The United Nations has declared that 2005 to 2014 is the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). Everyone in the whole world is asked to take part to improve the quality of life on Earth for all.

VISION for DESD

A world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation.

- UNESCO

What can you do to take part?

Turn the page to find out!
What is Sustainable Development?

Hi! My name is Sustainable Sara and I want to learn about sustainable development with you. Let's first define the two words separately:

Sustainable - ongoing, to keep going
Development - something that has become larger or more organised

When we put the two words together, the term sustainable development is commonly defined as:

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


I like to think of sustainable development as trying to improve my life, and at the same time, protecting the environment for my grandchildren one day. For example, at my friend Asmara's school, they just installed a water tap for drinking. Asmara always makes sure to turn off the water when she is finished. She knows that water is life and we have very little in Namibia.

The concept of sustainable development is constantly growing as the world is changing. Let us explore the four key areas of sustainable development.

**Environment:** All living things, resources & life-support systems
**Sustainable Development Focus Area:** Conservation

**Economy:** Technology, development & financial management
**Sustainable Development Focus Area:** Jobs & income

**Politics:** Policies & decision-making
**Sustainable Development Focus Area:** Democracy & good governance

**Society:** People, community & culture
**Sustainable Development Focus Area:** Peace, equality, health & human rights

Quality of life - How do we measure it?
Many people want to improve their standard of living. They want to earn more money, own a car and TV and be able to buy whatever they want. Getting more things does not always mean that we have a better life though. When measuring the quality of our life we need to ask: Do we have access to education? Health care? Services? Do we have rights and responsibilities in our community? Do we have friendships? Are we happy?

Sustainability is not just about conserving the environment, but about learning to live in respectful relationships with each other and with our world.
UNESCO LEADS THE WAY

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture

UNESCO has been appointed by the United Nations (UN) as the lead agency for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). Together with representatives from many countries, UNESCO is developing a plan of action for the DESD. This action plan will have global aims and outcomes, projects and suggested activities. UNESCO will work with national governments, non-governmental organisations and civil society to achieve sustainable development goals.

What is UNESCO?
UNESCO is an agency of the UN. It supports countries in building their capacities in education, culture, communication and the science. The international headquarters for UNESCO is in Paris, France.

UNESCO in Namibia
In Namibia there is a UNESCO Windhoek Cluster Office on Brahms Street. This cluster office is responsible for UNESCO activities in Angola, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.

What is the United Nations (UN)?
The UN was started in 1945 to keep peace through international cooperation. Today there are 191 member countries who have agreed to the UN Charter. It is an international treaty that sets out principles of international relations.
The UN has four main purposes:
• to maintain international peace and security;
• to develop friendly relations among nations;
• to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights;
• to be a centre for harmonising the actions of nations.

Namibia National Commission for UNESCO

The Namibia National Commission for UNESCO is based at the Ministry of Education. They work directly with the UNESCO Windhoek Cluster office to coordinate projects and activities.

UNESCO is an international organisation that has employees from throughout the world. The National Commission is a part of the Namibian government and employs Namibians.

Environmental education is one of the essential instruments for empowering individuals and communities to take meaningful action and positively shape their future.

Dr. Claudia Harvey, Director of UNESCO Windhoek Cluster Office
NaDEET Centre Opening Ceremony 2003
The UN in Namibia and our government have identified Namibia’s most critical issues - called the Triple Threat. They are: 1. HIV and AIDS, 2. Food Insecurity, 3. Weakened Capacity of Institutions. The Triple Threat makes sustainable development difficult to achieve. However, sustainable development can help solve the Triple Threat. Read on to find out more about how the problems are connected and their plan of action.

**The Triple Threat**
- Threat: something that is a possible danger.
- The Triple Threat: 3 likely dangers to Namibia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. HIV AND AIDS</th>
<th>2. FOOD INSECURITY</th>
<th>3. WEAKENED CAPACITY OF INSTITUTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Immune-deficiency Virus (virus that leads to AIDS)</td>
<td>Insecurity: not being safe</td>
<td>Capacity: the ability to do something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome (weakened immune system that leads to death)</td>
<td>Food Insecurity: not having enough food or the ability to get food.</td>
<td>Weakened: lacking strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When family members are infected by HIV and AIDS the whole family is affected. There are fewer family members that can earn money and grow food. These families often suffer from food insecurity.</td>
<td>Food insecurity means that there are more hungry and poor people who need the government to help them. This puts more pressure on the already weakened government.</td>
<td>Institution: an organisation (e.g. government, non-governmental and private companies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food insecurity causes people to be hungry and therefore sick. People infected with HIV and AIDS are more at risk.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Weakened Capacity of Institutions: organisations cannot do as much as they used to be able to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are not enough healthcare and education services to take care of HIV and AIDS patients. This is due to weakened capacity of institutions.</td>
<td></td>
<td>The weakened government offices cannot support all the poor families. These families continue to be unable to feed themselves.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plan of Action**
- HIV and AIDS: To educate about prevention and to increase treatment and care, especially for the most vulnerable communities.
- Food Insecurity: To create more jobs in an environmentally sustainable way.
- Weakened capacity of institutions: To promote democracy and public participation. To improve social services (e.g. pension, medical).
HOW SUSTAINABLE ARE YOU?

Take this QUIZ to find out if you are living sustainably:

a. Do you get a plastic bag at the store when you buy something?
   YES  NO

b. Do you use wood, electricity or gas for cooking?
   YES  NO

c. Do you leave the lights on when you go out of the room?
   YES  NO

d. Do you leave the tap running while you brush your teeth?
   YES  NO

e. Do you always use a car for transport?
   YES  NO

f. Do you only use one side of a piece of paper?
   YES  NO

g. Do you get all of your food at the store?
   YES  NO

h. Do you throw everything into one bin (i.e. banana peels, tin & glass)?
   YES  NO

i. Do you use tap water to water your trees?
   YES  NO

My name is Unaware Ursula. I live my life without thinking about the environment.

My name is Sustainable Sara. I think of the environment first in my daily life.

SCORING: HOW MANY YES BOXES DID YOU CHECK?

0-2: Congratulations! You are like Sustainable Sara! Keep finding more ways to help the environment.

4-5: You have made some effort, but keep working hard to become more like Sustainable Sara.

7-9: You are like Unaware Ursula. Read below, and in the rest of the Bush Telegraph, to find out how you can change your life to take care of the environment.

Everyone can live a more sustainable life.

Read below to learn how:

a. Reuse cloth bags. You can take the cloth bags with you to the store to fill up, instead of getting new plastic bags each time.

b. Use other forms of energy than wood for cooking, such as solar cookers, or use energy-efficient stoves and ovens.

c. Turning off the lights when no one is in the room saves energy. Also remember to turn off other electronic equipment such as the TV.

d. When you brush your teeth (or do anything at the tap) only turn on the water when you really need it. It doesn't need to be running while you are brushing.

e. If you use a car for transport, try to give others a lift, or walk, ride a bicycle, or take public transportation.

f. Use both sides of a piece of paper before you put it in the recycling. Each piece of paper is then twice as useful and you aren't creating as much waste.

g. Growing your own food is healthy for you and the environment.

h. Recycling paper, glass and tin, as well as composting leads to less waste.

i. Reuse shower or dish water to water your trees instead of using tap water.
Here is my school. We have worked hard to become more sustainable. Tell us on page 10 about your school!

- Reuse old tins to make a fence around the school.
- Solar panels for energy.
- Glass, other metal: Recycling area.
- HIV/AIDS awareness and action projects.
- Vegetable garden for food and learning.
- Rainwater collecting tank provides water for the garden and cleaning.
- Learners plan and do environmental projects. Teachers and parents are actively involved.
- Taps don’t drip and water is collected for plants. A water bottle is used for drinking.
- Solar cooking to save trees, electricity and gas.
- Exploring and identifying local plants and animals.

Composting toilets built by the community.
Name: Dr. Andreas Wienecke
Organisation: Habitat Research & Development Centre- Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing and Rural Development (MRLGHRD)
Job Title: Manager - Research
No. of years on the job: 2.5 years at HRDC

What is the Habitat Research & Development Centre (HRDC)? The HRDC is a government research institution falling under the MRLGHRD. It is becoming the focal point for research and development of the Namibian housing sector, aimed at promoting sustainable human settlements.

What are the HRDC's aims?
The HRDC aims are to:
- promote the production and usage of local building materials through appropriate technologies and design;
- advocate, promote and facilitate ecological sanitation, water conservation, renewable energy and biodiversity;
- support communities, local and regional authorities in capacity building;
- disseminate information to stakeholders; and
- contribute to policy formulation on housing, environment and resource management.

When did the HRDC open?
The centre was inaugurated in October 2004, but staff moved to the HRDC already at the beginning of last year.

What are some examples of sustainable technology/building at the HRDC?
High technologies are not an answer to many of our problems, therefore alternatives should be considered. At the HRDC we used recycled/reused building materials, e.g. building rubble, glass bottles, tins, second hand doors and windows. We only used dry sanitation systems (toilets) to save costs and water. A natural air conditioning system has been included in the library, the exhibition room and the multipurpose hall. This system utilizes natural phenomena to cool air in these rooms through evaporative cooling.

What are some 'easy tips' for sustainable living for Namibians?
Utilise locally available materials and recycle and reuse materials (do not waste). Harvest rain water and garden organically. Use a dry toilet system.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?
To change existing attitudes and perceptions to adapt new ideas and possibilities.

Andreas' message for Namibia's youth:
Do not disrespect the natural environment, which is the basis for life.

YOU ARE WELCOME TO VISIT THE HRDC:
Location: Claudius Kandovazu St. in Wanaheha, Windhoek.
Opening hours: 07h30 - 16h30. For special arrangements: Phone 061-268200
FOR THE BEGINNER READER

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Make a list of the five most important things in your life. It is nice to have money and lots of things. It is even more important to have loving people in your life. Who will you share your things with if you don't have friends or family?

1. It is important to remember that friends and family support us and we support them. This is our community.

2. The environment is also part of our community, because it provides us with food, water and shelter. If the environment is suffering, then the community will also suffer. Everything is connected!

3.

4.

5.

GLOSSARY OF SOME SUSTAINABLE TERMS

Did you have trouble understanding all the words in the Bush Telegraph? Here are the definitions of some words. The page number that the word is on, is next to the definition. Find the word on that page and see if you can understand the sentence better.

CIVIL SOCIETY...........All parts of society that are not part of the government. (page 3)

COMPROMISING...........Giving up something you want or need in order to agree with someone or something else. (page 2)

DECADE....................A period of ten years. (page 1)

HARMONISING..............Happily agreeing with others. (page 3)

IMMUNE SYSTEM............A system inside your body that fights against infections and disease. (page 10)

NUTRITIOUS.................Healthy for you, like food with lots of vitamins. (page 10)

UN AGENCY....................An organisation of the United Nations that deals with different issues. For example, UNESCO and UNDP (United Nations Development Program). (page 3)

VULNERABLE..................Unprotected; easily hurt or harmed. (page 4)
The Earth Charter

"forming a global partnership to care for Earth and one another"

WHAT IS THE EARTH CHARTER?
The idea for the Earth Charter was started at the "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. After over 3,000 meetings of different groups all over the world, the Charter was released in June 2000. It provides a framework of global values to work towards building a sustainable Earth where all life (people, animals and plants) is respected and cared for, and where there is peace, freedom and economic justice for present and future generations. The Earth Charter is a treaty between the peoples of the world to "declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations". The Charter was created to inspire a sense of global community and responsibility in every individual and to work towards a sustainable world.

THE EARTH CHARTER AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

PREAMBLE
"The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty" is every person's responsibility. Our current way of living is destroying the environment, communities are falling apart, and injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread. We need to make a choice to work together to protect our Earth and each other.

PRINCIPLES

I. Respect and Care for the Community of Life
- Respect all people, plants and animals.
- Understand we are all interdependent and everyone has a duty to the environment and other people.

II. Ecological Integrity
- Prevent harm to the environment and restore ecological diversity.
- Use methods of production and consumption that protect the Earth.
- Share knowledge about environmental sustainability.

III. Social and Economic Justice
- Get rid of poverty by "allocating the national and international resources required"
- "Promote equal distribution of wealth".
- Affirm equality among all people.

IV. Democracy, Nonviolence, and Peace
- "Strengthen democratic institutions" and make governments accountable.
- Make sustainable living a part of formal education.
- "Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence, and peace."

THE WAY FORWARD
"We must find ways to harmonize diversity with unity, the exercise of freedom with the common good, short term objectives with long-term goals. Every individual, family, organization, and community has a vital role to play." Different cultures will find different ways of living sustainably, but if we all have the common goals above, then we can cooperate so everyone can enjoy the Earth for generations to come.

All quotes are taken directly from the Earth Charter. To read the full Earth Charter and to learn more go to www.earthcharter.org.
WILD FOODS

Wild foods can contribute to food security. They can help provide fresh food all the time, especially when food is scarce, like during a drought. They are very nutritious with lots of vitamins. Lekker! Ask older people in your community to share their knowledge about wild foods in your area. Having a variety of good food can help all of us to stay strong and healthy. If you are HIV positive wild foods can help to keep your immune system strong. It is important to protect wild foods so they are around for generations to come.

PART 1: CLASSROOM ACTIVITY:
Directions: 1. Talk to elders to find out about wild foods. 2. Collect samples of wild foods to display in your classroom. 3. Make a Wild Food chart (like the one below) with all the foods the group has collected. 4. Share what you learned with the rest of the school.

PART 2: INDIVIDUAL CONTEST:
Directions: 1. Choose one of the wild foods on your chart. 2. Using the wild food make a dish to share with your class. 3. Send us your dish recipe of your wild food decorated with pictures. The best recipe will win The Big Five Nambian Tree Poster!

WILD FOOD CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD</th>
<th>USES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Marula</td>
<td>People and animals both eat the fruit. The seed is edible. The oil is used in porridge and is good for cooking. The fruit can be eaten as it is or made into wine and brandy.</td>
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KEY: 🌺 Flowering 🌟 Many fruits ▲ Some fruit ◊ Few fruits

GROUP CONTEST:
HOW SUSTAINABLE IS YOUR SCHOOL?
Sustainable Sara’s school (on page six) is an excellent example of sustainability. Let us know how sustainable your school is!

Directions: 1. Write a small report about your school. 2. Make sure to include at least three ways that your school is sustainable. 3. Your report should include a picture or drawing of your school. 4. Send your report with the following information: teacher’s and learners’ names, grade, school address and phone number. The winning school will receive an environmental video.

CONTEST ENTRY DIRECTIONS: Post your completed Wild Food Recipe and/or your School Report (one entry per school) to: NaDEET, PO Box 31017, Pioneers Park, Windhoek. Entries must arrive by: 15 March 2006.
Dear friends,

Thank you for all the questions we have received. Today we have two questions for you related to the desert. Read on to find out more.

If you have any questions for Chinga and Nzovu, please write to:

Chinga & Nzovu, NaDEET, P.O. Box 31017, Pioniers Park, Windhoek

---

**Dear Chinga and Nzovu,**

Why is the desert so hot during the day but so cold in the night?

From Meyer in Mariental

---

Dear Meyer,

There are a number of reasons that cause such a fast change of temperature in deserts. Although the sun shines everywhere on earth, deserts receive more heat than any other part of the planet. More heat reaches the ground because there are few obstacles such as water vapour and clouds to slow it down. There are also fewer plants in deserts to absorb the sun's energy. The sand and rocks therefore will also become hotter. These are the main reasons that the desert surface heats up rapidly during the day. The desert loses all of this heat during the night for the same reasons. The clear desert night air easily sucks the day's heat without cloud cover, plants and moisture in the air.

Chinga and Nzovu

---

**Dear Chinga and Nzovu,**

What kind of food or plants do scorpions eat?

From Dore-Ann in Mariental

---

Dear Dore-Ann,

Scorpions are predators (hunters) and feed on other living animals. These include insects, spiders and even other scorpions. Some larger species of scorpions will prey upon small vertebrates, gastropods, small reptiles, mammals and amphibians. No records are available of any scorpions that feed on plants. Scorpions either use poison or their pincers to kill their prey. Scorpions with small pincers have strong venom while scorpions with large pincers are not as poisonous. Although many people are scared of scorpions, they do not purposely try to harm humans. We would like to encourage you to keep on reading more books about scorpions in order to appreciate them.

Did you know that some scorpions 'glow-in-the-dark' when you shine a UV-light on them?

Chinga and Nzovu
CROSSWORD CONTEST WINNER

We received a total of 89 crossword puzzle entries. Thirty-seven of the entries were correct. At random the following winner was selected.

Joseph Gae-ab from Tsintsabis JS School, Tsumeb

Joseph has won a Namibia Calendar 2006.

Congratulations!

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Learner ☐ (age: __________ grade: _________) Teacher ☐ Other ☐

School: _______________________________________________________________

Postal Address: __________________________ Town: _________________________

Teachers please note: Multiple copies of this mini-magazine are available for you to use in the classroom. If you are interested, please complete the following:

yes, ☐ please send me ______________ additional copies.

Please send all subscriptions to: Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET), P.O. Box 31017, Pioniers Park, Windhoek

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Development team: Participants of the "SADC/REEP UN DESD workshop: Informing the development of southern African guidelines for participation in the UN Decade" 13-14 October 2005.

Written by: Viktoria Keding and Sarah Bittenbender