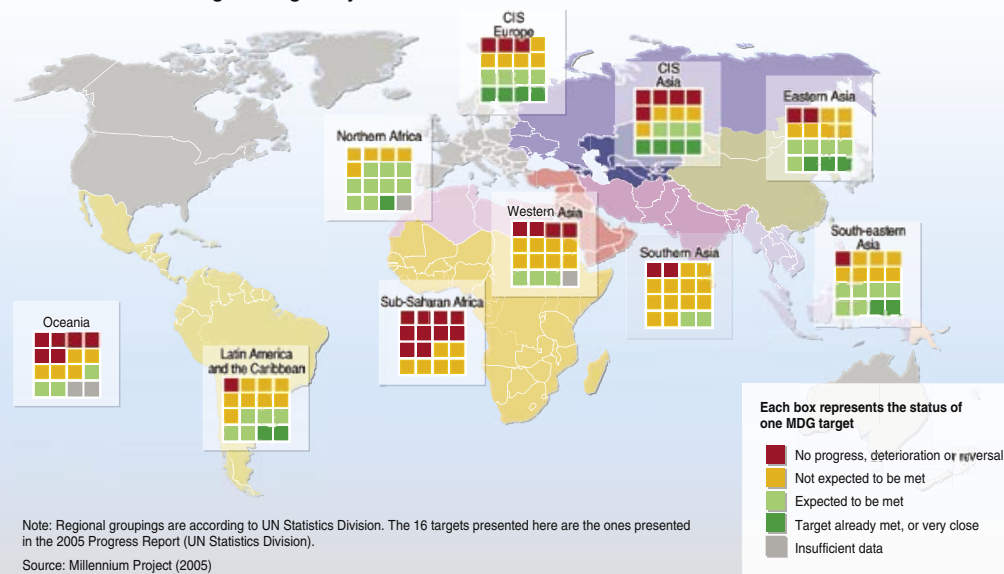


## Contents

- Page 2-3  
**One planet, many people**  
The Millennium Development Goals and eco-systems. How will the loss of services derived from ecosystems affect the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty, hunger, and diseases?
- Page 4-5  
**Partnership and globalisation**  
A bigger chance of achieving the MDGs requires coordinated efforts – and commitments from everyone, North and South alike.
- Page 6-7  
**Urban living**  
In the next thirty years as many as 2 billion people will be living in urban slums, challenging the target of achieving significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.
- Page 8-9  
**Water for all**  
Clean water is essential for human health and survival, and also critical to other facets of sustainable development, like environmental protection and food security.
- Page 10-11  
**Environmental thinking**  
Few countries have made an attempt to deal with the environment in a strategic way.
- Page 12-13  
**A healthy life**  
Excessive and wasteful consumption, social inequities and inefficient resource use perpetuate a vicious cycle of pollution and resource degradation that contribute to poverty and the erosion of livelihoods.
- Page 14-15  
**Back to school**  
Can any of the goals be reached without progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women?
- Page 16-17  
**A hungry world**  
More than 1.1 billion people live in extreme poverty today.
- Page 18-19  
**Is another world possible?**  
Are the goals merely targets set but never met?
- Page 20  
**Forecast**  
Summit must be red ribbon day for the environment.

## Millennium Development Goals overview Trends toward meeting the targets by 2015



# Sustainable development, a global challenge

Ms **Hilde Frøfford Johnson**, Norway's Minister of International Development

"Eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, particularly for developing countries." This quote is taken from the Plan of Implementation of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and it reflects a perception of sustainable development that I wholeheartedly share. The concept of sustainable development must be understood in terms of human needs, rights and responsibility towards the environment as well as in terms of solidarity – between generations and between communities. Unless we keep this in mind too many people will persist in maintaining that we should deal with poverty and growth first and then take a look at the environment.

When Wangari Maathai was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize last year it was a timely reminder that we must take a holistic approach to environmental

management, human rights, poverty reduction and peace. This sounds simple, but in practice our thinking and actions tend to be compartmentalised, focusing on one or other of these goals. In all our efforts to implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) it is essential to remember that sustainable development and its three pillars – economic, social and environmental development – are implicit in all the MDGs. Achieving MDG 7 on environmental sustainability is vital to reaching the other MDGs on poverty, health and gender equality.

I firmly believe the millennium goals and the decisions taken at the Johannesburg summit have contributed effectively to focusing the world agenda on the challenges associated with all three pillars. I remember the time when it was difficult to convince world leaders and politicians to focus on poverty and environmental issues. Fortunately this is no longer the case. To mention but one example: Africa and climate change were at the top of the agenda at the Gleneagles G8 meeting.

Climate change is a reminder of the fact that poor people are most likely to be the first victims and the greatest sufferers of environmental degradation. The poor are more vulnerable than others to environmental hazards and environment-related conflicts and least able to cope with them when they occur. They also tend to be most dependent on the environment and direct use of natural resources, and are therefore most severely affected by environmental degradation and lack of access to natural resources.

The 2005 Millennium Summit in September will be a unique opportunity to reaffirm the global partnership for achieving the MDGs and the principle that every country must take the primary responsibility for its own economic and social development. But the summit will also carry out a comprehensive review of progress fulfilling the Millennium Declaration and meeting all the MDGs. Questions will be asked: How far have we come in relation to the MDGs? What challenges remain? How can we make partnerships between actors more effective?

The UN report on the status of MDG implementation answers some of these questions, noting in particular that unprecedented gains against poverty have been achieved since 1990. The number

of people living in extreme poverty has fallen by 130 million. This progress has taken place against the backdrop of overall population growth of more than 800 million people in the developing regions.

But 1.2 billion people are still living on less than a dollar a day and half the developing world lacks access to sanitation. Every week in the developing world 200,000 children under five die of disease and 10,000 women die giving birth. In addition we need to adjust ourselves to the new geography of poverty. Some regions score highly on most of the goals, whereas sub-Saharan Africa is lagging behind. In a few years' time, for the first time in history, there will be more people, in absolute figures, living in extreme poverty in Africa than in Asia.

The report of the UN Millennium Project states quite clearly that most of the world is failing to reduce the loss of biodiversity. All developing regions have experienced substantial environmental degradation over the past decade, which could very well worsen as a result of long-term, man-made global climate change. Many countries are struggling because their natural resource base – specifically the forests, fisheries, soil and water – is being progressively degraded and polluted.

In March the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, Living beyond our Means, confirmed these negative trends. In particular it focused on ecosystem services and their benefits for people, concluding with a stark warning: human activity is putting such a strain on the planet's ecosystems that we can no longer take for granted their ability to sustain future generations.

We should take very seriously the report's insistence that our planet's natural assets must be seen as part of the fight against poverty. Many of the regions facing the greatest challenges achieving the MDGs must also cope with severe ecosystem degradation. The report clearly states that "development policies aimed at reducing poverty that ignore the impact of our current behaviour on the natural environment will be doomed to failure."

The conclusion I draw from these two reports is that we need to focus more on Africa and the environment. The MDGs can and must be met. But they will not be met unless we all, donors and devel-

oping countries alike, improve on our past performance. We need to do more, and to do it better and faster.

If we are to reach the MDGs, we need to promote our global reform agenda on four fronts. First we need to reform international framework conditions. Trade and market access, investment and debt must be addressed, and we must all be willing to help establish a level playing field. Second we need donor reform, with more and better aid. The Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness, with its commitments, timetables and targets, is now the benchmark for gauging the shift from the uncoordinated donor circus of the past to the country-owned, country-led development of the future. This is why the Paris Declaration must be endorsed in the Summit Declaration, and why UN development actors must act on it. Third we need governance reform in developing countries. Development starts from the inside. Lasting development in any country requires responsible and transparent governance, including a strong and persistent focus on efforts to combat corruption. This goes for environmental policies as well. And fourth we need to mobilise the private sector and civil society. One creates jobs and promotes economic growth, the other seeks to empower the poor. Both are essential for fighting poverty.

If we lack the will to reform the way we work, the MDGs will end up being little more than wishful thinking. They will join all the other well-intentioned initiatives in the graveyard of broken promises to the poor, and our generation will have failed its most important test. We cannot let this happen.

Agreement on the MDGs and Johannesburg principles was an outstanding achievement on the part of the UN. But it will only be a true victory when the goals are reached. Only when deadlines are kept, targets are met and the poor see improvements in their own lives which do not jeopardise sustainable use of resources, only then shall we all have succeeded. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said: "All our efforts will be in vain if their results are reversed by continued degradation of the environment and depletion of our natural resources." I entirely agree with him. We must ensure that the outcome of the Summit reflects this view of sustainable development. Let us renew and strengthen our resolve and make sure we deliver the results, at the UN Summit and, most importantly, on time by 2015.

## World Resources 2005 – The Wealth of the Poor: Managing Ecosystems to Fight Poverty

Ecosystems are – or can be – the wealth of the poor. For many of the 1.1 billion people living in severe poverty, nature has always been a daily lifeline – an asset for those with few other material assets. But programs to reduce poverty often fail to account for the important link between environment and the livelihoods of the poor. World Resources 2005 argues that the generative power of nature – the bounty of ecosystems – can act as a fundamental stepping stone in the economic advancement of the rural poor.

This requires, first, that the poor manage ecosystems so that they attain – or regain – stable productivity over time. But it also requires that the poor are able to reap the benefits of this good stewardship. Unfortunately, those in poverty are rarely in such a position of power over natural resources. An array of governance failures typically intervenes: lack of legal ownership and access to ecosystems, political marginalization, and exclusion from the decisions that affect how these ecosystems are managed. Without addressing these failures, there is little chance of using the economic potential of ecosystems for reducing poverty.

World Resources 2005 details the steps necessary to empower the poor to use ecosystems both wisely and for wealth. Using examples and case studies, the report traces a route to greater environmental income. Working at the cutting edge of sustainable development, it lays out the governance changes necessary to give the poor the legal, financial, and management capacity to use nature for wealth creation that does not deplete their fragile resource base.

Eleventh in the World Resources series, World Resources 2005 is a joint report of UNDP, UNEP, The World Bank and World Resources Institute. It includes 50 pages of national statistics on current environmental, social, and economic trends in more than 150 countries.

