

National Capacity Self-Assessment for Global Environmental Management - Hungary

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I. Preface: The global perspective

I.1. Growing uncertainty

Our world is characterised by growing uncertainty. The information society, as any other society that is ruled by the dominance of one certain force, produces its own contradictions. We lose control over the endless amount of information and are unable to see and manage it systematically. We take bits and pieces from the mass of problems and only get to the acknowledgment and treatment of the effects. The causes remain hidden and unanswered, and the problems regenerate on a wider scale.

We neither believe nor understand that the problems of the world cannot be solved by separately functioning institutions and conventions. All the problems are within a system, they have the same roots and causes, and we need to uncover these causes. The Brundtland Report was right in recognising that all environmental and developmental issues are interrelated and they can only be addressed as a part of a system.

The opposing points of view regarding the existence and the nature of these problems is a sign of our increasing uncertainty. Politicians interested in sustaining economic growth do not care about the natural resources that are the basis of growth, and do not really consider its basis in society either. The relationships between economic growth, social welfare and the state of the environment remain hidden from the people as no one follows up on the changes of the natural capital. No one notices that economic growth is achieved at the cost of the decrease of the natural capital and social polarisation.

It has become a general belief that economic growth can answer our current problems, and that the economy will create the resources for welfare and the development aids we can spend on solving environmental problems. This however is a misconception. The problems that we try to solve by economic means are created by economic processes. Wouldn't it be easier not to create these problems at all? It definitely would. We could simplify the situation by preventing problems. Then it would not be necessary to spend that much economic profit on problem solving. But in this case, what would the problem solvers live on?

Another part of our uncertainty comes from judging the situation. How threatening is the declining state of our environment? We cannot, or we do not want to answer simple questions. Although we are surrounded by facts (the average temperature on Earth is rising, glaciers are disappearing, deserts expanding, forest areas shrinking, growing UV radiation causes 2 million cases of melanoma a year and the area of natural habitats and the biodiversity are decreasing), there is no real political will that would be necessary for changes.

It looks like our life is flowing in two or more separated channels. In one of them people worry and create international conventions or national environmental regulations. In the other one real life goes on with spinning economy. There are also international conventions and institutions here supporting the ongoing profit mechanism. While in the first channel people dream of ecological corridors connecting habitats, in the latter a worldwide network of transport is created where settlements slowly grow into each other. And there are those who do not care and do not look beyond the reality of their own lives, do not worry about the problems in the world surrounding them and do not notice what kind of role they play in the global game as tiny individuals.

I.2. Global expansion

One cause of growing uncertainty is the globalisation of human society. By developing the means of changing locations, mankind has eventually lost its fixed locality by perfecting the means of mobilization and by the globally expanding communication. Mankind has taken possession of the entire Earth.

In previous cultures the relationship of the society to its own environment was determinant. When a society used up its environment, its culture fell or became extinct. Society adapted to the locality because it was forced to adapt. Mobilisation, however, made locality turn into space, till and beyond the size of the globe, so that the space of adaptation expanded globally, too.

In the globalising society all of mankind stands together before the entire and only globe. Adaptation is global, and as we only have one Earth, the way of adaptation implies huge responsibility. In previous times if a local society fell, it did not endanger the future of mankind. Nowadays, we share a common future.

The results of decreasing ozone and the climate change also affect people who never used CFC or contributed to greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, all species on Earth are forced to adapt because of the abuses of a single fellow species.

Because of globalisation there are no strictly national issues any more. First the economic expansion connected the various societies, and only a few could remain isolated, and even then not completely. Economy entered the social structure by capital allocation, and gradually penetrated the delicate structure of local communities. Economic expansion was followed by the globalisation of environmental problems parallel with the above phenomena. Although the national states kept their identity, the loose social relations disrupted national identity, loosened social solidarity, or led to violence and migration.

The biggest potential loser of global expansion is the adapted, organic culture. On one hand, there is no need for the local community to adapt locally, because global communication and mobilisation have made the unlimited movement of resources and goods possible. On the other hand, global communication transmits values and patterns that motivate local communities to follow new, global cultural trends.

Regardless of whether we judge globalisation good or bad, in this situation mankind cannot avoid thinking about common regulations. It is hardly possible to introduce regulations within a national state that are different from other states' regulations and would not put that state or society at disadvantage.

I.3. First global steps

The global expansion started a new culture, which bears many adaptation risks and uncertainties for mankind and nature. Despite the crises we are facing, this development cannot be anything else than organic either. Humanity will experience the correctness of its decisions as time goes on; time will prove their efforts.

Global environmental conventions are very small first steps in this organic development process, so we should not think that the majority of the work is over. This is also true for

other multilateral conventions or international institutions that, just like the sectoral approach of national policies, go a different way than the environmental intentions of mankind.

The same applies to national environmental efforts that are not, and cannot be harmonised with other segments of economic and social policies until people are fully aware of the importance of living together with the environment. The question is, when will this happen and what will finally make people aware? The current threats, the deepening local and global environmental problems are not enough to force changes in thinking and attitudes. Does it seem that mankind is letting the last chance pass them by when they could turn their own future for the better using their own will and good intentions?

As with anything else, time will show the correctness and effectiveness of multinational environmental conventions. At the moment we can see that biodiversity is decreasing globally, carbon-dioxide emissions are increasing, weather extremes connected to climate change are becoming more frequent, and desertification and soil degradation are increasing issues. Although these prove the importance of the conventions, they also show that the conventions are not a sufficient tool in stopping or slowing down the negative processes.

In certain areas of the “developed world” toxic emission rates are improving, but it is difficult to evaluate these results if we don’t know what kind of resource or geographical area the burdens are being transferred to: for example, the relocation of production while keeping technology at home, etc. It is also difficult to judge the changes in Central and Eastern Europe, because the few reserves that we collected during the political changes and that were the result of the changes in economic structure (e.g. reduced Hungarian greenhouse gas emissions) are slowly being used up or automatically converted into other environmental burdens.

At any rate, the UN has continued to express its environmental commitment since the first environmental world summit in Stockholm. Together with the development issue in the Rio process, this concern might have placed the environment into the focus of international attention just in time. This gets attention occasionally at major international events and calms down in between, when everyone is fighting their own national battle in the war of various interests.

And the power is very unevenly distributed...

II. Sustainability, as a cross-cutting issue in Hungary

The prerequisite for all kinds of political integration is that the institutional system should be suitable for it. Therefore I shall analyse the Hungarian institutional system and its ability to treat interconnected issues.

Hungary is a strongly centralised country both in the decision-making and geographically. This has serious consequences for sustainability. Centralised decision-making is a barrier to devolution. At the time of the political changes, politicians tried to loosen centralised structures by setting up strong local governments. Since then the decision-making power at county level has been continuously reduced, and today the county governments have lost practically all their authoritative rights. The strong local governments have not been able to reduce centralisation, because they only received limited competence from the central powers. Since all important decisions are made centrally, local decisions are limited – they cannot overwrite the central measures. A good example for this is the local tax. Local governments have the right to levy a tax, but there are so many taxes levied centrally, which constitute a huge burden on the entire society, that the local government cannot use this right.

The central government wanted to increase local democracy by allocating development resources. It is true that they distributed certain resources at the local level, but their use is limited by other central decisions. For example, they define which programmes and activities those resources can be used for.

Real devolution would require not only the allocation of resources, but first of all the opportunity to make local decisions. The rational explanation for this is that the needs of local communities can only be defined at the local level. That is where they know the circumstances and the social and ecological conditions. Central decisions are the same for everyone and they enforce the uniformity of local communities; however, those communities live under different social and environmental conditions.

European integration has made this situation partly worse, partly better. Decision-making has been further centralised, or moved up one level, to Brussels. Just as the national central governments are unable to handle the above-mentioned social and environmental factors, in other words the cultural varieties the communities represent, one cannot force uniformity onto the member states, which have very different cultural backgrounds. On the other hand, European regional policy has offered the possibility of improvement by creating regions. However, the seven statistical regions in Hungary remain paper constructs, as they have no regional government with the necessary institutions; therefore, no regional decision-making is possible. Regional institutions are the Regional Development Councils and the Development Agencies. They decide about a certain part of the Structural Funds.

Similarly, the framework for the use of the Structural Funds is centrally defined by the National Development Plan and its Operative Programmes. In the current period the ministries of the various sectors decided about the majority of the resources, in the form of sectoral Operative Programmes. Only the Regional Operative Programme gave the theoretical opportunity for the regions to set their own targets. While the development and the cultural, economic and environmental-geographical background of the Hungarian regions are very different and hence appropriate programmes based on these differences would be necessary, the seven statistical regions were treated as one, so they could not even choose to carry out their own plans. The planning phase was characterised by the direct management by Brussels' bureaucrats and by the enforcement of Brussels' ideas.

On the other hand, the regulations for the use of the Structural Funds make it possible to integrate environmental aspects into the individual projects, and the Directive about Strategic Environmental Assessments theoretically ensures that the environmental issues are already included in the planning phase and in the implementation of the programmes. In practice this means that the National Development Plan and its Operative Programmes undergo a strategic environmental assessment, and that environmental protection, together with equal opportunities, is a so-called horizontal aspect in the planning of projects and in related decision-making.

This institutional background is theoretically flawless, but the question is the implementation and the political will – how seriously the decision-makers want to take and examine the representation of environmental aspects. The results so far are not very positive. Although there was an environmental analysis of the previous National Development Plan and its Regional Operative Programmes, and the preparatory plans for the period after 2007 are also being environmentally assessed, these are rather formal. The assessments are just formalities, because they are prescribed by law. It is not regulated how deeply and in what way the assessments should be taken into consideration. It seems that the analyses cannot really influence the plans and programmes which are based on the usual unshakeable development stereotypes. The strategic environmental assessment does not affect the political framework of planning and programming, as it is not subject to such assessment.

The regulations of the Structural Funds – since they include the introduction of the horizontal aspects – remain a theoretical opportunity to integrate environmental issues. There are various reasons for this. One of them is the lack of professional capacity. In theory, all projects should include the environmental aspects. In order to achieve this, reasonable planning capacity would be necessary, and also well prepared consultants, who are able to judge effectively whether the environment is appropriately considered. Such capacities are currently not available. However, the evolving institutional system should be seen as a positive opportunity, as the regulations themselves created at least the possibility of continuous learning and improvement. The current use of the institutions is that they keep environmental issues on the agenda and make a learning process possible. This process will be seriously completed only if there is a political will to practically represent environmental aspects. There is a lot to be done in this area as well. For the decision-makers the primary aspect is that there should be as many projects as possible, in order to use the financial resources of the Structural Funds at a maximum. For this reason, at the moment the system is concentrated on spending money and the horizontal aspects are less represented. We can see again that it is obligatory to include environmental aspects, but they remain subsidiary in the selection of projects.

Another difficulty is that classical environmental issues appear instead of sustainability. Society and the decision-makers are far from understanding the latter. For example, how can the interests of various generations be protected? No one is investigating what kind of burdens the development fever is going to produce for future generations. What we build today will have to be maintained and will require energy, etc. While money comes from the Structural Funds for developments, there are usually no sources for maintenance and operation. It is easy to prove that the current developments reduce the chances of future generations to satisfy their needs. Today every newborn child has a debt of 1.3 million HUF, which is only growing.

Another question is whether including the environmental aspects in the projects produces the desired results, or only strengthens the usual sectoral thinking. Nowadays it seems that the environmental expectations formulated in restrictions give the impression of a too strong environmental sector, which provokes the objections of the developers. There are serious European and Hungarian lobbies that aim at deregulation and try to break down

environmental policy results which have been achieved with much difficulty. Thus the current integration process does not bring various sectors closer to each other; it rather increases the already wide gap between them.

An undoubtedly positive effect of using the development funds is that it requires partnership. This is again an excellent theoretical opportunity, which is unsuitable for the representation of environmental interests. In the development projects the public, the interested and the affected parties can be partners. Accordingly, the public brings up very different issues. As the Hungarian public has a low environmental awareness, the expression of environmental interests is very weak. More precisely, the public can express local environmental interests strongly if it threatens their direct interest and if the public is directly affected (Nimby). Good examples are when the public opposes setting up landfills, burning and battery processing plants. At the same time, we cannot expect the representation of long-term and broad public interests in this partnership system. The few public organisations that represent global issues are played down by other interest groups.

Geographical concentration and geographical differences in development belong to the nature of central governance. Governance from one centre and the concentration of public affairs in one spot result in the continuous growth of the centre, which has a draining effect on the peripheral areas. Centralised structures with many duties attract masses. Just based on the logic of the market, they draw more and more people from the periphery. As cities offer better market opportunities and more chances of employment, the peripheral areas go into decline and the possibility of devolution decreases.

The structure of the legislative institutions within central governance should also be mentioned. I shall investigate whether they are suitable to treat environmental and development issues in connection. The parliament, which represents the highest level of decision-making, has committees that more or less follow the sectoral division of the government. There are rigid borderlines between the committees, similar to those between the ministries of the government. Furthermore, the political division makes the work of the committees even more difficult.

Theoretically, there is a mechanism in the legislation that could ensure the integration of environmental aspects. The Environmental Law prescribes the environmental assessment of certain legal regulations. It says that before any law is ratified, an environmental assessment must be carried out. This is not obligatory in the EU practice, but it was decided upon in Hungary prior to the EU accession. The Environmental Law also sets up the National Environmental Council, which is a modern, but again, formal institution. This Council is a government advisory board and consists of seven representatives each from the scientific, the business and the civil environmentalist sectors. The co-chair of the Council is always the Minister for Environment. The task of the Council is to review normative decisions from an environmental point of view. There are two basic problems with the operation of this Council. The division of the Council into three sectors does not serve the harmonisation of interests; instead, it results in the enforcement of one particular interest. Or rather it would result in such enforcement were the council able to enforce any interest at all. Although they formally carry out the normative review, the government does not take their advice seriously, because the law does not prescribe that the government must listen to its advisory board, or in what way they should consider their opinion. Thus the Council's advice manifests itself neither in the government work nor in the decision-making.

In summary, there are no institutions in the legislation or at government level that would be able to deal with environmental and development issues together. There is not even an

understanding of how environmental and development problems are connected. There is no related political or governmental will, and the existing regulations, as explained above, are only formalities. Perhaps the biggest problem is that there is no way to dissolve the rigid borderlines between the various sectors. There are no institutions which could handle this. After the Rio Summit the Hungarian politicians tried to set up a “Cross-sectoral Committee for Sustainable Development” consisting of a representative from the various sectors each and of a few experts and civil delegates. The Committee did not meet very often but at least there was a forum which had the task of treating environmental and development issues in a broader perspective. The Committee took part in the preparations for the Johannesburg Summit, but after that it died out. The basic problem was that the representatives of the sectors did not have any influence on their own institutions, and therefore none on the government. (It is obviously not enough if at a whole institution there is one single person who is responsible for sustainable development, when everyone there should work on or at least in the spirit of sustainability.)

II.1. Environmental protection in politics:

Elections were held in the spring 2006. Before elections politicians and parties usually make plenty of promises. Obviously they discuss the issues that the voters are most interested in. The most frequent issues tell a lot about the awareness of politicians and of society.

During the election campaign none of the party representatives mentioned environmental protection. Only one candidate referred to “sustainable development” and used the phrase as a synonym for sustainable economic growth. Environmental protection and sustainability was not even mentioned in the political discussion programmes which had the highest viewers’ index. The topics to be discussed were selected by the parties. The televised debate among the candidates for prime minister did not deal with sustainable development or environmental protection for a minute, either. Evidently, this was a very important sign for society. More than 40% of the population watched the programme in which the candidates for prime minister demonstrated how unimportant the question of sustainability is for politicians.

It is becoming a tradition that before the elections the Centre for Environmental Science interviews politicians interested in environmental protection. Four years ago they published a book called “Green Ars Politica”. In the current book they talked with experts from five parties, the Élőlánc, the Young Democrats (FIDESZ), the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) and the Free Democrats (SZDSZ).

We can see in the book that the parties leave environmental protection to individual experts or sometimes to specialised teams within the party. The few politicians who have some environmental awareness try to picture their party as committed to the environment. In reality only one or two party members are environmentally minded from personal conviction and even they vote according to the general principles of their party rather than out of their own conviction.

II.2. Environmental protection in society:

If the legislation and the government do not care about sustainable development, how can we expect the public to gain awareness and knowledge? If there is no progress towards sustainability, how can society participate in it?

However, there are very interesting surveys about environmental awareness in Hungarian society. It must be emphasised that sustainability does not appear in the mind of people as an integrated term; they think about traditional environmental protection separately from social and economic issues.

The Marketing Centrum recently carried out a survey in which they announced the surprising news that environmental protection is one of the most popular issues among the population. But when it comes to real-life activities, we find that they are hard to carry out. Radical action provokes clear opposition in the majority.

According to surveys, the attitude to various political and ideological terms has hardly changed in Hungary for years now. Environmental protection and democracy are among the most popular keywords, while radicalism is the least popular. That is where the contradictory approach towards environmentalist organisations originates from: their aims are extremely fashionable, but their ways of representation are less respected. While 8 of 10 Hungarians identify to some extent with environmental protection, only 28% are completely satisfied with the activities of the green organisations. Barely one-third finds their activities “mostly effective”. That is one reason why the survey gave the, at first sight surprising, summary that the majority expects international treaties, local governments and state initiatives to solve environmental problems, and only a minority hopes that civil organisations can bring results.

Three different groups can be identified based on their attitude to the green groups and to environmental protection. About 30% of the survey participants agree with the environmental initiatives, but do not really sympathise with the environmental organisations. 39% also agree with the green idea, but are neutral towards environmentalists. Finally, 31% of the Hungarians consider themselves active environmentalists who are willing to actively join environmental protection activities, and sympathise with the green organisations. Regarding the actual participation, the picture does not look that bright: only 1% of the population are members of an environmental civil organisation, and 2% claim that they financially support a green organisation.

The survey demonstrated that people find the protection of the environment much more important than the above numbers show: nearly half of the survey participants thought that in case of an investment the economic reasons should not come before the green considerations and only 38% found that the economic aspects are equally important. The opinion that the environmentalists often protest unnecessarily was shared in a different ratio – roughly as many participants agreed as not.

All in all, only 14% of the participants said that the environmental organisations almost always represent their interests. The greens seem to represent only one-third of Hungarians “in general”. These people do not feel represented, for example, when the environmentalists hold up economic investments. Half of the survey participants disapprove of the environmental actions that hold up investments which they find important or environmentally less damaging (or even environmentally friendly). Only 16% say that the green organisations never represent them and do not act on their behalf.

This survey was completed in March with the nationwide participation of 1500 randomly chosen adults.

Another case is the battle around the National Sustainable Development Strategy, which gives a true picture of the political commitment and the lack of integrated approach. Although Hungary quickly expressed its commitment in Johannesburg for creating the Strategy, and it

was reassured by two (unimplemented) government decisions, such a strategy has not been created yet and there is no expected deadline for its completion.

The first decision promised the Strategy for the end of 2004, but in the shadow of a prime minister change and a government reorganisation it was not fulfilled. At that time the Ministry for Environment supervised the process, demonstrating that for the members of the government sustainability is the same as environmental protection. Actually, it is an exaggeration to say that a ministry supervised the process, when in reality it was just a case of the commitment of one or two persons who personally found the strategy a primary issue. And because sustainability cannot be treated the same as environmental protection, a purely professional and environmentally oriented strategy could not be created. In order to ensure integration, the Ministry gave the task to the National Development Office.

This step unfortunately showed us that the related ministries do not know much about sustainability, and that the political will to create such a strategy is also missing. It is still not clear for them where the place of such a strategy would be and what its role could be.

The National Development Office wanted to get rid of the unfamiliar task, so they left the creation of the strategy to scholarly circles. A government decision roughly defined the thematic of the strategy, and based on this decision twenty expert groups and individuals created various parts of the strategy. The process was coordinated by one of the major Hungarian universities. The writers of the texts did not adapt their work and they did not even clarify the terminology. They all completed their task according to their previous concepts and experience. A so-called public discussion followed the submission of the parts. There was one such event organised with about ten participants.

The parts were assembled by a scientist who did not have any previous experience with sustainability. The idea was that in this way he could stay neutral towards the various ideas and views. The National Development Office did not find the material suitable for governmental discussion. Therefore, the office personnel, who are just as inexperienced in sustainability, started to revise the material. Currently this revised material is circulating in the ministries and will most likely wait for the new government. It is planned that the governmentally approved material will be publicly discussed and finalised after that.

The lessons of this procedure are that everything depends on the beliefs of one or two people. One or two people decide about what is presentable and what can go before the government. Carried out in this manner, there is no chance that new ideas will appear beside the usual stereotypes. Obviously, there is no political will. There is a weak international commitment and very few know about it. Perhaps a few people deal with it in the apparatus of the government. This process is closed off from the public, at least until the basic concepts are fixed. Only when the basics cannot be changed any more, does the public discussion follow. The government does not consider the strategy as an excellent chance to improve the awareness of society, to convince people, but as a task that should be ticked off.

Finally, it is important to mention that the likelihood that social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainability will be integrated into policies is decreasing in the expanded European Union, and this is certainly the case in Hungary. The reason is partly the approach of certain people and partly the international economic competition. The Prodi Commission always emphasised the equality of economy, society and the environment. Although these elements appeared in separate strategies (in the Lisbon and Göteborg Strategies) which were not harmonised with each other, environmental problems were never put in the background – they rather have been a guideline during the accession process.

The Barroso Commission did not even aim for an apparent equality of the three aspects. In a famous parable, Barroso said that when one of his three children is ill, he concentrates on that one, and neglects the other two. In his opinion, of course the economy is the ill child that needs more attention. The Lisbon Strategy has been relaunched in this spirit. Its main goal is improving the competitiveness of the EU. Accordingly, the member states had to create national Lisbon action plans. Social and environmental aspects are subordinated to competitiveness, which leads to the further erosion of the idea and practice of sustainability. This approach encouraged the member states that already mishandled sustainability and environmental problems, and softened the already existing environmental policies. In this political atmosphere we cannot count on the realisation of the Göteborg Sustainable Development Strategy's goals and on their strengthening in the revised EU Sustainable Development Strategy, which is expected in June 2006.

III. Relationships, connections and sustainability

III.1. Sustainability evaluation of the three conventions

Sustainable development is the realisation of social welfare without damaging the carrying capacity of the environment. This idea recognises that an economy serving the material wealth and growth of human society cannot have uncontrolled priority over the natural environment. Material wealth can be ensured neither without preserving the quality and the sustaining function of the environment nor without a reliable economy and a well-organised, democratic society.

There are four basic criteria to ensure sustainability. We need a *holistic approach* in order to understand social, economic and environmental connections and consider them in our decisions. Ensuring *equal access to resources* is a precondition of social justice. *Sustainable use of resources* is important in order to preserve the carrying capacity of the environment and to make a durable, long-term use possible while leaving enough resources for future generations. *Ensuring environmental quality* is inseparably connected to the ecological conditions all living creatures require for their existence.

In evaluating the sustainability connections of the three multinational environmental conventions, we have to look at how these four criteria appear in them.

Holistic Approach and the Consistency of the Three conventions

As was discussed in the preface, no Convention can be implemented if policies based on different interests have their own lives. They can do this, because there is no overall regulation, a so-called “master law” that would give a framework for all social activities.

Obviously, from a society’s point of view, the state of the environment is directly influenced by social activities, i.e., the kinds of production and consumption patterns that exist in the society, and the institutions that regulate social activities. Of course these direct influences are determined by culture: social values, education, knowledge and attitude all indirectly determine the state of the environment.

In general, the environmental conventions do not aim to treat the cause of these phenomena, but the effects. Decreasing biodiversity, global climate change and desertification are some of these effects, behind all these are structures of production and consumption, a system of institutions. Conventions however do not, regulate human activity or only do so on a very small scale.

The holistic approach requires the utmost consistency between and within the conventions. Is there such a consistency in them, and to what extent?

Apart from the actual content of the conventions, let’s investigate the relationship of three topics: climate, soil and biodiversity. By now we have gotten used to the theory that splits the environment into different parts and distinguishes environmental elements like water, air, soil, living nature and built environment. But in reality the environment is a single entity and is undividable, as none of its elements can exist without the other. The environment is the interaction of all these.

It is unfortunate that legal environmental regulation and the international conventions follow the logic of decomposition, and treat them separately. The climate change Convention focuses mainly on the enhancement of the physical state of the atmosphere by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and it does not really recognise that the climate is an interaction of all different elements, including built environment.

An analyst however, who is looking to connect the dots, climate means a basic ecological framework for the soil and biodiversity. Climate determines the changes in biodiversity, and affects it not only directly, but also indirectly, for example via the conditions of the soil. Biodiversity too, influences soil conditions, and both have an impact on climate.

Even this inaccurate (partial) analysis demonstrates that the holistic approach, that is necessary for sustainability, support the division of the environment into its elements, and the regulation of these via them.

Another requirement of the holistic approach is the balance between global and local aspects. All three issues of the conventions have, of course, global and local aspects. The global aspect of soil degradation is indeed climate change. It is not only the local community that is responsible for soil degradation, but also climate change – its is an external factor, larger than community that causes the degradation of soil or biodiversity. The local aspect is, of course, when the local community does not use the local natural resources, in this case the soil for sustainability. The Convention aimed at stopping soil degradation highlights the responsibility of the local community in the sustainable use of the soil, but it does not mention the cases when global, external factors come into play. The same applies to biodiversity. An important and crucial external factor such as climate can cause irreversible changes even when the local community deals with biodiversity in a sustainable way. Climate change, too, has innocent victims, when a community does not cause any environmental damage, but due to their geographical location they suffer from the effects at an increased degree.

Unfortunately, the conventions do not harmonise local and global issues, do not clarify the responsibility and do not suggest a regulation according to the scale of responsibility. In the conventions there are general requests for financial aid (without actual figures) and the desire for technological transfer.

The third element of the conventions showing the lack of a holistic approach is not discussing cause and effect relations. Climate change, decreasing biodiversity and soil degradation all have the same roots that lie in the production and consumption structure, and in the end in the socio-cultural conditions. With a very few exceptions, the conventions treat mainly the effects. Limiting greenhouse gas emissions to the appropriate level is just an illusion in a world based on economic growth and competition. This is the main cause of unsustainability in case of climate change, soil degradation and decreasing biodiversity.

From the three conventions the one about preserving biodiversity shows the most signs of a holistic approach. Its goals include the preservation of biodiversity, which is identical with the sustainability requirements for the protection of the quality of the environment; the sustainable use of biodiversity components, which is the sustainable use of natural resources; and equal participation from the benefits of genetic resources, which at least partly covers the necessity for equal access to resources.

Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

The necessity of the sustainable use of natural resources is mentioned in both the biodiversity and the soil degradation conventions, but the climate change agreement does not include sustainable use. Apparently, we could hardly expect this from a Convention that focuses on the limitation of emissions from fossil fuels, but the key to the solution would exactly be the sustainable use of renewable energy sources. The main question in this case is whether we can reduce the amount of energy sources used by limiting emissions? The necessity of sustainable use and ensuring environmental quality should be linked in the Convention if we want to make it consistent with itself and with the other conventions.

The real goal is to achieve an emission level that guarantees good environmental conditions while energy use does not increase. Consider this: with the current volume mankind has already nearly destroyed biodiversity and used up the biosphere's resources. The Convention is very lopsided from this point of view. It does not lower the total capacity but recognises the developing countries' right to grow. Of course everyone has the right to develop, but we should define what development means. Those who think that rising energy use and the related environmental emissions must go together with our development hardly understand the language of sustainability.

This interpretation of development corrupts the institutions of sustainable use. The basis of sustainable use are clearly the local ecological and social conditions, the environmentally proven and culturally justified production, and consumption experiences. But instead of recognising the above, technological transfer and the provision of financial resources are urged. We should have learned from experience that introducing foreign production and consumption practices to replace traditional, that sustainable use patterns may be promising at first, but in the end the process destroys the fine structure of the environment and the local community.

All in all, the objectives of the sustainable use of natural resources are correct. Looking at the classical approach of environmental regulation, we can see that it always uses and tries to achieve quality indices for the state of the environment, but only very recently do we see some weak efforts (IPPC) to regulate the use of the environment that have had an impact on its condition. Good environmental quality could be achieved by the correct use of the environment. That is why, instead of prescribing a particular environmental quality, the ways of its use should be regulated.

Sustainable resource use will remain a wish until regulations, legal or economic, determine the ways of use. The standard approvals of environmental use are the first attempts at this. The best available technique is, of course, by far not a guarantee of sustainable use, because even this mechanism cannot help the fact that there is too much use. However effective it is, it can still exceed the carrying capacity and the tolerance of the environmental system. The impact area of IPPC is nevertheless very small, as it only affects certain activities of a certain level. In many cases particular levels induce the avoidance of legal regulation, while many activities under the set level combined cause the same environmental damage as one big scale activity. We should not forget that BAT is also relative. It does not mean the absolutely best technique, only the best that is available under current knowledge and circumstances.

Social Justice

We ought to examine the conventions with a critical eye from the viewpoint of social justice as well. Conventions in general search for the ways toward justice between nations and do not, or only to a small extent focus on environmental problems arising from social injustice within a nation. Justice between countries in the biodiversity Convention is partially achieved by leaving the benefits of genetic resources locally. The climate Convention tries to create mechanisms via joint implementation and emission trade. The question is whether these measures are consistent with the other goals of the convention, e.g., to what extent do they serve the protection of biodiversity or the reduction of emissions and capacities in total.

The conventions are not able to treat the environmental and social problems arising from the unequal distribution of environmental resources as they do not answer the basic question. The basic question is not by whom and from whose money and where can new investments and workplaces be created, but whether the local community has the right and the possibility to own the tools of production. The basis of global and local injustice is the monopolisation of the natural resources by a few. This became possible via the worldwide market mechanisms. The conventions do not make even one small step towards recognising and treating this problem.

Ensuring Environmental Quality

The fourth criterion of sustainability is the ensuring environmental quality. One would think that because these are environmental conventions, this criterion is fully represented. Unfortunately we have to go back to the lack of a holistic approach. Without this our current thinking and activities are not able to preserve the quality of the environment.

The approach that divides the environment into elements and effects partial regulations according to these elements in reality only causes a transmission of environmental burdens. From the viewpoint of sustainability, the one and indivisible environment has three attributes: the state of the environment, the carrying capacity of resources, and space. Without considering the above, measures aimed at the improvement of the state will have an impact on the resources, or the effects will be transposed or divided in space and multiply the environmental burdens.

The shifting of environmental burdens can be blamed on the environmental regulations themselves. The regulations targeting certain elements of the environment improve the quality of one element at the expense of another. The same applies for the whole system, easing the burdens at one point places them onto others.

Environmental protection associated with economic growth cannot be even a theoretic way of sustainability. A typical example of shifting environmental burdens is the climate convention, which on one side induces spatial transpositions because of the new mechanisms, and on the other side the reduction of the emissions in question is not associated with the reduction of resource use.

It is also clear that the measures aimed at the prevention or slowing down of climate change come in contradiction with the measures treating the impact of climate change within the same convention. What does this mean? Preventive measures require the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and there are certain very small steps in this direction. At the same time, because of the present climate change, a treatment of the effects (weather extremes like

heat waves, floods, storms, etc.) is also necessary and it causes a positive feedback. The elimination of the effects requires energy and material and that again increases greenhouse gas emissions.

Finding a solution to the effects is an immediate and urgent social issue. The damage caused by floods and storms has to be eliminated without delay. If a house is uncomfortably cold or hot, heating or air-conditioning is necessary. However, society finds it difficult to understand making sacrifices for an issue that will bring benefits not just for the individual. The when and where of the benefits resulting from these sacrifices is hard to say anyway.

III.2. The Implementation Measures of the conventions in the Context of Sustainability

All three conventions lead to actual activities that on their own are in harmony with the objectives of the respective convention, but cannot fulfil the aims of all three conventions optimally.

Afforestation seems a suitable step from the viewpoint of all three conventions as it increases carbon-dioxide absorption capacity, prevents erosion, enhances the local climate conditions, provides renewable resources and could contribute to habitat and species diversity, etc.

However, this general rule can only be applied under certain strict conditions, depending on the location, the technology, the species combination and the end use of the planted forest.

Important conditions regarding biodiversity are:

1. The current use and biodiversity status of the location: A natural or semi-natural system should be selected for afforestation, one that plays a significant role in propagation (ecological corridor), feeding, reproduction, etc. Especially grasslands fall in this endangered category.
2. Its diversity of qualified species: The planted forest is usually selected by the species of the tree, and mostly the purpose is not a grouping of forests. Most planted forests are homogenous, of one certain age and consist of a single species. The preference for fast growing, foreign species makes this situation worse.
3. Ecological network: The forest should not be treated on its own, but in connection with its environment. Its potential role in the ecological network should be the primary consideration.
4. Mosaic layout: The mosaic layout of an area is important not only for the landscape and land use, but also for the amount of biodiversity.
5. Genetic adequacy: The planted species of trees should be genetically adequate.
6. Spatial and time dynamics: The mosaic layout makes the interaction of different habitat types possible, so that various succession phases can follow each other in space and time.

Important conditions regarding soil protection:

1. The technology of afforestation: The soil preparation work prior to the afforestation can contribute to erosion and deflation if not carried out with the necessary precaution.
2. Combination of species: The selected species of trees have a huge impact on the soil quality later, e.g., acacia leaves.
3. End use: The soil conditions depend on the technology of the end use, e.g., clear-cut leads to erosion.

Important conditions regarding climate:

1. The technology of afforestation: The environmental impact of machine work during plantation, maintenance and end use contribute to the causes of climate change.
2. Succession phase: The climax forest does not provide a net absorption of carbon dioxide. A growing, planted forest of a single age is the best net absorber, a fact that is in conflict with the requirements of biodiversity and stability.
3. Organic material use: It is important how the end product will be used, whether the wood exits the cycle (e.g., technical use).

We can clearly see the many points of conflict that should be optimised in order to satisfy the requirements of soil and climate protection and biodiversity at the same time. The optimal solution would be using natural succession, unless it conflicts with economic interests: if nature does our job, how will we make a living?

Although this is a major dilemma, it could be solved if resources had an economic value and the negative external costs were taken into consideration. Then the natural succession “managed” by the local communities would provide the same income as energy-intensive machine work.

Benefits of natural succession

For biodiversity:

- Change does not cause a shock, it is much a continuous, gradual process that leaves time for adaptation.
- Forms a combination, not a monoculture, and the undergrowth develops together with the tree species .
- The mosaic layout is ensured.
- It is in accordance with the natural dynamics of evolution.

For climate protection:

- There is no positive impact on the cause of climate change as there are no environmental burdens.
- The dynamics of succession guarantee the parallel follow up of various succession phases, so there will be net absorbers.

For soil protection:

- There is organic soil development.
- The micro-mosaic structure prevents soil degradation.

The example above shows that there are measures that integrate the objectives of all three conventions, but in reality only such measures will be implemented that provide economic benefits within the framework of the current economic regulation systems. They might be in accordance with certain goals of one convention, but they cannot ensure the implementation of all objectives.

The example that best illustrates this is the use of biomass as a renewable energy source. The bio-diesel directive of the EU requires 20% bio-fuel use by 2020. As a result plants suitable for bio-diesel production get a green light and subsidy. This is obviously the fulfilment of one particular environmental target. No one investigated its impact in connection with other environmental objectives. In order to meet the requirements of this directive, given the current levels of fuel use, when growing rape, the whole territory of the member states would have to be used for this purpose. And we did not calculate the growing demand, and that the 20% would not solve any problems.

It is worth investigating this issue more in detail. If we assume that subsidies cause more bio-diesel production and consumption, and that these reach the required level, where would we grow other agricultural plants and where would be space for the already diminished natural habitats? What could people eat and what would happen with the already decreasing biodiversity? What would be the result of the rape monoculture? What kind of weeds and parasites would become dominant? Moreover, it is not even clear how much energy is required for the production of ca. 1.5 tons of bio-diesel grown on one hectare of soil, and how much environmental impact it causes. Farming, ploughing, replacing used soil resources,

sowing, cultivation, harvesting, transport and fuel production all require energy. When we ask for such statistics, we only receive insufficient information. Although it is sure that the regulation is lacking any kind of environmental rationale, farmers would gladly switch to growing energy crops for sufficient state subsidies.

III.3. Sustainability Context of Greenhouse Gas Emission Trade

The Kyoto Convention sets the target of 6% reduction on average between 2008 and 2012 compared to the base period 1985-87, when Hungary had 111 million tons of carbon-dioxide equivalent greenhouse gas emissions. In 2002 according to the “latest” available data there were 75,6 million tons of emission, which is 30% less than in the base period.

These data show how the measurable carbon-dioxide emission of a restructured economy by 2002 makes a 24% surplus pollution possible. This means we achieve the 6% reduction by an actual 24% growth in emissions. The forecasts predict a 23% emission surplus by 2010 because of economic “development”, so we collect 1% of reserves. The available amount compared to the 75,6 million tons in 2002 will be 89,71 million tons, so we can contribute a bigger amount of pollution.

(The right to surplus pollution is described in the justification of the trade law:

“On the other side, property value rights of significant value, created according to the legislation and belonging to the government will be distributed free of charge. In the first trading phase the yearly amount of the distributed emission quota among operators will be 29,6 million units. The prospective value of this – based on the exchange rates according to the impact assessment – at 4 Euros/unit is 118 million euros (29,9 billion HUF), at 10 Euro/unit it is 296 million Euros (72,5 billion HUF). Several companies can gain additional income by the careful management of these property value rights without any investment. Those companies that can reduce emissions by investment can sell the released emission units: the participation in the system means actual financial benefits for them.”)

What is the reason in this?

From an environmental point of view, obviously nothing as pollution will grow.

We cannot argue that there is a 6% decrease compared to the base period, because although there was more emission in the base period, the problem was much smaller (i.e., the signs of global climate change themselves). Nowadays a smaller scale emission implies a larger problem, and we are responsible for solving the problem.

Sensitive Issues of Hungarian Emission Trade

1. Russia did not want to join the system because the USA is not involved and that means the largest potential customer is missing from the market. Due to the lack of demand the countries that have a surplus can only sell their quota at depressed prices. The surplus emission rights should be distributed only when there is a buyers’ market. A cheap market is in favour of those who have a deficit, and provides no advantage for those who have a surplus.
2. There is the danger that on a sellers’ market it would become cheaper to buy a quota than to reduce emissions and that would have a backlash when the demand grows stronger.

3. The institution of joint implementation has only deceptive benefits. We know from environmental economics that a certain percentage of pollution reduction is cost-effective. Relatively small investments result in big savings. But further savings can only be achieved at much higher costs. The Western economies, which use the latest industrial technologies, are mostly already beyond this cost-effective phase, because they were forced by their advanced environmental policies. If we give the cost-effective phase of pollution reduction to external stakeholders during the joint implementation, then we will have to implement real reduction in a later phase of the trading, so it will only be possible in the low efficiency phase.

4. An economic structure associated with emissions surplus does not support the competitiveness of the economy. Providing emission surplus leads to an economic structure that encourages emission growth.

5. From an environmental point of view it is a questionable way of reducing pollution to convert precise, measurable emissions into diffuse pollutants. Good examples are most methods of biomass use, when we count the emissions of energy production alone, and do not measure the greenhouse gas emissions of burning fossil fuels during growing, harvesting, transporting and preparing the biomass, and we do not consider this additional pollution. Of course, we should not forget about other environmental impacts like endangering biodiversity, because it is part of another international Convention in which we are responsible partners. Such so-called clean developments can only appear beneficial for the near-sighted, who considers the small scale of environmental impacts.

6. In the phase of emission trade when real reductions will be necessary, the reduction will appear primarily as a social, and not a corporate burden. The consumers will pay the costs of buying quota or reducing emissions in some indirect form. No one has investigated these effects yet!

Conclusions:

At the time of signing the Convention it was reasonable to request 1985-87 as the base period, because at that time the greenhouse gas emissions went down greatly after the collapse of the industrial structure, and we could not know how much emissions savings there would be in the changing economy. It is also obvious that this favourable position brings economic benefits for Hungary by the emission trade.

However, our long-term economic competitiveness and especially the protection of our environment require that we keep our advantage that resulted from the economic structural changes.

IV. Objectives and Tasks Related to the Implementation of the conventions

IV.1. Suggestions for Sustainable Development

The following short-term (5 years) measures are suggested for sustainable development:

IV:1.1. Creating the Conditions for Systematic Thinking and the Institutions Integrating Environmental and Developmental Issues

1. The content and methodology of an education based on systems thinking should be prepared in various methodology workshops.
2. Tertiary education should transform the teacher training system. The subject specialisation of trainee teachers should be replaced by the training of teachers who are able to transmit a framework of knowledge and educate for life.
3. The groundwork for the introduction of integrated knowledge systems should be laid down in primary and secondary education. As a first step, the current structure of school subjects should be integrated into the knowledge framework of sustainability.
4. Social debates regarding the current development situation and the chances of sustainability should be presented more often in the media. More people should take part in media events promoting the positive norms of behaviour and the values of sustainability.
5. The leading participants of Hungarian academic life should set up a workshop for clarifying sustainability issues. The workshop should release annual sustainability reports in order to help the public understand sustainability. The workshop should elaborate the methodology for measuring and following up the status of sustainability and should play a leading role in communicating with the public.
6. Cause and effect relations should be studied and the results should be communicated to the public. These cause and effect relations should be the starting point of various strategies, programmes and plans. Current programmes and plans should be updated according to the cause and effect structure.
7. The methodology of a sustainability assessment has to be elaborated and its institutions ought to be established. Instead of an endless number of various assessments (cost-benefit, minority, competitiveness, environmental analysis, equal opportunities, etc.) we need just one, a sustainability assessment integrating all aspects of social welfare.
8. Legislation, all sectors of development and decision making, the state budget and of course all development plans should be included in sustainability assessments. It is important to carry out sustainability assessments during the early stages of planning; involving the stakeholders, and the process and results of these assessments should be made public.

9. The transformation of the institutional system should be planned, and the current sectoral institutions should be transformed into cross-sectoral institutions representing the principles of sustainability. The integrated institutions should be set up at local, regional and national levels; they should be assigned the appropriate scope of authority according to the principles of devolution.

10. The legal and economic regulations should undergo a sustainability assessment, and the regulations conflicting with the goals of sustainability should be sorted out.

11. Integrated indicators of sustainability will have to be formed, and we all must come to an agreement regarding their implementation. The statistical data collection and data structure ought to be transformed according to these indicators. The information generated from the data and the tendency of the changes should be made public. The transparency of the data and information should be ensured, and an institution independent of any political course should be set up in order to provide an objective status report for the public. The sustainability indicators of local communities should become measurable as well.

12. Institutions necessary for the implementation of the principle of precaution ought to be established, in order to turn this principle from a theory into practice. Techno-scientific inventions should undergo a sustainability assessment before application.

13. We have to review our views about the environment, and change the related educational materials and viewpoints. We have to review all areas of environmental regulation. Ways of measuring the changing natural resources ought to be elaborated; the relationship between environmental pressure and ecological capacity should be followed up.

IV.1.2. Enhancing Social Welfare Conditions

1. In order to represent the interests of future generations, the generational aspect should be included in the methodology of sustainability assessments. The possibility of giving independent societal opinions and the institution of future generations' representatives should be integrated into the decision-making mechanism.

2. In the short term, society should be made aware of the components of welfare of the elderly. It should be investigated how social and generational interactions can be revived by giving an active role to older generations. People should understand the mechanisms that lead to the loosening and breaking of mutual community connections.

3. Equal opportunities for men and women should be compared in all areas of life by making the situation clear, substantial and public. Comparative analysis should form a starting point.

4. In sustainability assessments for strategic decision making and development plans, the issue of equal opportunities for women should be included so that it integrates development issues in all areas.

5. A deliberate human resources policy should enhance the role of women in politics and public affairs, giving a sign of respect for women to society.

6. Far more financial and moral value should be given to the activities carried out by women, especially in upbringing and social work. Flexible working times and employment should

help the co-ordination of work at home and at the working place. Work at home should be recognised as part-time work.

7. A special programme for introducing minority cultures and teaching tolerance should be started at schools and in adult education.

8. The media should carry a positive campaign for correct social coexistence, showing the cultural values of minorities, not only conflicts.

9. The mechanisms causing unequal welfare opportunities are global; they can only be changed by international co-operation. At the national level these mechanisms should be uncovered and analysed, they should be made public, and ways of effecting change should be elaborated upon.

10. A system for the inventory of natural resources should be set up. The methodology of measuring and monitoring negative external costs should be elaborated upon, regular and valid reports should be published about them.

11. Regional development plans should be reviewed and they should undergo sustainability assessments. The processes that increase the differences despite that they intended to reduce them should be analysed.

12. The subsidy scheme should be reviewed and placed on an eco-social basis instead of on the absorption ability.

13. The results of the financial support for development provided in the last decade for social welfare and regional development should be evaluated. The evaluation should be transparent and the results public.

14. The aspects of project sustainability assessments should be elaborated and projects should undergo a sustainability assessment. The system of long-term evaluation and monitoring of project results should be elaborated.

15. It should be investigated how the state could provide a subsidy for activities that use a high amount of human labour, have low negative external costs and are not material and energy intensive, and are therefore socially beneficial, in relation to the taxes and charges paid in.

16. It should be investigated what kind of decision-making competencies should be placed at the local level, and what resources or resource-building instruments can be allocated to them.

17. The structure of state and municipal tasks should be reviewed and a bigger role should be given to civil participation.

18. The stakeholders should be effectively included in decision-making and in the preparation of decisions, in order to strengthen the principle of prevention. The necessary institutions should therefore be set up.

19. It ought to be ensured that the youth takes part in decision-making, so that caring for the future and public life shall become their intrinsic need. In order to achieve this, models should be created and self-governing youth organisations should receive support.

20. The sustainability context of education programmes should be investigated. Such programmes should be organised that do not conflict with the requirements of sustainability. The effectiveness of education programmes should be checked with regards to generating income.
21. A health education programme should be created that integrates the defining factors of welfare, and communicates them systematically towards society. We must ensure that the whole institutional system is governed by the idea of caring for health.
22. Besides the existing health and social care systems, we should work to revive community level activities and voluntary services. Work in the family and community social care work should be recognised at the same level as care work at the workplace.
23. Health insurance should be restructured so that the support system prioritises prevention. The practice of workplace or community health preservation should be created and given bonuses, for example by leaving a certain amount of the expenses paid at the local level.
24. The development of products and services presenting no danger for health and serving the preservation of health should be supported by an integrated product policy and a new consumption policy. Strict criteria should be set up for advertisements and commercials so that they cannot advertise products and activities that damage health or the environment. On the other hand, public attention should be called to a healthy lifestyle and consumption, and should be paid for from public financial sources.
25. In accordance with European regulations long term environmental regulation should ban emissions that damage the environment and are toxic for human health. A list of materials, tools, services and technologies should be created that have to be replaced by other processes, materials, etc. within a given period of time.

IV.1.3. Ensuring Quality of Environment

1. The calculation of the ecological footprint ought to be introduced and used at the national and local levels. Programmes should be set up in order to reduce the ecological footprint of the various communities. A system that provides positive encouragement should be created in order to reduce the ecological footprint, e.g., efficiency should be a criterion in providing subsidies. Yearly summaries, reports on increasing or decreasing tendencies and a list of most and least efficient communities should be published.
2. Production and consumption patterns should undergo sustainability assessments. The role of traditional methods in sustainability ought to be investigated, and traditional, truly sustainable production and consumption patterns should be favoured in regulatory mechanisms.
3. The sustainable use of local resources should be prioritised in shaping production and consumption patterns, in manufacturer and consumer awareness, and in trade.
4. A regulatory system for ecological landscape management should be set up and implemented in regional planning.

5. Product development based on local resources and traditional landscape types and the trade of new local produce should be encouraged.
6. An accountability system for using resources should be elaborated and implemented, based on the principle that the user of a resource is responsible for the whole life cycle of that resource. The accountability system can assure the connection between the various production and consumption structures.
7. The principles of sustainable resource-management should be introduced into strategic sustainability assessments. A regulation system is necessary that:
 - creates sources of funds for the knowledge and innovation necessary to implement sustainable resource-management;
 - transforms non-sustainable resource-management practices gradually;
 - shifts material and energy intensive products and services towards products and services which require minimal material and energy use; and
 - prioritises human labour with low negative external costs.
8. The integrated indicators of sustainability ought to be elaborated and connected with the continuous monitoring and analysis of environmental quality and social welfare.
9. A methodology of sustainability analysis should be created.
10. Integrated research dealing with the issues of development and economy should be initiated in order to understand the social contexts of environmental issues.
11. The methodology of measuring and following up ecological carrying capacity should be elaborated. It is necessary to understand the changes in carrying capacity and its application in practice.
12. Increased effort should be put into understanding the effect of “modern” consumption patterns on people and communities.
13. A sustainability filter should be introduced into the early evaluation of research outcomes and innovations in order to prevent applications damaging human health and environmental systems.
14. Attention should be paid to research of the environmental impact mechanisms of existing applications, especially on synergist behaviour.
15. The environmental economic research regarding the negative external costs and the incorporation of the value of natural resources should be sped up, and their role in the social allocation mechanism should be interpreted.
16. Innovations focusing at sustainable resource use and related research should be encouraged.
17. Research should be initiated on the reasons of regional differences in development at the system level, in order to understand the changing relations of town and county.

18. The theory and know-how of integrated product policy should have a place in professional education, and its details should be elaborated.
19. Legal regulations should be set up in order to introduce the *cradle-to-grave* life cycle analysis of products. The regulations should enforce the practical implementation of the theory.
20. The feasibility and details of a tax on resource use should be investigated in order to change production and consumption patterns.
21. A marketing system based on direct contact between manufacturers/farmers and consumers should be created in order to favor local produce and local markets.
22. Propagation of a less material and energy consuming lifestyle, widening the product scale and the use of prices as indicators should contribute to a change in consumer behaviour and habits.
23. The existing ecological network of the country should be mapped with special attention to cross-border connections. Factors endangering the ecological network should be identified and the reduction of these dangers should be planned, especially those caused by changes in landscape use. Aspects of ecological network protection should be harmonised with current and future development plans and these should be included in sustainability filters.
24. The institutions of ecological landscape management should be set up, providing information centres for sustainable landscape management on the one hand, and giving landscape management advice on the other, so that the stakeholders could bring their plans and needs regarding landscape use in harmony with the ecological network.
25. In order to ensure that ecological criteria are met, landscape use should be based on the ecological properties of a landscape and on historical experience. The sustainability context of traditional landscape use should be mapped with special attention to floodplain, outlet, foothill, hill and lowland management.
26. A landscape rehabilitation programme should be created for the entire country.
27. Land use regulation according to the criteria of sustainability should be set up, in which the acquisition of the necessary know-how for sustainable landscape use can be realised. Setting up a zone system and corresponding regulations should gradually phase out non-sustainable land use. A ratio of natural habitats that can ensure the functionality of natural interactions and the ecological potential should be preserved.
28. A system of land-saving land development should be elaborated. The available green areas for industrial use and green field developments should be limited. Construction activities should be rationalised within the limits of the land already in use.
29. The methods of full sustainability assessment of environmental infrastructure investments should be elaborated, and the efficiency and specific indicators of each investment should be incorporated into it.
30. The system of environmental impact assessment in individual projects should be extended to include an assessment of the joint effect of all projects.

31. In order to make prices serve as environmental indicators of a certain product or service, environmental factors should play a role in pricing. Consumers should learn the environmental qualities of products and services. A pricing practice reflecting environmental qualities should be introduced. Providing product information labelling alone is not sufficient; media campaigns are necessary to provide information about environmental aspects.

IV.2. Suggestions for the implementation of the conventions

IV.2.1. Integrated Measures for the Prevention of Environmental Damage

Measures should be introduced that serve the various environmental policy objectives and, because they are integrated, ensure that they do not conflict with the effects of the other measures. This would make possible that the requirements of the various conventions are fulfilled with a single, integrated assessment system.

The basic question of sustainable development is the integration of development and environmental issues, so we have to consider the expected environmental and social impact when planning developments. Based on this principle, all developments should undergo sustainability assessments in advance.

A generally accepted requirement of all three conventions is *the integration of environmental aspects into other sectoral programmes*. This wish is expressed in every serious environmental policy, but at the moment there are only partial, imperfectly functioning institutions for the implementation of integration. Parts of these institutions are Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment.

IV.2.2. Description of the problems, recommended actions and the expected results of these actions:

1.) Institutions for the Implementation of the conventions

Problem: There are no united, cross-sectoral institutions for conventions. Environmental conventions usually fall under the authority of environmental protection institutions, and implementation is expected from the existing capacity. There are hardly any new capacities created, usually a certain person is assigned to take care of the convention. This kind of responsibility is necessary for administrative obligations, but it cannot contribute to the actual implementation. The problem with having a single responsible person is that this individual alone knows all about the convention, so when this person leaves, it is difficult to reconstruct the situation and that person takes away the knowledge and the network of connections. A further problem is that the person is in charge of many other areas and has only time for the Convention when an urgent obligation comes up.

It makes the situation even worse that the other departments, whose activities affect the issue, have hardly any necessary information.

Recommendation: Inter-departmental institutions should be created for the conventions.
Elements of these institutions could be:
Secretary – possibly the Prime Minister’s Office
Inter-departmental committee – all affected areas
Scientific council – with broad public participation

What should be the role of the integrated secretary?

- Following up international events related to the convention, Convention development tasks.
- Evaluating the implementation and yearly reports for the government and the public.
- Fulfilling international reporting obligations.
- Introducing the aspects of the conventions into legislation and governmental work.
- Informing the public about the conventions and awareness raising.
- Contact with the departments, requesting work plans from the departments, controlling the work plans and integrating the aspects of the conventions into department work.
- Contact with regional and local level, integrating the aspects of the conventions into authority work.
- Disclosing legislation and regulation deficiencies.
- Demonstrating good international practice examples of the implementation.
- Providing training and training material for government officials.
- Providing the public with information, process support and data.
- Creating and maintaining Convention websites.

Benefits of the recommendation:

Avoiding multiple assignments that would result from the overlap of the various conventions.
The international obligation appears at the governmental level, not just departmental level, and it provides tasks for every affected party.

The international conventions are incorporated into government work and become daily duties instead of campaign activities.

The aspects of the conventions can be integrated into sectoral policies.

More government officials and other people deal with the issue.

The currently sectoral issues become integrated.

Science comes closer to government work and its viewpoints can be incorporated into the government work.

Society and the public receive more information about the importance of the international conventions and the associated tasks.

2.) Integration of the Viewpoints of the conventions into the Sectoral Policies, Plans and Programmes

2.1. Problem: The conventions live a separate life, so their viewpoints are not implemented in everyday decision making. This applies to normative and development decisions as well. Although the environmental analysis as defined by environmental law exists and applies to all regulations, and the environmental impact assessment for development decisions and the institution of environmental assessment were introduced after EU accession, the viewpoints of the conventions do not appear in them systematically.

The currently valid Environmental Assessment, which applies to the strategic review of certain plans and programmes, does not include all policies and regulations that determine social and economic activities, so it does not apply to all normative decisions. For example, the budget does not undergo Environmental Assessment, even though government expenditures and income plans for a given year affect the use of the environment and, as a result, the state of the environment to a large extent.

Recommendation: All normative decisions should undergo Environmental Assessment.

Expected result: Decision makers and those who prepare the decisions are forced to integrate environmental aspects. This enforces a change in attitude as well. The environmental aspects of normative decisions will slowly improve.

2.2. Problem: There is no limit to social and economic activities. Although everyone agrees on the need to increase eco-efficiency, they forget that the solutions that are individually very efficient can add up to an intolerable overall level. The very few experiments that aim to regulate from the emission side, like the climate convention, cannot guarantee the sustainable use of resources or that the activities aiming to achieve the target will have an impact in another form or at another location.

Recommendation: There should be an upper limit to the consumption of various resources.

Expected result: The extras required for the development of the economy and the society can only be produced by increasing efficiency. This would speed up innovation, stop further growth of environmental burdens and lead to an improvement in the state of the environment.

2.3. Problem: The purpose of Environmental Impact Assessment is to prevent or reduce major environmental impacts. The classification of major environmental effects is based on a subjective decision, whether the affected people find the expected impact bearable or not, and depends on the observation-based judgement of the people carrying out the assessment. This approach focuses on direct, local effects, and does not or hardly considers, that major effects are exported to other locations (mostly into the global environment), or to other parts of the environment.

The effort spent on the preservation of environmental elements leads to the transfer of the effects between elements of the system. For example, in the interest of clean water we damage other elements of the environment. The production of the energy used for carrying away and cleaning wastewater will damage the air quality, and the construction material used for the treatment plants damages the soil, i.e., living nature, etc.

This process did not cause any problems as long as the “insignificant” effects spread into the global environment did not add up and affect the “clean” environment. This reverse effect, in contrast to the temporary effects that assured the good quality of individual environmental elements, is universal. It affects all ecological conditions and the environmental framework of human activities. The best current example is the climate change that causes the change in biodiversity. It is the result of greenhouse gas emissions which were considered insignificant and did not cause any direct, local problems, but added up in the end. The CFC from spray bottles was also considered irrelevant until it all added up and damaged the ozone layer.

Recommendation: This issue affects the entire environmental policy and all legal regulations based on this policy. The deficiency of this regulation is that it does not include a part to examine the total environmental impact of all activities related to a certain location (country,

region, small region, etc.), and to consider the impact on the state of the environment, on the availability of resources and on the possibilities of land use during the whole life cycle of an activity.

Obviously, this can only be improved through EU level environmental policy, and requires the reconsideration of the entire environmental policy.

2.4. Problem: The available regulation measures like Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and IPPC permit only deal with activities of a certain scale and effect, i.e., significant activities, and aim to regulate these alone. The investment value limits in the regulation force the developers to plan smaller investments and avoid the regulation. This way it is exactly the regulation that induces more and more activities that not individually, but collectively affect the environment.

Recommendation: All development activities should have a so-called sustainability filter. It should be applied during the planning phase of the development in order to ensure the integration of sustainability aspects in all activities, regardless of their scale.

Expected result: The sustainability awareness of developers and planners would increase, the consideration of environmental aspects would become a daily routine and environmental targets get into the centre of attention.

2.5. Problem: The environmental impact of individual developments cannot be summed up mechanically. This means that even perfectly carried out individual impact assessments cannot prevent the destruction of the environment, when the total effect of the individual projects goes beyond the carrying capacity of the environment. For example, we can do correct impact assessments for every highway in Hungary, but from the results for the parts of the network we cannot work out the overall environmental impact of the whole highway network. It is a different, new quality compared to the other parts' effects.

Can Environmental Assessment help? The aim of the EA is to provide a strategic assessment of individual plans and programmes and to theoretically ensure the consistency of the projects that would result from these plans or programmes but are not yet defined. The EA should give a framework for future activities that would not hurt environmental interests individually or combined.

It would be too early to criticise a newly released directive, but it is important to consider that as the plans and programmes only give the framework for actual future development projects, we cannot see in advance what kind of actual environmental impact the existing and new activities in that field would have combined. We should also not forget that the impact assessment only deals with certain kinds of activities. Even if someone would deal with the combined effect of all activities falling into this category, they would neglect the possibly "insignificant" results of the activities that do not require EIA.

Recommendation:

Activities that are based on each other and are related should be analysed as one system. This should be made clear in the legal regulations.

For example, the entire section of a cross-country motorway should be assessed extensively. All related activities of construction and use should be examined in combination (e.g., building material sources, service infrastructure, etc.)

Recommendation: All normative and development decisions should undergo integrated sustainability assessments. The methodology and aspects of sustainability assessments should be elaborated.

The essence of a sustainability assessment is that it integrates various assessment requirements and fulfils them in one system. Accordingly, the economic, social and environmental impact of normative decisions and developments would be examined at once.

Recommendations to improve the effectiveness of environmental assessments:

- Various development options should be assessed in order to select the environmentally and socially most suitable alternative.
- Development decisions should prefer the environmentally and socially best solution when compared to private interests.
- Public participation should be made possible in the preparation of developments from the very early, conceptual phase.
- The impact of individual developments should be evaluated within the system of all existing activities, including related activities and their impact area.
- Not certain effects, but effect mechanisms should be studied, considering the expansion of the effects in space and time.
- The impact on the citizens' health should be examined based on the health condition of the people.
- The social impact of developments should be assessed via uncovering the negative external costs.

Expected result: Decrease of bureaucracy, speeding up permission processes and increase in the social and environmental appropriateness of developments.

3.) Planned Introduction of Convention Tasks at the Local Level

Problem: The conventions are being dealt with only at the central level, but the implementing institutions are at the local level. The aspects of the conventions do not appear consequently in the tasks of environmental authorities or other affected sectoral authorities. The requirements arising from the conventions are not known at the local level. The authorities dealing with environmental issues do not have the necessary knowledge or the appropriate environmental awareness. There is not even enough capacity to implement the legal regulations.

Recommendation: Training programmes and guidebooks are necessary. Regional trainings should be organised at least twice a year, where the affected authorities would receive information about the implementation of international conventions and related tasks and where they could participate in environmental awareness raising at the same time.

Expected result: Increased knowledge of the conventions and environmental awareness. The aspects of the conventions integrate into the work of the authorities and they start dealing more knowledgeably with these conventions. Connections would be built between the officers of the various authorities, and their work processes would become easier and more effective.

4.) Integrating Convention Aspects into Decision Making at Local Authorities

Problem: The local authorities do not have the overall knowledge and the appropriate environmental approach in order to include sustainability or the requirements of the conventions in their decision-making. The decision makers, the municipal representative committee itself, do not have the appropriate environmental awareness. In the implementation it is the function of the notary to carry out environmental tasks, and he does not have political or professional support in order to integrate environmental aspects into the authoritative work.

Recommendation: Support and encourage the introduction of EMAS to local authorities.

Expected result: Dealing with environmental issues would become routine and it would be a part of everyday work and decision-making. The environmental efficiency of local authorities and the environmental basis of decisions will improve. Environmental awareness will increase.

5.) Improving Knowledge and Awareness of the conventions in Developers

Problem: The environmental awareness of developers is very low. Voluntarily taking on responsibility apart from what is requested by law is very rare or non-existent. The general approach of a society that prefers economic growth and protecting individual and group interests above social interests weakens the possible representation of environmental interests.

Recommendation: Enhancing the consistency of legal regulations and simplifying approval processes and focusing environmental aspects at the same time could reduce the opposition to environmental restrictions. The set of values in society should change in order to place environmental interests at the same level as material interests.

Expected results: Consistency in legal regulations would reduce the shifting of environmental burdens, simplify approval processes and provide more space for environmental considerations.

6.) Improving Legal Consistency

Problem: The conventions do not have a legal effect. Only what is covered by the environmental legislation will be implemented. Therefore, the main question is whether the current environmental legislation includes all targets and tasks set by the conventions.

By separating the environment into elements, environmental protection was separated as well, and this resulted in sectoral knowledge and measures (see above, consistency of environmental conventions). In the framework of environmental authority work, the sectoral expertise is not integrated; the sectors are not connected with each other. Even civil society follows this pattern with regard to the disintegration of the environment and specialises in various fields of environmental issues.

We consider the preservation of environmental quality the same as the conservation of the state of the environment (i.e., clean local environment), so the legal and economic regulation focuses also on keeping the local environment clean and has started to consider the protection of the global environment just recently. However, there is still no sign of the preservation of natural resources and spatial structure.

For example, according to governmental regulation Nr 20/2001 the Impact Assessment examines the effect of various activities on the environmental elements, on the system, processes, structure of these elements, especially on landscape, settlements, climate and natural ecosystems, and the effect on human health, welfare and land use possibilities. In the list of activity types the EIA Directive and the governmental regulation recommend considering the size of the affected area including related operations, the limitation of other natural resource use, the attraction of other activities having a significant environmental impact, the sensitivity of the landscape, the relatively limited amount, the quality and renewability of the resource in question, the absorption capacity of the environment (carrying capacity), and the synergy of the effects.

However, we cannot find any legal regulations supporting the above, unlike legislation for the easily limitable environmental emissions. This means that while the environmental output of certain human activities is regulated, the input side of it is not. Such inputs are the area size and quality, and the resource quality and amount. When we take a closer look, we can also discover the weaknesses of the output regulation. The deficiencies are in the inadequate judgement of the various kinds of impacts, especially synergic, persistent, cumulative and toxic effects.

The above anomalies have a reverse effect on the environmental protection authorities that review the assessments. They can only request the elimination or modification of an activity based on existing, explicit legal regulations.

The situation could be improved if the associated authorities had a deeper environmental awareness and more intention to act. For example, it should be the duty of the Hungarian Public Health Authority (ÁNTSZ) to deal with human health damaging effects, and the mine captain's office should watch the preservation of the resource quantity. Local authorities and regional governmental institutions should control land use. However, without environmental awareness a contrasting interest is formed. The mine captain's office is interested in opening new mines and the municipalities are interested in construction, because they consider these as development or the sources of tax income. They would not get this income for the protection of their environment. In most cases the authorities do not provide suggestions related to their own field of responsibility, but to the tasks of the environmental authority.

All in all we can say that legal regulations are specialised in treating major, local environmental problems and they cannot handle global impacts. The intentions of the legislative institutions regarding the treatment of global effects remain theoretical ideas. Moreover, the regulations for the prevention of the local environment cause a shifting of environmental burdens and convert local environmental damage into global impact.

Recommendation: The consistency of the environmental regulations should be reviewed systematically, and the regulatory anomalies that cause a shifting of environmental burdens should be eliminated. Not just the legislation, but also the implementing institutions should be integrated and harmonised, so that the various sectoral authorities do not represent conflicting interests.

Expected results: A more straightforward, clear and systematic legislation that would be able to regard the whole environment. As a result, the shifting of environmental burdens would be eliminated and environmental awareness increased. The work of Environmental authority would become simpler and more effective, and the conflict of interests would be eliminated.

7.) Raising Awareness and Training the Public

Problem: The public does not connect the surrounding phenomena and information with their own lifestyle and their role in the global environmental crisis. Although everyone hears and experiences daily the occurrences of the climate change, people do not feel its their personal responsibility or the obligation to act in order to improve the situation. Not even the most conscientious social groups have the necessary long-term foresight yet. Average people are only capable of understanding local, direct effects, and to object to these issues. Clearly, satisfying local environmental “interests” very often conflict with global ones, enforcing local “solutions” only causes shifting the environmental burdens.

Recommendation: Taking the three pillars of the Aarhus Convention would help in this matter. Environmental awareness raising should be supported with appropriate, credible and up-to-date information. Participation in the decision-making would lead to responsible behaviour. The public should be trained to exercise their right to participate and should receive process support.

The customer services operated by the authorities cannot fulfil this function at the moment, because not even the authorities are able to harmonise local and global environmental interests and the legal regulations also support the representation of local environmental interests. Global affairs are presented by the media and no-one explains the connection between local and global issues.

Building the environmental awareness necessary for the representation of global interests can be realised by strengthening civil organisations, by changing the methods and the content of school education and by training the media. At the same time scientific capacity building is necessary in order to create a multi-disciplinary knowledge base about the social context of environmental issues.

An extensive campaign should be started at the government level about the ideas of the Aarhus Convention, as well as to set up the institutions to implement these, and to enable the appropriate conditions and capacities.

Civil organisations, in co-operation with scientists, should create training materials about sustainable development and global environmental issues for various social groups (the government, the business sector, non-environmental civil organisations, decision makers, etc.). Regional sustainable development centres should be organised, where these training could be held for the local participants.

Expected results: We can expect the improvement of the environmental awareness of wider social groups, and that people will be able to harmonise their direct, local environmental interests with the global interests only on the long term.

IV.2.3. Short-term measures planned

Considering that CEEWEB cannot discuss to what extent the government wants to achieve the objectives in question or what measures it plans to take for the sake of sustainable development and for the realisation of the targets set in the three conventions, we can only list what measures we are able to complete or support.

1. Supporting the National Sustainable Development Strategy, civil capacity building for sustainability.

Situation: Hungary does not have a Sustainable Development Strategy. The government has planned public discussions that should contribute to the strategy, and after that it shall be finalised. Discussions shall be held in several locations.

Aim: It is important to make the strategy consistent and to strengthen the representation of the targets of the three conventions in it.

Planned measure: CEEWEB will set up an expert group, the members of which will participate in every public discussion and represent its opinion. The group will need training on sustainability and the three conventions, and it has to reach agreement on a common viewpoint regarding the strategy. We shall organise preparatory trainings for the members of the group.

Expected result: The views that the people express at the local discussions will be recorded in minutes, so they cannot be ignored. The Hungarian strategy will be in harmony with the targets of the three conventions.

2. Introducing the EU Sustainable Development Strategy in Hungary and harmonising the Hungarian strategy with it and with the targets of the three conventions.

Situation: The review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy will be completed soon and the updated version should be finalised by the Council at the end of June.

Aim: Inclusion of the EU Strategy's main ideas in the Hungarian strategy. Introducing the EU Strategy to the Hungarian public, and more importantly, to decision makers.

Planned measure: We will publish a short summary about the EU Sustainable Development Strategy, including its main targets and their explanations. The booklet will be presented at a conference (organised jointly with the Environmental Committee of the Parliament and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences). We are going to pass the booklet to the members of the government and the parliament.

Expected result: Decision-makers will get to know the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and the correct understanding of the term "sustainable development".

3. Creating a Hungarian strategy for the sustainable use of resources.

Situation: In the framework of the 6th Environmental Action Programme the EU created thematic strategies. There is one such strategy on the sustainable use of resources entitled the Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources. The sustainable use of resources is connected with all three conventions. Although there are material and energy efficiency targets in Hungary, and there has been some improvement in efficiency, a general programme to support sustainable resource use in all sectors of the economy and to change the consumer behaviour does not exist.

Aim: To make it understood that sustainable resource use is an important tool to implement the conventions. The goal is to create a sustainable resource use strategy.

Planned measure: On the basis of the EU Strategy we will create a sustainable resource use strategy adapted to Hungarian circumstances. Leading figures of science workshops,

economic innovation and civil organisations will participate in the process. The strategy will be presented to the government for adoption, and we would like to see the strategy become the leading principle of the development targets for the period 2007-2013.

Expected result: The benefits of sustainable resource use for competitiveness and for the state of the environment will be acknowledged. Sustainable resource use becomes the driving force of innovation.

4. Sustainability assessment of the National Strategic Frame of Reference (NSFR).

Situation: The NSFR determines the development targets, the frame of the operative programmes and the regional developments for the period of 2007-2013. On the whole it has a great influence on the mid-term development of the country and the state of the environment. The NSFR plan has been completed. Currently it is under environmental assessment and ex-ante review. Civil environmentalists participate in both analyses as experts.

Aim: An NSFR that includes the necessity of sustainable development and contributes to the enhancement of the state of the environment and to the achievement of the targets set in the three conventions.

Planned measure: Review of the NSFR by leading civil environmentalists, collecting and comparing opinions and incorporating them in the official reviewing process.

Expected result: The NSFR will include the targets of sustainability and of the three conventions.

5. Informing the public about the term “sustainable development”.

Situation: The results of the latest representative questionnaire completed upon the request of the Business Council for Sustainable Development (Üzleti Tanács a Fenntartható Fejlődésért) showed that 3% of the Hungarian population know the definition of sustainable development, and only 11% (including the above 3%) have a rough idea of sustainability.

Aim: Increase general knowledge of the term in the population and raise awareness of the close relationship between the three conventions and sustainability.

Planned measure: The best and fastest results can be achieved via the media. A 13-part series was filmed as a civil initiative and shown on three small channels at less popular viewing times. We would like to place the series in the national television, possibly at prime time. The programme should best be followed by thematic discussions with the participation of well-known experts and politicians.

Expected result: Increased awareness of the term in its correct meaning. Connecting the term “sustainable development” with the targets of the conventions. Higher level of environmental awareness in the public and among politicians.

6. Capacity building for sustainability and for the realisation of the targets set in the three conventions.

Situation: The number of officials in the state administration who deal with environmental issues has gone down recently, and in the near future it will be reduced further as part of the process of balancing the budget. At the same time many new, promising legal instruments have been created that could help in the implementation of the conventions, when enough capacity is built for the use of those tools (SEA, IPPC, EMAS and Natura 2000). The reduction in the number of personnel can be compensated for, when the officials gain more knowledge and expertise in the use of the above mentioned new instruments.

Aim: Spread more information about SEA, IPPC, EMAS and Natura 2000 among the affected people (officials in the public administration, developers, planners and civil participants).

Planned measures: Creating training material on the above topics and organising training sessions where all affected parties can meet. There will be training material on the best practices of strategic environmental assessment, on the use of IPPC, on EMAS as a planning and environmental management system and on the sustainable use and nature protection of the Natura 2000 sites. Depending on the available finances, we will organise training based on these materials and develop the available material with further best practice examples.

Expected result: All affected people will understand the importance of these legal instruments, and the use of these tools will become more effective. The officials will be able to consciously implement these tools in order to realise the targets of the conventions.

7. Introducing environmental protection as a horizontal aspect into development projects.

Situation: EU and Hungarian regulations regarding the use of the Structural Funds require the integration of environmental and equal opportunity concerns into the planning and accomplishment of development projects. This is a unique opportunity to make good environmental performance a condition to the financing of the project, and to make environmental aspects a part of even the smallest development decisions. As this regulation is in force for the use of the Structural Funds in the period of 2004-2006, concern for the environment can already be expected. But there are no capacities to effectively carry out this important concept in the planning, consideration and monitoring of projects.

Aim: Building up the professional capacities of the planning, analysing and monitoring personnel and at the same time incorporating the horizontal aspect of environmental protection into the planning and implementation of projects.

Planned measures: Creating guidance for project planners, analysts and monitoring personnel. In this guidance material the targets of the three conventions and the implementation instruments will be emphasised. Based on this guidance, materials and training sessions will be organised for the participants of development projects.

Expected result: There will be an effective improvement in the representation of horizontal environmental concerns. Affected people will have the necessary knowledge and will learn about the practical aspects of including environmental concerns.

8. International utilization of the project output among Central and Eastern European civil organisations.

Situation: CEEWEB, as the co-ordinator of the biodiversity related activities of several Central and Eastern European civil organisations, has launched the CEEWEB Academy with the purpose of circulating its policy programmes and related knowledge and methodology in the Central and Eastern European region.

Aim: Publicizing the knowledge gained in the NCSA project in Hungary within the region. Building up the capacity of civil organisations and distributing this capacity in the countries of the region.

Planned measures: Utilization of the project material at the CEEWEB Academy, such as the sustainable resource use strategy, the environmental aspects of the structural funds, the training materials related to environmental assessment, IPPC, EMAS and Natura 2000. We will organise international thematic trainings in the following three years, and expect from the participants that they adopt the training material and the syllabus in their own country and thereby build the capacity in the countries of the region.

V. Conclusion

In summary, we can say that the three conventions were written in an early stage of the sustainable development process, when it was not yet possible intellectually or politically to create a synergy of the Convention and sustainability. To be honest, these conditions do not yet exist at the moment, because neither the will of national political leaders nor the awareness of the public lead by them is attuned to living in a sustainable way. On the contrary, despite the international conventions, we are moving away from the sustainability of human societies in the world.

The deficiency of the conventions is in ignoring system wide thinking and dividing the otherwise indivisible elements of the environment and also trying to address interrelated problems separately. Instead of many conventions we would need a single, general world sustainability carta that would settle the basic structural issues of production and consumption and related socio-ethical questions. International agreement about such a document is essential to ensure that a country that does not use its resources in a sustainable way, but exploits both human and natural resources in order to maximise profits, cannot have an advantage.

It would be naïve to think that the conventions about three particular issues can be isolated from the issues of society, however important those particular questions are. It would be time to understand the primary message of the Brundtland Committee, i.e., that all issues of the environment and development exist within one system and can only be treated with one central institution. The above recommendations suggest taking a small step in this direction.

Maybe someone will listen to them.

VI. Progress Reports of the Thematic Working Groups

VI.1 Thematic Working Group of the CBD

1. Short Introduction of the Convention

The legal-binding dispositions of the Convention recognise the necessity of the holistic approach and that problem solving is not exclusively confined to the field of classic environmental protection. The Convention is based on departmental integration lays a charge on not only governmental organizations but financial and social ones as well.

2. Exploration of the Situation

Methodology

1. In our analysis we reviewed the most important national, international and EU documents according to a methodological chart, which we created based on articles of the Convention and the decisions of the COP. We used the internet and experts from different fields to research these documents.
2. Applying the modified Delfi method, we handed out questionnaires to a group of 100 experts in the respective sectors (agriculture, finance, rural development, conservational biology, environmental protection, forestry etc...) via e-mail.
3. The members of the working group conducted 15 interviews with the experts and representatives of interest-groups. The goal of these reports was to reveal the possibilities and imperfections of conservation of biological diversity in the field of both highly remarkable sectors and environmental protection as well.
4. During the project we organised four panel-discussions in three Hungarian regions (Vác, Cegléd, Szolnok). The aim of these was to check and complete the information gathered via the questionnaires at the regional level and to get to know the opinions about conservation of biological diversity and positioning of certain sectors and social groups.
5. In order to assist the workgroup, we established a consulting committee with 15 known and respected experts. Each member of the committee was interviewed and we also organised a half -day meeting where representatives responsible for the various fields from the Ministry of Environment and Waters also participated. At the meeting we reviewed the national situation of conservation of biological diversity with the modified application of the nominal group method.

3. Key Findings of the Analysis

3.1 The most important deficits in capacity that block the realization of the Convention

3.1.1 Institutional

- The Government the Ministry of Environment and Waters takes *delegated* responsibility to ensure the realization of the CBD, even though the law announcing the Convention mentions five Ministries to be in charge.
- In point of biological diversity (BD), it can be stated that there is no real strategic coordination (the country may be the most advanced in environmental education), only limited conciliation exists (e.g.: Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development, Ministry of Environment and Waters; Ministry of Economy and Transport)
- Departmental and professional scheduling and programming procedures are not open to civil participation at the appropriate levels, often not even in the final scheduling phases. The strategies integrating BD are not transparent and are not prepared in open scheduling and decision making procedures.
- Monitoring effects of agricultural assistance and other professional procedures concerning BD does not take place at present and it does not have a systematic form, process.
- Imperfections of law, their inner contradictions, unprovoked and frequent changes, alterations, unperceptible law material. Imperfection in vindication of law, and its slowness. Unpreparedness and lack of funds of prosecutors and law courts. On top of all this, prosecutors do not get the necessary quality and quantity of information neither from civilians nor from the civil and governmental organizations to initiate legal action.
- The utilization of international financial, contractual possibilities and of legal redressing in order to preserve the BD is incomplete.
- The criteria to preserve BD are not considered an aspect in financial decision-making processes. Economical and financial incentives and the tax system pay no regard to these criteria.
- There is no proper feedback on the realization of the National Environmental Programme. The annual assessments and the ones after the programmes do not lead to any real results because they do not have any effect on the favourable or unfavourable processes.
- The means of different environmental protection and protection categories are not harmonized. There are no protection categories and guidance. Presentation of experiences of treatment and plans to protect species and landscape protection are missing. Regulation of buffer zones has not been completed, announcement the ecological networks has not happened. There is no national strategy to block the spread of ozone. The definition of practical and professional content concerning landscape protection and planning and protection on the level of landscape protection are also missing.
- There is no overall strategy for research of BD. Monitoring the aspects of conservation of BD is not an essential and integrated part of overall research strategies and special research projects. Profit oriented projects, mainly agricultural utilization of genetic resources of species of wild and natural populations and genetic diversity.
- Background institutions specialized in gene-conservation are in danger. Exploring genetic resources exclusively emerges with financial aims. The already existing institutional system does not really deal with traditional species and species of wild in order to conserve BD.
- The handouts on regional development do not contain the steps of appropriately conserving BD. Monitoring and evaluation of effects of development on BD are missing. Developers have no interest in taking the aspects of BD conservation into account.

- Regional developments do not see the existence of BD as a baseline condition that one has to adapt to.
- Low number of strong local communities, crescendo of spatial mobility. Townships do not make relevant use of their nature and landscape related cultural facilities from a conservationist viewpoint and they do not inform their residents properly about them. Local governments are often not concerned about natural environment at all.
- Locals are not widely and effectively called in the help with BD conservation tasks.
- Irrational utilization of territory, growth of artificial environment. In spite of management and restoration of spoilt areas today's practice is the green field investments. Profit oriented, territorial defencelessness.
- Decisive role of multinational companies is increasing.
- Interests dictated by business terms predominate the aspects of BD conservation at territories proper for sustaining.
- Concentration and foreign management of news broadcasting organisations, dumping of news and negative news have the upper edge. Incompetence of forwarding information and lack of positive news.
- Strategy and programme that informs about and strengthens the relation between elements of culture and BD and sustainable utilization are missing.

3.1.2. Infrastructural

- The biomonitoring system does not operate in a holistic way. The base of the social and professional members who carry out monitoring is not organized and harmonized. There is no formed system to process and apply the results.
- BD related databases about conditions, processes and indicators of informational background, genetic diversity, values of landscape and spread of species and habitat are not available for the various scientific groups. There is no working, uniform and to an extent public information system about environmental protection that science or nature protection could use. The Strategy of Hungarian Informational Society does not contain any goals regarding this issue.
- The ongoing decay of the railroad network, the lack of constructing new ones, the dumping of motorway construction. The conservation of BD is far behind the priorities of motorway construction. Expedited procedures, the lack of watchful research, prevailing individual interest.

3.1.3. Personnel

- The situation of nature conservation is more and more worrying. While there are excellent experts at our service, there are no means to employ them because of the continuous realignment and cut-back of the once well oiled regional system. The MEW has problems with staffing. There are no well-prepared experts in the necessary numbers to take on the tasks. A competent department was affirmed in 2003 with regards the CBD. The national parks are not even able to cope with their multiplying basic functions because of lack of human resources.
- Cut-back in civil service. The work of authorities and attendants of nature conservation becomes more and more absurd, there is no capacity to ensure the integration concerning other sectors. One could say that in general the knowledge and

skills of state organizations in regards with BD need to be educated at an alarming rate.

- There is no parliamentary group or representative responsible for the protection of BD. Parliamentary ombudsman of future generations is wanted.
- There are only a few *BD-related assessors*. An overall vision to protect BD during codification processes (such as confusion of coherence and inner contradictions) is missing. And also those institutions and organizations are missing which could act on the civilians' behalf regarding BD (e.g.: network of *environmental solicitor* service).
- Concerning the claims of BD, the preparedness of experts working in regional development and regional planners is exceptionally incomplete. *Regional major architectural offices* and *planning councils* do not have the right experts of BD and at the same time the competence of planning councils is extraordinarily narrow.
- Local governments rarely employ qualified experts in local governmenting bodies and a smaller group responsible for environmental issues working there is even less typical.
- Teachers are neither motivated to be interested in nor and encouraged to teach BD with particular attention to a hands-on approach. The field of teacher training misses complex problem-solving and cognitive techniques and skills of familiarization with the various species and locale. Teacher's knowledge of species and terrain is usually not proper. The development and familiarization of teaching techniques due to utilizing traditional and conservational farming are also lacking (except for open-air schools).
- Employment at civil organisations creates a defenceless situation because of insecure long-term financing.
- Economical organisations rarely employ experts of BD (advisors and analysts).

3.1.4. Consciousness

- Lack of holistic approach
- There are no widely accepted values of sustainability, drawing attention to moral responsibility is also missing. Forming and reinforcing the values of conserving BD is not a primary goal when compared to consumerism.
- Political commitment to lobby for BD related issues is missing.
- BD is an uninteresting and unknown term for civilians.
- Termination of regional bonds, declining and termination of responsibility.
- Isolated subjects in school, practical visualization and realization are missing between BD-related subjects. Problem-solving skills and system approaches are missing. Placing cognition on bases of experience and own-experience centred is delayed. The quality of university education is declining. Presentation of cultural relationship in BD is missing from university-, public education, vocational training and adult education.
- The churches do not properly emphasize the responsibility towards our companions and descendants. Teachings of churches do not stress basic principles enough that society can rely on them during conservation of BD.
- Traditional and adaptable forms of farming are forgotten. Well working methods acquired from experience, professionals disappear.
- Lack of farmer-attitude in cultivation. Lack of long-term farming, presence of speculation-driven farming, lack of a respectful society. There is no agricultural, not societal information about tasks of conservation of BD concerning agriculture.

3.1.5. Finances

- The financial source of the Parliament, governmental and other bodies of state is the budget, which unfortunately and continuously cuts off supply from certain sectors. This way neither nature conservation nor other sectors can provide the conservation of BD with security unless their systems of priorities are reorganized. The financial state of nature conservation does not even allow for the basic functions at present. Several institutions must create their necessary funds through different tenders when necessary conditions to win tenders are not available.
- The financial subsidy of the state to local governments make for only a part of their income, the rest comes from local sources. There is no adequate financial cover of jurisdiction provided by acts of law (currently more than 3000) so local governments are defenceless from a financial viewpoint.
- The only income for civil organizations to help survive comes from subsidies of state and national and international tenders. There are also several other means of income for them but these amounts are by far insufficient to secure their continued operation.
- Institutions of the economical sector spend either nothing on conservation of BD or only spend to increase future profits. This latter for example counts for ecological farming or trade marking products, but these developments promise long-term profit, while the economy runs in the opposite direction. Players of economy are becoming more and more defenceless against financial institutions (banks) due to not having the proper amount of liquid assets. But financial institutions do not take the conservation of BD as a condition of financing.
- Decline in financing research, lack of managing priorities. Research programmes are often resource centred. The financing of research to help conserve and *ensure* BD is disproportionately low. The business interest of biotechnological centres is exaggerated.

3.2. Influence of EU Accession and the Influence of Membership

The challenges have been multiplied due to the accession. Having a look at the field of nature conservation, we can talk about a 50% increase of tasks not to mention the additional ones generated by the restructuring of rural development in agriculture and *agro-environmental* farming and tasks of other sectors.

4. Conclusion: What Happens in the Business as Usual Scenario (BAU)?

- Farming strategies adapted to traditional and specific facilities of landscape are becoming forgotten, local valuable types of landscapes are disappearing.
- Degradation of landscape and landscape structure, environment that incites and inspires creativity is pushed back to smaller and smaller territories.
- Increase of artificial environments and the area of spoilt territories.
- Continuing loss of genes, sickness-ridden stock, draw-back of species, the ruin of habitats, instable, less immune systems. As a result the systems of nature control and

service are also declining (soil erosion, flood management, providing drinking water, clean air etc.) environmental conditions are becoming incalculable.

- Costly reconstruction efforts, designing new, costly methods of *reintroduction* (e.g. the British reed plantations, Dutch resettlement of storks, hopeless conservation of natural values in aggressively cultivated areas etc.)
- The spread of unhealthy and artificial food.
- The effect of BD on culture is decreasing, the decline of organic culture, natural motives are becoming less influential in art, loss of values in folk architecture. Cultural *uniformisation*.
- Decline in tourism, places to relax and rest are getting further from each other and their number is dropping.
- Number of city dwellers is increasing while number of rural inhabitants is falling, structure of large scale farming gains space, less available natural possessions.
- The bond of population to the components of biodiversity, their living place and environment is fading.
- The value of BD is getting lower and lower on the population's scale of values.
- The population's will to take responsibility to conserve BD is declining.
- The population is more and more defenceless financially.

VI.2 Thematic Working Group of the Desertification, Soil Degradation and Draughts

“About the fight against desertification in the countries severely hit by drought and desertification, especially in Africa”

Desertification and drought being the irreversible process of soil erosion are both global and local problems. They are global because the subsistence of 1.2 billion people making a living out of agriculture and the food supply of an additional 3.5 billion are threatened. At the same time its local, because they concern geographical territories, regions and landscapes and furthermore the negative effects of local activities on regions and parts of continents driven by thoughtless and short-term interests emerge years later. The problem is of global proportions and only a joint international effort can challenge them. Within the frameworks of the NCSA project (National Capacity Self Assessment) our aim was to survey the processes, results and imperfections so far and to achieve this we have gathered the related documents and useful information through reviews, questionnaires and round-table discussions.

1. Initiatives and Results in Regards with the Treaty and Their Analysis

Several surveys have been carried out on national level in the topic of drought, soil protection and water operational strategy (watering, lack of water, regional possibilities of water supplement, protection against drought, global climatic changes, soil erosion) but we have to highlight three initiatives in connection with the UNCCD treaty:

- In 2002 the First National Report about the realization of the UNCCD treaty was completed at the Hungarian Ministry of Environment and Waters. The report summarizes the legislative and institutional preparations, the measures taken in the field of resource mobilization and coordination, and the preparations of measures that are necessary for monitoring and the rehabilitation of the concerned areas. From the viewpoint of national and sectoral coordination only intent shines through, definitive tasks and schedules, operational programmes that help cooperation have not been made, the will of the decision makers is missing.
- In 2003 the **Strategy of Draught** was completed in close relation with the UNCCD treaty at the initiation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The strategy intends to provide the national action programmes with a base, but it is imperfect when describing causative coherence and characteristic processes.
- Parallel with the NCSA project, the so-called **Agrarian round table** was formed and it summarized the most important steps of “**Rural development and agrarian strategy**” that encourages the clarification of property ownership and the setting up of a network of experts among other things in order to create a transparent and calculable agrarian economy. A unified opposition has not been agreed on the judgement of intensive and extensive use of land.

On the whole one may say that the lack of Soil Protection Strategy and the immaturity of the Agrarian Strategy and its somewhat one sided approach of the latter can be felt. Complexity,

integrated systematic approach and long-term planning must take a role and political commitment must be joined to these processes in the future. The field of data and information management has to reach the detailed expectations; data management and monitoring based on civilian cooperation must be provided to ensure continuity. A well operated, financed and prepared system of experts is missing; there are problems in many areas with human resources (people, expertise, dedication). Randomness, uncoordinated activities can be explained by individual interests (political, decision-making and financial) and the lack of environmentally conscious approach.

2. The Status and Processes of Institutionalizing the Convention

The conciliation between ministries and background institutions are still underway to clarify their involvement in the fulfilment of the treaty and the related EU processes (e.g.: working out the Soil Protection Strategy) with special attention to licences, responsibilities and financing of such. Independent of our joining the UNCCD convention, there were and have been programmes and researches that face the requirements and objectives of the convention. But many times these are carried out parallel to each other lacking coordination so they can only support our tasks to fulfil our requirements to the Convention only indirectly.

3. Methods of the Situation Analysis

During the interviews of the situation analysis we tried to address the connection among the three convention (biodiversity, climate and soil), paying special attention to those implementations and interventions, which could be used with regards to all three conventions. We started to map the Hungarian situation by uncovering, studying and systemizing the available documents including foreign literature as well. The focal point of the situation analysis was a series of interviews when conducted with three dozens of experts and representatives from the institutions involved in this matter in order to learn of their opinion during one on one interviews. The scope of the analysis was outlined using their different opinions and some elements turned out to be of bigger importance than we had initially thought. The previously prepared materials were discussed in three regional round-table meetings, which provided us with the possibility to make the treaty and the NCSA project more popular and discuss the general objectives.

4. Key Findings of the Situation Analysis

The following shows the results of the analysis in brief in a way that separates the current conditions and the expected procedures from possible future measures and proposals.

4.1. Institutional Background:

- In general the experts of the authorities are well educated but few in numbers, and their activities and coordination is ineffective.
- A well formed institutional system is available, but the tasks that are related to the Convention (in a wider sense to soil protection) are not clarified; there is no

coordination between respective institutions and levels, the harmonization of objectives and definition of priorities are missing.

- The judicial background of the Convention is not clarified; the tasks that are related to the Convention are not defined, broken down or scheduled. Financial planning, its inclusion in the budget, and the implementation of already existing laws are improper. Contradictions emerge and (water management and nature protection) political intentions (or the lack of them) influence the creation of laws.
- Poor, unstable and ill-distributed financial background (many institutions have fallen into a defenceless situation)
- Information management and research processes are imperfect at the institutions and in regards with the Convention. There is also a lack of complex and process-oriented approach.
- The coordination between institutions is weak, definition of tasks is not obvious, there are overlaps (in information networks and development of indicators) and the absence of certain fields can be discovered (e.g. national network for information on the degree of erosion and deflation; data concerning farming and use of land). The coordination of involved areas is erratic between and inside the two most involved ministries (environment protection, agricultural).

4.2. Information Management

- Part of the already existing data and the information is available with difficulties and also very costly, it cannot be processed uniformly;
- Access to information is getting better (with the spread of internet-based servers), but it is still not adequate;
- Research, collection of data and cooperation connected with the Convention exist, but most of it does not converge to ensure the fulfilment of the convention;
- The operation of TIM which is one of the oldest running monitoring programmes can get in danger; the processing and publication of the data takes years, its necessary renewal has become questionable because of financial restrictions.
- The publications of the results relating to this subject depend on experts' "willingness to publish" and at the same time publications written for experts are not available and comprehensible to everyday people.
- The credibility and availability of environmental data is very poor in our society;

4.3. Education, Communication, Environmental Consciousness:

- The Convention and related matters get only limited attention in the field of education;
- Communication is inadequate towards society and the target groups involved with it;
- Consciousness and the sense responsibility of society is inadequate;
- Consciousness of farmers (environmental consciousness) is inadequate, and it is short-term profit oriented;
- The system of expert advisors and practical help is not enough and many times they are not carried out in the spirit of the convention;

5. The Cause and Effect Relations of Desertification, Soil Degradation and Draughts

The criteria of human life's quality: healthy food, clean water, nice environment and doing meaningful activities (work). All of them are in connection with soil, the use of soil, land and landscape management. Maintaining the undisrupted functions of soil is the interest of the whole society, therefore it is very important to treat and know the decisive processes of its importance. The following lists the most typical problems without any reasoning or detailed explanation:

- Natural causes and facilities; location in Carpathian basin, border of three climatic zones; warming, climatic change.
- Coherence of financial and social causes: changes in use of land (harnessing of a river, water management, clearing of forests, drainages, intense agricultural use of land, bad agritechnology) production techniques and plants without attention to natural resources, improper use of chemicals, exaggerated use of machinery, local inhabitants' estrangement from their own environment, lack of capital and instruments.
- Today's typical tendencies: too frittered fields, giving up cultivation (unclear ownership), lack of expertise among new owners, dominance of short-term economical interests in use of land, lack of integrated water management, ignoring agri-ecological competence, building up production systems and estate structures that are inadequate for the given production site, disproportion of the supply system towards GOF sector, delay in (continuing) introduction of agri-environmental management, limited use of water saving farming methods and drought tolerant, native species and breeds.

6. A Plan for Realization

Tasks in connection with the use and protection of land belong to more sectors and institutions where coordination and conciliation is inevitable in order to gain results. We have experienced the following in the matter of following the convention: :

- There is law supporting the aims of the treaty but they are independent of it
- The lack of a legislative framework is present, some think the legislative background is acceptable, but instead we should stress the realization and implementation of this.
- Lack of orders of implementation, as well as unavailability of liquid assets.
- The continuity of scientific research and analytical work is not guaranteed.
- The coordination and cooperation of certain fields is still inadequate.
- Credible data needed for decision making, is not available

VI.3 Thematic Working Group of the UNFCCC

1. The goal: What we would like to achieve?

The ultimate objective of the thematic profile and the forthcoming strategy is to promote the inclusion of climate protection considerations in economic/investment/political decisions. We intend to enhance the 'climate efficiency' of these decisions by analysing the current capacity bottlenecks.

2. Current activities

We have examined the results and deficiencies of the following implementation activities related to the UNFCCC:

1. Emissions inventory
2. Climate policy / strategy
3. Research
4. Public awareness, education
5. National Communications
6. Kyoto mechanisms
 - Joint Implementation (administration, procedure)
 - emissions trading (EU and international)
 - registry
 - National Allocation Plan (EU trading)
 - monitoring and reporting
 - Clean Development Mechanism
7. Policies and Measures
 - transport, industry – emissions reduction
 - energy efficiency and saving
 - renewables
 - agriculture, forestry - sinks
 - waste
8. Adaptation

3. Methodology

The analysis has been based on the interviews with the governmental officials with responsibility of vested interest in the implementation of the Convention and a number of nongovernmental organization experts. As conducting interview with all the relevant stakeholders was beyond the scope of the project, it has been supplemented by an electronic survey targeting 3 groups: state officials, NGOs and business representatives. Consequently, we have organized a roundtable meeting with those who responded. The basis of discussion was the draft paper compiling and synthesizing the information received so far. The roundtable provided an opportunity for these experts to exchange views after being informed about their fellows' opinion on the same issues. The final paper has been prepared as a revision based on the roundtable results and the written comments received for the draft, together with the conclusions drawn from the document research.

4. Key conclusions

4.1. System Level

4.1.1. The Legislative Process

The experts have assessed the legislative process and the results were rather ambivalent: they have noted a delay in adopting the legal instruments necessary to put the Kyoto mechanisms into practice.

The main bottlenecks are the following:

1. legislation on the tasks and mandates relating to the implementation of the UNFCCC
2. short/long term energy policy
3. 'carbon framework law' that would cover the legal definition of emissions right and provide a stable framework for the period beyond 2012 as well
4. JI law and the 'linking directive' of the EU trading
5. strategy document on the emission targets and priorities for the period beyond 2012.

4.1.2. Political Support

The assessment of the general political support of the UNFCCC goals has been very diverse. On one hand climate protection is considered a well supported topic within environmental policy that will enable Hungary to comply with its provisions. On the other, climate change is completely missing from the agenda of decision makers and hence it is not integrated into sectoral policies and decisions.

Several experts have called for the compulsory cost-efficiency analysis of sectoral decisions, including environmental policy.

The climate chapter of the National Environmental Program (2nd NEP) for the period 2003-2008 approved by the Parliament comprises the present official climate strategy. The yearly executive plans of the 2nd NEP will update the tasks of the climate strategy.

State officials and industrial stakeholders have very different opinions on the priority of tasks required by the Convention. While the state administration considers the preparation of the National Communications and the annual inventories (including methodological update) as its primary tasks, the representatives of the industry expects the state administration to create the possibilities to increase the capital inflow accommodated by the JI and ETS frameworks. It is expected that the adoption of the National Allocation Plan will bring these different standpoints closer.

Early approval of the national strategy beyond 2012 is very important for the business sector since it also gives incentives and an adequate time period for making and executing investment decisions that require no less than 5 to 10 years in the respective sectors.

4.2. Institutional level

4.2.1. Human Resources of the Implementing Agencies

All the organizations investigated are understaffed, especially the agency responsible for the annual inventory preparation.

4.2.2. Data Issues

A serious problem identified is the limited data access of the public organization on emissions related data from the companies due to business confidence provisions. Laws inhibit the use of data for secondary purposes even if it would be beneficial for the data provider as well (no extra administrative cost). Another problem is the differentiation between natural and legal persons when dealing with data management and confidentiality. The 63/1992 law on the protection of data and the public access to data should be harmonized with the Aarhus Convention adopted into the Hungarian legal system with the 81/2001 law.

During the preparation process of the thematic profile we have reviewed the data sources and sets used in the implementation of the convention.

4.2.3. The Division of Responsibilities, Tasks and the Scope of Authority

While the Ministry of Economics and Transport and Ministry of Environment and Water consider their task division as well defined, other parties pointed out the lack of clear mandate and non-decisions in basic questions (ie. in connection with the ETS and JI, and some questions concerning the allocation of permits etc.). These can be explained in part by the fact that the decisions on these matters have only been made recently, and these decisions have yet to be officially communicated to the other Ministries (it will take place most likely in the next session of the Interministerial Committee).

None of the experts interviewed could or wanted to name other institutes where the given function could be executed more efficiently. On the other hand we could identify from the interviews that certain tasks (i.e. preparation of the communications) could be conducted with efficiency by the state administration and business sector, however the private consultancy sector cannot be included in this yet, since the financial sources available for these tasks are not adequate.

The executive tasks concerning the Convention were included in the official Rules of Organization and Operation only at the minority of the institutions concerned.

Another problem mentioned was that Ministries already started to hand out the Letter of Endorsement and the Letter of Approval for Joint Implementation projects when the legislation has not yet been prepared. This practice restrict the possibilities of the future legislation and creates ad-hoc permitting practice that is burdensome to both the authority (ministry of Environment and Waters) and for the applicants (foreign and domestic companies).

4.2.4. Shortcomings of the Coordination

The primary institution for coordination in Hungary, the Interministerial Committee can provide the proper medium for co-ordination and can serve as an information platform among the respective ministries involved in the implementation of the Convention. However, the decision makers of other Ministries are rarely the same as the individuals delegated and since the communication of the information is not always flawless within the Ministries climate considerations are not integrated properly into other materials and decisions.

4.2.5. Necessary Steps

a) background analysis

The executing ministries need a reliable external expert base that can prepare the necessary analyses in time and quality. However, public resources are not reliable and adequate to sustain such an expert market, an issue where both the state officials and the experts are in agreement.

b) technology info centre

It should be a basic requirement that the technical, technological descriptions of such projects should be submitted to a central institution that is supported directly or indirectly by the state. This central institution could disseminate the positive environmental effect of these projects to the entire country.

5. Business as Usual Scenario

In this chapter we concluded on the shortcomings of the national emission reduction projects, of the process of adaptation to the changing climate conditions and of the financial aspects.

6. Contextual Framework: The Identification of Processes that Affect the Implementation of the Convention

We identified three main areas of influence on climate change policy:

- the principals of setting the price of different energy sources
- the proportion of the external costs caused by the consumption of energy is borne by the consumers (the application of the polluter pays principle)
- how the competitive disadvantage of the renewable energy sources is dealt with.