



Sustainability means that things can keep going, can sustain themselves, can continue into the future and go on forever.

From a humane perspective, sustainability for our planet means that it can continue to do what it was designed to do – provide fresh air, clean water, produce food and allow us all to have a high quality of life forever. Unsustainability means that it cannot and that's where we are now.

Twenty years ago, scientists from Sweden developed a definition for sustainability with four basic principles. These can be seen as the care instructions for our planet. If we follow them, it is good for our planet, and because we are part of the system that is our planet, it's good for us too. The care instructions are as follows:

- reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and heavy metals
- reduce our dependence on some heavy chemicals that persist in Nature
- reduce our destruction of Nature
- insure we are not stopping people, globally, from meeting their needs.

Demand for the Earth services (clean air, water, food) increases as the population increases and living standards rise. But the Earth's ability to provide these services is declining because of the way we are living.

In our search for prosperity, growth and success, we are destroying the system that we, as humans, are completely dependent upon: Nature. We, humans, have become a threat to our own way of life. The Earth is a system and everything is connected, society, environment and economy.

To live sustainably, we need to follow the four care instructions and apply them to everything we do at home and at work. If we can follow these care instructions, we can work together to be sustainable. We will all have a better quality of life, we'll waste less, we'll pollute less and we'll create more things we value in society while improving our planet's chance of providing us with the very things we need to survive.