

# History of Sustainability

## Chapter 5 From Concept to Movement

“The point here is that sustainability did not magically win over the hearts and minds of business and government leaders in the 1980s. In fact, progress in building a sustainable society was rather slow, and the successes in this period, although notable, were more significant for their symbolic potential than their immediate impact.”

Presenters:  
Manish  
Henrique

# The Timeline - Important achievements

## In the 1980s

- Sustainability became the centerpiece of international agreements
  - sustainability becomes part of the political agenda.
- The 3 pillars of sustainability are determined and evident

## In the 1990s

- Sustainability is discussed in the economic plan, the energy sector, education, agriculture, housing, transportation, business operations, and many other domains.
- Media started to “promote” the idea

**Between 70 and 90** - Sustainability supported by worldwatch Institute, the Rocky Mountain Institute, the United Nations (UN).

# The Timeline - Specific dates

- 1972 : Creation of UNEP - permanent environmental branch of the UN
- 1989: Ecological Footprint Analysis (EFA)
- 1992 :
  - The Rio Declaration casted sustainability as a human right.
  - Agenda 21: created a detailed framework for implementing sustainable development
- Other important steps:
  - The 12 design principles of permaculture.
  - Swedish scientists establish the conditions for sustainable society.
  - Hawken's ecological approach for sustainable business.

## The Case of Energy Conservation Policies and Technologies in Japan

- 1940s to early 1960s, coal was main source of energy in Japan
- Petroleum exceeded coal in 1962
- Post-war period (1945 - 1950's) and high economic growth policies and it's effects
- In 1970, pollution standards were defined (sulphur -1.7%).
- Motivation schemes:
  - Tax reduction
  - Low interest government loans
  - Special depreciating schemes
- GDP (1980-1991)- Japan (+57%), U.S. (+26%), Germany (+28%)

## The Case of Solid Waste Disposal in King Country, U.S.A

- 1970s to early 1980s, landfill sites were being filled up rapidly.
- In 1987, incinerator were proposed by the county.
- “Not in my backyard” movement.
- “Waste Not Washington Act” in 1989
  - Waste reduction and recycle (target 50%)
- Waste fee (+40% for second garbage bin) and Gate fee
- Challenges:
  - Small recycle market
  - Could not force business to participate (40% waste stream)
  - Inefficient information relay

# Results

**KING COUNTY MIXED MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE FIGURES AND PROJECTIONS**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>TONS GENERATED</b>	<b>TONS DISPOSED</b>	<b>TONS REDUCED/RECYCLED</b>	<b>PERCENT REDUCED/R</b>
1987	989,500	808,000	181,000	
1988	1,038,500	813,000	225,500	
1989	1,138,500	838,500	305,000	
1990	1,258,500	890,500	368,000	
1991	1,346,500	914,000	432,500	
1992	1,410,000	916,500	493,500	
1993	1,491,500	895,000	596,500	
1994	1,578,000	868,000	710,000	
1995	1,669,500	834,500	834,500	
1996	1,766,000	830,000	936,000	
<i>italicized years indicate predicted figures</i>				

# Thank you!

“We scientists don’t know how to do that”

“I used to think the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change.

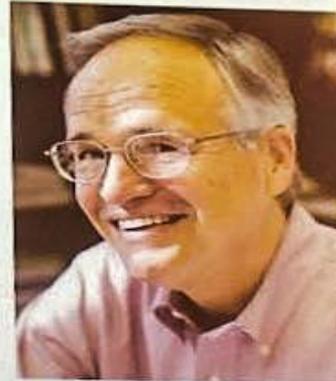
I thought that with 30 years of good science we could address those problems.

But I was wrong.  
The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy...

...and to deal with those we need a spiritual and cultural transformation

- and we scientists don't know how to do that.”

*Gus Speth*



# Questions

- In this chapter it is discussed about a “barrier” for sustainability according to many economics : Economic growth vs Sustainable growth. How do you think companies can apply sustainable principles and maintain economic growth?
- Do you think without laws of sustainability companies would not apply sustainable principles in order to maximize economic growth?