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“Utilisation of diversity in land use systems:  
Sustainable and organic approaches to meet human needs”

## What Means Sustainable Development for German Development Cooperation?

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### Abstract

Since the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in particular, the term “sustainability” has been an omnipresent buzzword. It has in fact become the guiding vision of national and international politics. German development cooperation works at three levels to attain the goal of sustainable development: internationally, together with the partner countries and within Germany.

International agreements help create the framework for efforts to protect the environment and make sustainable use of resources. Within partner countries, German development cooperation support concrete activities to protect the environment and share natural resources more equitably. And in Germany, awareness-raising activities improve public understanding of the relationship between development and environmental protection.

For practical development cooperation, sustainable development means:

- supporting sustainable economic growth in partner countries, in order to alleviate poverty and disparity (pro poor growth);
- ensuring equality of opportunity, between rich and poor, North and South, women and men;
- utilising natural resources for the benefit of humanity today such that they are preserved for future generations.

Sustainable solutions to complex development questions are not available off the rack. This is why a mix of different types of interventions is used, including policy advisory services, technical and organisational consultancy, and financing. German development cooperation operates at government level, and also cooperates with civil society, private sector, the local population and other bilateral and international donors.

**Keywords:** Earth summit, environment, German development cooperation, pro poor growth, resources, sustainable development