

# **Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm Declaration, 1972)**

The UN Conference on the Human Environment, having met at Stockholm from 5 to 16 June 1972, having considered the need for a common outlook and for common principles to inspire and guide the peoples of the world in the preservation and enhancement of the human environment,

Proclaims that:

1. In the long and tortuous evolution of the human race on this planet a stage has been reached when, through the rapid acceleration of science and technology, man has acquired the power to transform his environment in countless ways and on an unprecedented scale.
2. The protection and improvement of the human environment is a major issue which affects the well-being of peoples and economic development throughout the world.
3. Man has constantly to sum up experience and go on discovering, inventing, creating and advancing. In our time, man's capability to transform his surroundings, if used wisely, can bring to all peoples the benefits of development and the opportunity to enhance the quality of life.
4. In the developing countries most of the environmental problems are caused by under-development. Therefore, the developing countries must direct their efforts to development, bearing in mind their priorities and the need to safeguard and improve the environment. For the same purpose, the industrialized countries should make efforts to reduce the gaps.
5. The natural growth of population continuously presents problems for the preservation of the environment, and adequate policies and measures should be adopted, as appropriate.
6. A point has been reached in history when we must shape our actions throughout the world with a more prudent care for their environmental consequences.
7. To achieve this environmental goal will demand the acceptance of responsibility by citizens and communities and by enterprises and institutions at every level, all sharing equitably in common efforts.

The Conference calls upon Governments and peoples to exert common efforts for the preservation and improvement of the human environment, for the benefit of all the people.

## **Principles**

**Principle 1.** Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being, and he bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations.

**Principle 2.** The natural resources of the earth, including the air, water, land, flora and fauna and especially representative samples of natural ecosystems, must be safeguarded for the benefit of present and future.

**Principle 3.** The capacity of the earth to produce vital renewable resources must be maintained and, wherever practicable, restored or improved.

**Principle 4.** Man has a special responsibility to safeguard and wisely manage the heritage of wildlife and its habitat, which are now gravely imperiled by a combination of adverse factors.

**Principle 5.** The non-renewable resources must be employed in a way as to guard against the danger of their future exhaustion and to ensure that benefits from such employment are shared by all.

**Principle 6.** The discharge of toxic substances or other substances and the release of heat, in such quantities or concentrations as to exceed the capacity of the environment to render them harmless, must be halted.

**Principle 7.** States shall take all possible steps to prevent pollution of the seas.

**Principle 8.** Economic and social development is essential for ensuring a favorable living and working environment for man and for creating conditions necessary for the improvement of the quality of life.

**Principle 9.** Environmental deficiencies generated by the conditions of under-development and natural disasters can best be remedied by the transfer of substantial quantities of financial and technological assistance.

**Principle 10.** For the developing countries, stability of prices and adequate earnings for primary commodities and raw materials are essential to environmental management.

**Principle 11.** The environmental policies should enhance and not adversely affect the present or future development potential of developing countries.

**Principle 12.** Resources should be made available to preserve and improve the environment..

**Principle 13.** In order to achieve rational management of resources, States should adopt an integrated and coordinated approach to their development planning.

**Principle 14.** Rational planning constitutes an essential tool for reconciling any conflict between the needs of development and the need to protect and improve the environment.

**Principle 15.** Planning must be applied to human settlements and urbanization with a view to avoiding adverse effects on the environment.

**Principle 16.** Demographic policies which are without prejudice to basic human rights and which are deemed appropriate by Governments concerned should be applied in those regions where the rate of population growth are likely to have adverse effects on the environment.

**Principle 17.** Appropriate national institutions must be entrusted with the task of planning, managing or controlling the environmental resources.

**Principle 18.** Science and technology must be applied to the identification, avoidance and control of environmental risks and the solution of environmental problems.

**Principle 19.** Education in environmental matters is essential in order to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises and communities in protecting and improving the environment in its full human dimension.

**Principle 20.** Scientific research and development in the context of environmental problems must be promoted in all countries, especially the developing countries.

**Principle 21.** States have the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

**Principle 22.** States shall cooperate to develop further the international law regarding liability and compensation for the victims of pollution and other environmental damage.

**Principle 23.** Without prejudice to such criteria as may be agreed upon by the international community, or to standards which will have to be determined nationally, it will be essential in all cases to consider the systems of values prevailing in each country, and the extent of the applicability of standards which are valid for the most advanced countries but which may be inappropriate and of unwarranted social cost for the developing countries.

**Principle 24.** International matters concerning the protection and improvement of the environment should be handled in a cooperative spirit by all countries, big and small, on an equal footing.

**Principle 25.** States shall ensure that international organizations play a coordinated, efficient and dynamic role for the protection and improvement of the environment.

**Principle 26.** Man and his environment must be spared the effects of nuclear weapons and all other means of mass destruction.