

# Environmental Management Principles

# 5 General Principles

1. Polluter pays principle (PPP)
2. User pays principle (UPP) (or resource pricing principle).
3. Precautionary principle (PP).
4. Subsidiary principle (SP)
5. Intergenerational equity principle (IEP)

# Polluter pays principle

The Polluter Pays Principle was first widely discussed in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro of Brazil in June 1992. This principle was endorsed by all the attending representatives of the countries.

- The Polluter should bear environmental costs.
  - Environmental damages are (often) external effects of production and consumption  
e.g smoke, waste, tobacco,...
- The objective of the PPP is Internalisation of environmental costs. (Rio Declaration, Principle 16)

# PPP

- If the polluters have to pay for the cost of any pollution they cause, market forces will then encourage them to change their activities either by introducing new pollution control technologies or by switching to more efficient production process.

# User pays principle (UPP)

- The UPP states that the beneficiaries should pay for the full cost of using the resources and its related service
- The full cost includes the cost of losses for future generations
- This principle is more easily applied to the consumer of public services involving the collection and treatment of effluents.

# Precautionary principle

- Precaution: Actions should be taken so that the risk of damage is avoided
- The Precautionary Principle was adopted by the UN Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit) in 1992.

## UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 9 May 1992:

- "The parties should take precautionary measures to anticipate, prevent or minimise the causes of climate change and mitigate its adverse effects. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing such measures, taking into account that policies and measures to deal with climate change should be cost effective so as to ensure global benefits at the lowest possible cost."



- PP:

**“Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage to environment, lack of scientific certainty should not be used as an excuse for postponing cost effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.”**

- This principle seeks to prevent and ease environmental stress before conclusive evidence of damage exists and adopts policy when raw evidence is available.

# Subsidiary principle

- SP states that political decisions should be taken by lowest possible level of public authority dependence with effective action
- setting standards and interpreting risk are politically involved processes
- The SP recommends that these decisions be made by the authorities that are closest to the population concerned

# Intergenerational equity principle (IEP)

- The IEP is the central principle in the definition of sustainable development
- According to the Brundtland Report sustainability states that:  
**‘meeting needs of present generations without compromising the needs of future generations’**

- We should monitor the world such that future generations should have the opportunity to be at least as well off as we are
  - Moderat use of oil, minerals,...
  - Avoid deterioration of the environment (incl. climate)