



**Miljödepartementet**

**Plenary Session I: Mr Andreas Carlgren, Minister for the Environment Sweden**

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

When I was somewhere around twelve years old: a little book about journeys to the Moon. One picture engraved itself in my memory more than others.

There I saw the Earth in a photo – not least the fantastic picture of the ‘Earthrise’ on the Moon.

Today we can watch developments on Earth from satellites. (Bild 1)  
More modern than my little book – but arouses the same thoughts.

The gleaming, blue planet floating alone in the universe  
- infinitely beautiful and fascinating  
- the insight that the Earth is our home, and that there are desperately few Earth-like planets...  
- that we only have one Earth.

Today: Over half of the Earth’s ecosystems are in the process of being destroyed because they are being exploited in an unsustainable manner.

The UN report, the ‘Millennium Ecosystem Assessment’: a situation so serious that it risks having enormous consequences for the goal of halving world poverty and securing access to clean drinking water.

Examples:  
failed harvests,  
flooding,  
species invasions,  
outbreaks of environmentally-related diseases

You can register all this on geodata images. But you can also listen to people who actually seen the changes.

One year ago, I convened a meeting of the environment ministers from some 30 of the world's countries at Riksgränsen the most northern Sweden.

We all met Niels Labba. (Bild 2)

He seen the changes in nature during his life. Witnessed: The decreasing permafrost. The melting snow that stopped reflecting the sun and thereby increasing the temperature.

I stood with the environment ministers from Brazil, Indonesia and New Zealand. The river Abiskojokk – which is the largest river flowing into Torneträsk. Drank water directly from the river. (Bild 3)

Talked about the destruction of the rain forests in Brazil and Indonesia. The risk of the total flooding of hundreds of islands in Indonesia.

Stood high in the Swedish mountains – experienced the connections, felt the distances shrinking. Niels Labba, Ministers from all over the world: the world is ours – everything is connected around our threatened home.

Engagement and will:  
Global climate change takes a global agreement.

Breakthrough in Bali in December:

all the countries participating in the negotiations  
negotiations start  
we are focusing on all emissions  
a global climate agreement must be met in 2009.

The negotiation process is underway, no one left on the platform.

That autumn, 2009, Sweden will hold the Presidency of the EU.  
Great ambitions: The EU targets are the most radical and ambitious that any group of countries has set up. The EU has taken the leadership for achieving a new, global agreement.

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The world will have to undergo an enormous shift into a sustainable development.

Earlier this spring I visited China. China and other developing countries now experience the urbanization processes that we have been through, but on a scale that has not been seen before. 18 million people move from the countryside to cities each year in China alone. Each day, the global urban

population grows with 180 000 people – the equivalent of a medium sized European city. A major part of all construction in the world takes place in cities in the large developing countries.

How these cities are built will have an enormous impact, not only on the environment and on quality of life for their citizens, but also on the long-term possibilities for tackling climate change. 80 percent of greenhouse gas emissions originate from urban areas.

But also many European cities, including Stockholm, were heavily polluted fifty years ago. Today Stockholm is one of the cleanest cities in the world. This shows that it is possible to change the urban environment – and to have flourishing economies at the same time.

Our experience is that cities, if planned and managed correctly, hold possible solutions to many of these problems, for example through efficient infrastructure, energy and transport solutions.

Sustainable urban development can not only help boost local economies and quality of life, but also be an important part of the transformation into a global, competitive and welfare-producing zero-carbon economy.

Today, 40 percent of the energy supply is from renewable sources. By 2020, it is estimated that this figure will be 50 percent.

Has this been to the detriment of the economy? The answer is no. In the last sixteen years, Sweden's carbon dioxide emissions have decreased by nine percent while our economy has grown by forty-six percent.

Economic instruments, such as the carbon tax in the 90's.

The Swedish municipalities have also been important for the positive development. Being early adopters of Agenda 21, sustainable development is today mainstreamed into their ordinary activities.

Sweden is prepared to work in the forefront together with our partners in the developing countries.

Sustainable cities

Combat poverty – eradicate

Includes today environmental task

One example is district heating, which today is established in large parts of Sweden and answers for 90 % of all multi-family housing. The use of fossil fuel in district heating has been reduced from 80 to 3 percent, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have been reduced by 60 percent. In warmer climates, much of the same technology can be used for district cooling.

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(Bild 5)

One prerequisite for the positive development of district heating in Sweden has been that physical planning and urban design have enabled energy efficient, low cost district heating networks.

You have a major role in the challenge: finding new ways of maintaining the capacity of ecosystems to manage environmental change and disturbances.

Construction, infrastructure, expansion of wind power.

Roads, streets, railways and airports  
water, sewage, electricity, telecommunications

energy: district heating, gas, oil and broadband for data transmission.

This is why this conference is important.

Exchange of experience and to develop new solutions for:

- better information on climate change and environmental monitoring
- planning the use of land and building housing in a sustainable manner
- a well-functioning property system to combat poverty.

Availability of knowledge and information is vital for combating climate change and adapting society to a changed climate.

Sweden is in a more privileged situation than many other parts of the world. But when Hurricane Gudrun swept in over southern Sweden in January 2005, the results were devastating for land-owners and the people. (Bild 4)

Many people were without electricity and telephone for weeks, forests that had been managed and cared for over generations fell in the course of a few hours. Roads were blocked by fallen trees. A lot of chaos.

Reliable cartographical data was essential for effective work. Electricians and forestry mechanics went down to southern Sweden from all over Sweden. Both roads and electrical and telephone cables had disappeared in many places, but with the help of road maps, grid maps and property maps, work could begin.

The red sections of this picture shows the damage. (Bild 6)

Close cooperation between land surveying services, municipalities, electricity companies, forestry owners collaborating, using reliable maps over the years was important.

Now there are developments to increase the availability of data and a greater exchange of information between

- countries
- government agencies
- others in society.

This is taking place at the European level through the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES).

An initiative taken by the European Commission together with a number of space organisations including the Swedish National Space Board.

Developing an action programme to monitor the risks of natural disasters and provide society with information regarding the environment.

The GMES is Europe's contribution to the Group on Earth Observation (GEO). GEO has adopted a 10-year action plan to investigate how data about the Earth's environment can be coordinated so that it can be read, understood and used by all countries and the organisations concerned.

The Swedish Government has taken the initiative for the construction of a national satellite imagery database for measurements over Sweden – Saccess.

The satellite database will be launched next week (24:th june). In Saccess: everyone, entirely free, can download satellite images of Sweden. Initially, the database will contain satellite images from the 1970s and later. New images of the whole of Sweden will be stored in the database every year. This is an example from where I spend my summer: Höga Kusten. (Bild 7) with the midnight light in summer time.

The exchange of data and information is crucial to much of the EU's work on the environment. Examples of this are the Water Directive, the Floods Directive and above all, the INSPIRE Directive.

The purpose of INSPIRE is to provide an infrastructure for spatial information in Europe. One means of coordinating – information between users and producers  
– combining information and knowledge from various sectors.

In Sweden, the National Land Survey has drawn up a national strategic plan for the provision of data within the geodata field. A national geodata strategy is being implemented in cooperation with a large number of government agencies and municipalities. Databases and services are being harmonised and standardised to make exchanges between agencies easier.

The strategy is to serve as a guide for all actors in Sweden to achieve more efficient management of fundamental geographic information and property information.

The geodata field covers a large number of actors, and has very good potential for electronic governance, or e-governance. The national geodata strategy and implementation of the Inspire directive in Sweden is a prioritised project in the Government's action plan for e-governance. The overall objective for the work with e-governance in Sweden is that by 2010 it

should be as simple as possible for as many people as possible to exercise their rights, fulfil their obligations and access public administration services.

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Sweden has long traditions in the land surveying area. On 1628, Director-General Anders Bure was instructed by King Gustav II Adolf. The instruction was to set up the land survey organisation and train personnel in order to survey and map Sweden in a systematic manner.

(Bild 8) A few hundred years later, in the 1800s, major land reforms were implemented throughout the country (redistribution of land holdings, called storskifte and laga skifte). The activities of the National Land Survey were of central importance. The land reforms were necessary for economically sustainable agriculture and forestry, economic development and poverty reduction in Sweden.

Similarly today, a great social change in the life of our society, the lack of access to food in the world and competition for land make the issue of land very important in large parts of the world. The system for land and property is of fundamental importance for many functions in society, not least for sustainable development.

Guaranteed right of ownership is essential for sustainable use of land. Guaranteed right of ownership also gives the user the opportunity to take out loans. Necessary for individuals willing to invest in a property, for example to develop a farm.

It is only when it is made clear who is responsible for managing a particular land area that demands can be made regarding long-term management of land and water. If you know that you are going to use something in the future, you do not overexploit it.

Economic development requires a functioning regulatory system that ensures that all transactions in society can be done at low cost, quickly and safeguard the legitimate interests of all people. This is also highlighted in a new report from the commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, supported by UNDP.

(Bild 9) This is value. In Sweden, the total value of property credit amounts to about 80 per cent of the total national assets. Of all credit in Sweden, about 80 per cent is protected by security in property.

Sweden was one of the first countries in the world to computerise the property register (with information about a property and its owner). This work began as early as 1968 and was completed in the mid-1990s. In Sweden, we take for granted that property can be bought and sold quickly, safely and expediently. We also take for granted that the bank lends money, with the property as security. Registers with accurately defined properties

and information, that are guaranteed by the State, on owners, assessed values etc. build the system for transfers, letting and mortgages.

For developing countries, access to functioning property systems that are adapted to the conditions of the country and which make use of traditional rights are fundamental in contributing to social and economic development.

The property system contributes to availability of knowledge and combat poverty ensuring peoples access to land and water.

Availability of knowledge and information is necessary in the work with climate, planning, marine environment – and to combat poverty. What the world is about to build, with your strong efforts, is fast and secure systems that allow us to know and stop guessing.

But the data that now are available are also making our recreation safer and better.

In my little book, the Earth was full of blue – the oceans.

Despite climate change, we actually have winters with snow and ice here in Sweden. A major popular amusement is long-distance skating on natural ice. Every weekend, from November to March, large numbers of people gather together and go on skating excursions. You often go as far as seventy kilometres, enjoying the landscape and spending time with people that you would not otherwise meet, often across generations. What do you then have in your rucksack? Coffee and sandwiches, of course, but also: the maps and this days: GPS to find the way.

Each weekend, the ice that is best is different from that of the week before and then it is a matter of finding that ice, and then finding your way home. At the end of the day, you can log on to the Internet and read a report from that day's excursion and can often find a map, where one of the leaders has marked the route of the day's trip. This is all thanks to cooperation between the National Land Survey and skating clubs.

The earth faces a great challenge. But even if the night seems dark, it can get brighter. Your work is important, so is your contribution.

Thank you for your attention!