

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

(<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/aboutCsd.htm>)

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The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was [established](#) by the UN General Assembly in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development ([UNCED](#)), also known as the Earth Summit.



The Commission is responsible for reviewing progress in the implementation of [Agenda 21](#) and the [Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#); as well as providing policy guidance to follow up the [Johannesburg Plan of Implementation \(JPOI\)](#) at the local, national, regional and international levels. The JPOI reaffirmed that the CSD is the high-level forum for sustainable development within the United Nations system.

The CSD meets annually in New York, in two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on clusters of specific thematic and cross-sectoral issues, outlined in its new [multi-year programme of work \(2003-2017\) \(E/CN.17/2003/6\)](#).

The CSD has opened its sessions to broad participation from both governmental and non-governmental actors, and it supports a number of innovative activities, such as the [Partnerships Fair](#), the Learning Centre and a series of panels,



roundtables and side events. The [High-level segment](#) features dialogue among Ministers, and Ministers also hold a special dialogue session with [Major Groups](#).

As a functional commission of the [UN Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](#), CSD has 53 member States (about one third of the members are elected on a yearly basis). Each session of the CSD elects a Bureau, comprised of a Chair and four vice-Chairs.

Mandate of the Commission on Sustainable Development

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was established as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council by Council decision [1993/207](#). Its functions are set out in General Assembly resolution [47/191](#) of 22 December 1992. The Commission is composed of 53 members elected for terms of office of three years, meets annually for a period of two to three weeks and receives substantive and technical services from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Division for Sustainable Development. The Commission reports to the Economic and Social Council and, through it, to the Second Committee of the General Assembly.

The Commission on Sustainable Development is an inter-governmental body whose [members](#) are elected by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) from amongst the Member States of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Thirteen members are elected from Africa; eleven from Asia; ten from Latin America and the Caribbean; six from Eastern Europe; and thirteen from Western Europe and other. One-third of the members are elected annually and outgoing members are eligible for re-election. Other States, United Nations organizations, accredited inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations can attend sessions of the CSD as observers.

The role of the Commission as a high level forum on sustainable development, includes:

- to review progress at the international, regional and national levels in the implementation of recommendations and commitments contained in the final documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), namely: [Agenda 21](#); and the [Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#).
- to elaborate policy guidance and options for future activities to follow up the [Johannesburg Plan of Implementation](#) and achieve sustainable development
- to promote dialogue and build partnerships for sustainable development with governments, the international community and the major groups identified in Agenda 21 as key actors outside the central government who have a major role to play in the transition towards sustainable development. These [Major Groups](#) include women, youth, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific community, and farmers

Furthermore, the [Johannesburg Plan of Implementation](#) called for:

- Renewed emphasis on integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way
- Focus on reviewing and monitoring progress in the implementation through a broad exchange of views and experiences, best practice and lessons learned
- Enhanced linkages between global, regional and national endeavors
- Integrated process that enhances coherence between the implementation of Agenda 21, initiatives and partnerships
- Greater involvement at the regional level
- Opportunity to look at new challenges and opportunities in the context of implementation
- Innovative methods of work

- Broader participation of all stakeholders, particularly UN agencies/international financial institutions and the Major Groups
- Greater consideration to scientific contributions
- Contributions of educators
- Focus on a limited number of issues
- Negotiations once every two years