Sustainable Development and Public Administration

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Outline of Presentation

- DSD thinking on this year's AMR theme: environmental sustainability
  - National sustainability challenges
    - Areas of concern for governance, public administration: woven into discussion
  - Global sustainability challenges
    - Latest concerns related to climate change
    - Others: biodiversity, fisheries, oceans
- Upcoming session of the Commission on Sustainable Development
Challenges vary across country groups

- Rapidly industrializing countries
- Non-renewable resource dependent countries
- Renewable resource rich countries
- Resource poor, least developed countries
- Mature, post-industrial societies
This year's AMR theme

What are the main sustainability challenges?

- **Rapidly industrializing countries:**
  - how to manage industrial and urban growth?
    - Building adequate infrastructure, including less polluting public transport and power generation
    - Providing water and waste treatment
  - Making polluters pay
    - Effective, efficient regulation
    - Greater use of eco-taxes
    - Information disclosure, right to know
...main sustainability challenges (cont’d)

- Rapidly industrializing countries
  - Historical lessons on the environmental costs of breakneck economic growth
  - But governments have learned relatively few of those lessons
  - May be able to bend the curve a bit but more difficult to “tunnel through”
Bending the curve, yes …
Tunnelling through, not quite yet …

Environmental Kuznets curves
The challenges for late industrializers in a globalized economy

- Rising living standards, combined with globalization, have permitted transition of OECD countries to service-based economies.
- Emerging economies are increasingly industrial suppliers not only to their domestic economies but to developed countries.
Implications for governance

- Ironically, emerging economies may face bigger challenges than developed countries making transition to lower resource intensity, energy intensity
- Rapid, resource and energy using growth is pulling their people out of poverty
- Policies conflicted – yes, environmental pressures mounting, but expectations also rising
- Grow now, clean up later – still alive and well
Times are a changin’

- Growing middle classes demand quality of life improvements
- Rising incomes permit larger public investments in environment
- High profitability in private sector makes polluter pays more tolerable
- With higher incomes and education generally comes improved governance
  - Though this is not automatic
  - Depends on history, culture of professional civil service relatively insulated from vested interests
... main sustainability challenges?

- Non-renewable resource dependent countries
  - Managing and utilizing natural resource revenues efficiently
  - Utilizing resource rents to invest in human and physical capital
  - Diversifying economies to reduce resource dependence, esp. where resources are fossil fuels
... main sustainability challenges?

- **Renewable resource rich countries**
  - Loss of environmental resources
    - Biodiversity loss
    - Deforestation
  - **Climate change financing mechanisms**
    - Offer opportunity to fund avoided deforestation
    - Knock on benefits for biodiversity if well designed
... main sustainability challenges?

- Resource-poor, least developed countries
  - Investing to boost productivity of subsistence agriculture
  - Managing scarce natural resources, notably water; avoiding further resource degradation
  - Investing in health and education to:
    - improve life expectancy
    - provide incentives to reduce fertility
    - raise productivity of human labor, incomes
... main sustainability challenges?

- Mature, post-industrial societies
  - Living standards locked in to resource-intensive consumption patterns
  - High impact on global commons (GHGs)

- Disconnect between:
  - Awareness of problems and historical responsibility
  - Willingness to pay

- ‘Polluter pays’ sounds good in principle
General areas of governance concern

- Proliferation of national sustainable development strategies
  - But continuation of resource depletion, degradation, other unsustainable trends
Global sustainability challenges

Climate change

Bali Roadmap

Bangkok meeting on program of work
- Still talking about talking or, more charitably,
- Warming up ...

Clock ticking towards Copenhagen 2009

Fundamental questions still need to be resolved:
- What is the international community’s long-term vision/goal? ppm stabilization? at what level?
- How are we going to get there?
- What role will Annex 1, non-Annex 1 countries play?
- How will the financing and technology needs of the latter be met – for mitigation? for adaptation?
What are the precedents?

- Montreal Protocol:
  - One successful model of global governance
  - Much ink spilt on the lessons for Kyoto
  - But how relevant?

- Financing:
  - CDM: pros and cons
  - Multilateral Fund?

- Technology transfer: key constraints:
  - costs; complementary investments; absorptive capacity
  - High Level Conference on technology for climate change, planned for Beijing, Nov of this year
Other global governance challenges

- **Biodiversity:** no powerful natural constituency
  - Yes, pharmaceutical companies (but how far do their ‘killer drugs’ depend on natural products?)
  - Children, and the rest of us, but the collective action problem is real
- **Also, the dilemma:**
  - Conservation requires action in tropical countries
  - WTP tends to be highest in temperate countries
  - Two key governance issues:
    - Sovereignty (tropical perspective)
    - Trust (temperate perspective)
Fisheries and oceans

- Classic open access resource problem
- Compounded by technologies
  - Which permit intensified exploitation
  - Which make depletion of ocean fisheries appear less critical
    - As countries become more dependent on aquaculture
    - Though the latter depends importantly on the former for inputs
- Are governance arrangements adequate?
Upcoming CSD: A few key issues

- **Agriculture**
  - Rising food prices: food, feed, fuel dynamic
  - A green revolution for Africa

- **Rural development**
  - Infrastructure needs, notably in Africa
  - Generating off-farm employment

- **Land**
  - Access, scarcity, degradation
  - Conversion of land: agricultural to urban; forests, other ecosystems to agriculture
Upcoming CSD: A few key issues

- Peoples living in drylands often have the worst human development indicators (mortality, per capita income)
- Drought
  - Prospects for worsening drought in certain hotspots with climate change
- Desertification
  - Climate change could also intensify, though in some cases – e.g. parts of Sahel – changing precipitation in recent decades has meant a greening
Upcoming CSD: A few key issues

- Africa
  - Good growth performance in new millennium
    - Improved macroeconomic stability, governance
    - High commodity prices almost across the board
  - A host of sustainable development challenges
    - Endemic disease one of biggest
    - Poor infrastructure in rural areas to help develop agriculture
    - Continued conflicts, governance problems in some countries, regions
A few concluding thoughts on governance and sustainable development

- Globalization: a mixed story for the environment and sustainable development
- Social development: China, India – many millions emerging from poverty; strong growth in Africa for 1st time in decades
- Environment: cleaner technologies can move across borders, but so can pollution
  - Former priced; latter not.
  - At least not always, not yet …
- Carbon markets: symbolically significant --international community agrees the atmospheric commons is no longer a free resource.
International governance institutions

- Are markets up to the task of governing the global atmosphere?
- Or are other governance structures also needed?
- If so, what? Other models include:
  - technology standards
  - fiscal measures (carbon taxes)
  - public trusts and trust funds