

Cork Environmental Forum

Position Paper 1 – Sustainability Principles



At the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, held in June 1992 and otherwise known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, a global action plan for sustainable development called **Agenda 21** was agreed and signed. **Agenda 21** committed its signatories to defining how they intended to achieve sustainable development in their respective countries. Sustainable development has been defined in many different ways, perhaps the best known being “*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*” (The Brundtland Commission 1987).

Ireland’s Agenda 21 document, “Sustainable Development – a Strategy for Ireland ” was published in 1997. Each local authority is also committed to the preparation of a **Local Agenda 21 Plan** document, which outlines how sustainable development would be achieved at local level. Cork County Council’s draft **Local Agenda 21 Plan** prepared in late 1997 has yet to be finalised and adopted. It outlined how Cork County Council is already involved in a number of projects in the field of sustainable development in County Cork, but the **County Development Plan** currently under review offers the best opportunity yet to ensure that sustainable development is delivered through the planning system.

To do so, it is essential that the **County Development Plan** states clearly **the thirteen criteria of Sustainable Development** (with reference to Local Agenda 21):

- 🌿 **Resources** are used efficiently and waste is minimised by closing cycles;
- 🌿 **Pollution** is limited to levels which natural systems can process without damage;
- 🌿 **Natural Diversity** is valued and protected;
- 🌿 **Local needs** are met locally where possible;
- 🌿 **Good food, water, shelter, and fuel** are available to all at reasonable cost;
- 🌿 **Satisfying work** in a diverse economy is available to all;
- 🌿 **Good health** of the community is protected;
- 🌿 **Environment** is not damaged by access to facilities, services, goods and other people;
- 🌿 **Personal safety** of the community is secured from crime and violence;
- 🌿 **Skills, knowledge and information** are accessible to all;
- 🌿 **Participation in decision making** is extended to the whole community;
- 🌿 **Culture, leisure and recreation** opportunities are readily available to all;
- 🌿 **Local distinctiveness and character** are valued and protected.

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To foster, promote & implement sustainable development within the Cork region