

Q: Explain treaties or conventions signed in Agenda-21.

AGENDA-21

Agenda-21 is a comprehensive action plan given in 1992 and adopted by 178 countries at United Nations Convention on Environment and Development, also known as Earth Summit. It is an action plan given in 20th century, keeping in view the challenges of 21st century. Various treaties or conventions have been signed after 1992 for achieving the objectives set in agenda-21. Each treaty or convention reflects different aspect of agenda-21, aiming to conserve environment and promote sustainable development.

Explicating Major Sections of Agenda-21

Agenda-21 is divided into four major sections that are socio-economic dimension, conservation and management of natural resources for sustainable development, strengthening the role of stakeholders and means of implementation. Various treaties or conventions have been signed in first three major sections of agenda-21.

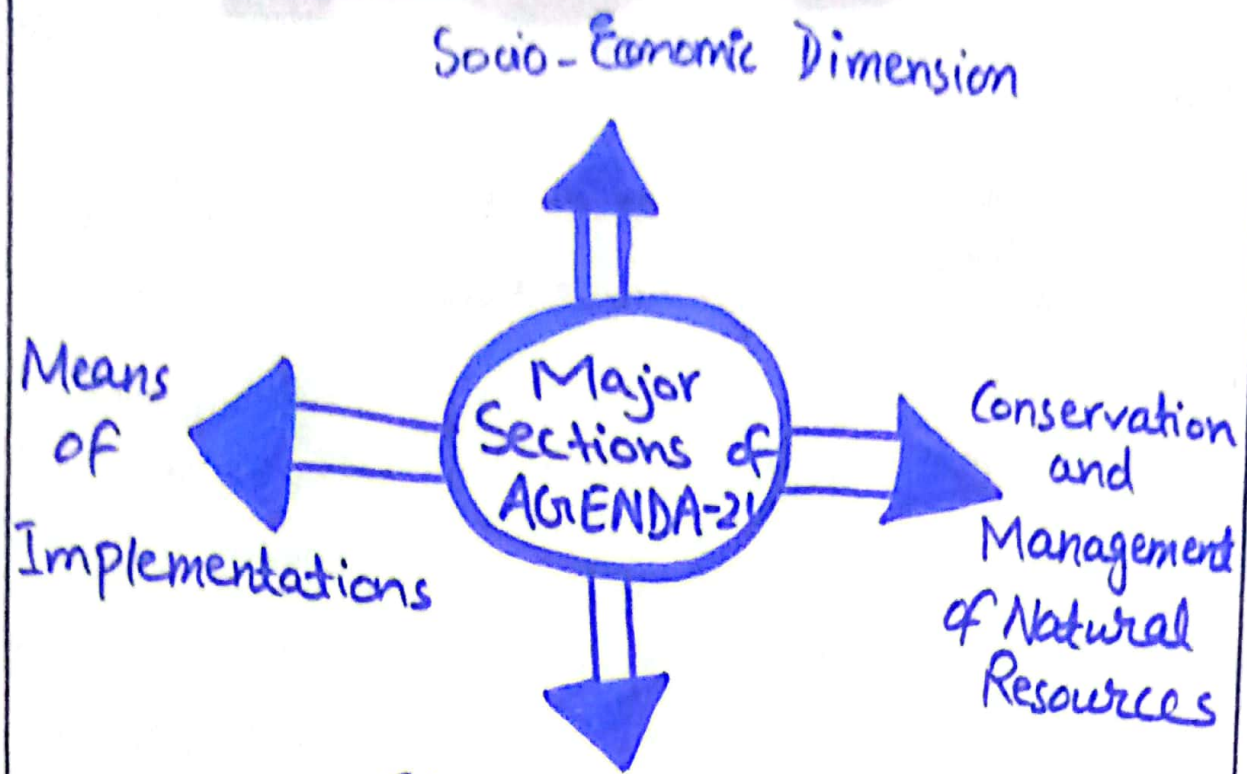


Figure: Major Sections of AGENDA-21

Treaties or Conventions Signed in the 'Socio-Economic' Dimension of Agenda-21

Following treaties or conventions have been signed in this section of agenda-21.

i- Millennium Development Goals for Combating Poverty:

Agenda-21 was focussed on combating poverty. Following this principle, in September 2000 Millennium Declaration was adopted in which Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established for combating poverty and

hunger till 2015 (New York Times, Millennium Development Goals, October 2000).

ii- Maputo Protocol for Promoting Sustainable Population Growth:

For achieving the objective of sustainable population growth set in agenda-21, Maputo Protocol was adopted in 2003 by African Union with the emphasis on the needs of family planning and affordable reproductive health services (The Guardian, Maputo Protocol, October 2003).

iii- Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities for Improving Health Services:

Agenda-21 was focussed on improving health services. For fulfilling this objective, United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was signed in 2006 for ensuring that the states provide equitable and affordable health services to the disabled as states provide these facilities to others (The Economist, Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, December 2006).

iv. Sustainable Development Goals for Enhancing Access to Education:

For achieving this objective of Agenda-21, Sustainable Development Goals were introduced by UN in its agenda 2030 in September 2015. ~~SDG~~ SDG 4 aims "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all" (Foreign Policy Sustainable Development Goals, November 2015).

Treaties or Conventions Signed (in) for Conservation of Natural Resources

Following treaties or conventions have been signed under this section of agenda-21.

i- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) for conservation of biodiversity:

For achieving this objective of agenda-21, convention on biological diversity (CBD) was entered into force on December 29, 1993 for ensuring equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources and for conserving biodiversity (The Economist, Convention on Biological Diversity, January 1994).

ii- **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change for Promoting Sustainable agriculture**
For achieving the objective of sustainable agriculture set in agenda-21, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in March 1994. This convention was aimed at promoting sustainable agriculture practices for sustainable development.

iii- **Kyoto Protocol for Improving Air Quality**
For improving air quality, a key objective of agenda-21, Kyoto protocol was signed in 1997 for reducing global green-house gas emissions by an average of 5% compared with the emission levels of 1990. This protocol was signed for improving air quality by reducing emissions of pollutants into the atmosphere.

iv- **United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Use of International Water Courses for Improving Water Quality**
For improving water quality that is a key objective of agenda-21, United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of

International Watercourses was signed in 1997. This convention was aimed at water quality management, controlling water pollution and improving cooperation among states for shared water courses.

Treaties or Conventions Signed for Strengthening the Role of Stakeholders

Following treaties or conventions have been signed under this section of agenda-21.

i- Aarhus Convention for strengthening the role of Public in environmental conservation

For achieving this objective of agenda-21, Aarhus convention was signed in 1998 that was aimed at strengthening the role of public in environmental conservation. This convention was aimed at raising environmental awareness in public for environmental sustainability.

ii- Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants for strengthening the role of industries in sustainable development

Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants was signed in 2001 that clearly

reflects the agenda-21 which was aimed at strengthening the role of industries in sustainable development (New York Times, Stockholm Convention, February 2002).

iii- Minamata Convention for Strengthening the Role of Environmental Institutions

Minamata Convention on Mercury was signed in 2013 for strengthening the role of environmental institutions, thereby reflecting agenda-21. This convention was aimed at strengthening role of environmental organizations for conservation of environment.

iv- Paris Agreement for Strengthening the Role of Scientific and Technological Community for sustainable development

Agenda-21 was focussed on strengthening the role of scientific and technological community for sustainable development. For achieving this objective, Paris agreement was signed in 2015.

Concluding Thoughts

Agenda-21 is of capital significance in environmental conservation efforts because this agenda was given in 20th century for addressing challenges of 21st century. Various treaties or conventions have been signed after 1992, reflecting the same principles and objectives as mentioned in Agenda-21. All these treaties or conventions have clearly reflected the principles and objectives mentioned in Agenda-21.