



"It's in our hands"

Santa Cruz County: Local Agenda 21

*A Sustainable Community Action Plan
Our Agenda for the 21st Century*

FINAL DRAFT for consideration
by Santa Cruz County Municipalities and the board of Supervisors

SAM FARR
11TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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June 3, 1997

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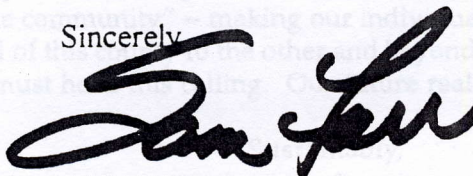
Dear Ms. Nordland:

I am writing to congratulate you, the Advisory Board and the *ACTION Santa Cruz County* coalition for completing the "Local Agenda 21" Action Plan. Your efforts are to be commended and will make an important contribution to the future quality of life in Santa Cruz County. I support the principle of sustainable development to balance the needs of economic growth, environmental stewardship and social equity.

The "Local Agenda 21" Action Plan not only has local significance, it also will have regional and national impacts. As you know, the President's Council on Sustainable Development is beginning Phase III of its work with an emphasis on sustainable communities. In addition, I have been spearheading a similar effort, known as *Monterey Bay 21st Century*, to develop a process for sustainable development planning for the entire Monterey Bay region (Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties). I look forward to working with you on opportunities for collaboration among these groups.

In the Monterey Bay Region, we are blessed with a unique and beautiful place in which to live and work. We have a strong commitment to environmental protection and quality education and a strong economy based on agriculture, tourism and marine research and technology. As we move toward the 21st Century, I believe it is an appropriate time to pause and ask ourselves how we will sustain these qualities and build upon them for our descendants. I appreciate your dedication to the goals of sustainable development.

Sincerely,



SAM FARR
Member of Congress

SF:db



ACTION – Santa Cruz County

... a Model Sustainable Community Campaign

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Dear Friends,

The Santa Cruz County "Local Agenda 21" process started soon after the Earth Summit in 1992, with steering committee and coalition meetings. In October of 1993 and also 1994, on UN Day, ACTION-Santa Cruz County and the Santa Cruz Chapter of the United Nations Association collaborated on two local S.E.E.D.* Summits at Nylonnek Retreat Center in Soquel, each drawing about 125 people. Participants self-selected to twelve Special Focus Area Round Tables and began to envision a "sustainable" future. Round Table meetings followed, and our *Action Plan* began to take shape. During the entire process a consensus model was used, along with the Guiding Principles printed on the back of this letter. To date, more than 150 groups, organizations, businesses, agencies, and hundreds of individuals have collaborated on this document.

This June in New York City, Earth Summit II took place and there was a renewed interest to see this process completed. As editor, I took on the challenge of updating and verifying the report. This meant passing the chapters by the scrutiny of experts in each field and then, of course, another round of agreements from key Round Table participants ... no small feat.

What we have at last are the cumulative hopes, ideas, and expertise of the people whose names appear at the bottom of each chapter – plus many others who contributed bits and pieces. Yet this is only a beginning! This is very much a work in progress -- an organic process that will be adjusted and refined as our understanding evolves.

Where do we go from here? That will depend on all of you who read this blueprint for a sustainable 21st century in our county. In March of 1993, the Board of Supervisors endorsed the Agenda 21 proposal and in January, 1994, officially approved the process and agreed to seriously consider the document as a policy guide. We will now submit this "Local Agenda 21" to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and to municipalities for approval to be a guide for policy recommendations. Perhaps a *Local Commission for Sustainability* will be formed to oversee and aid administration of this plan, addressing the needs common to all. The next steps are dependent on each organization, business, agency, institution, and person heeding the call to work collaboratively toward the goal of creating a "sustainable community" -- making our individual and collective voices and actions felt from one end of this county to the other and beyond. Now is the time, and we are the generation that must heed this calling. Our future really is "in our hands."

Sustainably,

Jeanne Nordland,
Coordinator & Editor

(* S.E.E.D. = Social, Environmental, & Economic Development)

* PRINCIPLES OF AGREEMENT FOR DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

As we go forward with our "Local Agenda 21," we will seek to:

1. Include all community groups and interests with full participation of all ethnic groups, the youth, elders, and women; fully honor both our unity & diversity; and treat all with respect.
2. Provide opportunities for the community at large to contribute without having to attend a meeting. (The viability of implementation of a local Agenda 21 depends on total inclusivity.)
3. Establish an Information Sharing Network focused on our "Sustainability."
4. Look for creative ways to collaborate, avoiding duplication of efforts.
5. Establish positive working relationships with business, the education systems, government, social institutions, organizations, media, and all segments of society.
6. Provide a values-based education, with respect for all peoples, nature and all of life. Educate the community at large about individual responsibility, encouraging a positively-focused community empowerment.
7. Maximize conservation and develop local renewable resources, so that, as much as possible, we live off the interest our environment provides without destroying its capital base.
8. Create a vital economy with a viable and sustainable economic system, creating opportunities for work that are based on "right livelihood" and service, as well as products that sustain life, and that this collective wealth must support and sustain well being for all.
9. Recognize that environmental quality, economic health, and social well-being are mutually interdependent. A healthy environment is integral to long-term economic interests and to each individual's welfare; achieving a healthy environment must ensure that inequitable burdens are not placed on any one geographic or economic sector of the population.
10. Protect, preserve, and restore the natural environment.
11. Define "development" in ways that bring about improvement in the quality of life for all.
12. Look beyond Santa Cruz for additional successful programs and strategies, and be willing to share our model with other communities around the world.

**This list represents a consolidation of principles agreed upon by all participants to date.*

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Global and Historical Perspective

Nations of the world first began to recognize the need for global environmental planning in 1972 when 70 governments met in Stockholm, Sweden for a conference – out of which was born the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Soon UNEP and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) began to mount an environmental education campaign. In 1984, UNEP helped to publish the World Conservation Strategy – a forerunner of *Agenda 21*. However, the question of development was still not adequately addressed, so the United Nations appointed a World Commission on Environment and Development which produced a report called *Our Common Future*. Then for the first time, “sustainable development” was defined as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own [needs].”¹

In June, 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), popularly known as the “Earth Summit,” took place in Rio de Janeiro, bringing together world leaders to focus on environment and development issues. The most substantial document to come out of the Earth Summit is called *Agenda 21*, a guide and workplan, agreed upon by 179 nations of the world including our own, for what must be done to live sustainably as we move into the 21st century.

“Agenda 21 addresses the pressing problems of today and also aims at preparing the world for the challenges of the next century. It reflects a global consensus and [political commitment at the highest level] on development and environment cooperation. Its successful implementation is first and foremost the responsibility of Governments. National strategies, plans, policies and processes are crucial in achieving this. International cooperation should support and supplement such national efforts. In this context, the United Nations system has a key role to play. Other international, regional and sub-regional organizations are also called upon to contribute to this effort. **The broadest public participation and the active involvement of the non-governmental organizations and other groups should also be encouraged.**”² [Emphasis added.]

Chapter 28 of *Agenda 21* specifically calls for each community to formulate its own *Local Agenda 21*. The process suggested is that representatives from all strategic areas come together to give definition to “sustainability” on the local level and support plans and projects that will lead the community in that direction.

“Local authorities construct, operate and maintain economic, social and environmental infrastructure, oversee planning processes, establish local environmental policies and regulations, and assist in implementing national and subnational environmental policies. As the level of governance closest to the people, they play a vital role in educating, mobilizing and responding to the public to promote sustainable development.”

“Each local authority should enter into a dialogue with its citizens, local organizations and private enterprises and adopt “a local Agenda 21.” Through consultation and consensus-building, local authorities would learn from citizens and from local, civic, community, business and industrial organizations and acquire the information needed for formulating the best strategies.”³

Following the Earth Summit, the United Nations set up the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development to monitor progress spawned by that momentous gathering. Many communities around the world have initiated local Agenda 21 plans for sustainable development. The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), based in Toronto, Canada, is tracking these initiatives and offering support. Under the Clinton administration, the United States formed a President's Council on Sustainable Development, which developed recommendations for a national sustainable development action strategy plan. Their report, published in February, 1996, is entitled, “Sustainable America – A new Consensus for the Future.” With the support of the President's Council and federal financial assistance, the National Association of Counties and the U.S. Council of Mayors have established a Joint Center for Sustainable Communities to facilitate collaborative planning.

¹ “Our Common Future,” World Commission on Environment & Development, Oxford University Press, 1987.

² “Agenda 21,” (Ch. 1.3), U. N. Conference on Environment & Development, June 3 - 14, 1992, United Nations, N.Y.

³ “Agenda 21,” Chapter 28, sections 1 and 3.

What has been the global response to the concept of "Sustainability"?

The global movement for "sustainability" is strong. Some 150 countries have established National Councils on sustainable development or similar bodies. More than 1,800 communities have created local Agenda 21 plans, though mostly in just 11 countries and principally in Europe. In the United States we are one of just 19 communities that have created a sustainability campaign, however many other communities are involved with sustainable development projects and activities.

What is "Sustainability"? What constitutes a "Sustainable Community"?

The terms "sustainability" and "sustainable development" are increasingly being used by the United Nations and on the national, state, city, community, and individual level to help us think about the major challenges that confront us as we plan for our common future. The definitions used for the purposes of this "Local Agenda 21" are taken from the official UN definition, stated on page i, paragraph 1. From that definition we deduce that:

A "sustainable community" is one in which the inhabitants practice a lifestyle that will meet the needs of the present life in that community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. A "sustainable society" is one that can persist over generations, one that is far-seeing enough, flexible enough, and wise enough not to undermine either its physical or its social systems of support.

"Sustainability" literally means – the ability to maintain oneself over time. It simply has to do with continuing life on the planet . . . and hopefully, not merely surviving, but actually thriving into the 21st century! Sustainability, most everyone would agree, is the only viable legacy, but how do we achieve it?

To achieve a sustainable future, we must balance concerns for ecological health, economic vitality, and social equity. "Sustainable development" rests squarely on these three pillars. Each will be addressed in detail within the 12 Special Focus Areas of this "Local Agenda 21" Action Plan, as they pertain to Santa Cruz County. It is the consensus of this Coalition to note the interrelationship between these three pillars (environmental, economic, and social) and the synergism that ensues from the collaboration between all strategic areas within this document.

Does "sustainable development" mean growth? The dictionary defines *growth* as an increase in physical size while *development* means "to realize the potentialities of, to bring to a fuller, greater or better state." Simply put *growth* means to get "bigger," while *development* means to get "better." According to Donella Meadows, co-author of *The Limits to Growth* and *Beyond the Limits*, "The planet Earth develops, diversifies, and evolves. It does not grow. The same must ultimately be true of human economy, if it is to be sustained on and by this planet. Sustainable *growth* is neither desirable nor possible. But sustainable *development*, providing more services to human beings while putting less load on the environment, is entirely possible, if we develop the words to talk about it, understand it, act on it, and bring it into being."⁴

A sustainable society must maintain "informational, social, and institutional mechanisms to keep in check the positive feedback loops that cause exponential population and [physical] capital growth.... In order to be socially sustainable the combination of population, capital, and technology in the society would have to be configured so that the material living standard is adequate and secure for everyone. In order to be physically sustainable the society's material and energy throughputs would have to meet economist Herman Daly's three conditions:

- Its rates of use of renewable resources do not exceed their rates of regeneration.
- Its rates of use of nonrenewable resources do not exceed the rate at which sustainable renewable substitutes are developed.
- Its rate of pollution emission does not exceed the assimilative capacity of the environment."⁵

⁴ Donella H. Meadows, syndicated columnist and founder of the Global Citizen, Box 58, Plainfield, NH, 03781.

⁵ *Beyond the Limits*, Donella Meadows, et al, pgs. 209-210

Goals of our "Local Agenda 21":

- To articulate a comprehensive vision and realistic framework for establishing "sustainability" in Santa Cruz County and beyond.
- To identify the challenges in meeting these goals and the possible actions, plans, programs, or restructuring needed to overcome the barriers.
- To serve as a official policy guide, expanding upon the goals of City and County General Plans and Referendums. Further appropriate legislative proposals will be put forth to aid in the implementation process.
- To build a network and cooperative base in which to incubate new productive partnerships.
- To highlight the many wonderful existing projects, programs, and initiatives happening in our county.
- To serve as a model for other communities as they strive to implement the global Agenda 21.

Purpose and Focus of our "Local Agenda 21":

It is our underlying purpose to make long-term sustainability the driving criterion in every area of human activity and simultaneously alter these human activities for the better. This will require shifting our consciousness away from seeking only short-term solutions and toward consideration of long-term consequences. It will require programs and projects designed to cultivate conditions and activities that are caring, just, and rich in opportunities available to all people (i.e. humane); and living practices – individual and shared – that can be fruitfully utilized for generations without diminishing our environment, society, or the web of life they support (i.e. sustainable).

Our central focus is not merely on what is wrong today, but rather what practical steps and useful insights can lead us into a better tomorrow. "Sustainable" development must bring about the improvement in the quality of life for all (including the entire web of life).

"Our Common Future reminds us that, whatever may be our individual aspirations, whatever may be our national or cultural identities, that we are first and foremost earthlings, that our future is absolutely and inextricably bound together. We cannot pursue our futures solely as isolated individuals or as isolated sovereign nations today. We have to work together, our future is truly a common future on this planet, and it depends on the way in which we work together and cooperate together in ensuring that our planet – Earth – will remain a congenial and a viable and hospitable home for the entire human species and indeed for the other forms of life that inhabit our planet."

Maurice Strong,

General Secretary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1992

NOTE:

This document reflects a collaboration of suggestions and documentation from a diverse group of individuals and groups and does not necessarily represent the views of any particular individual or group. Decisions and wording reached at the two local S.E.E.D. Summits, Round Table meetings, and subsequent dialogues were reached through consensus of those participating and were approved by experts in each field.

*Sincere Appreciation to the following Contributors
who have made the printing of this document possible!*

PREVIOUS DONORS TO "LOCAL AGENDA 21"

ACTION-Santa Cruz County, Anonymous, Michael Arenson, Pat Arnold, Marion Alexander, California World Foundation, Community Printers, The Connection Magazine, CRUZIO, EarthLinks, Ken Foster, Greener Alternatives, Griffin Chiropractic, Gary Harrold, Kennolyn Retreat Center, Emily Maloney, Charlotte Monroe, Randall Morgan, Tom & Jeanne Nordland, Odwalla, Pacific Bell, Peace Child-S.C., Chase Price, Dr./Rev. John Price, Daliya Robson, Stephen P. Ross, Lisa Rudnick, UNA-SC, UNA-USA, Susy Waldron, Zero Population Growth (listed in alphabetical order)

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(listed in alphabetical order)

Plus the in-kind services and volunteer efforts of many!

Our apologies to any individual or group omitted accidentally. Please let us know corrections for future printings

VI. Useful Resources & References

Documents referred to above:

- "City of Santa Cruz, GENERAL PLAN - 1990-2005" - City Hall, 809 Center St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060-3864; Tel: (408)429-3550.
- "County of Santa Cruz Economic Development Strategy," 1994 - Private Industry Council, Committee on Economic Vitality (see "local agencies" below).
- "County of Santa Cruz, General Plan" - Planning Dept, County Gov't Center 4th floor, 701 Ocean St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4069; Tel: (408)454-2200.
- "Decade of the Environment Referendum, Santa Cruz County Measure C," 1990 - Planning Dept, County Gov't. Center, (see address above).
Also see: "Measure C Annual Progress Reports" - Diane Gerbrandt, coordinator of annual updates, 454-3402.
- "Agenda 21," esp. chapters 2, 3, 4, & 30, United Nations Conf. on Environment & Development, June, 1992.
- May be ordered from UN Sales, Rm DC2-0853, New York, NY 10017; Tel: (212)963-8302 or (800)253-9646; also available on EcoNet: en.unced.documents (Then type o for old) (Nest type: i for index and s to search for a particular article/document);

Local organizations & agencies:

- **Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)**, P. O. Box 809, Marina, CA 93933; Nick Papadakis, Exec., Dir.; Tel: (408)883-3750; Fax: 883-3755.
- **Barter Connection**, Sue Williams, Dir., 1414 Soquel Ave., Ste. 102, Santa Cruz, CA 95062; Tel: (408)426-5978.
- **Business for Social Responsibility**, 609 Mission St., 2nd floor, San Francisco, CA 94105; Tel: (408)537-0888.
- **County of Santa Cruz Economic Development**, Susan Pearlman, Coordinator, County Administrative Office, 701 Ocean St., Rm. 520, Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4069; Tel: (408)454-2100; Fax: 454-3262. Also: **Private Industry Council, Committee on Economic Vitality** (citizen's advisory group on econ. development. matters).
- **Democratic Management Services**, 500 Chestnut, Ste. 250, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; Bill Tyssling, Director, Tel: (408)425-7478; Fax: 425-0830.
- **Planning Department for the City of Capitola**, 420 Capitola Ave., Capitola, CA 95010; Kathleen Malloy, Dir., Tel: (408)475-7300.
- **Planning Department for the City of Scotts Valley**, One Civic Center Drive, Scotts Valley, CA 95066; Tel: (408)438-2324, Laura Kuhn, Director.
- **Redevelopment Agency for the City of Santa Cruz**, 323 Church St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060; Ceil Cirillo, Dir., Tel: (408)429-3045.
- **United Way**, P.O. Box 1458, Capitola, CA 95010; Mary Lou Getke, Dir., Tel: (408)479-5466; Fax: 479-5477.
- **Watsonville Housing & Economic Development Agency**, P.O. Box 50000, Watsonville, CA 95076; Tel: (408)728-6014, Ted Madonia, Director.

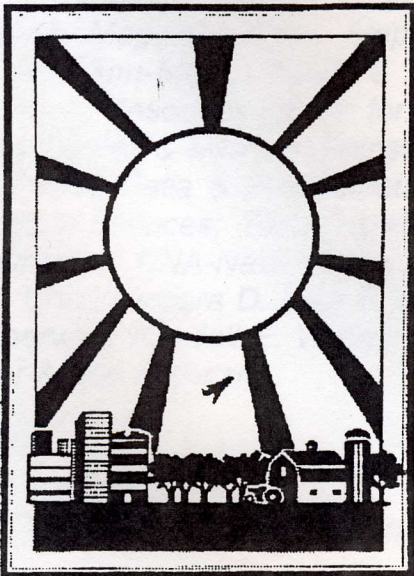
Model programs referenced:

- **National Awards for Environmental Sustainability**, c/o **Renew America**, 1400 Sixteenth St. N.W., Ste. 710, Washington, DC 20036; Tel: (800)922-RENEW; Web: "solstice.crest.org/renew_america"
- **Santa Monica Sustainable City Project - SQA Program**, Daniel Ehrler, CEO, Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce, 501 Colorado Ave., #150, Santa Monica, CA 90401; Tel: (310)393-9825, ext. 11.
- **Sustainable Quality Awards (SQA) Program**, P.O. Box 548, Santa Cruz, CA 95061; Tel: (408)454-0400 or (800)962-GREEN, Daniel Robin, Dir.; Email: sbqa@cruzio.com; Web: "www.ecoquality.com/sqa"

Documentation Sources:

- ¹ Worldwatch Institute, Paper #66, 1985. According to the World Energy Conference & U.N. Statistical office, "We have only 40 years worth of proven oil reserves left!"
 - ² "1996 Highway Statistics," Federal Highway Administration. [Of approximately \$100M in highway revenue, less than \$6M was allocated to mass transit.]
 - ³ "Who Killed the Middle Class: by John Cassidy, *The New Yorker*, October 16, 1995.
 - ⁴ "Who's Poor: by Cheryl Russell, *American Demographics Journal*, March 1996.
 - ⁵ "1995 California Statistical Abstract" by Dept. of Finance shows 9.1% rate for Santa Cruz County and 7.8% for Calif. "Economic Indicators" by Council of Economic Advisors shows 5.6% for U.S.
 - ⁶ "Yearly Counts, 1996" by Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission
 - ⁷ Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission: 27,000 people commute "over the hill" every day.
 - ⁸ Refer to Resources & Recycling chapter, Section IV.
 - ⁹ "88% of the local businesses have fewer than 20 employees" - HRA Rpt. to Board of Supervisors, Mar 5, 1996; County of S.C. Economic Development Strategy, '94; & Measure C Baseline Environmental Conditions of SCC, 1990.
- * **"Sustainable Businesses"** are defined as exhibiting sustainable practices in the following ways:
- non-polluting
 - protects resource base (minimizes use of non-renewable resources and raw materials)
 - responsible for products from beginning to end of their life cycle.
 - ethical social policy

Contributors: Chairperson Alan Schlenger, Daniel Robin, Rob Wheeler, Micah Posner, Daniel Ehrler, Bill Tyssling, Randolph Morgan, Bob Schwarz, Charlie Reid, Alan Brady, Dan de Grassi, Cecile Mills, Gary Harrold, Michael Shaw, Dan Doxtator, Paul Johnson, Joan Brady, Ron Wolf, Glenn Smith, Carl Blanke, Will Hull, Dave Skinner, Hina Pendle, Stephanie Hoffman, Tom Ghiglia, Chase Price, Rick Longinotto, Pat Arnold, Patrick Greer, Sylvia Caras, Lynne (Basehore) Cooper, Mike Bauer, Jeff Ringold, Chris Schneiter, Susan Pearlman, & Nick Papadakis.



"Since healing our Earth will require many people working together, the ability to bring diverse groups and viewpoints into a common effort is essential."

David Gershon & Robert Gilman
Household EcoTeam Workbook
Global Action Plan, 1990



Agenda 21 Community Teamwork In Operation Now

Santa Cruz County

... a Model Sustainable
Community Campaign