

Definition of environmental sustainability (from: *Financial times lexicon* - <http://lexicon.ft.com/>)

A state in which the demands placed on the environment can be met without reducing its capacity to allow all people to live well, now and in the future.

Evidence is strong that we are exceeding and eroding the earth's carrying capacity, that there are limits to growth on a finite planet. Effects are interactive, complex, unpredictable and escalating, as we head for a global average temperature rise of more than 2 degrees centigrade over pre-industrial levels.

Sometimes "environmental", "social" and "economic" are termed to be the three pillars of sustainability.

But this is problematic as it suggests they are equivalent and can be traded. Environmental sustainability is the context within which social and economic life happen. Also, social inequity directly affects environmental viability.