



Written by [James Heiser](#) on March 5, 2012

UN's Environmental "Solution": More Government

The new UNEP report, *21 Issues for the 21st Century* presents itself as the product of "a careful and authoritative ranking of the most important emerging issues related to the global environment". Therefore:

UNEP aims to inform the UN and wider international community about these issues on a timely basis, as well as provide input to its own work programme and that of other UN agencies, thereby fulfilling the stipulation of its mandate: "keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action".



UNEP executive director Achim Steiner readily acknowledges that the focus of the new report is to frame the discussion for the "Rio+20 Summit" scheduled to take place this coming June, and by influencing that summit, to set the agenda for years to come:

While the initial focus was to inform the Rio+20 Summit taking place in Brazil in 2012, *21 Issues for the 21st Century* will be clearly relevant to environmental policy-making and scientific priority setting for many years to come as well as the trajectory of UNEP's future work programme.

While such an assessment of one's own relevance might seem boastful, the UN's [Division for Sustainable Development](#) has an equally expansive assessment of its significance for the future of planet Earth through its upcoming conference in Rio:

The objective of the Conference is to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, and address new and emerging challenges.

The Conference will focus on two themes: (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development.

"Poverty eradication" and the "green economy" [have been linked for years](#) in globalist rhetoric despite the fact that many of the artifacts of the "green economy" — from "[green power](#)" to the [Chevy Volt](#), for example — have been noteworthy examples of government largesse in the service of the appetites of wealthy consumers with little relevance (other than increased government spending and regulation) to the poor.

As *21 Issues for the 21st Century* makes clear, the "institutional framework" required for sustainable development is more growth of global government. The report concedes that "by all accounts, governance for global sustainability is already a major enterprise":



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Presently, more than 900 intergovernmental agreements with provisions on environmental protection are in force. Major environmental summits — such as the Conferences of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change — regularly draw several thousand participants and observers. Global environmental policy has become a core item on the agenda of the UN system and of regional organizations alike.

However, despite such a stunning growth in global government, 900 agreements — and the regulation of life that comes with such “agreements” — are still not enough: “Despite the size of the effort, it is not clear that the current system of global governance is adequate for the necessary transition to sustainability.” In the assessment of the UNEP report, what is needed is a new “constitutional moment” to advance the power of the globalists in a way which has not been seen since the creation of the UN itself in the aftermath of the Second World War:

It appears that we may be seeing the emergence of a “constitutional moment” in the development of international relations and governance, comparable in recent times only to the major constitutional moment of 1945 “post World War II” that saw the emergence of a multitude of new, and often unprecedented, international norms, institutions, and agencies. Similar fundamental revisions in norms, processes and mechanisms of global governance would help address the global sustainability challenge.

Among the goals set forth in *21 Issues for the 21st Century* is nothing less than a global pattern of “behavioural change” resulting from governmental regulation:

As noted above, many experts believe that behavioural change is at the core of many environmental problems. Behavioural transformations support more effective systems of governance and help build human capacities for change. Such changes are also vital in addressing many other issues, from the depletion of water resources by overconsumption, to the mitigation of climate change by modifying mobility patterns and life-styles. The support of behavioural change is not new *per se*, and it has been part and parcel of environmental and health policies for decades. Yet, Lucas (2008), Crompton (2009) and others believe that previous efforts to encourage sustainable behaviour were not sufficient. The much desired sustainability transition is less likely, or more difficult, without a substantial transformation in modern lifestyles, from the rich industrialized countries to the rapidly developing mega-cities in the South.

From the perspective of UNEP bureaucrats, “overconsumption” is a matter of concern for global governance, and “mobility patterns and life-styles” are to be molded by international regulation to bring about the needed “behavioural changes” needed to support the agenda of “green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.” Functionally, this means that the “lifestyle” of every human being is now seen as a matter of saving the global environment — and therefore the target of international regulation at the hands of UN conferences.

With the “Rio+20” summit only a few months away, the purportedly mainstream media is still devoting little attention to a UN agenda that seeks a dramatic expansion on global governance. A [story for FoxNews.com](#) does note that for all of UNEP’s concern for expanding the scope and authority of global governance, its own institutional record falls far short of commending the ability of getting its own house in order, let alone reorganizing the global economy: “An internal U.N study obtained by Fox News last June found that the \$450 million organization is an administrative mess, not knowing how its money is spent or how many public and private partners it might be working with at any given time.”



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