



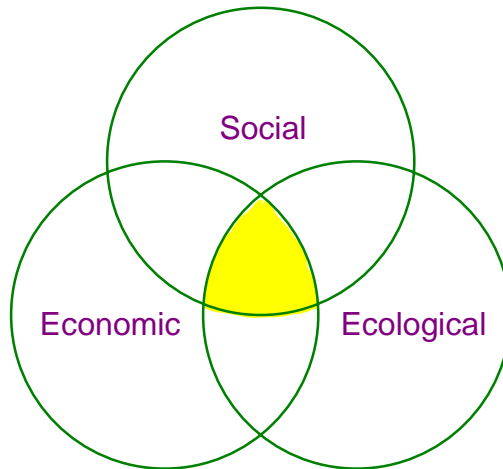
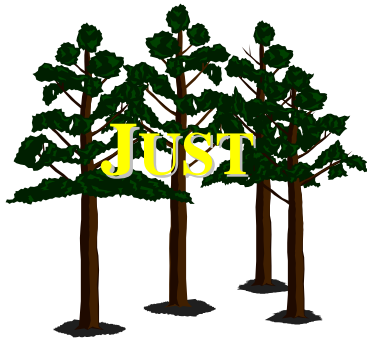
# Eco-Link

Linking Social, Economic, and Ecological Issues

## The Power of Vision

Volume 8, Number 1

As humans, we have the unique ability to envision our future and to see ourselves making our dreams come true. In his video, The Power of Vision, futurist Joel Barker says all great individuals, corporations and nations have been driven by visions of what they wanted to do, be and have. In “Man’s Search for Meaning” Vicktor Frankl writes about how he survived the Auchwitz Concentration Camp by concentrating on his vision of things yet to do. Frankl says, “It is a peculiarity of man that he can only live by looking to the future, and this is his salvation in the most difficult moments of his existence.”



Imagine a sustainable society in which we meet our needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. Better yet, imagine yourself making it happen. Through our vision, principles, and choices we can all make a difference right where we are. If you believe in public education, sustainable forestry, and sustainable development, you can be part of the solution.

Vision without action is but a dream  
Action without vision just passes the time  
Vision with action can change the world  
*Joel Barker*



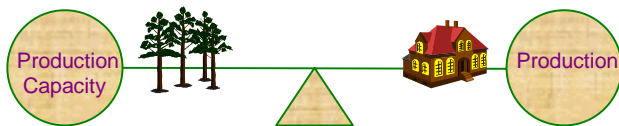
## Growth vs. Development

There is an enormous difference between growth and development. Growth only means getting bigger; it doesn't mean getting better. In an individual there is a point where growth becomes either obesity or cancer. The same can be said for uncontrolled and unsustainable growth of any kind. Sustainable development is ultimately measured by improvements in education, health care, environment, life expectancy, income, and other quality of life yardsticks. Sustainable development is development we can sustain indefinitely while living within our economic and environmental means. It means not passing debts on to future generations. Today, it means sustaining six billion people with dignity and quality of life. It's no small task, but it's an easy choice. We must succeed.

**Solutions to our social, economic and environmental challenges won't come from the top down.** Solutions come from the bottom up, from individuals and communities. It starts with an inspiring shared vision of what we want to do, be and have. Then we have to decide on the principles (e.g. quality science) that will guide us along the way. Once we do that, our choices are a lot easier to make. If we can agree that we want to live sustainably (passing on a better world to successive generations), we're off to a great start. That's what sustainable development is all about; it's about meeting our needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. Visionary leaders will emerge who can articulate our common aspirations, and others will emerge to turn them into realities.

### A Sustainable Society

- ✓ Conserves ecological life-support systems and biodiversity.
- ✓ Ensures that uses of renewable resources are sustainable and minimizes the depletion of non-renewable resources.
- ✓ Keeps within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems.



The expanding world population demands more and more production, but production must be kept in balance with production capacity.

### Power of the Individual

Many people, especially children, feel powerless to influence their future. However, there are many reasons for hope and optimism. Industrialized nations are making an unprecedented shift from the pioneering (or exploitive) phase of their development to sustainable development. There is no need to feel guilt for the past, because exploitation and pioneering are exactly what was required to conquer new frontiers. However, we are moving from our mission of conquering nature to living in harmony with nature and, hopefully, each other.

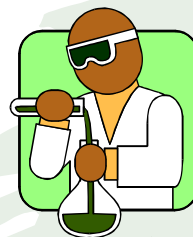
## CHOICES

Every person can make a difference by their **career, consumption and citizenship choices**. People can choose careers where they can make a difference. People can consume renewable resources and they can reduce, reuse, and recycle. They can use durable goods and they can extend the life of goods in use. They can play an active citizenship role by being involved in worthy causes, schools, civic groups, and the political process. Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt the power of the individual or small groups of individuals to change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

### Careers

One of the best things an educator could do is to **direct a student to a career in forestry or teaching.**

Just imagine what goes into growing, harvesting, processing, distributing and recycling forest products. Sustainable forestry is essential to the larger vision of sustainable development, and in many ways foresters and the forest products industry are leading the charge. Whatever a child's interest is; from forestry to materials science, wildlife biology to computer science, genetics to paper making, forest engineering to ecosystem management, chemistry



to silviculture, entomology to fire management, manufacturing to marketing, from research to education...

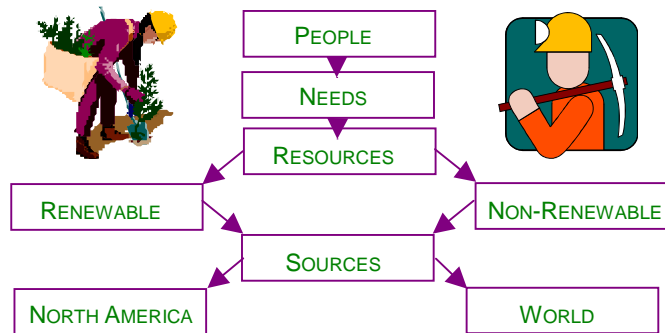
there is a place where everyone can make a big difference while doing something enjoyable. Career opportunities are everywhere in public service, private industry, and academia. Children should be encouraged to choose meaningful careers where they can contribute to building a better world.



We have not inherited the earth from our ancestors ...we are borrowing it from our children

## Consumption

We all have *choices* about which materials we use, where we get them, how we use them and how we dispose of them. Demand on resources is a direct result of population and per capita consumption. When it comes to building materials our choices are simple: wood, metal, plastic, or cement. Only one of these is renewable, recyclable, biodegradable, and extremely energy efficient. Since most of our energy comes from non-renewable fossil fuels, our choice gets even easier. Wood is by far our most energy efficient building material.



Living sustainably means meeting our needs with renewable resources whenever possible while slowing the depleting of our critical non-renewable resources. It also means *reducing, reusing and recycling*. It means sourcing things in our own back yard whenever we can. We wouldn't want to source wood fiber in a place where there is no forest management, no environmental regulations, and poor growing conditions while shutting down our own forests where we have ideal growing conditions, state-of-the-art forestry and strong environmental regulations. Consumption involves individual choices that are important to sustainability.

Almost half of the paper used in the U.S. is now recovered for recycling. Each day Americans recycle enough paper to fill 15 miles of boxcars. That adds up to 45 million tons a year or 329 lbs. per person.

## Citizenship

The future belongs to those who show up. Somebody is going to be running for office and somebody is going to vote. Somebody is going to write the new rules that everyone else will follow. Somebody is going to reach out and make a huge difference in another person's life. Somebody is going to volunteer to help those less fortunate. These are all choices, flowing out of our vision and the principles we have chosen to live by. Good choices lead to self-esteem.



The reciprocal interplay between human kind and the earth can result in true symbiosis.

*Rene' Dubos*

Thinking critically involves understanding an **issue** and all the **options** (alternatives) for addressing that issue. Options are choices, and we can make better choices if we fully understand an issue. A well-educated public is essential to making informed choices about issues like sustainable forestry and sustainable development. More and more of our choices will rely on an understanding of science and technology. As good citizens we have an obligation to stay informed.



## Teach Them Right

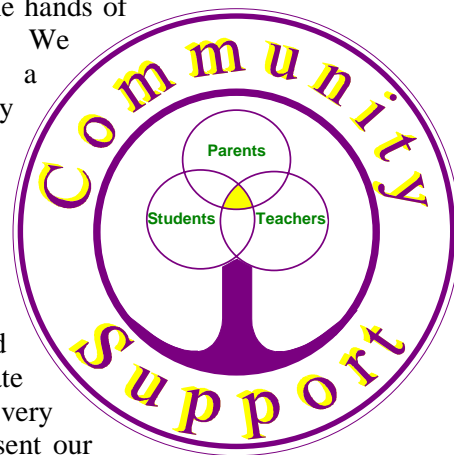
Parents and teachers can make a huge difference in the life of a child by telling them the formula that all successful people and organizations follow. There are really five steps to success in whatever career they choose:

- ✓ Have a Vision guided by strong Principles
- ✓ Understand your Current Realities
- ✓ Have a strategy to get you from where you are to where you want to go.
- ✓ Make sure that everything you do (action) supports that strategy
- ✓ Measure and monitor results so you know your progress

There are three kinds of people in the world: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who things happen to.  
We all have a choice...

## Hope & Inspiration

Hope is as important as reason in inspiring our children and convincing them that they can all make a difference. Certainly parents, teachers, and students need to work together as a team. However, many children are from broken homes and families. Their last chance is in the classroom, in the hands of a caring educator. We can all make a difference by supporting public education and the thousands of underpaid and under-appreciated educators who act as role models and often surrogate parents to the very children who represent our future.



## Summary

**Before anything great happens, there must first be a dream.** We only made it to the moon because we shared a positive and inspiring vision. Great athletes are driven by their visions, and use their imaginations to practice everything from golf to driving racecars. Have you ever woken in a cold sweat from a terrifying dream? That's because your brain can't distinguish between a real experience and one that is vividly imagined. The most powerful computer doesn't compare with the human mind and our ability to imagine. We have awesome creative power. By applying it we can solve any problem. Getting to the moon was a lot easier than creating a sustainable society will be, but we have the ability to make it happen. **Just Imagine!**

The Power  
of Vision  
cannot be  
denied

Pursue excellence rather than happiness. Make a habit of that, and you can have a fulfilling life.  
Greek Philosophers

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He who has a why to live for can bear most any how  
- Nietzsche

## Glossary

**Creative Tension:** The natural tension created by the tug of war between our current reality and our vision of the future. Our vision pulls us up, and our current reality pulls us down. People who learn how to work with creative tension use the energy it generates to move more reliably toward their goals.

**Guiding Principles:** The "core values" that ensure the rightness of your direction. While only a vision can give you direction, values ensure that you are on the right path.

**Legacy:** How do you want to be remembered, and how will your organization be remembered? Writing your own legacy is an excellent way to come up with a vision statement.

**Logotherapy:** *Logos* is a Greek word that denotes "meaning." According to logotherapy, striving to find meaning is the primary motivational force in man.

**Options:** The different alternatives available for action. All options have strengths, weaknesses, risks and trade-offs. Informed decisions are made by understanding the options and then choosing the best one.

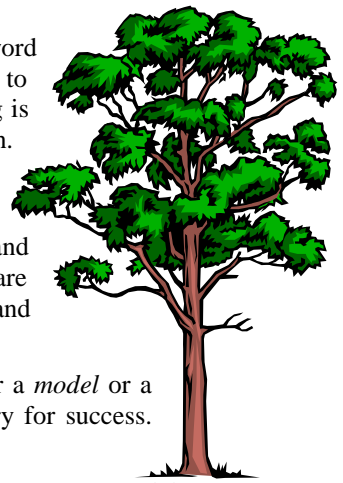
**Paradigm:** This is a Greek word for a *model* or a set of rules and regulations necessary for success. We have paradigms for everything.

**Paradigm Shift:** What happens when a new model comes along, rendering the old model obsolete. In every shift there are winners and losers.

**Strategic Planning:** Long range planning, which allows an individual or organization to exercise control over the future. Without an overall strategy, short-term tactics are often misguided.

**Vision Statement:** An explicit statement of what you want to do, be, or have in the future. It must be positive and detailed enough for people to form a mental picture. It must be inspiring, challenging and worth the effort.

**Zero Sum:** A game or scenario where one wins all and the other loses all. Often used to describe the economy against the environment. Sustainable development rejects this zero sum scenario. It's win/win rather than win/lose.



Success has always been easy  
to measure. It is the distance between  
one's origins and one's final achievement...

Michael Korda



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