

Advancing the Agenda

Agenda 21 is a comprehensive plan of action taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the United Nations System, governments, and major groups covering all spheres of social, economic, and human development affecting our environment. The document, adopted at the first Earth Summit in 1992, contains 40 chapters and related topics are thematically grouped in 'clusters.'

Today many nuclear technologies are contributing to sustainable development in countless, and often unheralded, ways. A method known as the 'sterile insect technique', for instance, is a key component of integrated pest management programmes. Nuclear analytical techniques are instrumental to scientific assessments of pollution in the marine environment, while forms of chemical elements called isotopes play vital roles in hydrological studies of freshwater resources deep inside the Earth's crust. Further examples include fighting acid rain in Poland, and promoting child nutrition to communities in Peru and Senegal.

These are just some of the ways in which nuclear science and technology can be applied at the ground level of sustainable development to solve practical problems.

The safe and peaceful use of nuclear technologies underscores the key role that the IAEA plays in advancing the achievement of Agenda 21's ambitious goals.