

and co-operating fully in measures to protect the global environment.

Although progress was made after the Stockholm conference in many individual areas, and although many environments, particularly the industrialized countries, actually got better, little real effect was given to environment development in the policies and practices of governments and industry.

Of even greater concern is the fact that the underlying conditions driving the risks to the human future perceived at Stockholm did not fundamentally change in the two decades that separated Stockholm from Rio..

Some 1.7 billion people were added to the earth's population during these two decades, almost the same as the total population of the planet at the beginning of the century. And most of this growth took place in the developing world.

Despite recessions the global economy more than doubled, but most of the growth accrued to the already rich countries. During this same time, the environment and natural resources of developing countries deteriorated at an alarming rate. You do not need to be a scientist or a statistician to know this.

As I travelled to every region of the world, retracing my steps of 20 years ago, the extent and the nature of this environmental degradation and its tragic human consequences were evident everywhere. The cities of the developing world, growing at rates beyond anything ever experienced, are now among the world's most polluted, many of them headed for environmental and social breakdown.

The appalling destruction of natural resources, the loss of forest cover, erosion and degradation of soils and deterioration of supplies and quality of water are visible throughout the developing world.

Economic losses in agriculture, fisheries and tourism are tragically manifested in diminished livelihoods for already impoverished and struggling people, whose numbers continue to grow.