



Declaration on International
Science and Technology
Co-operation for Sustainable
Development

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Date(s)

Adopted on 30/01/2004

Noted by the Council on 30/03/2004

Background Information

The Declaration on International Science and Technology Co-operation for Sustainable Development was adopted on 30 January 2004 on the occasion of the Ministerial Meeting of the Committee for Scientific and Technological Policy. The Declaration reaffirms the objectives set forth in the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, as adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) on 4 September 2002 and the concrete actions and measures set out in the Plan of Implementation of the WSSD. Notably Ministers emphasised the critical role of science and technology as key instruments to address the challenges in sustainable development, including the specific areas of water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity.

THE GOVERNMENTS¹ of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States:

RECOGNISING that sustainable development involves human progress towards a more prosperous and equitable future within the context of environmental conservation and even development with respect to access to resources, energy, markets, health and education;

RECOGNISING that sustainable development brings into sharper focus the growing socio-economic interdependence of developed countries with developing countries and economies in transition;

RECOGNISING that the process of globalisation has given rise to new patterns of networking that are changing the way in which knowledge is created, diffused and applied, and that comprehensive responses, especially innovative policies and technologies, are required to bridge global inequalities including in knowledge and information;

RECOGNISING that global science and technology networks and platforms bringing together relevant social and professional communities facilitate the expansion of concerted international collaboration to more effectively address the challenges of sustainable development;

RECOGNISING that in order to optimise the contributions of science and technology to sustainable development, it is necessary to enhance the use of existing national and international instruments and facilitating mechanisms, and promote mutually beneficial collaboration between governments, civil society, business and industry;

RECOGNISING that in order to increase confidence in the application of science and technology for sustainable development, citizens need reassurances about effective risk management, appropriate regulatory environments and observance of ethical considerations by science and technology practitioners;

RECOGNISING the importance of international scientific and technological co-operation as a means for human resource development and institutional capacity building to strengthen problem-solving competencies in developing countries and economies in transition;

RECOGNISING the competence of the OECD Committee for Scientific and Technological Policy in facilitating international scientific and technological co-operation and enhancing exchange of information on science and technology policy practices, and the distinctive role played by the Global Science Forum in addressing complex scientific issues as well as, more generally, the major contribution that the OECD is making in addressing sustainable development issues, and the scope that exists for providing developing countries and economies in transition with best practice frameworks in the development and implementation of science and technology policies for sustainable development;

REAFFIRM the objectives set forth in the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, as adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) on 4 September 2002; and the concrete actions and measures set out in the Plan of Implementation of the WSSD emphasising the critical role of science and technology as key instruments to address the challenges in sustainable development, including the specific areas of water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity.

DECLARE THAT:

They reaffirm their commitment expressed at the WSSD to the promotion of sustainable development through the application of science and technology by strengthening national innovation policies and programmes, and by enhancing existing global collaborative networks.

They will take the necessary steps, within the framework of international agreements as well as their respective laws and practices, to strengthen existing national and regional research and development

funding programmes and instruments to support international collaboration in science and technology for sustainable development, in particular in respect of:

- a) Citizen education and public awareness regarding safety and ethical concerns relating to the application and the utility of science and technology for sustainable development.
- b) Strengthening innovation and knowledge-generation capacities of developing countries and economies in transition to entrench science and technology for sustainable development.

They will support initiatives undertaken by the CSTP, its subsidiary bodies and more generally the OECD, notably those of the International Energy Agency (IEA), to promote international science and technology collaboration for sustainable development. These initiatives will form part of a plan of activities to be mapped and monitored. Some of these activities may include:

- a) Supporting the exchange of information about effective methods to promote sustainable development through science and technology, with the aim of achieving the objectives of this Declaration.
- b) Introducing initiatives that are complementary to but do not duplicate WSSD follow-up activities, which promote research for sustainable development and support dedicated research partnership initiatives including developing countries and economies in transition. Such initiatives may include:
 - 1. The development of new or enhanced international research co-operation initiatives that address the scientific dimensions of issues of global concern in the area of sustainable development on the basis of an evaluation of current international co-operation programmes.
 - 2. The identification of new science and technology policy choices for sustainable development as well as benchmarking good practice activities in support of the creation of framework conditions for developing countries and economies in transition.
 - 3. Supporting activities on the development of a bio-based economy, the possible establishment of a framework for a network of Biological Resource Centres and the role of biotechnology in fighting infectious diseases, especially emerging, neglected diseases.
- c) Fostering a dialogue within all relevant fora of the OECD, including the IEA, on the critical interface between science and technology and sustainable development, and the necessity for a broad collaborative effort, including with non-member economies.

They agree to review progress made in furtherance of the objectives of this Declaration within a period of three years, and to examine the need for new strategic options to ensure the most effective harnessing of science and technology for sustainable development in the appropriate OECD fora.

FURTHER DECLARE THAT THE OECD SHOULD:

Further articulate specific issues raised within the Plan of Implementation of the WSSD and by relevant OECD and CSTP policy recommendations on science and technology for sustainable development, such as the outcome of the OECD Seoul Conference on International Science and Technology Co-operation: Towards Sustainable Development, held in November 2000 and, after collection and distribution of case studies of member countries and CSTP observers, provide practical assistance and advice to them on the formulation and implementation of policies which would harness science and technology as instruments for sustainable development.

Co-operate with relevant regional and international organisations as well as civil society, industry and business, as they work to promote sustainable development through science and technology.

Periodically review the main developments and issues in the fields of sustainable development and science and technology with respect to the objectives of this Declaration.

INVITE:

Other countries to take this Declaration into account.

Relevant international organisations to take this Declaration into consideration as they develop or revise international instruments to harness the contributions of science and technology to sustainable development.

Industry, business and civil society to take the objectives of this Declaration into account and to work with governments to further them by implementing programmes for optimising the contribution of science and technology to sustainable development.

Concerned countries and relevant stakeholders to convene, in collaboration with the OECD if possible, an appropriate event such as a dedicated conference of specialists on the issues raised by this Declaration to further enhance the consensus of the WSSD on the application of science and technology for sustainable development.

¹ Including the European Community.

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The OECD Member countries are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Union takes part in the work of the OECD.

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Since the creation of the OECD in 1961, around 450 substantive legal instruments have been developed within its framework. These include OECD Acts (i.e. the Decisions and Recommendations adopted by the OECD Council in accordance with the OECD Convention) and other legal instruments developed within the OECD framework (e.g. Declarations, international agreements).

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- **Declarations:** OECD legal instruments which are prepared within the Organisation, generally within a subsidiary body. They usually set general principles or long-term goals, have a solemn character and are usually adopted at Ministerial meetings of the Council or of committees of the Organisation.
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