

## **CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE NECESSITY OF IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES**

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**Key words:** environment, sustainable, ecological dimension, regeneration capacity, anthropogenic impact.

**Abstract.** The preoccupations regarding the sustainable development, at the level of each country, but also at the global scale, are the result of a complex of problems which worry: poverty, in the middle of the wealth; the degradation of the environment; the loss of the trust in the institutions; the uncontrolled extension of the urbanisation; the lack of the safe work place; the youth marginalisation; the removal of the traditional values; the unemployment and the other economic and financial or geo-political crises etc. From the synthesis of the performed analyses, two essential risks can be formulated: the increase of the industry based on the consumption technologies and the increase of the number of the population in certain regions of the globe. The first risk leads to the disappearance of the natural resources and the pollution of the ecosystems, and the second one is obvious through the reduction of the food resources and the drinkable water on the planet. The latest analyses reveal that there still is a danger, which becomes more and more obvious. The Planet Earth's Biosphere has already lost its capacity of regeneration following the anthropogenic, anthro-technical, political impacts etc.

### **Introduction**

The first studies regarding the theory and the practice of the sustainable development first appeared on a global scale, because of the fact that at this level the researchers were able to observe more visibly the negative effects of the development so far. Of course, at a national level, in different countries of the world, a series of legal, economic and financial and educational elements have been created that constitute a start for the sustainable development in the future.

From 1972, when the Conference on the environment from Stockholm took place, and up to the present, over 60 interpretations of the development concept have been identified, in the new vision of the interdependencies of the environment

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problems, the general welfare and the economic growth process. The area of these interpretations is found between the two extreme limits: the one from the first report to the Club of Rome - *the Limits of growth* - where the experts approximate the stop of the economic growth, and the one of the "green" - who consider the environment the only priority.

Until not long ago the concept of *sustainable development* was used only in ecology and related to the ecological problems. But lately there has been a broadening of the concept and its extrapolation to the other fields (Mazilu, 2009).

Within the Brundtland report, titled **Our Common Future**, presented at the United Nations Conference from Rio-de-Janeiro from June 1992, it is stated that *the sustainable development is designed in order to reconcile the economy and the environment, on a new development way not to support the human progress, not only in some places and for several years, but for the entire planet and for the longer future.*

The point of view broadly accepted is the sustainable or viable development, within which the interaction of the compatibility of four systems is aimed: economic, human, environmental and technological, so that to ensure the satisfaction of the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of the future generations to ensure their own necessities. In order to achieve the compatibility condition of the 4 systems which are conditioning each other, the sustainable development strategy includes, as an indispensable essential element, the simultaneity of the progress in the four dimensions.

The vision of the strategies regarding the sustainable development starts from the understanding of the fact that the economy of a country, as the ones of all the countries, means more than the sum of the component parts, that the changes produced in a subsystem or another triggers general changes, due to the dynamic interdependences existing within its components.

Starting from the factors that influence each other in the process of development - the population, the natural resources, the natural environment, the agricultural production, the industrial production and the pollution - the strategy of the sustainable development aims at finding the adequate criteria to optimise the resources - needs report, objectives to reach - necessary means report, based on the mutual compatibilities, in time and space. It is about the conception and the achievement of such an economic environment that, through its inputs and outputs, finds itself directly and dynamically compatible with the natural environment, but also with its current and future needs and interests of the generations which coexist and follow.

From this we understand that the sustainable development is defined by a *natural dimension* - in the sense that there exists only as long as the environment created by the man is compatible with the natural environment; an *economic*

*dimension*, based on competitiveness; a *social and human dimension* - in the sense that all the outputs from the human made environment must answer directly to the current and future needs and interests of the generations that coexist and follow; a *national and state, regional and world dimension* - in the sense of the compatibility of the optimisation criteria, nationally and regionally and globally. Thus, the concept of *sustainable development*, as well as its achievement strategy, deals with the problem of the human being and, in general, of the human collectiveness, from the perspectives of time and space. Such perspectives, which must be integrated by the sustainable development, depend on the people's culture, on their past existence, on the reality and the difficulty of the problems which they face on each level, on the degree of development and incorporation of the scientific and technical conquests, on the national and international development strategies. Without neglecting the concrete aspects of the daily life, the sustainable development, through the interdependent approach of the five problems which the current development strategies are facing, is trying to draw up scenarios to follow, within which the future should find a better and safer place in the present time we are living. The four dimensions offer the future development model the character of *human -sustainable*.

Through the answer that must be given to the tendencies that are manifesting - the rapid growth of the population, the accelerated industrialisation, the widely spread malnutrition, the disappearance of several resources that are not renewable and a natural environment in degradation, the human sustainable development aims at creating, in time and space, the conditions for exceeding the limits of progress, though the progress of the limits, in quantity and quality, from the position of the human beings, of the compatibility of the environment created by the human with the natural environment, of the interests of generations in time and space.

In comparison with the development so far, the human -sustainable development integrates the following major exigencies, at the level of all the national economies and of the global system of the world economy:

- fundamental behaviour, essentially reviewed, as the direct manner of fighting the objective and subjective restrictions of the development and collaboration with the natural environment;
- the substantial improvement, in absolute and relative terms, of the development in the countries in development, related to the economically developed states of the world;
- a strategic planning, with the specific and common elements, found in the direct compatibility, nationally and internationally;
- achieving a rational and sustainable status, taking into account the traditions, the education and the current activities, the immediate interests, shall make the

transition disputed and slow, the success being ensured by the real understanding of the human condition, in this context of radical changes;

- through passing to the sustainable development, we hope to achieve and create a present within a more and more secure future;

- within this fundamental process, it is essential for the science to help the humans research themselves - from the point of view of the objectives and its values, as much as they want to research the world they want to change;

- within this large and difficult complex process, the key to the sustainable development is not only to survive for the human species, but also to survive without falling into a valueless existence.

According to the Brundtland report, the sustainable development is a new kind of human strategy which answers the current needs, without compromising the possibilities of satisfying the future generations' needs.

In essence, the human-sustainable development is defined by the following more important elements:

- the permanent and safe compatibility of the man made environment with the natural environment.

- the equality of chances of the generations which coexist and follow in time and space.

- the interpretation of the present through the future, under the form of the introduction as a purpose of the sustainable development, of the ecological safety instead of the profit maximization.

- the introduction of the compatibility of the national development strategies as a consequence of the stronger interdependences, geo-economically and ecologically.

- the transfer of the weight centre in ensuring the general welfare, from the quantity and the intensity of the economic growth to its quality.

- the ecological capital is in a relation of interdependence and it organically integrates with the man made capital, with the human (cultural) capital, within the global category that is redefining the economic and social objectives and extends the horizon in time and space.

- the passing to a new strategy with a natural and human face, where the economic development and social objectives are subordinated to the human and the environment's health, in time and space.

Starting from this necessity of achieving these components, the new strategy of the sustainable development aims at monitoring the change of the economic growth type, the pollution control, the creation of an institutional and legal frame that is adequate and efficient, the educational system that can anticipate and perfect the knowledge, the system of economic instrument to prevent, protect and ensure the

rare resources, the specific indicators system, which could help appreciate the quality of the human development and life.

The sustainable development needs strategies on short and medium term horizons, but on a long term for the perspective of 20-25 years. In this sense, policies are necessary at a regional, international and global level, at the level of the state and at the local level, with the compatible objectives in time and space, based on criteria which derive from the improvement of the people's conditions of life. At the same time with the basis of these policies, regulation mechanisms must function, with an economic, legal, substitution and informational feature, to ensure the achievement of the objectives set forth.

In order to evaluate the action means, we need criteria of economic and social efficiency, feasibility, acceptability and institutional compatibility.

At any level at which the problem of sustainable development is discussed, a strategic planning is necessary with clear objectives, with criteria of appreciation and measurement indicators, with support mechanisms - legal, economic, cultural and spiritual - with the ecological management of the processes, on each cycle of life, with the ecological audit necessary, with the development of some clean technologies which reach "zero defects" etc.

The theory, as well as the practice of the human-sustainable development must be based on the compatibility of the policies of ensuring the quality of the human activity results with the policies of protecting the environment.

The passing to the sustainable development marks the entrance of people in the era of the environment, where the risks must be strongly reduced or eliminated. For this, the sustainable development set forth, firstly, to change the manner in which the people perceive a series of elements of life they are living. Through education, culture and science, people can overcome the perceptual threshold that determine them to notice, judge and act on a long term for a better life. This way, the humanity can turn to a new moral frontier, which proves that the problem of the development needs to be seen in interdependence, in time and space.

The era of the environment, from the point of view of the sustainable development, shows us that the progress is an illusion, if it can come to degrade the necessary conditions for a normal, prosperous life.

The achievement of the new era of the sustainable development means a period of transition in which the political leaders, as well as the citizens need to re-evaluate the purposes and the aspirations, need to redefine the standards of a successful life and need to adapt the work and the use of the free time to new values-principles, which have as objective the prosperity and the protection of the future generations.

Based on some common elements, the strategy of the sustainable development becomes operational through the adequate national policies, capable of favouring

the compatibility of the systems which condition themselves in time and space, the collaboration and the cooperation with a regional, international and global character.

In this context, although the final objective of the sustainable strategy is the same for all the countries - concrete problems which need to be solved, necessary financial sources, as well as the manner of achievement, the difficulties which can occur, the position of the population towards the objectives of such a long process, as well as the costs which have to be incurred - the stages that need to be fulfilled and the duration of the achievement of the set purposes will be different from a society to another.

Within this relatively long process, impediments will appear, besides the favourable national and international factors, in the developed countries, as well as in the countries in development. A common and strong will, however, is essential in order to achieve the unique final objective, in front of which all man are equal.

The economic literature, starting with the last decade of the 20th century, deals with the problem of the correlation between the **ecology and the economic growth and development**.

The process of economic growth is defined by the specialists as totally dependent on the natural environment, on its quality. It appears, on the other hand, the fact that any economic activity triggers discrepancies between nature and economy, between man and his/her natural environment. The bilateral report between the economic activity and the environment is questioned.

Thus, the sustainable development means the transformations and the performances that would correspond not only to the priority necessities, current for Romania, but also to the global transition of the great systems to the new model of civilisation. This means, from the point of view of the geography insertion in the sustainable development:

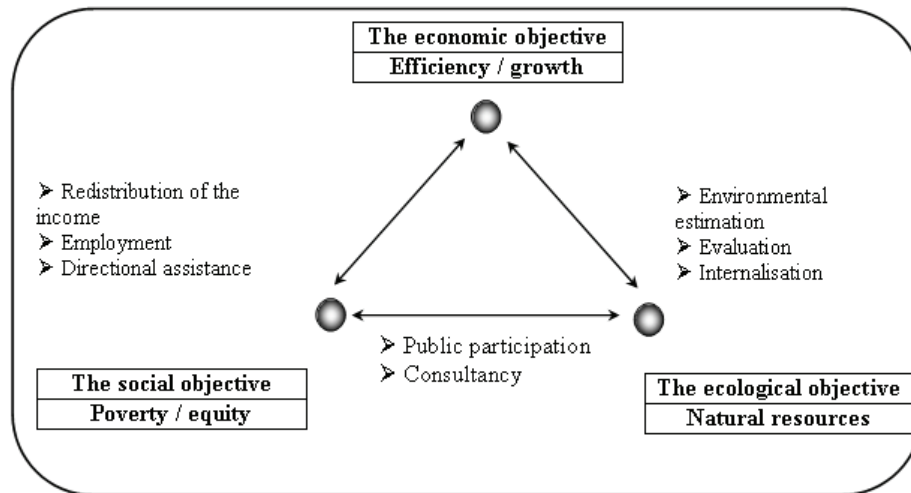
- **the constitution and the operation of the rule of law**, understood as the "device" that protects the society in a new way, more competent, more visible: the real democratisation of all the spheres of human existence and the growth of each individual's option, the formation of the ecological culture, the political culture etc.:

- **the constitution of the market economy** through the transformations encouraging investments (avoiding the slogan "we do not sell our country") which can stimulate the work competence, the free initiative, the risk assumption and the fight against the corruption etc.:

- **the direction of the sustainable development towards the improvement of the life quality** - the increase of the lifespan, ensuring a higher degree of training, the granting of man's rights and liberties etc.

- **the promotion of the sustainable development for people and through people**, as a unitary process of the economic growth, of the investment in the human capital and of ensuring the ecological safety;
- **the promotion of the continuous development** based on the stabilising and the preservation of biodiversity, of the ecological processes integration into the decisional act.
- **the promotion of a new and real concept of security** of the people (food, ecological, social of the geo-regional and sub-regional economic alliances);
- **the eradication of poverty**, the reduction of the geo-discrepancies related to the life conditions of different categories of population on regions of the country;
- **ensuring the knowledge**, the information, the awareness and the participation to the sustainable development process;
- **the free access to the information** with an economic, social character to the creation and the use of the national and international communication networks in the sustainable development field;
- **the ecologisation of knowledge**, the reshaping of the mentalities, the reorientation of the educational, ethical and moral, cultural and scientific and technological systems towards the real and authentic intellectual and spiritual values.

Fig. 1 - Alternatives and transactions between the three main objectives of the sustainable development

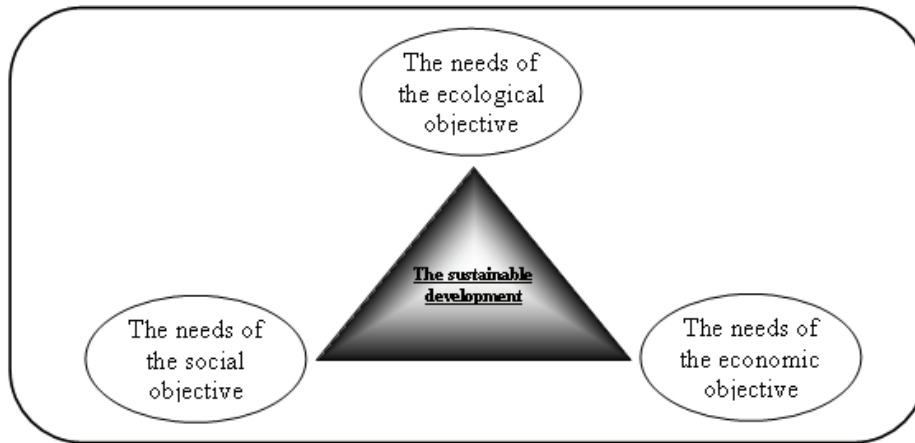


One of the major objectives of the sustainable development is **the protection of the environment**, because the degradation of the environment shall remain an obstacle in the way of development.

The concept of sustainable development itself has evolved consisting of three approaches, respectively three objectives: **economic, social and technical**.

The economic approach is based on the concept of maximum flow of income that can be generated through the maintenance of the values reserve (or of capital), which has produced these benefits. This concept is based on the principle of the optimal economic efficiency, applied to the users of poor resources. The interpretation problems appear upon the identification of the types of capital that need to be maintained (manufactured, natural or human) and their possibilities to be substituted; the evaluation of the types of capital, especially of the ecological resources. The supplementary difficulties raise the irreversibility problems and the problems related to the catastrophic breakdown, are frequent in the last decades.

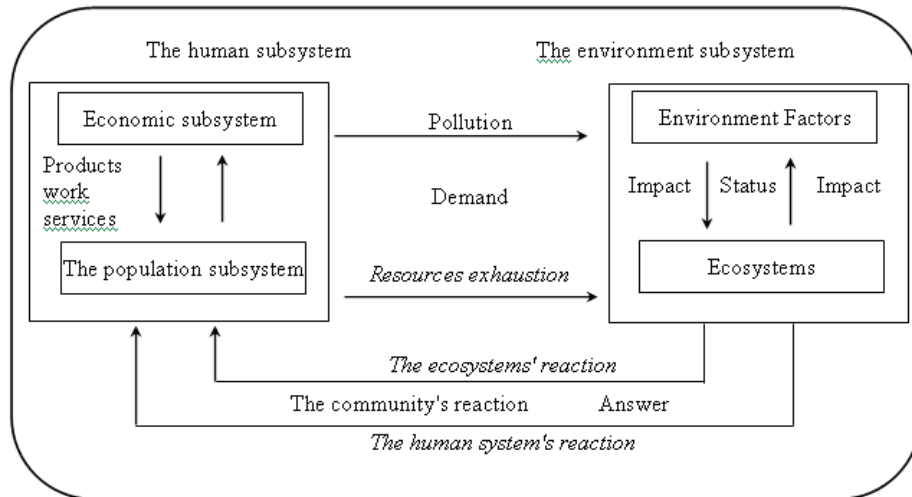
Fig. 2 - The harmony of the sustainable development objectives



The ecological approach is based on the biological and physical stability of the ecosystems. The viability of the subsystems is very important and essential to the global stability of the entire system. A fundamental aspect is attributed to the protection of the biological biodiversity. Moreover, the natural systems can be interpreted in such a way to include all the components of the biosphere, including the anthropogenic ones, like the cities. The accent is placed on the preservation of the elasticity and the dynamic capacity of such systems to adapt to the changes in time and space and not on the preservation of an ideal status.



Fig. 3 - The report between the human system and the environment one



The social and cultural approach seeks to maintain the stability of the social and cultural systems through the reduction of the destructive conflicts. The most important aspects of a type of approach consist of the promotion of equity within the same generation (especially the eradication of poverty), as well as the equity between different generations (involving the guarantee of the future generation's rights). We recommend the preservation of the existing cultural diversity in the world, as well as the use of the knowledge related to the viable practices gathered in the less dominant cultures. The modern society shall have to encourage and promote the pluralism and the original participation to the purpose of creating a more efficient decisional frame for the sustainable social development; to examine the maintenance of a set of possibilities related to the strict preservation of the basic value. This thing is due to the fact that the preferences and the technologies are not constant throughout the lives of more generations, so that the preservation of a basic value can prove to be excessive.

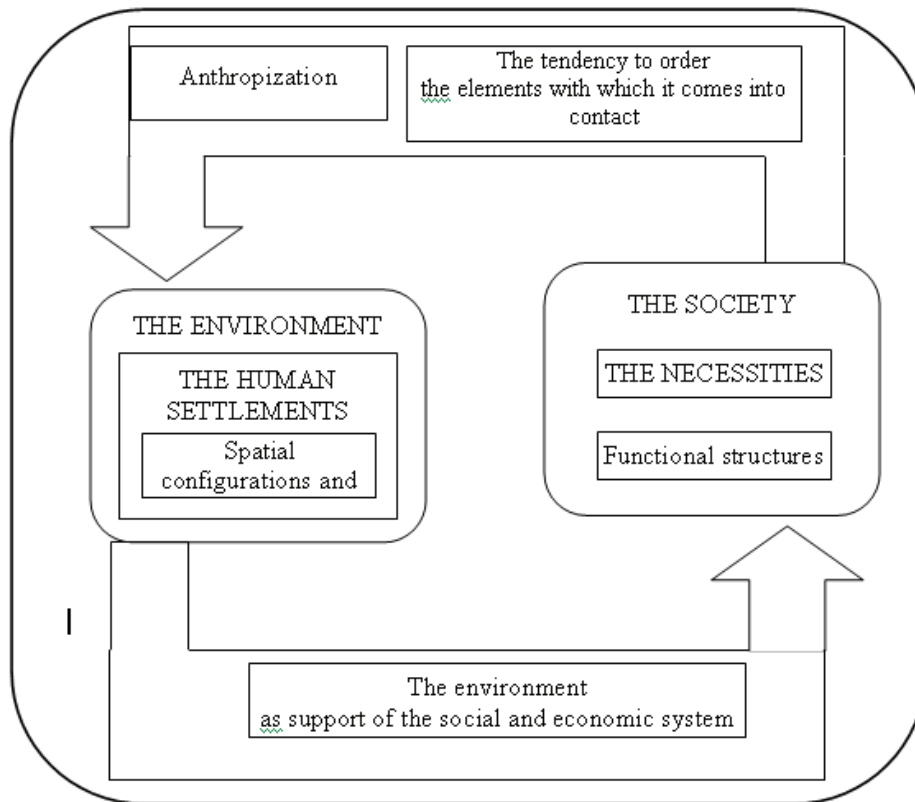
Taking into account the regeneration abilities, the importance of the preservation of the biodiversity for the sustainable development becomes so obvious from the point of view of the ecological approach, as well as the economic one. Thus, the preservation of the biodiversity allows the maintenance of the system's flexibility through the protection from the external shocks, and the preservation of the natural capital protects the values for the consumptions of the

loss of ecological flexibility. A society that consumes the fixed capital without completing it again is not sustainable.

Using the ecological approach, the loss of flexibility involves the reduction of the capacity of self-organisation of the system, but not necessarily a reduction of productivity. This depends to a certain extent on the ability of the human society to adapt and to continue to act despite the stress and the shock.

The connection between the social and cultural, economic and ecological supportability is proved through the organisational resemblances with the human communities and the ecological systems (picture 4).

Fig. 4 - The human settlement related to the environment and the societ



The implementation of the sustainable development shall need a pluralist and consultative social frame, which, among others, can facilitate the exchange of

information between the dominant groups and, until recently, between the negligible groups, for the identification of the less intensive non-polluting material ways for the progress of mankind.

The area of operation of the sustainable development strategy must be very flexible: from a personal level up to the national level or the global phenomena level.

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