

# 6.

## The Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia project

### 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

#### 1.1 Title of practice or experience

The Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia Project

#### 1.2 Category of practice/experience and brief description

The Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia (CSE) was launched in 1989. Its aim was, as its name suggests, to study the natural resources, environmental imperatives and development demands in the country and to harmonize them. The harmonization process was to be activated through the formulation of an appropriate environmental policy, which was itself to be translated into action through the development of laws and the setting of standards on the one hand, and through the development of action plans and their implementation on the other, as well as through environmental education and awareness-raising. The Environmental Policy, which impinges on all sectors of development and all sections of society, was approved in 1997, the laws are being drafted and the standards are being set.

All this was started when the country was at the height of a long civil war, and the project faced many challenges and has had to adapt its workings to the rapidly-changing political and administrative conditions. It also faced a serious threat of being derailed by well-meaning but inappropriate external intervention in the form of aggressive "aid". All these pressures, far from being destructive, helped to formulate an appropriate Environmental Policy.

#### 1.3 Name of person or institution responsible for the practice or experience

The Environmental Protection Authority of Ethiopia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Economic Development and Co-operation

***1.4 Name and position of key or relevant persons or officials involved***

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***1.6 Name of person and/or institution conducting the research***

The Environmental Protection Authority of Ethiopia

***1.7 Details of research person/institution***

As in **1.5** (i) above

## **2. THE PROBLEM OR SITUATION BEING ADDRESSED BY THE PRACTICE/INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE**

The environment of Ethiopia is very varied. The lowest area in the world is a very dry and very hot salt desert in the Afar Depression that is 200 m *below* sea level. But about 40% of the country's just over one million km<sup>2</sup> of land area is above 1,500 m above sea level, the south-western parts of which get rain for about 9 to 10 months per year. Over 80% of the water of the River Nile comes from Ethiopia. Agriculture is an age-old activity and Ethiopia is one of the world's 12 major centres of crop domestication and diversification.

But the desperate condition of Ethiopia manifested itself dramatically in the 1984-85 drought and famine when probably more than one million people died. Drought and famine have been a recurring reality over the last few decades. This is the problem which the Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia tried to understand and to develop a set of policies and strategies to deal with, besides dealing also with a new set of problems emanating from efforts at modernization.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES AND POPULATION GROWTH**

Ethiopia's population, which is the second largest in sub-Saharan Africa after Nigeria's, is growing fast. Ethiopia also has the largest livestock population in Africa, which exerts additional pressure on the renewable natural resources. Given this setting, the present methods of resource use and management, which consist of tapping from nature with little compensatory inputs, are causing serious depletion at an accelerating rate. If unchecked, this could cause a serious impairment of the environment's ability to keep producing the renewable natural resources to maintain the population, even at its current level of poverty.

#### **Human-support capacities**

The demand for cropland, fuel, timber, forage and browse, which is not compensated for by adequate inputs, e.g. replanting, and in the absence of effective management, is leading to an increasing depletion of the country's natural vegetation, particularly from pastures, woodlands and forests. In 1984, the annual use of wood was estimated at 24 million cubic metres, some 60% in excess of the sustainable level given the present rate of unaided natural regeneration (FAO, 1988a & 1988b). Even though these estimates seem to have considered only the annual production from high forests, ignoring the biomass produced in woodlands, grasslands, bushlands and agricultural ar-

eas, and are thus unduly alarmist, the situation is nevertheless bad. Even the more carefully-based estimates of CESEN-ANSALDO/ FINMECCANICA Group (1986) do not give room for optimism. It should be pointed out, however, that their figures give a standing biomass of more than 14 times the size of the annual production, or an annual production of only 6.9%. Considering that forests with mature trees of much locked up biomass are not extensive in Ethiopia, and considering that much of the present vegetation consists of herbs and shrubs, this proportion should be lower. Since standing crop is easier to determine than the rate of production, it would thus seem that they have underestimated the latter. The Ethiopian Forestry Action Program (1993) shows that if appropriate steps are taken, the situation could be reversed within about a decade.

While the soils in the Ethiopian highlands have a high inherent fertility, the very low level of fertilizer use to replace the nutrients removed with crops, and the steep and dissected terrain with extensive areas of slopes of over 15%, coupled with the high intensity of rainfall, have led to accelerated soil erosion reaching up to 400 tons/ha/annum. It is estimated (FAO, 1986) that out of the 54 million hectares in the highlands, including Eritrea, serious degradation has occurred in 14 million hectares and moderate degradation in 13 million hectares, while in 2 million hectares the soil has been made so shallow through erosion that crop cultivation is no longer possible. The reduction in soil depth and thus in moisture-holding capacity compounds the problems of drought in those areas of the country where rainfall is low and variable.

The major lakes of the country cover 7,000 km<sup>2</sup> and have a maximum sustainable yield of fish estimated to be about 35,300 metric tons. Over the past 20 years, the consumption of fish has increased in popularity in Addis Ababa and other urban centres in and around the Rift Valley Lakes area. It is also popular in Bahir Dar on the southern shore of Lake Tana. The catching of fish in the Rift Valley Lakes has more or less kept pace with the increased demand in Addis Ababa. Elsewhere, the fishing potential has hardly been touched, and research and development to support this sector is still in its infancy. However, fish and other aquatic life are beginning to be threatened as industrial development has begun to pollute the water bodies.

### **Livestock production and support capacities**

Livestock are an integral part of nearly all the farming systems in Ethiopia. The most important uses of cattle are as draught animals for land preparation in the cereal-growing wetter highland areas and as sources of the staple food, milk, and as accumulated capital in the arid lowland areas inhabited by pastoralist and semi-pastoralist societies. In both cases, small ruminants con-

stitute an important form of capital. There is a steady demand for meat and milk in urban areas. In rural areas, small ruminants are the main suppliers of meat and hides. Hides and skins are second to coffee as major foreign exchange earners.

Livestock numbers, and hence the ability of highland farmers to produce crops, have been severely affected by the recurrent droughts. The deteriorating environmental conditions have also adversely affected feed resources, leaving the country's herds poorly nourished and prone to diseases. Veterinary and other livestock support services have not developed fast enough to cope with these problems.

Because the Ethiopian highlands support a large livestock population, the area experiences a severe deficit of animal feed. One estimate (Hurni, 1988) forecasts that all pasture land will be fully utilized by 2005. The demand for cropland has come into increasing competition with that for grazing land.

A succession of droughts over the past 20 years has led to catastrophic livestock losses, as well as to a deterioration in the rangelands. The long-term dynamics of rangelands in relation to livestock depletion and recovery are still imperfectly understood. In certain areas, the position has been exacerbated by the loss of rangelands to large-scale irrigation, to parks and to encroachment by cultivators, placing increased demands on the remaining rangeland resources (Girma Bisrat, 1990).

### **3. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE/INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE AND ITS MAIN FEATURES**

#### **THE PROCESS OF FORMULATING THE CONSERVATION STRATEGY**

The Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia (CSE) takes a holistic view of natural, human-made and cultural resources, and their use and abuse. It seeks to integrate into a coherent whole existing and future federal and regional government planning in all sectors that impinge on the environment, including agriculture, forestry, wildlife, fisheries, soils, water, minerals, energy, urban planning and cultural heritage conservation.

A sound partnership has been sought between planners, decision-makers and the Ethiopian people to manage Ethiopia's natural resources for the Ethiopian people and their children. Most sections, groups and classes of people have been consulted and have participated in the formulation of this strategy.

The policy-making phase encompassed broad-ranging discussions and a full debate at both federal and regional levels in order to arrive at a consensus. The process was launched by the Government in May 1990 at a conference held in Addis Ababa. The conference provided an opportunity for issues to be considered at all levels. Representatives from every government department were in attendance, together with delegates from the business community, the United Nations, and donor and NGO agencies. Experts from many fields contributed with their powers of analysis.

The conference was followed by the creation of task forces and regional workshops and a deeper analysis of the issues raised. The regional and zonal task forces took the action into the countryside through a series of field visits and grassroots-level consultations. In this way, regional and community needs and priorities have been effectively addressed.

The CSE will be implemented by the Government of Ethiopia through a co-ordinated investment programme. A complete review of legislation that may affect conservation is in progress. Laws will be modified or enacted to support the process of conservation without hindering development.

This is an umbrella strategy which considers all sectors of human activity and enhances the capacity and effectiveness of existing and subsequent strategies. In this respect, the CSE will play an important role in co-ordinating sectoral strategies.

The CSE recognizes the very low standard of living of the majority of the people of Ethiopia and thus their minimal ability to invest in activities that do not yield quick returns. It is, therefore, realistic and works towards enhancing their ability and will to invest in conservation.

The policy items were then separated and compiled in a volume on "The Environmental Policy of Ethiopia". This Environmental Policy was formally approved by the Government on 2 April 1997, and the understanding is that by this process, the Government has approved the whole CSE.

Based on this Policy, a framework environmental law has been drafted, and an environmental impact assessment system developed. The drafting of a law on community rights and on access to biological resources is being finalized. A detailed country-wide consultation is taking place to develop a consensus on which arm of the federal government, of each regional government, and of non-governmental organizations and the public will implement each policy item. Since the Policy is multisectoral, it is felt that such consensus-building is necessary to obviate turf-fighting among government arms and lack of clarity among the public at large.

## THE COVERAGE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

### The overall policy goal

The overall policy goal is to improve and enhance the health and quality of life of all Ethiopians and to promote sustainable social and economic development through the sound management and use of natural, human-made and cultural resources and the environment as a whole so as to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

### Specific policy objectives

The Policy seeks to:

- (a) Ensure that essential ecological processes and life support systems are sustained, biological diversity is preserved and renewable natural resources are used in such a way that their regenerative and productive capabilities are maintained and, where possible, enhanced so that the satisfaction of the needs of future generations is not compromised; and, where this capability is already impaired, to seek through appropriate interventions a restoration of that capability;
- (b) Ensure that the benefits from the exploitation of non-renewable resources are extended as far into the future as can be managed, and minimize the negative impacts of their exploitation on the use and management of other natural resources and the environment;
- (c) Identify and develop natural resources that are currently under-utilized by finding new technologies and/or intensifying existing uses which are not widely applied;
- (d) Incorporate the full economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of natural resource development into the planning, implementation and accounting processes by a comprehensive valuation of the environment and the services it provides, and by considering the social and environmental costs and benefits which cannot currently be measured in monetary terms;
- (e) Improve the environment of human settlements to satisfy the physical, social, economic, cultural and other needs of their inhabitants on a sustainable basis;
- (f) Prevent the pollution of land, air and water in the most cost-effective way so that the cost of effective preventive intervention would not exceed the benefits:

- (g) Conserve, develop, sustainably manage and support Ethiopia's rich and diverse cultural heritage;
- (h) Ensure the empowerment and participation of the people and their organizations at all levels in environmental management activities; and
- (i) Raise public awareness and promote understanding of the essential linkages between the environment and development.

The Policy is divided into 10 sectoral and 10 cross-sectoral issues as follows:

### **Sectoral issues**

- (a) **Soil husbandry and sustainable agriculture**, with the objective: "To promote improved soil conservation practices that enhance and maintain land productivity for the sustainable development of agriculture and, in general, for protecting biomass and biodiversity".
- (b) **Forest, woodland and tree resources**, with the objective: "To conserve forest ecosystem and genetic resources and to increase the production of forest resources on a sustainable basis, including sawn timber, fuelwood, poles, fodder and minor forest products, as well as to increase soil fertility and decrease land degradation thus improving agricultural production through the planting of appropriate trees".
- (c) **Genetic, species and ecosystem diversity**, with the objective: "To preserve, develop, manage and sustainably use the diversity of gene pools of Ethiopia's species of wild and domesticated flora and fauna and its natural and human-managed ecosystems for the country's social and economic development and for the integrity of the biosphere".
- (d) **Water resources**, with the objective: "To develop water resources for increasing sustainable agricultural production, for the generation of hydroelectricity and for the health and well-being of the population".
- (e) **Energy resources**, with the objective: "To augment the supply of energy commensurate with the country's energy demand and reduce the growth rate of that demand through increasing supplies of energy and improving efficiency in its production and conversion".
- (f) **Mineral resources**, with the objective: "To increase the contribution of mining to the diversification and expansion of the economy and to export earnings, and to increase mineral use in manufacturing, construction, agriculture and services through the development of self-

sustaining and environment-friendly private and state sector mining, mineral processing and mineral-based manufacturing”.

- (g) **Human settlement, urban environment and health**, with the objective: “To plan and manage human settlements and their environments so as to satisfy the physical, social, cultural, health and other needs of their inhabitants on a sustainable basis”.
- (h) **Control of hazardous materials and pollution from industrial waste**, with the objective: “To limit the release of hazardous materials and other pollutants into water, land and air from domestic and industrial sources to levels compatible with the economic benefits accruing and with the well-being of humans and the receiving environment”.
- (i) **Atmospheric pollution and climate change**, with the objective: “Through a country-wide programme which includes climatic monitoring, to minimize the emission of pollutants into the atmosphere to levels which are as close as possible to being compensated by their removal by green plants and other natural phenomena so as to minimize their contribution to climate change”.
- (j) **Cultural and natural heritage**, with the objective: “To preserve, conserve and sustainably manage Ethiopia’s cultural heritage including its ancient and historical sites, monuments and artifacts, oral and written history, traditional arts and design, indigenous languages and social culture, and indigenous knowledge and technologies as well as natural heritage so as to retain their heritage significance and to contribute to a new modern synthesis of culture”.

#### **Cross-sectoral issues**

- (a) **Population and the environment**, with the objective: “To maintain and improve the human carrying capacity of the environment by managing population growth and distribution in such a way as to match people and resources in a manner which is environmentally sound, economically sustainable, both economically and biologically productive as well as socially **and** culturally acceptable”.
- (b) **Community participation and the environment**, with the objective: “To ensure sustainability by empowering and supporting natural-resource users at all levels to be in charge **of** their own development efforts and thus to develop, use and manage their natural, human-made and cultural resources responsibly”.
- (c) **Tenure and access rights to land and natural resources**, with the objective: “To provide security of tenure for land and natural-resource

users by clearly defining and strengthening land and other natural-resource tenure rights and responsibilities so as to support sustainable agricultural, pastoral, forestry and fisheries production and a sustainable urban environment”.

- (d) **Land use planning**, with the objective: “To achieve coordinated, integrated and participatory local plans and land use decisions to achieve ecologically, socially and economically sustainable state and private sector land utilization”.
- (e) **Social and gender issues**, with the objective: “To ensure that the disadvantaged stakeholders, especially local communities and women at all levels of society, are fully involved in the development, management and use of the natural, human-made and cultural resources and the environment so that social, cultural and economic sustainability is achieved”.
- (f) **Environmental economics**, with the objective: “To integrate environmental costs and benefits into economic planning, development and accounting at all levels of government in order to reflect the true costs and benefits of development, and to ensure that the full costs of using or misusing the environment and natural resources are fully reflected in economic assessments”.
- (g) **Environmental information systems**, with the objective: “To collect, analyze, store and disseminate on a continuous basis, reliable information relating to resource and environmental issues, including the assessment and conservation of natural resources, the condition of the urban and industrial environment, the state of the country’s cultural heritage, and the quality of its life support systems”.
- (h) **Environmental research**, with the objective: “To carry out demand-driven strategic, basic and applied research required for the sustainable, environmentally sound, biologically and economically productive as well as socially and culturally acceptable use, development and management of the country’s natural, human-made and cultural resources”.
- (i) **Environmental impact assessment**, with the objective: “To provide a system of Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Audit so that adverse environmental impacts can be foreseen, monitored, eliminated or at least mitigated, and environmental benefits are enhanced”.
- (j) **Environmental education and awareness**, with the objective: “To provide education, training and awareness programmes to increase public awareness and understanding of the need for the sustainable use and management of the natural, human-made and cultural re-

sources and the environment, and to prepare a workforce equipped with environmental and resource management skills and technical abilities to implement federal and regional programmes of sustainable resource and environmental management”.

#### **4. DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTITUTION RESPONSIBLE AND ITS ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS**

The CSE is a project of the Environmental Protection Authority of Ethiopia. It is funded by various donors through the World Conservation Union (IUCN), which also provide, especially in the first few years, technical back-stopping.

When it started in 1989, it was placed under the then Office of the National Committee for Central Planning, which changed into the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development in 1991.

The Ministry of Natural Resources Development and Environmental Protection was established in 1992, and the Conservation Strategy Project was transferred to it and helped define the policies of the newly-created ministry. One of the influences of the Project was in helping crystallize the idea of creating an autonomous regulatory organ for environmental protection as distinct from the actual implementation of environmental programmes and projects.

In 1995, the Government decided to establish a Ministry of Water Resources and return to the Ministry of Agriculture the responsibility for forests, wildlife and land management. The office which had been created as the nucleus for an autonomous institution for environmental protection was then established as an autonomous government arm answerable to the Council of Ministers, with the name of the Environmental Protection Authority.

The Conservation Strategy Project is now under the Environmental Protection Authority. It is the ideas the Project developed that gave rise to the Environmental Protection Authority, and it is the policy it developed that guides the Environmental Protection Authority.

The Conservation Strategy Project was designed to develop a system for harmonizing the demands of development and the dictates of the environment, help identify specific actors from among existing institutions to make the system work to the extent possible, make the system self-reviewing, and then, once the processes are internalized by the various government organs, to close down. At present the project is focusing on helping to build the capacity of Ethiopia's regional governments *so* that effectiveness in implementation will be ensured. To that end, the Project is training several regional conservation staff in critical areas such as participatory methods, Environmental Im-

Impact Assessment (EIA), environmental economics and project proposal preparation. The Project, having gone a long way in achieving its objectives, is expected to phase out in the near future.

It is worth pointing out that in some countries, the implementation of environmental policies has been made the responsibility of newly-created government arms. But since environmental policies impinge upon the activities not only of all government organs, but also of all non-governmental organizations and the whole population, such government organs, therefore, inevitably clash with virtually all other government organs. The solution being tried in Ethiopia consists of giving only the responsibility of initiating environmental policy and law, and regulating their implementation to the Environmental Protection Authority.

## **5. PROBLEMS OR OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME**

The problems encountered can be attributed to three sources.

### **POLITICAL PROBLEMS**

The Project started being implemented when the military government was beginning to crumble from the stress of the long civil war which ended in 1991. The civil war and the settling-down period, as well as the changing of administrative boundaries which followed, slowed down the work of the Project, and delays resulted. On the other hand, the very unsettled process meant that, following the collapse of the previous government, new government institutions were being created, or old ones reconstituted. This gave the Project opportunities to influence them long before the outcome of its work became policy. Patience in waiting for opportune moments, and alertness to make use of new opportunities were the two approaches used both to overcome the problem and to use the newly materialized situations to its advantage.

### **PROBLEMS WITH THE DEFINITION OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

The fact that environment issues are multisectoral in nature meant that the Project had to deal with issues over which existing governmental organizations staked claim. Cooperation was, therefore, at times not easily obtained. Also, it was a challenge to bring on board the various stakeholder groups outside of government, particularly because people were not used to the participatory approach that the project was promoting.

But the problems were mainly caused by a misconception of the purpose of environmental policy, law and planning. Person-to-person discussions, small meetings, workshops and conferences were good instruments for tackling this problem, and though problems still arise, they are only minor ones. Sufficient awareness has been created and the Environmental Protection Authority is seen as a complementing rather than a competing government arm.

### **INFLUENCE FROM OUTSIDE OF ETHIOPIA**

With the change in government in Ethiopia, foreign governments and the Bretton Woods institutions became very active in trying to influence developments. At the time, various donor/lender institutions were promoting their own brands of environmental planning. The Conservation Strategy had been designed to function through the use of local expertise only. This was in order to ensure sustainability in the necessary cyclical repetitions of revising the Strategy. For this reason, the amount of money at the disposal of the Project was small, since large amounts could be disruptive and create unstable expectations that would interfere with the aim of sustainability.

The World Bank was a persistent source of pressure. It wanted to bring in large sums of money and many consultants to do the job quickly in a donor-driven manner. This proposal was rejected and in 1995, it threatened to block off loans if Ethiopia's environmental planning process was not completed by June. In May, it fielded a team of environmental experts, by its own admission the largest team ever, to assess the Project. They stayed in Ethiopia for three weeks, went over the documents word for word, and finally had to admit that the Project was well done. However, a number of other African countries succumbed to similar pressures and had to undertake all at once the formulation of different framework strategies for environmental management sponsored by various international organizations.

Knowing clearly what needed to be done, doing it and defending it tenaciously was the solution to the problem.

### **6. EFFECTS OF THE PRACTICE/INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCE**

The need for harmonizing environmental and development needs is now well appreciated and firmly on the agenda at all levels. The basic principle of planning development, particularly at the local community level, is gaining very wide acceptance. Empowerment of such local communities, including women, is actually being realized currently and is no longer a mere slogan to which lip service is paid to. Government arms at all levels now talk of environmental protection and include it in their planning to varying degrees of

effectiveness. The many non-governmental organizations that were established in the 1980s to help famine victims are now reorienting their roles towards becoming development actors, and they all state that environmental rehabilitation and protection are part of their concerns. New higher education programmes with an environmental emphasis are being introduced. Even some factories, especially tanneries, have taken environmental concerns seriously and are improving their chemical processes so that they become less polluting. Notable in this is a “cleaner production” drive involving courses for factory technicians. These have become very popular, and a number of factories have started using their effluents as raw materials.

All this is voluntary since the framework environmental law, which will be used to enforce the Environmental Policy, is still being formulated. The growth in environmental consciousness and in the will to take action is gratifying indeed.

It should be pointed out, however, that changes in attitude and values occur because of a multitude of factors and the Conservation Strategy Project may not be the sole cause of all these positive developments. However, there is no doubt as to the catalytic role it has played in the past and will continue to play in the future.

## **7. SUITABILITY AND POSSIBILITY FOR UPSCALING**

Since the Conservation Strategy is country-wide in scope, the prospects for upscaling it are very limited.

It should be pointed out, however, that the Environmental Policy was probably the first government instrument of policy which explicitly stated that the rights of communities to their biodiversity, knowledge and technologies shall be protected, and this concern has now been taken up by the Organization of African Unity. A draft model law for African countries to use as a basis for national legislation and a draft African convention on the issue have been developed, and the OAU is expected to make formal recommendations to African governments about them.

On the whole, though, other countries may carry out conservation strategies similar to the Ethiopian example, but full upscaling is not likely.

## **8. SIGNIFICANCE FOR (AND IMPACT ON) POLICY-MAKING**

The Project was aimed at developing a policy and strategy for harmonizing development and good environmental care. What the Project developed has been fully adopted, and its impact on policy-making has been complete.

## 9. POSSIBILITY AND SCOPE OF TRANSFERING TO OTHER COMMUNITIES OR COUNTRIES

Many countries implemented conservation strategies before Ethiopia did. The outcomes have been varied. What seems to be common to the successful cases is the seriousness with which they undertook to involve all sections of society and all areas of the country, especially at the local-community level. This takes dedication among the staff. But with careful selection, it is always possible to find such dedication.

The combination of problems and opportunities which presented themselves to the Conservation Strategy because of the political upheavals between 1989 and 1994 is not repeatable in any country which is enjoying political stability.

The deliberate planning of the environmental protection system, introduced to minimize turf-fighting among existing organizations, can be copied in any country though, as is the case with participation, implementing it effectively is not easy.

## 10. OTHER COMMENTS

In the present geopolitical situation, it is extremely difficult to avoid excessive external pressure from the industrialized countries and the international institutions. There have been two such environmentally significant pressures applied on Ethiopia. One is on trying to do the environmental planning for Ethiopia while expecting Ethiopians to simply accept the outcome of the planning. This has been resisted so far, and it is hoped that this resistance will continue.

The second pressure tries to force the privatization of land. Traditionally, land has been under the control of the user, who gets access to it through family lineage, but not as private property. It could, therefore, never be sold or exchanged. The military government broke the requirement for family lineage so that all people in an area divided the land among themselves for their own use. This exacerbated the insecurity of tenure in the sense that regular reallocations often meant changes in the parcels of land under a family's control. The present Environmental Policy tries to ensure security of tenure. The Constitution prevents the buying and selling of land. The idea is to try and prevent the displacement of farmers and their transformation into urban poor. Such a displacement would be disastrous not only because it would exacerbate poverty, but also because the poverty would accelerate the already fast rate of land degradation.

The world needs some mechanism of restraining the global elite not only

from polluting and degrading the earth themselves, but also from the use of their influence to penetrate, displace and degrade local and indigenous established systems different from their own, where such local systems are compatible with sustainable development.

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