



The Rights of the Child & Agenda 21

Two sides of the same coin

The Rights of the Child and Agenda 21 - two sides of the same coin!

***Children experience the world as a whole.
Adults have often lost perspective.***

The Rights of the Child and Agenda 21 are two very important United Nations documents. They inter-connect, sharing the same outlook and objective: a sustainable future for everyone on the planet.

***Ask children what is important to them.
Listen to their thoughts***

People's involvement and participation in planning and decision making is emphasized in both documents. The work to realize the Child's Rights and Agenda 21 must proceed at all levels of society simultaneously. Especially important is the people's involvement at the local level, starting from people's wants and needs and integrating them.



The Convention on the Rights of the Child highlights the child's own rights to a full life and personal development and: the right to be heard. The right to a good environment: green trees to climb in, clean air to breathe and safe water to drink. The right to the child's own identity, and to associate with friends. Satisfying the needs of children, today and tomorrow, is the ultimate measure for a good social and physical environment.

Let children join in planning and managing their own environment. Meet children with respect.

Agenda 21 is a plan for action into the next century; how the world's countries shall manage sustainable development. How they can become sustained societies; where a sound environment and biological diversity go hand in hand with economical development and social security.

Children's participation is essential for sustainable development; even more important today - in view of the earth's shrinking resources.

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Sweden came far with local Agenda 21 since the UNCED Conference in 1992. Agenda 21 in Sweden is today a joint effort of municipalities, business, voluntary associations, communities and individuals.

***A good environment has a positive effect on children;
Children who feel good care for the environment.***

Adults shall learn to see how the social and physical environments influence the children's behavior. Children who are invited to join naturally assume responsibility, while children left outside often become a risk to themselves and others. Good understanding between children and adults create positive feedback since we are all part of one another's environment.

***Can we deal with the challenge we have in front of us?
Is it possible to combine the Rights of the Child and Agenda 21?
Can those two reinforce one another and jointly develop?***

Our answer is unconditionally: YES.

*Novel and creative cooperation is emerging everywhere.

*Dialogue unites people working with Child's Rights and Agenda 21.



*Good examples help to establish new working contacts in municipalities, businesses, organizations and institutions as well as among individual citizens.

***Do you have experiences or ideas to share?
Are you interested in this approach?***

***Whoever you are: municipality, private enterprise, organization,
authority or individual citizen, be welcome to contact us!***

CREA21 is an acronym for the Child's Rights and Agenda 21 -Entry Point to the next century. In Swedish: BRA21 - meaning: good 21st Century.

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The Rights of the Child

Article 2

State Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in this Convention ... without discrimination of any kind.

Article 3

The best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Article 4

State Parties shall undertake all appropriate measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention ... where needed within the framework of international co-operation.

Article 6

State Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.

Articles 12 to 15

State Parties shall assure the child the right to express its views in all matters affecting the child ... in particular providing the opportunity to be heard. The child shall have the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of association and peaceful assembly.

Article 29

The child's education shall, among others, be directed to respect for the natural environment.

Article 31

The child has the right to leisure and engage in play, and fully participate in cultural and artistic life.

Article 42

State Parties undertake to make the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means to adults and children alike.



Agenda 21

Chapter 4

Action is needed to promote patterns of consumption and production that reduce environmental stress and will meet the basic need of humanity.

Chapter 6

Provide the necessary specialized health services and to coordinate the involvement of citizens and relevant sectors in solutions to health problems...

Chapter 8

Integrate environment and development at the policy, planning and management levels.

Chapter 23

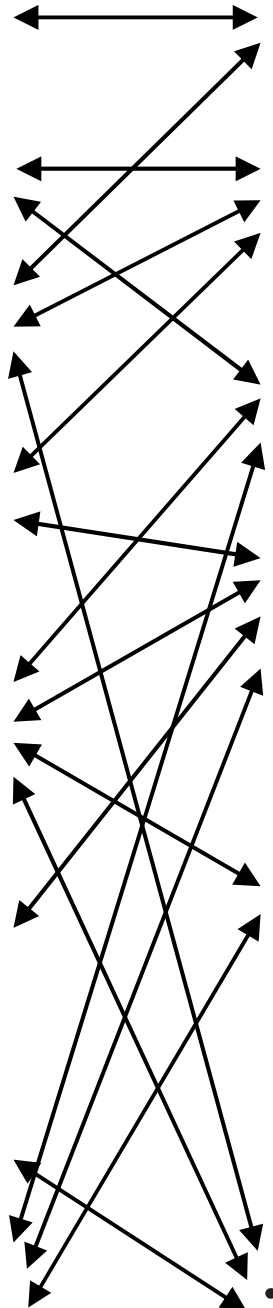
Fundamental to sustainable development is a broad participation in decision making processes ... acknowledging the need of individuals, groups and organizations to participate in environmental analysis, planning and decision making, especially where related to their own place of living or work.

Chapter 25

Advancing the role of youth and actively involving them in the protection of the environment and the promotion of economic and social development. Establish a process to promote dialogue between youth and Government at all levels, to establish mechanisms that permit youth access to information, provide them with the opportunity to present their perspectives on Government decisions, including the implementation of Agenda 21. Ensure the survival, protection and development of children.

Chapter 28

Initiative of the Local Authorities will be a determining factor in realizing the goals set in Agenda 21.



The above texts were derived from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Agenda 21. A selection from articles and chapters was made and the arrows show where the two documents engage in one another.