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The World Summit on Sustainable Development: Follow-up in South Africa?

by
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Introduction

South Africa hosted the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in September 2002. The Summit's purpose was to reinforce a global commitment to sustainable development while addressing the challenges of poverty eradication and global inequity. Ten days of tense negotiations, protests, marches, exhibitions and presentations, produced the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, and the non-negotiated (Type II) partnerships agreements as its products. South Africa has a mammoth task as custodian of the WSSD follow-up processes to implement the commitments through a strategy for international action and at a national level by establishing a national strategy for sustainable development (NSSD). An NSSD should set priorities and guide the implementation of the targets based on sustainable development principles. These principles are fairness, justice, peace, safety and security for the common good and benefits of all living beings (DEAT 2003). It takes into account the value of maintaining the ecological systems that support present and future generations.

This policy brief considers the outcomes of the WSSD and the implementation of its agenda for South Africa on a national level. It includes an analysis of putting in place a national strategy for sustainable development and establishing the necessary institutional capacity for implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Furthermore, this brief will explain the role of South Africa as custodian and propose policy considerations to accelerate sustainable development policy in South Africa.

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