



Of course, both of these principles sound like "motherhood and apple pie" concepts. Nobody could ever disagree with either of them. Once again, we come back to the question of how to operationalise our vision.

Our strategy will therefore, secondly, set out the chief unsustainability threats that Europe needs to tackle over the next 25 years and beyond.

As I said earlier, over the years sustainable development has started to mean many things to many people. But whilst few can agree on what is sustainable, most can agree on what is unsustainable. We will therefore operationalise sustainability by highlighting a few of the crunch unsustainable issues that we need to tackle.

We have in the Commission provisionally identified six key unsustainable themes. Each topic is complex and cuts across many policy areas. Each is an issue with severe potential consequences, where the time scale is long and which is of concern across Europe.

The themes we are currently looking at are:

- Combating climate change caused by greenhouse gas emissions. Of course, this is a major issue both for the environment and from an economic point of view.
- Efficient natural resource management, i.e. a decoupling of economic growth from resource use, and the protection of biodiversity. Saving our natural resources should be a general rule of good economic management we depend on them for the future.
- Public health including both protection of health (for example, through an effective chemicals management system), and the financing of health care.
- A policy towards land use and transport that allows for sustainable mobility. Transport is critical for our economy and an element of our personal freedom. At the same time it imposes enormous environmental costs in terms of air pollution, climate change or noise.
- Combating social exclusion and poverty through adequate social, education and labour market policies. This is not only a moral responsibility only an inclusive society will be a stable democracy.
- And finally, addressing our demographic problems caused by an ageing society, for example through a reform of the pensions systems.