

Integrated Independent Study – Issue Based

Unsustainable Development in
A World of Sustainability

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Global Perspectives

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Preface:

Sustainable development is described as being “development which meets the need of present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Oxford, 1987). Therefore, unsustainable development could be defined, as development that meets the needs of present generations that compromises the ability of future generations from meeting their own needs.

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate to the effects of rapid economic development in a developing nation such as China, as well as the effects of such development in countries like South Africa and India. In order to do so, this report will incorporate the three pillars of sustainability; the economy, the environment, and society.

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Summary

This report targets to advise the reader about the three pillars of sustainability and help the reader to further understand how every decision and/or action affects every aspect of the world around them.

In order to demonstrate how decisions and actions are being taken in order to allow for the world to live in a sustainable way, and therefore allow for the growth and prosperity of further generations. This report investigates case studies from three countries, including China, India, and South Africa,

This report will help to inform the reader, gain an understanding of concepts such as; unsustainable development, pillars of sustainability and carrying capacity.

Breakdown

Unsustainable development can be understood as what happens when the economic, social, and environmental choices people use today compromise the health and well-being of future generations.

Although there are many ways in which this topic could be approached, this report will focus on--but not limit itself to--sustainability and the

environment and it will focus on the effects of the rapid economic development of countries such as China, India, and South Africa. There is quite a difference between all three countries in terms of their sustainability or unsustainability. China has been selected to demonstrate how its socialist political system impacts sustainability. South Africa has been selected to highlight how particular geographic location can impact sustainability. Finally, India has been chosen to highlight its impact on the sustainability of our planet as a result of its polluted “sacred” river, the Ganges, and its wasteful lifestyle (factoids, 2010).

This report will explain the effects of decisions made by each country in depth, including how it affects the three pillars of sustainability including the economy, the environment, and society, and suggest some possible solutions that may lead to a more sustainable future.

To truly explain how this correlates to a developing nation, it is first important to understand what exactly is being referred to as a “developing nation”. In the case of this report, it will refer to, and mean the same as, a developing country. It will, in this context, refer to the direct proof of how it is in fact developing.

The term “developing” can be explained as, “The process of developing or being developed”, or, “A specified state of growth or advancement” (Oxford, 2010). Both of these definitions will come into play during this report.

Arguments

In the past, it was believed that people could do whatever they pleased to the planet and that the planet would take care of itself. People could mine, harvest, burn, refine or exploit resources and the planet would heal. Further research into this rather ignorant idea proves that this is not true. It was recognized that habits must change and that solutions to pollution and exploitation must be found. As more and more solutions to global problems were crafted, however, more problems were introduced – some as a result of those solutions themselves. (Deragon, 2011).

The necessity for technological development is without a doubt overwhelming. It appears to some, as though survival itself would be almost impossible if humans were incapable of furthering technology. There seemed to be no time to think about the consequences of technological development as an industry itself. Today, however, there is both time and necessity to reflect what has been done to the environment. The damages have become quite apparent.

If we, as responsible citizens, wish for the success of future generations, changes must be made. The current habits demonstrated by our generation, compromise the well being of future generations.

Why should something be done? Mankind cannot survive forever under the current conditions being placed upon the future. Desertification, over-

population, lack of food and water, poverty, are just a few of the problems that should prove quite challenging for generations to come.

It can be argued that the purpose of life is to create a stable foundation for the future. By living an unsustainable life style, this purpose is being disregarded. Remember the expression, “always leave the camp ground cleaner when you leave than it was when you arrived.”? Life can only continue when the planet is cared for and nurtured to be better than it was before.

The quality of life nowadays seems to be measured in dollars. This is not a very good way to live. Success is seen as how much “stuff” one owns, how fancy one’s car is, what type of gasoline one uses, and how big one’s house is. This mission to “keep up with the Joneses” causes a much greater separation between upper-class families (the rich) and lower-class families (the poor). There is only so much money to go around. In an effort to make money, those who “own” production must “take” from those who make production. A lower production cost can increase a company’s profitability. Of course, one would never engage in such exploitation unless it was legal. Hence, Canada protects its citizens through strict labour laws. Efforts to increase profitability can also cause a company to use “cheaper” raw materials. In doing so, a company can have big impacts on the environment through its exploitation. We can see this exploitation in countries like China and India.

“Economic development and environmental quality are equally important components of community growth. Unfortunately, this awareness comes after decades of environmental neglect” (L.W. and Kamath J., 1995) This statement highlights the importance of balance. Communities are only as strong as their weakest link – when there is poverty, there is crime. When there are no resources, there is no employment. When there is no employment, there is no income. When there is no income, there is crime. Essentially, when there is nothing to produce, there is no production and no growth. The cost of health care itself as a result of lung cancer and air pollution has sky-rocketed to the degree whereby Ontario’s hospitals are unable to keep up a proper standard of care.

Disregard for sustainable agricultural practices including, “rapid and irreversible conversion of prime agricultural land, loss of unique plant and animal communities, and increased pollution of water and air resources.” can result in lower food production and can lead to world hunger. (LIC, 2001). “Should nothing be done to fix these bad practices, the effects will only worsen”. (Sachs, 2000).

In the world’s worsening environmental situation, people are also lowering the planet’s carrying capacity. Carrying capacity refers to the planet’s ability to sustain the people who live on the planet. By taking more than what we need, it is not possible for the world to regenerate its resources fast enough. As the world’s population soars beyond its current staggering

figure of over 6 billion people, the amount of food, energy, and general produce the world can provide reaches its limit. The world's supplies have been tapped. Will they eventually be "tapped out"? Overpopulation is an issue that both China and India have been concerned about. Currently, these two nations lead the population boom and can account for nearly 1/3 of the world's entire population. What will happen to the world's sustainability should they not be able to control their ecological footprint – the amount of pressure their very existence places on the world's supplies? Truly, population control is an issue that can be addressed through studies of social sustainability.

History of Issue

Since the beginning of time, the world has been in a constant state of evolution. The human race has always believed that bigger is better, leading to the creation of political views such as imperialism (**Füredi, 1994**). However, on a smaller scale, the development of each individual has been in general quite unsustainable. The effects however, of such development have not been as apparent until now. Human kind is beginning to be able to see what damages have been caused to future generations by their neglect. This neglect leads to unsustainable development.

Unsustainable development affects humans on a worldwide scale. When one country makes a decision about its growth, it causes affects on other countries as well. Most oil is extracted from a developing country, and shipped off to a developed country. Cuba could easily be used as an example for this, as they have many pumps in the country that are owned and operated by Chinese companies. This results in serious problems on the ecosystem of such areas. The land that is used to house both the pumping station, and the pipes is contaminated by the oil. This forces animals to relocate and plants to cease growing in such areas. Also, oil pumping will often lead to an increase in greenhouse gasses which can in turn result in global warming and acid rain.

In order to harvest and/or refine oil on a massive scale, heavy machinery is required. At this time, there is no way to run such machines without using oil – a non-renewable energy sources. At the current rate that these machines are being used it will not be a possible source of energy for future generations. Heavy machinery also compresses the land to the degree whereby it is impossible to grow food. This can result in a diminished food supply to the people who live in the oil-rich areas. Economic disparity can begin. Those who work in the oil industry are well-paid. These workers typically belong to the nation that owns the pump. Those who “live” in the area are not employed and their very existence is threatened. Hostility towards the “richer” becomes inevitable. Often, insecurity exists in

developing countries where oil is harvested without regard for the social and environment and economic impact that can occur.

The same type of exploitation occurs in the lumber industry. Forestry industries have chosen to clear cut hectares of land in numerous developing nations including China, India, and many nations whose forests are some of the last rainforests of the world. (Natural Resources Defense Council, 2000). Some 86 000 hectares of trees to be cut down a day (Mongabay, 2005). Once again, the clear-cutting leaves citizens who live in the region with few resources. The negligence of government fails to protect its citizens who are unable to fend for themselves and they become ill and unable to work or hostile towards the foreign forestry industries. The rainforests of Indonesia and Brazil are among those whose trees provide oxygen for the very workers who exploit the forests. These two sources of energy, one renewable, one non-renewable, are both are being used at a rate that does not allow for the sources to replenish fast enough for future consumption.

Now that the world has a higher demand for energy itself as the driver of economic prosperity, and there seems to be higher and higher demand for non-renewable energy, there is a growing concern that the problems the oil and forestry industries face cannot be fixed. Unsustainable growth has not always been an issue. There was a time when the planet kept pace with the demands of industry. It has only begun to be an issue since the use of natural resources has surpassed the quantity that the earth can resupply it.

In other words, the problem is now an issue as industry has exceeded the earth's carrying capacity. Remember, that the carrying capacity of the earth refers to the amount of people it is able to hold, whilst also being able to resupply and maintain sustainability.

Although unsustainability has begun to become apparent, there have been no large-scale measures to correct it. However, that being said, there have been several efforts done on a small scale. Switching to renewable energy that cannot run out, such as solar or wind for example, are just some examples of such efforts.

The entire history of sustainable development also seems to revolve around the population, and the carrying capacity of the planet. The estimated carrying capacity of the earth at this time is 10-15 billion humans (Biog, 2005)

This does bring up, the *Bruntland Commission* (bookrags, 2010). This is the name given to the world commission on environment and development that was first chaired by Gro Harlem Bruntland in 1984 and created by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. It was the job of this commission, to research the interrelations between development and the environment. The final report was presented to the UN's General Assembly in 1987. (bookrags, 2010) This was a report submitted to the UN, which spoke directly of sustainable development, and offered many solutions as to how this could be achieved. It also went on to talk about several problems that could possibly get in the way (UN Document, 1987).

Expert

Dr. John A. Baden is both the founder, and a chairman for the Foundation for Research on Economics and the Environment. This organization is also often referred to as F.R.E.E. he also helped create “Gallatin Writers, Inc” (FREE-ECO, 2001). These organizations specialize in environmental policy analysis.

Dr Baden graduated from Indiana University in 1969, where he received his Ph.D. and was awarded a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship in environmental policy. He has also helped lead in developing the New Resource Economics, an incentive based approach to the management of environmental and natural resources. Over his career, he has been awarded numerous teaching awards, published a total of 7 books, and is the author of several articles discussing environmental policies.

In his non-academic career, he had served two terms on the National Petroleum Council and has also been the president of the Association of Private Enterprise Management. He was also the co-founder of the Environmental Management M.B.A. program at the University of Washington.

He has now retired to the Gallatin Valley in Montana, where him and his wife own and operate their own ranch (free-eco 2001)

Dr. John A Baden’s work will greatly help this report, as his many writing deal directly with the subject of sustainable development, and both solutions and problems to achieving sustainable development (free-eco 2001)

Role of Control

In a world of constant change, some being natural, some being developed by human kind, does some “one” need to be in charge of what is done. There is not a some “one” in charge. There is however a some “thing” in charge. It is a group of people that have the control. No one person can possibly assume the overall control over the methods of development. It is however, a choice made by everyone. If everyone decided that they wanted to try and find a solution to un-sustainability, a solution would be able to be found. This doesn't, however, mean there are some people that have more control over development than others do. The companies and firms that are put in charge of projects could make a considerable effort into improving the sustainability of what they build or construct. By accepting the methods chosen for developing the world, being either sustainable or not, it is allowing the unsustainable methods to continue.

There are groups however, that can claim some control in this situation. Groups such as the Foundation for Research on Economics and the Environment, the Hammes Company, the International Panel on Climate Change, the Earth System Governance, and the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia are all groups that are able to make some critical decisions in the development process and how it affects the environment.

Religious/Spiritual Aspects

Whilst there is no official religion that believes either for or against sustainable development, there is a lot however to be said about its spiritual influence.

The biggest belief system in unification and oneness with the earth would have to be Buddhism. Buddhism is often thought of as philosophy and not a religion. Therefore, it can be spoken of as a belief system, without referring to it as an organized religion. Also, it can be separated from other mainstream religions, as it not only allows for several different interpretations of all that it says, but it also allows for a Buddhist to become part of another religion if he so chooses.

There is another type of belief system that is called the Green Movement. This is a group of soul searchers who believe in an earth spirit name Gaia. And also believe that the earth is a deity in the form of a single combined organism (Webecoist, 2008).

The green movement does not gather very much respect. The reason for this is, it was originally formed by “radical environmentalists, feminists, Marxists, and peaceniks in the sixties” (Letusreason 2005).

Since neither of these two groups has gathered many followers compared to more mainstream religions such as Christianity or Judaism, the ideology of the earth as a single and uniformed oneness has not yet reached

very many people's hearts, thus making the earth more a second thought, as opposed to one's initial thought.

Case Study: China

In the year 1990, Beijing (Appendix 1) was said to be the third most air-polluted city in China (World Watch, 2007). Since then, there have been many efforts made to allow for better sustainability in the area. There have even been by-laws passed to not allow motor vehicles to be anywhere near Beijing during certain times or the year of the "Olympics" (Enviro News, 2007).

Now, sustainability has actually become more of a policy for Chinese government

(Ideas Rebec, 1999). It has even been said, that China will be using more environmentally friendly means of transportation (Xiaotian, 2011). An example of this would be the Maglev train system. The origins of this mode of transportation originated in Germany, hence why it is often associated with the Transrapid 09 test facilities in Germany. However this is quite debatable since the first functioning electromagnetic locomotive was released to the public in 1968 in New York whilst the German version was not released to the public until 1979 (pulaki, 2003).

Maglev, which is an acronym given to the magnetic levitation system, is said to use a considerable less amount of energy than a conventional train. Most of the energy required is used solely to mitigate the amount of air friction, and not to actually move the train (Bonsor, 2010). Over short distances, however, the

accelerating force required by a system based purely on electromagnetism, is considerably close to that of a regular train. As well as if it is travelling at slow speeds. However, once the speeds of such systems are at their maximum, 581 km/h, the efficiency becomes infinitely better than that of a regular steam, or coal powered train (Luu, 2005).

With the 2008 Beijing Olympics on their way, China had decided that it must become a sustainably developed. This was done, in reaction to the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney Australia, which had been known as the Green Olympics (Wasserstrom, 2009). Approaching the end of the set up to the Olympics, Beijing had become much more sustainable than the rest of China, however Shanghai had also decided, for other reasons, such as being such a tourist attraction, to become the world's leading commercial city in the 21st century (Rediff, 2009). In order to do this they would have to both clean up the air, and the river that surrounds the city. In doing this, they would be able to show to the world that sustainable development is good for business, tourism, and the cities own citizens.

In order to ensure that sustainable development would be met, the Chinese government has invested approximately 12 billion USD between 1998 and 2007 (Redoyt, 2011). They have also planned to improve their environmental protection by over 15% (Landecon, 2009) and are forcing the most polluting factories to either shut down, or improve. They are also requiring that other factories be moved away from cities and into rural areas (Hopa, 2010). They are

also attempting to improve the efficiency of energy use, by encouraging the modernization of its industries (Macdonald, 2011).

Although the highest amount of energy supplied in China is coal, the government is currently in the process of attempting to convert their power to more renewable resources such as natural gas (Jeremy, 2011). This is primarily being used, a sort of a “transition” energy source, in order to achieve sustainability.

In the northern regions of China, there is a water deficiency (Aoyama, 2011). There is a high demand for water as there are high amounts of agriculture. Often, the Yellow River, will cease to flow, due to the over withdrawal from the water zone that surrounds it (Borthwick, 2005).

China is a socialist country. This means that the government primarily controls the wealth of the country. In an effort to help reduce the rate of poverty within the nation, the government will use a very “Robin Hood” styled approach. By taxing the rich, and giving the money to the poor, they are able to eliminate both upper, and lower class incomes (Lauriean,2010). There are however, many defects to this type of government. When the money is entirely controlled by the government, the amount of work someone does, will not matter. Both the brain surgeon, and the store clerk, will both earn the same income. And so, there is no incentive for one person to continue to work on a more difficult task, when they do not get more out of it.

Case Study: South Africa

South Africa is a very interesting nation in that there is so much interest in its future sustainability. Despite being surrounded by developing countries, it is well on its way to becoming a sustainably developed nation as a result of a few organizations whose sole priority is to aide South Africa in becoming a sustainably developed country. One of these organizations is the United Nations Development Program South Africa (UNDP SA) (Diffenbaugh, 2011). Green Development is also working hard at helping South Africa to achieve its ultimate goal of becoming sustainable by providing the nation with “sustainable energy”. Green Development builds and donates, “passive solar design and thermal performance solar water heaters”, sustainable building materials and finishes, renewable energy technologies, and energy efficient appliances and technologies to South Africa. Furthermore, Green Development respects the environment even when producing their products. It is mindful that its production does not contaminate the water, produce toxic waste and does not over-use energy. (SEA, 2011).

One significant economic advancement that South Africa has made is that it has begun to deal with the problem of unemployment resulting from parents needing to stay home and care for their children, rather than going to work and contributing to the economy. On April 11th 2011, the Lynedoch Baby Center

opened. This centre allowed parents of children to return to work knowing that their children were going to be well taken care of (SEA, 2010). Now that the parents were able to generate an income, they would be able to invest their finances into more sustainable (although costly) materials, as opposed to the cheapest goods on the market which were produced using unsustainable methods.

In terms of economy, South Africa is reported to be among an upper-middle class income country. In all of Africa, there are only four countries that hold that kind of position (The World Bank Group, 2001). This title may be more fragile than the environment. In the beginning of the second millennium President Thabo Mbeki decided to help the economy of the country by loosening the very strict labour laws. This resulted in lower salaries, poorer working conditions and more part-time work. How can one sustain a family with these types of conditions let alone choose more environmentally friendly products? Mr. Mbeki ended up putting a significant proportion of the citizens into a state of poverty whereby they earned approximately 1.25\$ a day (OECD, 2008).

In 2008, at a time when the international markets suffered an economic slide, South Africa remained relatively unaffected. It relied heavily on its natural resources (Mafirakurewa, 2009). By investing into primary resources including gold and precious gemstones, South Africa had managed to almost remain unaffected by the recession. The government had created a deficit. It had,

however, extracted many tons of gold and diamonds. South Africa was able to sell these resources once the hard times were over (Callaghan, 2008).

Case Study: India

Dating back to 1972, India (appendix II) has begun progressing from unsustainable, to sustainable development (Chen, 2010). Then the prime minister of India, Indira Ghanhi, spoke in 1972 at the UN saying that “the removal of poverty is an integral part of the goal of an environmental strategy for the world.” (Envfor, 2006). The tactics used by the Indian government to help become more economically stable, and reduce the poverty rate have worked with significantly high results. In 1974, the poverty rate in India was estimated around 55%. However, in the year 2000, that rate had dropped to approximately 26% (see appendix III). This significant drop is due to the increasing amount of literacy in the country (Keelor, 2010).

Micro financing "Microfinance is the supply of loans, savings, and other basic financial services to the poor" (Kiva, 2011) works, by giving money to someone, when they become in grave need for it.

An example of when this could be used would be if a swarm of locust came through and decimate a farmer's crop, they could apply for a micro loan, and would then be able to re grow their crops, and avoid going hungry.

Micro financing has started to become a world wide strategy. However, India is one of the most successful countries at using this. The “Parivartan”, is one of the most well known microfinance strategies (Mellor, 2009).

On average, there are about 40 million people in India every year that get changed from lower class, to middle class incomes (Chung, 2009). Thus showing that the amount of family income has greatly increased over the past few years.

As there are three “pillars of sustainability”, correcting one, will often result in the increase of effectiveness in the other two. Therefore, by decreasing the amount poverty, the social pillar of sustainability is increased, thus allowing for an increase in the rest of the remaining pillars. By the social increasing, and allowing for a lower poverty rate, people will have more money in their possession, and increasing the economic pillar. When the economy of a country rises, the amount of money useable by the government becomes much higher, and thus allowing for the research and development into more environmentally stable technology.

International Organizations

On a smaller scale, there are several organizations that help individual people to get them off the streets and into a position where they can better help the society. These organizations include; the Salvation Army, or Out of the Cold.

However, in the case of the UN, they help out mostly with Aid and countries that are under financial devastation. An example of this would be the tsunami in Japan. After such a big disaster, it would take several years for the economy of the country to return to normal and be able to help out the world in search of sustainability. With the possibility of aid from other countries, not only does the economy of the countries lending money flourish, as the money given must eventually be returned. It also helps kick start the stand point of the country that has just faced devastation.

The UN also helps out on a political viewpoint. With NATO being now affiliated directly with the UN, the members of this group have been able to help out the social and political crisis in Libya.

There are several ENGOs (Environmental Non Governmental Organization) that also help sustainable development (Chadwick, 2007). Reusing old materials does much of this, and thus reducing the amount of materials needed to be taken from the earth. Also, this allows for the world to increase its carrying capacity. This happens for a very simple reason. Because materials are being re used, it is not necessary to take more. An organization that does just this would be Conservatree (Herdeg, 2003).

Conservatree is an ENGO (Environmental Non Governmental Organization) that specializes in recycled paper. The amount of energy required to recycle paper, is much less, then the amount or energy required to fabricate new paper. In fact, it takes exactly 70% less energy (Brook, 2006)

Another example of an ENGO that specializes in sustainable development would be the Dogwood Alliance. The Dogwood Alliance had once done big protests in order to stop wood chipping in forested areas. The focus of the group has since then diverged into more isolated events, such as saving the red pines and protecting the trees along the east coast. Since this has happened, and they no longer seem to be focusing on large-scale wood chipping, the amount of clear cuts and deforestation has greatly increased (Dogwood, 2010).

The Wilderness Society focuses mostly about the restoration of African wilderness, making it an ideal discussion topic for the previous case study about South Africa. In order to help save the wilderness, the ENGO will buy property from the government, and put up protection on it. This prevents big companies from coming and being able to destroy and ravage the land. Since it started back in 1935, the Wilderness Society has been able to collect over 110 million acres of land, over a total of 44 African states, averaging about 3 million acres per state. This truly does help preserve the natural ecosystem of the land, and keep its native animals and flora (Moulton, 2010).

Lastly, there is one very large ENGO that plays a very big part in the restoration of environmental sustainability. The World Wildlife Federation, or WWF, is without a doubt one of the most successful ENGOs on the planet. Living on the motto "We Shan't save all we should like to, but we shall save a great more then if we had never tried" (Scott, 1952). They have without a

doubt saved numerous different species, and are the leader, in wildlife preservation (Wright, 2011)

Canada's Role

In being one of the world's most developed nations, Canada has a very important role to play in how development unfolds, whether sustainable or not. Canada as a society, tries to keep itself as clean as possible. However, this does not mean it is any more sustainable than any other country. Canada has the habit of taking its massive industries, and sending them over to other countries where the labor is cheaper (CCNC, 2011). This is a very poor practice and seems to support the notion of not playing fair.

Sustainability has been growing in Canada over the past few years. Canada has been an active supporter of environmental planning sessions including Kyoto. Kyoto was one of the more impactful conferences where world leaders attempted to create laws and guidelines that respected the notion that sustainability is the world's responsibility. It was at Kyoto where Canada, among other nations, committed to a firm reduction in its greenhouse gas emissions. Although the target may not have been reached, the target itself became a topic of conversation for all Canadians – bringing Canadians on board as part of the sustainability learning curve. Schools began talking and children began learning. (Commonwealth, 2008).

Canada is one of the world's leading economic powers. The export of raw materials including coal, uranium, forests, and even water exported out of contribute to Canada's trade surplus of 627M. A responsible trade-off for this surplus would be to dedicate a certain portion to help support other countries research and develop more sustainable methods of production rather than purchasing products from those countries that use the easiest and cheapest development methods available (CCNC, 2011). Imagine the progress that could be made if instead of buying products from the Dollar Store, Canadians purchased products made in an environmentally safe way and whose companies paid their workers a fair salary? Currently, the only thing that draws us to the Dollar Store is the low price – the high unsustainability price tag is hidden.

Possible Solutions

It is much easier to fix a problem when we first understand what exactly the problem is. In this case, the problem would be that the methods of development are ultimately causing more overall harm, and causing more future problems, than good.

How many people understand, or have ever heard of planned obsolescence? In reality, one way to help the world achieve sustainability would be to stop engaging in planned obsolescence. How can we engage in this practice when it is so mysterious and seemingly buried from the media? Planned obsolescence happens when a manufacturing company purposefully expires a product before it is worn-out or obsolete in order to continue to have

its target audience continue to purchase the product (Toyer, 2010). How many times do people replace their cell phones to get the “newest and greatest” model even though there is no real difference between the new and old? This method of encouraging unnecessary product consumption creates an enormous amount of trash and becomes quite unsustainable over a long period of time. How many new materials must be extracted from the ground in order to accommodate the latest cell phone craze?

One may not be able to quell the consumer’s thirst for better and “cooler” but we can encourage manufacturers to switch their products to becoming more environmentally friendly. By changing from plastics, polyethylenes, Styrofoams, and un recycled paper products, to more renewable materials, such as a concept product which creates paper products out of elephant excrement, for example, there could be a significant reduction of harm to the planet. Besides, who wouldn’t want to talk on a phone made from elephant dung?

For China to achieve sustainable development, it must stop focusing on individual parts of the country, and focus on its country as a whole. In attempting to create the best looking country possible, it has invested all of its money into the southern boarder and have neglected the central area which is in grave crisis and is a threat to the sustainability of the planet itself. Pollution knows no borders. (Janardhanan, 2002).

Conclusion

The most seemingly insignificant damage to the environment can augment into a disaster as environmental damage can forever destabilize the pillars of sustainability: the economy, the environment, and society. Every decision and/or action that a consumer makes affects every aspect of the world around them. As soon as one pillar is affected, the other pillars are not able to balance properly. China, India, and South Africa, have all impacted the balance of sustainability through their specific regard or disregard for the economy, the environment, and their social practices. The carrying capacity of the world is finite and all three of these nations must make decisions that will allow not only their countries to grow and prosper today but also to grow and prosper tomorrow. This means that they must engage in sustainable, responsible practices. Global citizens must become more informed so that their consumer choices will target better production practices. Canada must join the sustainable wagon. Although it appears to be the world's leader in green technology, the technology is not fully implemented. What technology is implemented is often only used for one purpose, and one purpose only. We, as a people, must appreciate that which surrounds us and allow for the growth and prosperity of further generations. When we can accomplish this and truly provide a, "cleaner world than the one we left behind," we can say we have truly "lived".

Appendices

Appendix I

Map of China



Source: www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/china.html

Appendix II

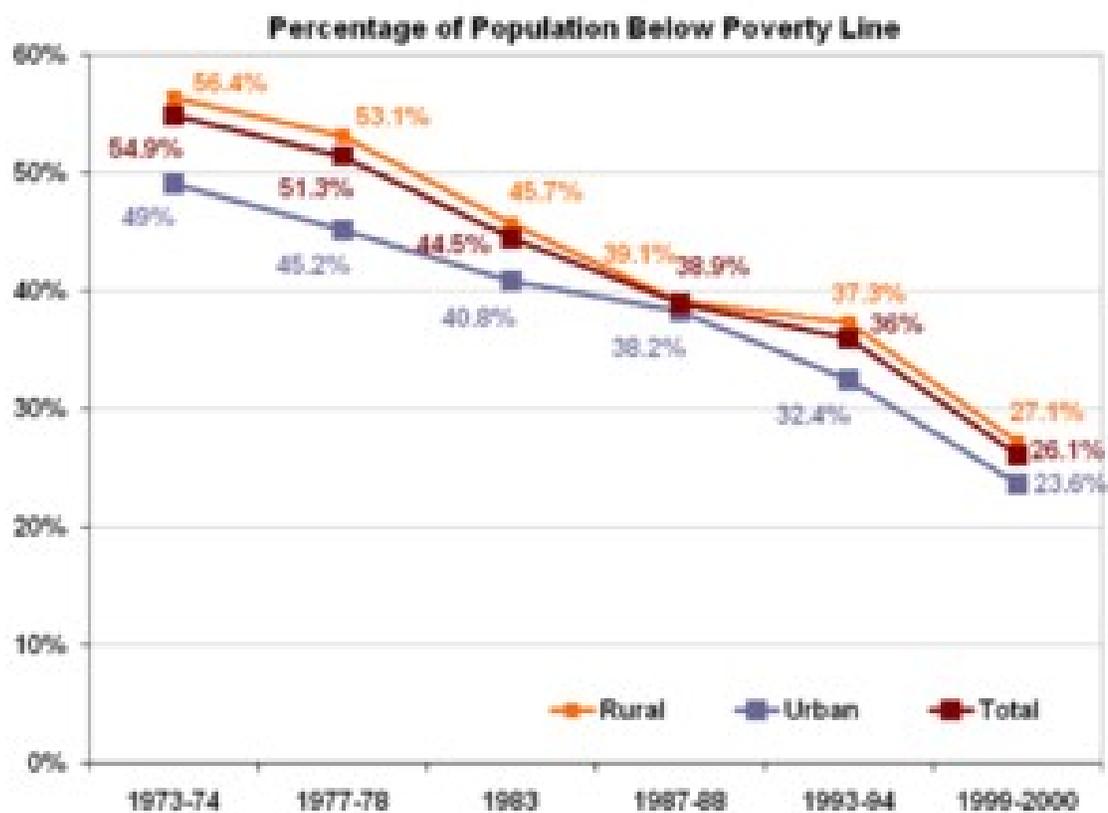
Map of Sout Africa



Source: <http://wpp.greenwichmeantime.com/time-zone/africa/south-africa/map.htm>

Appendix III

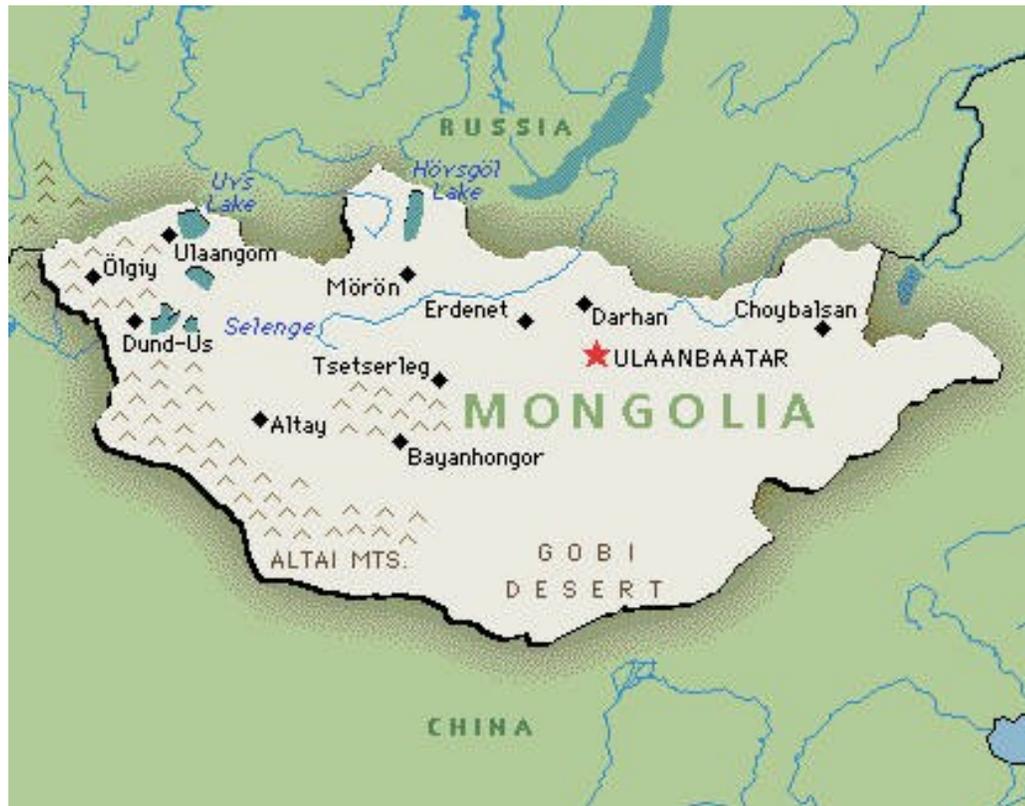
Percentage of Population Below Poverty Line



http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/ce/BPL_Data_GOI.png

Appendix IV

Mongolia



<http://www.greenwichmeantime.com/time-zone/asia/India/map.htm>

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Thu, Perry NelsonPublished, Jun 21 2007Think about that for a minute. "Rob from the rich, ye gave me no drink; 43I was a stranger, ye took me not in; naked, ye clothed me not; sick, in prison, ye visited me not. 44Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, did not minister unto thee? 45Then shall he answer them, saying, modern day liberal policies?Today, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not

unto one of these least, it's probably the basis of a lot of today's liberalism, socialism. But here, I mean pro-abortion, have you ever seen a conservative plaster their car with that many bumper stickers? Oh sure, I've seen lots of conservatives with bumper stickers. Usually it's only one, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil, and his angels: 42 for I was hungry. "The Drained Brain: Robin Hood was a socialist." *The Drained Brain*. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 May 2011. <<http://laurieandrainbrain.blogspot.com/2008/10/robin-hood-was-socialist.html>>.

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