

ICT and Sustainable Development

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MOTIVATION

Sustainable development is one of the greatest challenges of our time: The widely cited Brundtland Report defines sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without adversely affecting future generations. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have a great potential to support sustainable development. However, most of the ICT-related technical and political trends, such as the trend towards 'pervasive computing' or policies for 'the information society', are not exploiting this potential. On the contrary, there is some risk that ICT will become counterproductive with regard to environmental and social sustainability. Systematic approaches to develop ICTs and their applications in view of the goal of sustainable development are therefore essential.

AIMS

- To contribute to the development of an information society that meets the human needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- To be actively involved in the development of ICT applications which involve the goal of sustainable development.
- To investigate the interaction among social, environmental and economic issues in the development of ICTs and their applications.
- To promote worldwide research and practice for further advancement of ICT towards a safe and sustainable self developing World
- To strengthen interdisciplinary research efforts in technology assessment for ICTs with a focus on ICT-induced opportunities and risks for the individual, for social systems and for the global ecosystem.
- To provide a platform for presenting and discussing emerging ideas and trends in the intersection of the topics 'information society' and 'sustainable development'.
- To promote or support the organization of meetings as well as easy access to high-quality data, information and knowledge in this area and related areas.

SCOPE

- To create a network of experts working on ICT applications or implications related to sustainable development
- To support the coordination of policies related to information society issues with policies related to sustainable development
- To support applications of ICT for global environmental and development issues
- To facilitate research assessing the environmental and health impacts

(a) of ICT hardware life cycles: production, use, recycling and final disposal

(b) of ICT applications with respect to the resource efficiency of processes they influence

(c) of ICT-induced long-term changes of consumption patterns or lifestyles.

- To promote the communication between computer professionals and other experts on relationships between ICT and sustainable development
- To promote prospective studies to disseminate early warnings on consequences of applications of ICT that could compromise the goal of sustainable development, and encourage the development of strategies to ensure that ICT applications will contribute to sustainable development.

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