



# Promoting Sustainability: A Challenge for All



*“Our biggest challenge in this new century is to take an idea that seems abstract - sustainable development - and turn it into a daily reality for all the world’s people.”*

*Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General, March 2001*





# What is the Problem?

“The main cause of the deterioration of the global environment is the ***unsustainable patterns of consumption and production***, particularly in **industrialized** countries, which is a matter of grave concern, aggravating poverty and imbalances.”

Agenda 21 (Chap. 4.3), Earth Summit, Rio 1992





# What is the Magnitude?

“It is simply impossible for the world as a whole to sustain a Western level of consumption for all. In fact, if 7 billion people were to consume as *much energy and resources as we do in the West today* we will need more than one planet to satisfy all our needs.”

Gro Harlem Brundtland, 1994





# Deterioration Continues

- Between 1990 - 1995, **65 million ha of forest** (the size of 130 mil football fields) were lost.
- In 1996, **25%** of the world's **mammal species** and **11% bird** species were at a significant risk of total extinction.
- The **global marine fish catch almost doubled** between 1975-1995 and now an estimated **60%** of fisheries are at or near the point at which yields decline.
- **400 million tones of hazardous waste** is created from chemicals each year (with 75% attributed to the industrial countries)





# Implementation Gap

*Fundamental changes in the way societies produce and consume are indispensable for achieving global sustainable development. **All countries should promote sustainable consumption and production patterns...** Governments, relevant international organizations, the private sector and all major groups should play an active role in changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns.*

WSSD. Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, Sept. 2002



# WSSD Plan of Implementation, Johannesburg, 2002

*Encourage and promote the development of a 10-year framework of programmes in support of regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production...*





# Inequalities in Consumption

- ◆ 1.3 billion people live on below 1 USD a day.
- ◆ The overall consumption of the richest fifth of the world's population is 16 times that of the poorest fifth.
- ◆ Nearly 160 million children are malnourished.
- ◆ More than 880 million people lack access to health services.
- ◆ 1.5 billion lack access to sanitation and clean water.





# Population, Consumption & Environment

- **Population** is not the main problem of environmental degradation, but rather the consumption and production patterns.
- Need for **inter- and intra-generation equity**.
- Need to **meet the basic needs** of the whole population (food, shelter, health, education, clothing).





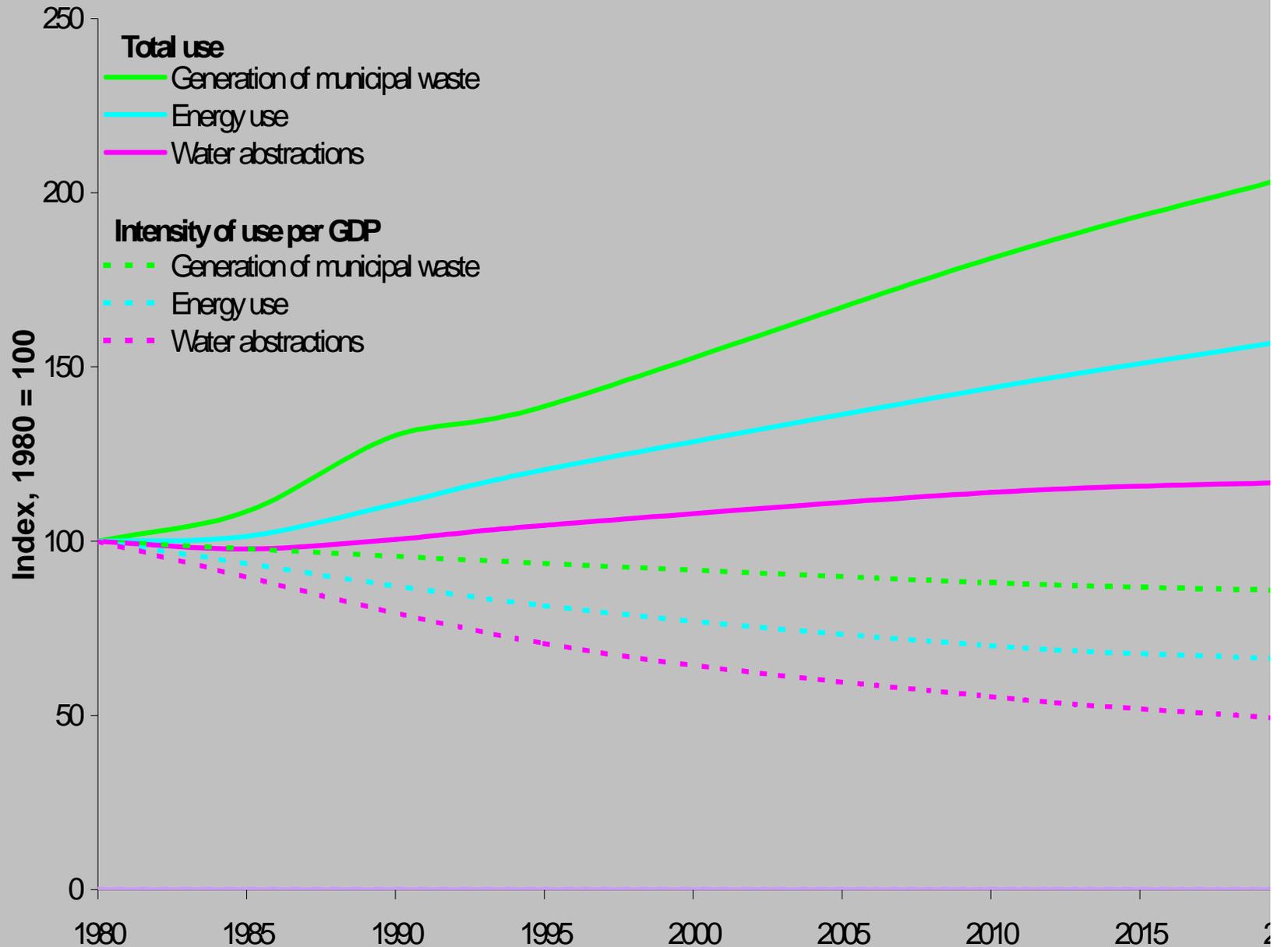
# Interrelation of Cleaner Production and Sustainable Consumption

- Over the last decade, we have seen significant improvements in **Cleaner Production** (pollution prevention, waste minimization, and eco-efficiency).
- However, changes in **consumption patterns** have offset the environmental gains achieved CP and eco-efficiency.





**Figure 1. Resource and material intensity of OECD economies, total use and intensity of use relative to GDP, 1980-2020**





# Current Situation

- **Rebound effects:** productivity/efficiency gains being overtaken by production increases
- Problems of production process understood but **gap of understanding consumption** (use) and disposal of products.
- New developing sectors **new opportunities**
- Environmental concerns **not integrated** into economic and social programmes and vice versa





# The challenge...

## Promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns

- New product-oriented strategies (life cycle perspective, design and manufacture)
  - Understanding consumption
  - Integrated approach of sustainable consumption and production.
- **De-linking environmental damage from economic growth**





## Action needed: Influencing consumption & production patterns ...

Examine underlying **drivers** for consumption:

- identify obstacles and **opportunities** for change
- improve products and services
  - **business**
- modernize infrastructure and policy frameworks
  - **governments**
- awareness, dialogue and reflection
  - **consumer groups**

... to create “space for consumption” for all



# Environmental Management Evolutionary “Ladder”

Anticipate & prevent

GOAL

Sustainable Development

cleaner production;  
sustainable consumption

Prevent

Control

recycling; treatment

Dilute

React & treat

Ignore

Save & opportunity

Cost & liability





# NOW - national strategies to promote SCP

- Starting from **human needs**
- **Exploring** current consumption and production patterns
- Optimizing economic, environmental and social aspects in **systems approach**
- Involving 'new' **out of the box** thinking
- Involving new **partners**
  - *let's work together...*