

IIED VALUES STATEMENT

22nd January 2001

The Values Statement is intended to improve understanding of IIED's identity and approach by staff, collaborators, funders and the general public. It aims to clarify: ¹

1. *IIED's goal* – to promote sustainable development
2. *Constituent values of sustainable development*, explaining what IIED stands for
3. *Organisational values*, guiding how IIED does its work and relates to others
4. *Associated commitments* that IIED will make to uphold these values

1. IIED's goal and mission

Since its inception in 1972, *IIED's goal* has been to promote sustainable development.

'IIED's Mission is to provide expertise and leadership in researching and achieving sustainable development at local, national, regional and global levels. In alliance with others we seek to help shape a future that ends global poverty and delivers and sustains efficient and equitable management of the world's natural resources.'

2. Constituent values of sustainable development

IIED believes that certain values, beliefs and principles are essential for achieving sustainable development. They motivate IIED staff, they underlie our work, and we aim to uphold and promote them:

- *Freedom* to express, inquire into, and debate issues and ideas
- *Social justice*, particularly to respect and secure human rights and to empower the poor and marginalised
- *Democracy and full participation* in decision-making and governance
- *Pluralism*, interdependence, and mutual respect, recognising value differences
- *An ecological perspective* that recognizes both the dynamism and adaptability of natural systems and the limits to resource use and waste generation
- *Rights* of individuals and communities to control the resources and other assets on which they rely, free from arbitrary expropriation

3. Organisational values

IIED's work towards sustainable development is also guided by its core organisational values. They describe both internal culture and external relations:

- *Consistency* – to 'practice what we preach' by upholding the above sustainable development values in our work
- *Commitment* – to understand and influence policy and practice towards sustainable development

¹ The values statement is the result of a process of reflection and analysis by IIED staff, culminating in a workshop on September 12th, 2000.

- *Independence* – to be open-minded in our research, and to avoid being unduly influenced by single interests
- *Integrity and credibility* – to use sound science and consultation methods as the basis for honest advocacy, in collaboration with partners
- *Inclusiveness* – to foster a diversity of perspectives and knowledge systems, and the building of trust and consensus, working in partnership with marginalized/poor groups, leaders and innovators in sustainable development
- *Innovation* – to support stakeholder involvement in processes of technical and institutional innovation focused on poverty and environmental problems
- *Linking perspectives and interests* – South and North; globalised and localised; government, civil society and to private sector; environment and development; long term and short term
- *Strategically engaged* – to respond to priority needs, threats and ideas in a well-informed, analytical and creative manner
- *Continuous improvement* – of IIED’s composition and balance of governance and partnerships, service provision, and quality and timeliness of outputs
- *Transparency* – to be clear about what we do, how we work, who we work with, and how we get our funding

4. IIED undertakes key commitments to uphold these values

The following is a working draft only at present:

4.1 In the development and application of knowledge, IIED undertakes to:

- make IIED’s own knowledge – especially of methodologies and sources of information and expertise – highly relevant to, and readily accessible in, the public domain
- explore and promote multiple perspectives and disciplines, and interdisciplinary methods
- encourage sharing of knowledge between regions and sectors
- consider forward-thinking and long-term perspectives
- safeguard conditions for intellectual freedom
- emphasise benefits to society over benefits to IIED or to one stakeholder
- respect the intellectual property rights and cultural integrity of indigenous and local groups, and develop ways to protect this
- challenge comfortable but questionable assumptions
- respect and give full credit for the intellectual property of collaborators and partners
- assess the implications of new scientific and technological developments for sustainable development
- encourage corporations to share innovations of wide benefit to poor groups

4.2 In its relations with stakeholders, IIED undertakes to:

- participate with stakeholders in project identification, design, role definition, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, according adequate time and resources
- acknowledge the inequality in resources and skills available to stakeholders, and help to redress this where possible
- recognise that the process of identifying a problem and starting an activity to address is key, as it will influence its subsequent direction and control
- recognise that consensus will not always be possible
- work to ensure that all relationships are treated as being amongst equals
- respect the independence of other stakeholders
- enter into discussion with potential collaborators regarding their approach to IIED’s values
- act transparently and in a trustworthy manner, employing clear and equitable contracts
- ensure timely communications and prior consent, especially where changes are required

- prepare, uphold and review codes of practice in relation to specific key stakeholders (collaborative researchers, private sector, and public sector donors)

4.3 In its governance, IIED undertakes to

- seek out active and informed individuals from a variety of countries, institutions (government, NGO, academic and private sector) and disciplines to contribute to its Board of Trustees, its Regional Advisory Panels and its various programme/project steering/advisory groups
- seek a balance of funding support, especially for research projects, so as not to compromise our mission, freedom of enquiry and public credibility
- avoid engaging in partisan politics
- ensure transparency on the use of programme inputs, progress and impacts, publishing such information and encouraging examination of our methods and conclusions
- apply a continuous improvement approach to IIED's strategy, with an emphasis on learning by both staff and collaborators about the efficiency and impacts of our work

4.4 In its staffing, IIED undertakes to

- actively seek a variety of origins and background in its staff, and an equal balance of men and women, bearing in mind any particular needs of the work in hand
- encourage staff to develop ideas, and exercise entrepreneurship in developing them
- seek ways for research, communications and administrative staff to work most productively together
- develop the potentials of all staff through planned programmes
- ensure staff adherence to, and active improvement of, the values in this Statement
- offer resources, opportunities and working conditions conducive to the above, to individual staff members' needs, and to achieving excellence in our work
- capture institutional knowledge and make it available to all staff

4.5 In its stewardship of resources: IIED undertakes to

- operate efficiently and in a fully accountability manner
- track its global 'footprint' and respond accordingly
- apply best applicable stewardship principles and codes, acknowledging the negative impacts which the use of these resources can cause (especially given IIED's work with developing countries, which currently has high travel and paper-based publishing demands)
- minimise the resource intensity of its operations, e.g. substituting electronic means of communication for travel and paper-based publication wherever possible and relevant
- develop and continuously improve a procurement policy that minimises waste disposal, resource degradation, pollution, climate change and negative social impacts, and that actively improves opportunities for sustainable development

4.6 Where necessary, IIED undertakes to develop and implement specific codes of practice

- prepared with staff participation and the participation of relevant groups to which the code applies
- reviewed regularly
- covering: collaborative researchers (complete), multilateral and bilateral donors (near to completion), private sector (first draft), and groups representing the poor (yet to begin)