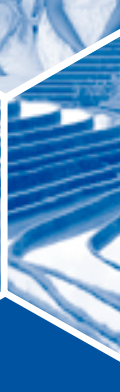


# Partnerships for Sustainable Development



United Nations

# PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## What are partnerships for sustainable development?

Partnerships were an important outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg in 2002; more than 200 partnerships were launched during the Summit process. In the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, Governments designated the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) as a focal point for the discussion of partnerships that promote sustainable development, including sharing lessons learned, progress made and best practices.

Partnerships for sustainable development, in the context of WSSD and its follow-up, are voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiatives that can contribute to the implementation of sustainable development. They are a supplementary means of supporting the implementation of Agenda 21 (the global action plan for sustainable development agreed at the UN Conference on Environment and Development – the Earth Summit – held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992), the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (agreed at the “Rio+5” meeting in 1997) and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (agreed at WSSD in 2002). These partnerships complement the intergovernmental commitments and are not intended to be a substitute for them.

## Criteria and guidelines for CSD partnerships

Governments agreed at the 11th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-11) that partnerships within the context of the WSSD process and its follow-up should be developed and implemented in accordance with an agreed set of criteria and guidelines, taking note of the preliminary work undertaken on partnerships during the preparatory process for WSSD, including the Bali Guiding Principles and General Assembly resolution 56/76.

The criteria and guidelines agreed to in CSD-11 are set out below:

- (a) Partnerships are voluntary initiatives undertaken by Governments and relevant stakeholders, e.g. major groups and institutional stakeholders;
- (b) Partnerships should contribute to the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and should not divert from commitments contained in those agreements;
- (c) Partnerships are not intended to substitute for commitments made by Governments but to supplement the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;
- (d) Partnerships should have concrete value addition to the implementation process and should be new – that is, not merely reflect existing arrangements;
- (e) Partnerships should bear in mind the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in their design and implementation;
- (f) Partnerships should be based on predictable and sustained resources for their implementation, include mobilizing new resources and, where relevant, result in transfer of technology to, and capacity building in, developing countries;
- (g) It is desirable that partnerships have a sectoral and geographical balance;
- (h) Partnerships should be designed and implemented in a transparent and accountable manner. In this regard, they should exchange relevant information with Governments and other relevant stakeholders;
- (i) Partnerships should be publicly announced with the intention of sharing the specific contribution that they make to the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;
- (j) Partnerships should be consistent with national laws, national strategies for the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as well as the priorities of countries where their implementation takes place;
- (k) The leading partner of a partnership initiative should inform the national focal point for sustainable development of the involved country/countries about the initiation and progress of the partnership, and all partners should bear in mind the guidance provided by Governments; and
- (l) The involvement of international institutions and United Nations funds, programmes and agencies in partnerships should conform to the intergovernmentally agreed mandates and should not lead to the diversion to partnerships of resources otherwise allocated for their mandated programmes.



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## Registration

Partnerships for sustainable development that are consistent with the criteria and guidelines are encouraged to register with the CSD Secretariat. This offers a number of opportunities and potential benefits. Information about registered partnerships will be made widely available, for example through the Secretariat's website, and registered partners will be able to participate in CSD-related events and activities such as partnerships fairs. Such activities and information sharing will also allow others with an interest to add their support to a given project or set of initiatives and could lead to the expansion or replication of successful projects.

The registration of partnerships with the CSD Secretariat is voluntary. Those wishing to do so should complete the on-line registration form available on the Secretariat's website: [http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/partnerships\\_registration.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships/partnerships_registration.htm). If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact the Partnerships Team for a paper form, either by email: [beyondwssd@un.org](mailto:beyondwssd@un.org) or by fax: +1-212-963-4260.

## Reporting

CSD-11 also decided that those who choose to register their partnership with the CSD Secretariat should provide transparent, participatory and credible information and reporting, focussing on their contribution to the implementation of goals, objectives and targets of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Such reports, which should be in writing, could also include an update of progress towards stated objectives, lessons learned, identification of opportunities, problems, constraints and proposed solutions. Registered partnerships should submit a regular report, preferably at least on a biennial basis.

## Role of the CSD Secretariat

The Secretariat can provide advice to existing and potential partnerships on such matters as registration procedures and CSD partnership activities. The Secretariat will also provide information to registered partnerships on when and how they should prepare their partnerships reports.

The CSD Secretariat collects and processes information and reports from partnerships and disseminates this information through the UN

Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) website and other means. A web-enabled database is being developed to hold this information and allow all stakeholders to have the ability to access and search this database.

In addition, the Secretariat will compile factual reports on registered partnerships based on the information submitted, as well as that from partnerships fairs and other sources, to facilitate discussion by the CSD on the contribution of partnerships towards supporting the implementation of sustainable development.

## Activities

Activities aimed at strengthening existing sustainable development partnerships and facilitating new ones will be arranged by the Secretariat and others, including through initiatives such as partnerships fairs and learning centres. Those involved will be able to learn from the experience of others and share information, such as case studies, best practices and how to overcome constraints. Information about upcoming events will be made available through the DSD partnerships website: [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships).



## More information

For more information, please visit DSD's website or contact:  
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For media enquiries, contact the Development Section,  
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[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/partnerships)