



UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and its wide range of partners.

World leaders have pledged to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, including the overarching goal of cutting poverty in half by 2015 and doing so with full commitment to environmental sustainability. UNDP's network links and coordinates global and national efforts to reach these Goals.

UNDP's focus is helping countries build and share solutions to the challenges of Democratic Governance, Poverty Reduction, Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Energy and Environment, and HIV/AIDS.

UNDP helps developing countries attract and use aid effectively. In all its activities, UNDP encourages the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women.

Visit the UNDP website at <http://www.undp.org>

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was established in 1972 as the environmental conscience of the United Nations. UNEP has created a basis for comprehensive, coordinated action within the UN on problems of the environment. UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnerships in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and people to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

One of the most important functions of UNEP is the promotion of environmental science and information. UNEP has always recognized that the environment is a system of interacting relationships that extends through all sectors. It places, among other things, emphasis on environment for development. UNEP nurtures partnerships with other UN bodies possessing complementary skills and delivery capabilities and enhances the participation of the private sector, scientific community, NGOs, youth, women, and sports organizations in achieving sustainable development.

UNEP derives its strength and influence from the authority inherent in its mission—environmental management. UNEP has and will continue to play a pivotal role in caring for the environment for the future.

Visit the UNEP website at <http://www.unep.org>

WORLD BANK GROUP

Founded in 1944, the World Bank Group consists of five closely associated institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD); International Development Association (IDA); International Finance Corporation (IFC); Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA); and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

The World Bank is the world's largest source of development assistance, providing nearly \$30 billion in loans annually to its client countries. The Bank uses its financial resources, its highly trained staff, and its extensive knowledge base to individually help each developing country onto a path of stable, sustainable, and equitable growth. The main focus is on helping the poorest people and the poorest countries, but for all its clients the Bank emphasizes the need for:

- Investing in people, particularly through basic health and education
- Protecting the environment
- Supporting and encouraging private business development
- Strengthening the ability of the governments to deliver quality services, efficiently and transparently
- Promoting reforms to create a stable macroeconomic environment, conducive to investment and long-term planning
- Focusing on social development, inclusion, governance, and institution building as key elements of poverty reduction.

Visit the World Bank website at <http://www.worldbank.org>

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

The World Resources Institute goes beyond research to create practical ways to protect the Earth and improve people's lives. Its mission is to move human society to live in ways that protect Earth's environment and its capacity to provide for the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

For more than 20 years, WRI has demonstrated its commitment to helping find solutions to these enormous global environmental challenges. WRI's work is concentrated on making progress toward four goals:

- **Healthy Ecosystems:** Reverse rapid degradation of ecosystems and assure their capacity to provide humans with needed goods and services.
- **Stable Climate:** Protect the global climate system from further harm due to emissions of greenhouse gases and help humanity and the natural world adapt to unavoidable climate change.
- **Sustainable Enterprise:** Harness markets and enterprise to expand economic opportunity and protect the environment.
- **Access to Environmental Information and Decisions:** Guarantee public access to information and decisions regarding natural resources and the environment.

WRI is online at <http://www.wri.org> and <http://earthtrends.wri.org>



A GUIDE TO **WORLD RESOURCES** 2005

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Development
Programme

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Environment
Programme

World Bank

World
Resources
Institute

ECOSYSTEMS ARE—OR CAN BE—THE WEALTH OF THE POOR. For many of the 1.1 billion people living in severe poverty, nature is a daily lifeline—an asset for those with few other material means. This is especially true for the rural poor, who comprise three-quarters of all poor households worldwide. Harvests from forests, fisheries, and farm fields are a primary source of rural income, and a fall-back when other sources of employment falter. But programs to reduce poverty often fail to account for the important link between environment and the livelihoods of the rural poor. As a consequence, the full potential of ecosystems as a wealth-creating asset for the poor—not just a survival mechanism—has yet to be effectively tapped.

The thesis of *World Resources 2005* is that income from ecosystems—what we call environmental income—can act as a fundamental stepping stone in the economic empowerment of the rural poor. This requires that the poor manage ecosystems so that they support stable productivity over time. Productive ecosystems are the basis of a sustainable income stream from nature.

But for the poor to tap that income, they must be able to reap the benefits of their good stewardship. Unfortunately, the poor are rarely in such a position of power over natural resources. An array of governance failures typically intervene: lack of legal ownership and access to ecosystems, political marginalization, and exclusion from the decisions that affect how these ecosystems are managed. Without addressing these failures, there is little chance of using the economic potential of ecosystems to reduce rural poverty.

World Resources 2005 details the steps necessary to empower the poor to use ecosystems both wisely and for wealth. Using examples and case studies, the report traces a route to greater environmental income. Working at the cutting edge of sustainable development, it lays out the governance changes necessary to give the poor the legal, financial, and management capacity to use nature for wealth creation without depleting their fragile resource base.

Eleventh in the World Resources series, *World Resources 2005* also presents a wealth of statistics on current environmental, social, and economic trends in more than 150 countries. It makes the full World Resources database accessible and searchable online in the companion website Earth Trends, at <http://earthtrends.wri.org>.

To order, please visit the WRI web site at <http://www.wristore.com>.

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