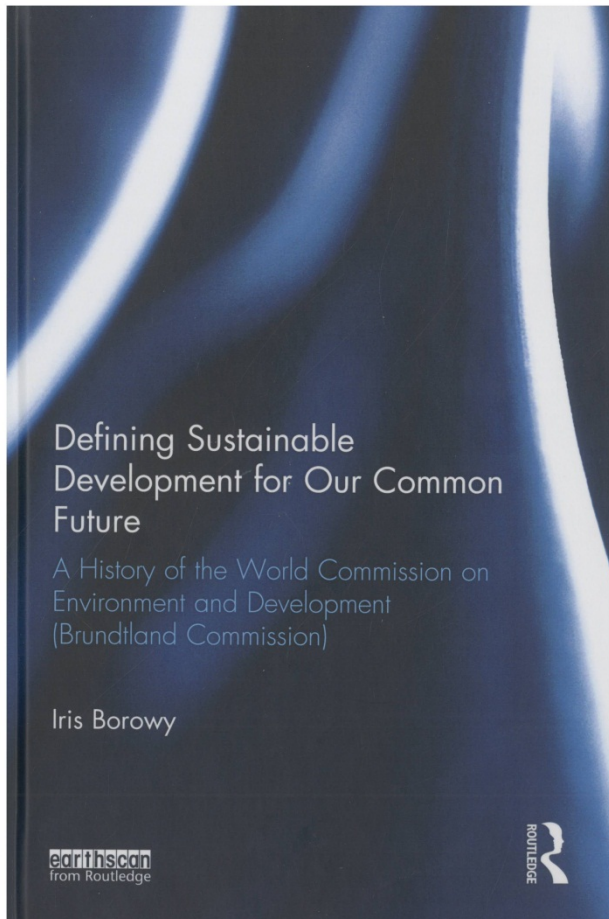


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Defining Sustainable Development for Our Common Future. A History of the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission)

Iris Borowy



The UN World Commission on Environment and Development, chaired by former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, alerted the world to the urgency of making progress toward economic development that could be sustained without depleting natural resources or harming the environment. Written by an international group of politicians, civil servants and experts on the environment and development, the Brundtland Report changed sustainable development from a physical notion to one based on social, economic and environmental issues. This book positions the Brundtland Commission as a key event within a longer series of international reactions to pressing problems of global poverty and environmental degradation. It shows that its report, "Our Common Future", published in 1987, covered much more than its definition of sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their

own needs" for which it became best known. It also addressed a long list of issues which remain unresolved today.