

Geog 370 – Geography of Sustainable Development

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Q2 – Final exam.

Write an essay about the definition of sustainable development and Give 4 examples from peer reviewed articles

- Sustainable development was defined by Brundtland Commission as:
- “The development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.
- Some criticize the term "sustainable development", stating that the term is too vague.
- Sustainable development is a development that economically viable,
- Socially acceptable and concern with environmental protection.
- Sustainable development does not mean the same for developed and the developing countries.
- Developing countries are more concerned with development while the developed countries are concerned more with environmental conservation.
- Sustainable development is connected with bottom-up and participatory approaches.
- Participatory approach also means community-based effort in combination with official efforts.
- Official effort is also known as outside intervention or assistance to provide credit, technical skills, equipments and training.
- Community-based effort took the form of money, manual work and administration.
- Assistance comes from governments, donors, NGOs and international organizations.
- With intervention, donors are aiming at fulfilling the need for sustainable, democratic and equitable growth.
- For example, for more effective intervention, since 2001 UK Department for International Development (DFID) has used a new approach of “**Drivers of Change**”.
- It means consideration of the factors behind development in each country that involves the deeply embedded **political, social and economic networks**.
- This goes in line with the concept of **social capital**.
- **Social capital** is a **bottom-up** approach of development that makes use of **community values, organizations** (institutions) and **social networks**.
- For the definition of sustainability, Brundtland Report has made much emphasis on meeting people’s **need**.
- That means, satisfaction of human **needs** and **aspirations** is the major objective of sustainable development.
- Unfortunately, the **essential needs** such as food, clothing, shelter, jobs, water etc. have not being met.
- In addition, people have **aspirations** for an improved quality of life.
- In a world that poverty, inequality and climate change have become more serious, they will easily **compromise sustainability not only for the future generations**, but also for the present generation.
- A society may in many ways compromise its ability to meet the essential needs of its people in the future by over exploitation or mismanagement of its resources (i.e. water, land, forests).
- In general, sustainable development can also viewed as an:

- **Acceptable type of developments by the society or the community** (Do what the people want based on their 1-knowledge, 2- experience and 3- participation).
- **Economically viable** (profitable) and
- **Environmentally sound** (It goes hand-in-hand with nature).