



## Policy At-A-Glance:

SustainUS is a unique and passionate group of young people working to push the United States and the world community toward **sustainable development**. We believe that achieving sustainable development requires policies that balance economic, social, and environmental concerns. Since 2001, SustainUS has promoted sustainable development through education, political action, and proactive implementation of sustainable development and youth empowerment initiatives.

Our path to sustainable development includes:

- Eradicating poverty through a combination of reducing trade barriers (particularly on the part of industrialized countries), improving labor standards, relieving debt, sharing technology, and investing in public health, education and small- and medium- sized enterprises;
- Establishing a variety of regulatory and market-based mechanisms, both international and domestic, to hold producers accountable for social and environmental damage and discrimination;
- Educating consumers about the social and environmental impact of their purchases and use of resources;
- Promoting the concept of common but differentiated responsibility and the precautionary principle, as laid out in the Rio Declaration, on all levels;
- Protecting biological diversity, preventing desertification, and preserving the world's threatened ecosystems, in particular tropical rainforest;
- Addressing climate change as a global community in a number of ways, among them energy conservation, scientific research on technological approaches like sequestration, a transition to cleaner and renewable fuels, the implementation of a system of emissions credits, and consistent progress on and adherence to emissions standards as set by international agreements like the Kyoto Protocol;
- Taking into account a wide spectrum of stakeholder perspectives for all development programs at all levels of formulation and implementation;
- Allocating 0.7% of industrialized countries' GNI's for ODA to developing countries, as was promised at UNCED in 1992 and then reaffirmed at FFD and WSSD;



- Ensuring transparency, independence from private interests, and respect for universal human rights in systems of governance, both at home and abroad;
- Strengthening civil society and expanding public participation, both being crucial to the effectiveness of domestic and international democratic institutions;
- Empowering systems of global governance to address global problems.
- Fostering peace in the broadest possible sense, in which poverty, oppression, violence, and threat of force are absent, and prosperity, democracy, and universal respect prevail;
- **Empowering youth, the leaders of tomorrow, to assume their rightful place as contributors in decision-making arenas today in the United States and throughout the world**

We must take these steps to provide justice and human rights for the current generation without degrading the natural and human systems that will support the next. Today's youth must lead the planet and its people to a sustainable future.

#### **Terms and Abbreviations:**

**WSSD:** The World Summit on Sustainable Development, a UN-sponsored conference that took place in Johannesburg, South Africa in August-September 2002. The WSSD was the largest meeting ever convened by the UN, bringing together over 100 Heads of State and tens of thousands of members of civil society. Also known as Rio +10

**FFD:** The Financing for Development conference, held in March, 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico.

**UNCED:** The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio De Janeiro in 1992. UNCED was the first major conference to link environmental protection with social development and economic prosperity.

**Kyoto Protocol:** An international agreement that facilitates collective action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**Sustainable Development:** Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Rio Declaration:** The document signed by Heads of State at UNCED.

**GNI:** Gross National Income

**ODA:** Official Development Assistance, the bulk of a given country's allocation for foreign, non-military, non-humanitarian development.