climate change. On the one hand, this can reduce agro-climatic risks, such as droughts or floods, while providing crucial support for coping with the already tangible impacts of climate change. On the other, land-use changes and deforestation, for example, can degrade vegetation and soil, contributing considerably to climate change through the release of greenhouse gases.

¹⁶) FMEIA (2008): Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy 2008–2010, Update 2008

Austria pursues the following aims in this operational field:

Propagating ecologically appropriate, diversified agriculture and promoting organic farming

National development strategies often promote the agro-industrial sector with a tendency toward market-oriented, less diversified agriculture and increased use of fertilizers and pesticides. This can worsen soil degradation and biodiversity loss. Farmers become more dependent on external factors, while losing control over their means of production. To effectively improve the food and income security of poor smallholders in particular, there is a need to disseminate ecologically appropriate, diversified agriculture and agroforestry land-use systems and promote organic farming in particular. Organic farming and agroforestry afford large scope for climate protection and adaptation to climate change impacts. Moreover, they improve the water retention capacity of soil through increased humus content and reduce pollution from agricultural chemicals.

Advocating precaution in the use of genetically modified organisms worldwide

The use of genetically modified organisms (GMO) can endanger the preservation of natural habitats and local, traditional seed varieties. Their use is also in dispute because of the risks to human health and socio-economic impacts on smallholder farmers. Regardless of whether national policies support the application of GMO, there is a considerable need in developing countries to monitor and trace their trade and use and conduct thorough risk assessments.

Contributing to securing land and use rights and to sustainable, long-term, land-use planning

Among others, insecure land and use rights are detrimental to politically and socially underprivileged groups, ethnic minorities, populations in peripheral regions and indigenous peoples, whose way of life and traditional knowledge protect the environment. They deserve special support.

Securing protected areas and promoting innovative incentives for resource conservation

The participation of the local population is particularly important here. They must support planning and implementation. They must also gain adequate economic benefit from resource conservation. Compensation schemes for internalising external environmental costs or in-situ and ex-situ conservation¹⁷ of genetic resources can provide attractive intervention points for this.

Supporting sustainable forest and timber management

A major responsibility of environment and economic policy is to take measures to halt the depletion and degradation of forests, which have escalated due to increased international trade, through consistent protection, afforestation and sustainable use. Intersectoral cooperation needs to be improved. Promoting non-timber forest products¹⁸ can also make an important contribution. Interesting incentives for sustainable forest management have also emerged recently through the carbon market.¹⁹

17) Ex-situ conservation denotes the preservation of biodiversity components outside their natural habitats. In-situ conservation, in contrast, pertains to preservation in their natural surroundings (cf. United Nations [1992]. Convention on Biological Diversity. Rio de Janeiro, p. 146f; <http://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-un-en.pdf>).

18) Non-timber forest products for example, include fruits, mushrooms, plants, honey or wild fauna as sources of food or leaf fibres, barks and roots used as products or inputs for crafts, cosmetics or medicine.

19) The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions – by means of the sustainable use or conservation of forests, for example – can be traded in the form of certificates like shares. This trade is called the carbon market.

The anticipated operationalization of the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation mechanism (REDD) in the set of instruments of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change will provide additional impetus. Beyond carbon storage, the environmentally and socially relevant aspects of forests and the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples should not be left out of account in this process, however.

6.2 Sustainable chemicals and waste management

Chemicals are used in many walks of life and economic sectors. On the one hand, they contribute to economic growth and employment as well as to poverty reduction, but on the other their use can cause serious local health and environmental problems. As the depletion of the ozone layer through chlorofluorcarbon gases shows, the adverse results of using chemicals can also have international repercussions.

There is often too little appreciation of and attention to the long-term consequences of toxic substances and waste. Inefficiency, neglect of environmentally less harmful alternatives and inadequate protection measures by users primarily affect the poorest population in developing countries. Children in particular are frequently exposed to the hazards of toxic substances. Balanced measures have to be taken that contribute to raising awareness, cater for economic opportunities and minimise risks to human health and the environment.

The prime aims for Austria are as follows:

Supporting the safe handling, trade and disposal of chemicals

A number of international agreements aim at making provisions for the safer handling of chemicals in production and distribution, the control of (illegal) trade and disposal, bans on particularly hazardous substances and the promotion of substitution. Capable institutions are needed in the individual countries to ensure that the goals of these agreements can also be implemented efficiently. The developing countries need considerable support here.

Raising political and social awareness

Better information management is needed of the potential hazards of toxic chemicals, comprising the whole life cycle up to disposal, including substitution options, and addressing both policymakers and manufacturers, dealers and users. One contribution in this direction is to support international efforts for harmonised and easily identifiable pictographs on hazards and risks, in keeping with different cultures.

Contributing to cleaner production in agriculture, trade and industry

Doing without pesticides and fertilizer, hazardous paints and varnishes or their more efficient use contributes to protecting vital natural resources and health, but it also saves on costs. The improved quality of the products or their compliance with ecological and social standards can also afford interesting marketing opportunities. To be able to make greater use of this potential, the relevant know-how and technology transfer needs promoting. Support must also be given to reforming the political and economic framework to provide enough scope and set tangible incentives.

20) REDD: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

Supporting sustainable waste management

Most developing countries lack the requisite facilities and capacities for the proper collection, disposal and use of solid waste. Waste dumps endanger the health of the people, particularly in slum and periurban areas and can cause groundwater pollution. Landfill methane is also a very harmful greenhouse gas. Sustainable waste management therefore also contributes to climate protection.

6.3 Climate protection

Climate protection and development cooperation are closely linked. This linkage poses many different challenges but also offers scope for synergies. This is particularly evident in the energy sector. About 2.4 billion people in developing and transition countries currently lack access to modern energy services.²¹ The urgent need for economic development will increase the global emission of greenhouse gases, if it continues to rely for the most part on fossil fuels.

The impacts of climate change pose developing countries with enormous challenges, however. Large investments need to be made in reducing flood risks, in erosion control, water supply security or efficient agricultural irrigation. Particularly the least developed countries and the small island states depend on international support to cope with these challenges.

Ideally, national development strategies should chart a course that avoids greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible and adopt longer-term adjustment measures to climate variability and change. Besides the necessary political awareness, enabling institutional frameworks and capacities are also lacking.

The individual aims in climate protection are:

Contributing to improved energy efficiency and dissemination of renewable energy

Energy efficiency and appropriate renewable energy approaches make an important contribution to emissions reduction. Sustainable solutions are needed to guarantee reliable and affordable access to energy services in developing countries. It is vital to replace the consumption of fossil energy and unsustainable biomass, while assuring food and income security for the population. A critical appraisal must be made of agro-fuels from this standpoint.

Reducing emissions from land use, land-use changes and forest management

Particularly important in this connection are measures against the further loss and for the sustainable use of tropical rainforests. Of global greenhouse gas emissions, 17.4 per cent stem from the destruction of these forests.²² Other significant emitters of greenhouse gases are industrialised livestock farming and the use of fertilizer in farming, which cause methane or laughing gas emissions. Promoting organic farming and agroforestry plays a major role in the fight against the loss of biodiversity or soil fertility, but it also goes hand in hand with climate protection.

21) ADC (2005): Policy document - Energy for sustainable development
22) IPCC AR4 (2007)

Providing assistance in adapting to the impacts of climate change

The impacts of climate change jeopardise the security of poor populations in rural areas and coastal conurbations in particular, which are exposed to difficult agro-ecological conditions, environmental risks and pronounced climatic fluctuations in any case. Support is most urgently needed here. Where adopted, national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs)²³ provide a good basis for this. There is a special need to strengthen participatory initiatives to help local communities build up their resilience against climatic risks. It is essential to take account of the diverse impacts on men and women and their different roles in implementing measures.

Helping to improve the basis for informed planning, institutional frameworks and capacities

Specific analyses of potential and requirements are decisive for identifying effective climate protection and adaptation measures. However, their realization often fails due to missing or unreliable basic information. Other obstacles are know-how and capacity bottlenecks in the institutions involved. All this also seriously hampers the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation in national development planning in developing countries.

6.4 Water and sanitation

Water is a scarce good in many developing countries and regions, putting heavy pressure on water resources. The demand for water is increasing partly due to rapid world population growth and climate change, particularly in agriculture. This leads to the degradation of aquifers, salination and drought. Lack of sanitation also impairs water quality.

Many problems and conflicts in the water and sanitation sector are caused by neglect of the ecological, economic, political and social parameters and their interconnections. All the diverse demands on water availability and quality – biodiversity, agriculture, drinking water supply, industry and power production, highlands and lowlands or upstream and downstream stretches of rivers – clash with each other. Sustainable use calls for a holistic approach that does not define water as a single local resource. These interconnections are also evident in the role of sustainable forest management in safeguarding drinking water resources.

The following aims conform to the Austrian Development Cooperation policy document, Water Supply, Sanitation, Water Resources:

Strengthening an integrated approach in water resource management

Integrated water resource management is conceived as an appropriate instrument to help account for diverse needs and frameworks and avoid conflicts. It is incorporated in many national development strategies. However, the political will, the institutional facilities and know-how as well as the requisite capacities are often lacking for successful implementation.

Contributing to improved water quality

Besides water supply coverage, water quality is a decisive factor in environment and development due to the many health risks and the threat to biodiversity. There is particular scope for synergies in measures for improving sanitation and waste management and promoting sustainable farming to prevent the pollution of waters.

23) In NAPAs (National Adaptation Programmes of Action), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) define their priority activities for adapting to climate change (cf. United Nations. Homepage of the Framework Convention on Climate Change: http://unfccc.int/cooperation_support/least_developed_countries_portal/ldc_work_programme_and_napa/items/4722.php)

Contributing to improved water use efficiency

Particularly in towns and periurban regions, the supply systems often incur large water losses. This has to do with deficits in operation and maintenance as well as institutional shortcomings. Water consumption by trade and industry can be reduced by rationalising production processes with cost savings. Investments in modern, efficient irrigation systems and in farming practices that make efficient use of or save on water help curb the enormous demand in agriculture.

Promoting sustainable wastewater management and sanitation

Besides institutional deficiencies, the high costs of installing and maintaining infrastructure are a major reason for the lack of or inefficient treatment of wastewater. In rural areas, the most elementary basic sanitary facilities are missing. Improving sanitation through sewage purification is not always the right approach. Decisive here is the specific socio-economic and socio-cultural setting. Simple, improved latrines or ecological circulation systems (e.g. dry toilets) are more suitable than costly sewerage and wastewater treatment systems in many cases.

7. Implementation strategy and intervention points

Austrian Development Cooperation implements the principles and aims specified in this guideline in partnership with environmental and development policy actors in Austria and with national government bodies in partner countries, multilateral and international agencies and civil-society organisations. All the implementation efforts with the different partners share one thing in common, though. They are primarily based on a strategy of mainstreaming environmental protection and sustainable natural resource management in development cooperation at different levels.

Outlined below are the different strategic intervention points for implementing these goals. The measures of the different actors for the individual operational fields and aims are listed in the matrix appended to the guideline.

7.1 Bilateral cooperation

In close bilateral cooperation with partner countries, there are many ways to advance the mainstreaming of environmental concerns and sustainable development. Progressive harmonisation among donors requires a careful analysis of their competencies and comparative advantages, whereas the central task is the arrangement of a matching division of labour. Tangible options are available to Austria both in policy dialogue in the partner countries and in direct budget support and sector programme assistance as well as in financing local development projects.

Policy dialogue

To enhance the effectiveness of development cooperation, it must be geared more towards national policies, programmes and plans and support their implementation through national capacities.²⁴ Environmental protection is seldom accorded top priority in partner countries. Through interaction with government partners and in cooperation with other like-minded donors, Austria can, however, contribute, to raising political awareness of environmental concerns.

24) This takes account of two main principles of the Paris Declaration: ownership and alignment.

It can do the following:

- Foster an appreciation of the fundamental connections between environment and poverty
- Advocate the integration of those objectives in national development policies and poverty reduction strategies established in the UN environmental conventions, national environment action plans (NEAP), national strategies for sustainable development (NSSD) or National Adaptation Programmes of Action in response to climate change
- Promote the development of institutional frameworks for improved environmental protection, particularly in connection with land rights issues and environmental legislation,
- Promote as broad a participation as possible in policy dialogue by major non-governmental actors in science and research as well as civil-society organisations, particularly environmental organisations, women's rights groups or indigenous organisations

Budget support and programme finance

Programme-based approaches and budget support are gaining importance as instruments of Austrian Development Cooperation.²⁵ In both instruments, the extent to which environmental issues are taken into account in national development strategies, budgeting and in specific thematic programmes is decisive about how well those issues are addressed in implementation. In budget support or programme finance agreements, environmental sustainability and the promotion of environmental protection should always be considered.

Possible intervention points include:

- Cooperate with other donors and government partners in analysing environment-poverty linkages and their impact on national programmes and plans
- Promote environmental sustainability, also with a view to climate change impacts, in national policies, PRSPs and sectoral programmes and the related monitoring and evaluation matrices
- Actively encourage specific environmental goals and indicators in impact assessments and evaluations of poverty reduction strategies and in sectoral programmes and related support agreements
- Support capacity development in environmental institutions and sectoral ministries, particularly at local/regional level
- Promote strategic environmental assessments (SEA) and contribute to the necessary capacity development together with other donors
- Provide support for setting up transparent and efficient finance management systems
- Advocate environmentally sensitive budget classification
- Encourage the implementation of environmental fiscal reforms in cooperation with other donors

Supporting local development

Soil erosion or water pollution can have highly adverse effects on municipal or district development. These kinds of local problems can, however, be overlooked among the many development goals at national level. By taking a local approach, practical environmental problems can be given priority and addressed, in connection with the implementation of district development plans, local development funds and project support, for example.

25) The Austrian Action Plan on Aid Effectiveness 2006–2010/11 provides for allocating at least 10 to 15 per cent of the operational ADC budget to budget support as of 2008.

Ways of doing this include:

- Conduct local environment-poverty studies and apply planning methods, such as the sustainable livelihood approach, which focuses on the local actors and their lifestyle as a whole
- Support decentralisation and integrate environmental aspects into local development plans and finance instruments, inter alia by defining environmental indicators
- Strengthen local civil society organisations, their capacities, political representation and ensure the broad participation of the population, particularly women and indigenous peoples, so that socially important environmental concerns are effectively included in local development plans
- Develop capacities in municipal, district and provincial authorities to cope with environmental protection issues, amongst others as a way of ensuring that environment is also institutionalised as an issue in other sectors of local administration, in infrastructure or in health and education, for example
- Improve access for all actors to information on the local environmental situation and the relevant legislation on environmental protection and resource use
- Specifically support research and innovative pilot projects with scope for replication and widespread application that pursue new avenues for the sustainable management of local environmental and development challenges

7.2 Multilateral cooperation

A useful intervention point for implementing and supporting strategic goals is active involvement in international platforms and conventions and their policy design and alignment. This also helps to improve coherence at international and hence regional and national level and fosters the awareness of the development dimension of environment policy.

Other opportunities include multilateral organisations engaged in implementing international, environmental conventions and targets, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF)²⁶, the World Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO). Cooperation with these organisations, by contributing Austrian know-how or technologies, for example, can make a decisive input to accomplish the strategic goals. In its Strategic Guideline for the International Finance Institutions, FMF defines environment and climate as core issues in Austrian assistance to IFIs. It concentrates here particularly on energy efficiency and renewable energy as well as water and sanitation.

7.3 Partnerships with civil–society and private–sector organisations

Equitable and sustainable development at global level can only be achieved if all social forces cooperate. NGOs and the private sector are therefore important partners in development cooperation. These include the Austrian Development Bank and the Austrian Control Bank, which support private-sector investments in developing countries. All these partners have to face the challenge of thoroughly integrating environmental sustainability in their development-policy activities, ranging from the design of instruments to investments, projects or programmes to implementation and evaluation.

²⁶ Instigated in 1991, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is a global partnership among 178 countries, international institutions, NGOs and the private sector devoted to global environmental concerns and support for national sustainable development initiatives. It provides funding for projects in six areas: biodiversity, climate change, international waters, desertification, ozone depletion and non-degradable organic pollutants.

Furthermore, GEF is the designated financial mechanism for a number of multilateral environmental agreements and conventions (cf. homepage of the Global Environment Facility: http://www.gefweb.org/interior_right.aspx?id=50).

7.4 Humanitarian aid

The incidence of ecological disasters such as floods, hurricanes or droughts is increasing. Conflicts over access to and use of natural resources are on the rise. Conversely, political unrest and hostilities destroy the environment. Humanitarian crises have extremely complex causes, usually with a marked political component. This poses a dual challenge for Austrian humanitarian aid.

It must do the following:

- Ensure that relief measures do not impair vital natural resources and carefully appraise the environmental sustainability of all interventions in humanitarian aid accordingly; take advantage of opportunities for initiating long-term environmental improvements
- Foster a broad appreciation of the background and causes of environmental problems as a possible way of contributing to alleviating humanitarian crises and making effective investments in disaster prevention

7.5 Development education at home

Education to foster cosmopolitan attitudes based on an appreciation of the existential problems of mankind is a major concern of political education. Development education must communicate knowledge about the world, point out global interconnections and instil responsible conduct, also as part of education for sustainable development. A major factor in the field of environment is that thanks to greater insight into these interconnections everyone can take measures in their own walk of life for the benefit of the global environment and development. Global environmental education in particular and development education in general can provide social impetus to help implement the goals of Austrian development and environment policy.

7.6 Institutional development at home

So that the strategic approaches and courses of action can take full effect, investments need to be made to develop sufficient capacities in Austrian institutions responsible for implementing the goals.

The following measures are important in this connection:

- Conduct specific training for personnel involved in policy, programme and project development to make them aware of the relevance of environmental issues
- Provide practical information and tools to facilitate the integration of environmental protection in the respective fields of work
- Provide for or improve processes for environmental quality assurance in policy, programme and project management

8. Monitoring and evaluation of strategic guideline implementation

The implementation of the Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development and the provisional matrix appended in the annex will be reviewed three years after they come into effect.

To improve inner-Austrian coherence and as an instrument for information exchange, an informal platform will be set up with access available to all the Austrian stakeholders. Its task is to continuously monitor guideline implementation and define the relevant processes. Consideration will also be given to setting up an Austrian expert database for the individual thematic operational fields identified in the guideline. This will help to pool and network Austrian know-how better.

The platform will be chaired by the Austrian Development Cooperation Department in the Foreign Ministry (VII) and will convene for consultations as required, at least once a year. Its initial tasks will be to improve the provisional implementation matrix further and define the anticipated results and indicators.

9. Coherence

The environment and development thematic cluster poses great challenges both for Austrian and international coherence. A variety of stakeholders is working on this issue in Austria.

As a rule, the multilateral environmental agreements administered in the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management also have a bearing on development. So it is important here to include development-policy aspects in Austrian dialogue as provided for in the Federal Development Cooperation Act. This is why Austrian Development Cooperation takes part in expert platforms, such as the Austrian Council for Sustainable Development (ÖRNE), the National Commission on Biodiversity (NCB), the Clean Development Mechanism Roundtable (CDM)²⁷ in Africa, or the Austrian platform on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). At the same time, environmental aspects and commitments under the international environmental accords must be accounted for and incorporated at all levels of development cooperation.

The preparation of the whole-of-government Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development marks a major step towards a coherent Austrian policy on this issue. The main Austrian actors, such as the FMAFEWM, FMEIA, FMF and other relevant ministries and subordinate agencies, civil-society and private-sector actors and research institutes have collaborated on this document and also intend to contribute to joint implementation. With a view to coherence and coordination, efforts will be made to improve networking among Austrian environmental activities in developing countries as well. Besides interventions by FMEIA and ADA, the international activities of the Life Ministry and the contributions by FMF, for instance to the Global Environment Facility, are particularly noteworthy. Another measure in this direction is the establishment of the stakeholder platform to monitor the implementation of the strategic guideline.

At international level, Austria is seeking to step up cooperation with other donors under the auspices of the EU and OECD. Of prime concern here are efforts at harmonising standards and instruments, such as the strategic environmental assessment, or the joint preparation of environmental country profiles. Austria is closely involved in international debate on environment and development, e.g. in EU expert groups, in the OECD/DAC or the Poverty and Environment Partnership (PEP).²⁸

Foremost concerns here are incorporating the goals of the Paris Declaration into the international environmental framework and their implementation and/or the general inclusion of environmental aspects in development cooperation for sustainable development and the achievement of the MDGs.

27) The Clean Development Mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol is designed to help the industrialised nations to meet their commitments to curtail greenhouse gas emissions by contributing to emission reduction in developing countries. Another aim of the CDM is to assist sustainable development in developing countries (cf. CDM homepage: <http://cdm.unfccc.int/about/index.html>).

28) Established in 2001, the Poverty Environment Partnership is an informal network of development agencies, international environmental NGOs and other actors that seeks to improve expert exchange and international coordination in the thematic cluster of poverty reduction and environment (cf. homepage of the Poverty Environment Partnership: <http://www.povertyenvironment.net/pep/>)

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Annex 1: Implementation matrix

Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development	FMEIA and ADA	FMAFEWM (incl. Umweltbundesamt, AGES and other agencies)	FMF	Other ministries
Sustainable natural resource management, combating desertification and biodiversity conservation				
<p>Propagating ecologically appropriate, diversified agriculture and supporting organic farming</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specific promotion of measures for sustainable natural resource management and preservation of biodiversity as integral component of rural development programmes ■ Advocacy for strengthening organic farming by ADC representatives in coordinating bodies in priority countries ■ Pilot projects in organic farming conducted in all priority regions ■ Support to UNCCD (10-Year Strategic Plan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contribution of know-how ■ Conducting appropriate research projects and studies in organic farming (at federal agencies level) ■ Collaboration in working groups and related policy intervention in committees of the EC, ILO, OECD, FAO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Austrian contribution to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) ■ Contribution to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) ■ Contribution to financing and the strategic-operational governance of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) 	
<p>Advocating precaution in the use of genetically modified organisms worldwide</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoidance and/or careful assessment of the use of GMO in cooperation programmes and projects ■ Critical stance by ADC representatives in consultative bodies in priority countries towards the use of GMO ■ Collaboration and provision of legal expertise in drafting an international liability instrument for the trans-boundary movements of living modified organisms (LMOs) under Article 27 of the Cartagena Protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International cooperation and capacity development for risk assessment, control and certification in GMO and implementation of relevant national laws and international agreements on GMO and biological safety ■ Policy engagement relating to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety 		

Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development	FMEIA and ADA	FMAFEWM (Incl. Umweltbundesamt, AGES and other agencies)	FMF	Other ministries
<p>Contributing to securing land and use rights and to sustainable, long-term, land-use planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Active collaboration in policy and strategic dialogue in partner countries ■ Participation/ Collaboration in the EU Task Force on Land Issues ■ Specific integration of measures to secure access to land in rural development programmes ■ Support in drafting land-use plans at decentralised level (capacity development and empowerment) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Austrian contribution to IFAD ■ Contribution to CGIAR 	
<p>Securing protected areas and promoting innovative incentives for resource conservation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specific activities in programmes and projects close to protected areas that contribute to their conservation ■ Integrated goal in monitoring measures, e.g. in budget support ■ Support to pilot projects for PES ■ Active participation in international dialogue, exchange of experience and refinement of approaches (inter alia in the framework of the Poverty Environment Partnership) ■ Collaboration and provision of legal expertise in the Marine Biodiversity Working Group of the UN General Assembly in areas outside national jurisdiction and support to the EU proposal for an implementation agreement on UNCLOS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implementation of and international cooperation under the International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) ■ 'Regenwald der Österreicher' initiative (Rainforest of the Austrians) ■ Policy engagement in international bodies, primarily CBD (particularly the Programme of Work on Protected Areas, related decisions, innovative finance instruments) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contribution to financing and the strategic-operational governance of GEF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FMSR: Cited themes integrated in all relevant research promotion programmes

Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development	FMEIA and ADA	FMAFEWM (incl. Umweltbundesamt, AGES and other agencies)	FMF	Other ministries
<p>Supporting sustainable forest and timber management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inclusion of specific development interventions in rural development programmes, particularly in favour of agroforestry, reforestation and the conservation of forestland ■ Support of projects to protect the rainforest ■ Advocacy for sustainable forest management by ADC representatives in coordinating bodies in priority countries ■ Integrated goal in monitoring measures e.g. in budget support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International cooperation under UNFF, particularly in international knowledge and technology transfer ■ Commissioning and implementing research projects in forest development cooperation ■ Inner-Austrian dialogue and awareness measures, also as part of the Austrian Forest Dialogue ■ Promotion of forest know-how transfer as a contribution to attaining development cooperation goals ■ Political support for afforestation and reforestation in connection with CDM/Climate Convention ■ Forest-policy advice for restructuring national forests, administrative reforms and developing necessary capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contribution to CGIAR ■ Contribution to financing and the strategic-operational governance of GEF 	

Sustainable chemicals and solid waste management

<p>Supporting safe handling, trade and disposal of chemicals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appraising the integration of suitable measures in all relevant programmes and projects, taking action where necessary ■ Collaboration and provision of legal expertise in drafting compliance mechanisms (compliance committees) under the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Policy engagement/ Cooperation in international organisations (UNEP, International Chemicals Convention) ■ Imparting Austrian expertise at international level ■ SAICM platform ■ National implementation plan for POPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contribution to financing and the strategic-operational governance of GEF 	
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Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development	FMEIA and ADA	FMAFEWM (Incl. Umweltbundesamt, AGES and other agencies)	FMF	Other ministries
Raising political and social awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raising awareness in partner dialogue ■ Support through the Green Diplomacy Network (GDN) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raising awareness in Austria of international issues, e.g. SAICM platform, Chem-News 		
Contributing to cleaner production in agriculture, trade and industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mainstreamed in all interventions for private-sector development ■ Applied as a funding or contribution criterion in development funds and programmes ■ Propagation and application of approaches and methods in organic farming ■ Support for relevant UNIDO/UNEP programmes ■ PPP as priority theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International cooperation on introducing rules of Best Agricultural Practice with priority on bilateral projects ■ SAICM platform ■ Climate protection 		
Supporting sustainable waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appraising the integration of suitable activities in all relevant programmes and projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Policy engagement and cooperation in international organisations (Basel Convention, Stockholm Convention, Montreal Protocol) ■ Promoting the transfer of Austrian expert know-how at international level ■ Environmental Technology Export Initiative (promotion of technology in the environment sector, including by road shows) 		<p>FMEFY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bilateral working groups on environmental protection and technology with the Russian Federation and Belarus under the respective major joint commissions ■ Events for improving waste management (in particular transfer of Austrian know-how and export of Austrian solid waste technologies)

Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development	FMEIA and ADA	FMAFEWM (incl. Umweltbundesamt, AGES and other agencies)	FMF	Other ministries
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Climate protection

<p>Contributing to improved energy efficiency and dissemination of renewable energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Defined as a priority in all energy sector activities, particularly in cooperation with regional initiatives ■ Appraising the integration of suitable measures in all relevant programmes and projects and taking action where necessary ■ Propagation of sustainable biomass use for energy, accounting for local socio-economic conditions ■ Focus of international cooperation (EU, UNDP, UNIDO, IRENA) ■ Support for research institutions and programmes in partner countries ■ PPP priority theme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support for specific studies and pilot projects related to the global carbon market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contribution to financing and the strategic-operational governance of GEF ■ Support for increased consideration of renewable energies and energy efficiency at IFIs ■ Seeking participation in special IFI programmes for renewable 	<p>FMH FY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cooperation between Austria and China in environmental protection and renewable energies (technology and know-how transfer on Austrian standards for the environmental technology industry and implementation of specific pilot projects) ■ INTERREG projects in energy efficiency
<p>Reducing emissions from land use, land-use changes and forest management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Accounted for in all measures in land-use planning ■ Propagation and application of organic farming approaches and methods ■ Projects for rainforest conservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support for specific studies and pilot projects in relation to the global carbon market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contribution to financing and the strategic-operational governance of GEF 	
<p>Providing assistance in adapting to the impacts of climate change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Climate proofing and mainstreaming climate change adaptation in the rural development, water and energy sectors ■ Closer alignment with disaster prevention in humanitarian aid 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support for the efforts of IFAD to integrate adaptation to the challenges of climate change in projects, country strategies and policy dialogue ■ Contribution to financing and the strategic-operational governance of GEF ■ Contribution to CGIAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FMSR: Integration of cited themes in ongoing research promotion programmes

Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development	FMEIA and ADA	FMAFEWM (Incl. Umweltbundesamt, AGES and other agencies)	FMF	Other ministries
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specific support for innovative approaches in community-based adaptation, particularly in Africa ■ Raising awareness in foreign policy, taking greater account of human security aspects, mainstreaming environmental risks/ climate change in security strategies ■ Support to activities and measures for adaptation to climate change (LDCF) 			
<p>Helping to improve the basis for informed planning, institutional frameworks and capacities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capacity development in national and regional energy-policy institutions ■ International cooperation in developing mainstreaming instruments ■ Support through the Green Diplomacy Network (GDN) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promotion of capacity development in the global carbon market ■ CDM in Africa Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support for IFIs in strengthening their role in capacity development and financing CDM/JI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FMSR: Integration of cited themes in ongoing research promotion programmes

Water and sanitation

<p>Strengthening an integrated approach in water resource management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ IWRM approach established throughout the water and rural development sectors ■ Support for policy dialogue in partner countries, particularly East Africa ■ Support for national and regional mainstreaming initiatives ■ Cooperation with international partners, such as the Danube Protection Commission (ICPDR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International cooperation in introducing and implementing IWRM with priority on bilateral projects ■ Protection of forest and timber resources for the sustainable supply of clean drinking water and protection against natural hazards ■ Possible transfer of Austrian expertise at international level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contribution to financing and the strategic-operational governance of GEF ■ Contribution to CGIAR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ BFMSR: Integration of cited themes in ongoing research promotion programmes
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Strategic Guideline on Environment and Development	FMEIA and ADA	FMAFEWM (incl. Umweltbundesamt, AGES and other agencies)	FMF	Other ministries
<p>Contributing to improved water quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capacity development in water management authorities and operators ■ Focus sanitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International cooperation in introducing and implementing Best Agricultural Practices to reduce nitrate pollution and the eutrophication of waters with focus on bilateral projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Austria induces IFIs to increasingly engage in developing and transition countries for high-quality water supply 	
<p>Contributing to improved water use efficiency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raising awareness and institutional support for water management ■ Harnessing synergies in investments for rehabilitating supply systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in international water protection commissions ■ Information exchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stepping up Austrian know-how transfer via trust funds of IFIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ FMSR: Integration of cited themes in ongoing research promotion programmes
<p>Promoting sustainable wastewater management and sanitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrating awareness raising activities for sustainable sanitation in all programmes and projects in the water sector ■ Specific support for the transfer of appropriate technology, EcoSan systems, for example 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bilateral and multilateral cooperation in international water protection commissions ■ Information exchange on technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Austria induces IFIs to increasingly engage in appropriate, sustainable sanitation in developing and transition countries 	

Annex 2: Major international agreements, political commitments in environment and sustainable development and their objectives

Sustainable natural resource management, combating desertification and preserving biodiversity

Millennium Development Goal 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Halve the proportion of people whose income is less than US\$ 1 a day by 2015 (base year 1990); halve the proportion of those that suffer from hunger by 2015 (base year 1990)

Millennium Development Goal 7 – Ensure environmental sustainability

Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources

2010 Biodiversity Target (from: CBD, JPOI, MDG 7)

Significant reduction of biodiversity loss by 2010

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources

UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Preventing the future spread of deserts and desertified land

Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

Regulating the international transfer, handling and use of genetically modified organisms

International Treaty on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)

Regulating access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from their commercial use

Washington Convention (CITES)

Regulating international trade in endangered species of wild flora and fauna and their products

Bonn Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

Worldwide protection and preservation of migratory wild species of animals including their sustainable use

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

Protection of wetlands of international importance and their biodiversity

United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)

Promoting the management, protection and sustainable use of forests

Sustainable chemicals and waste management

2020 Chemicals Target (from: JPOI)

Minimising the harmful effects of chemicals on human health and environment by 2020

Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

Banning and restricting certain persistent organic pollutants

Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade (PIC)

Regulating the international trade of certain hazardous chemicals

Basel Convention

Regulating the transboundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal

Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)

Global plan of action for implementing the 2020 target accounting for the whole lifecycle of chemicals

Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol

Reducing and eliminating ozone-depleting substances

Climate protection

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Preventing dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate

Kyoto Protocol

Reducing annual greenhouse gas emissions by industrialised countries in the so-called first commitment period (2008–2012) by an average 5.2 per cent compared with 1990

Water and sanitation

Millennium Development Goal 7 – Ensure environmental sustainability

Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation

