

## Assignment 2 – Reflection task

This reflection paper will be a summary of my own knowledge of climate change as well as the knowledge of three other university students with a background mainly in natural studies and engineering. The concept of climate change will be discussed from the perspective of **“Sustainable Development” in relation to oceans and coasts**, as well as **the possible impacts of global warming in the future**. The discussion regarding climate change has during the recent decades become a large part of societal discourse, but the concern regarding the oceans and coasts can be argued to be slightly more recent. The concept of “Sustainable Development” and a sustainable future is in the Brundtland report from 1987 defined as *“development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”*. The connection between global warming, rising sea levels, uninhabitable areas close to the coast, and the prospect of migration as the only response are all highly important aspects to consider and act upon which steered my interest towards these two questions. Although the concept of “Sustainable Development” in relation to oceans and coasts is highly connected to global warming, this reflection paper will focus mainly on the aspects of oceans and coasts.

The three people I discussed the subject with will be referred to as person A, B, and C, and the discussion with person B and C was done as a group discussion. The first person I talked to about the subject was quite confounded about the concept of Sustainable Development in connection to oceans and coasts and noted that the concept of sustainable development regarding a more specific area was familiar, but that the main problem was more difficult to pinpoint. Person A emphasized that they were familiar with the sustainable development goals (SDG's), but that they found the implementation and the concept of sustainable development difficult to define when talking about a specific area such as oceans and coasts. Person A did however phrase that their main knowledge regarding sustainable development in relation to oceans and coasts was regarding overfishing and draining the oceans of its resources as one of the main hindrances to sustainable development. During the discussion, the aspect of global warming and its impact on ocean water temperatures and rising sea levels were also mentioned, and person A expressed concern and a

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feeling of helplessness about the future in terms of global warming and the current state of the environment.

During my discussion with person B and person C, the aspect of overfishing was also emphasized as a main problem in the aspect of sustainable development in relation to oceans and coasts. Both student B and C also expressed their concern about global warming and its effects on for example coral reefs and the biodiversity of marine life. The discussion around sustainable development in relation to oceans and coasts also brought up the subject of global warming and especially the effect that global warming might have in the future. Person C brought light upon the relation between coastal life, global warming, and the consequential rising sea levels of increasing temperatures. The person was concerned about how, in a longterm perspective, rising sea levels due to global warming would affect the people who have built their life in coastal areas and how they could be affected if the sea levels would rise or if the marine life would be destroyed or changed due to damage to the oceans. The discussion then became centered around the possible social conflicts that could occur in the future if resources and feasible living areas were to become scarce. As discussed in class, the prospect of migration as the only possibility was also discussed which both person B and C were concerned about the inequality and conflict that such consequences could implicate. Both person B and C, and person A, stated their great concern and interest in the current state of the environment but agreed upon a lack of knowledge about details and means of implementation that could be efficient enough to make a sufficient impact.

My own reflections on the topic of sustainable development in relation to oceans, coasts, but also global warming and its impact on the future, aligns with the knowledge and thoughts expressed by the people I interviewed. The aspect of investment in sustainable practices and the importance of creating incentives for investment is also something that I have personally lacked knowledge in, but that have become clear during this course. I would also argue that this course has further increased my understanding of the interconnection between all aspects of the environment and how they act together and affect each other. The problem of overfishing mentioned by the people I talked to, is connected to overconsumption which also affects other parts of the environment in many ways. There is not only one problem that needs to be tackled in terms of sustainable development in relation to oceans and coasts, but a complex interlinked situation based on problems as for example pollution, over-usage of resources, reduced biodiversity, and rising sea levels and water temperatures.

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In conclusion, these above-mentioned challenges are also connected to the challenges that need to be tackled in terms of the overall environment, and to achieve a sustainable future as defined in the Brundtland report (1987). The knowledge regarding oceans and coasts of the people I interviewed was centered around problems such as overfishing, damage to biodiversity, pollution, and the effect of global warming on rising sea levels and water temperatures. The extent of knowledge regarding sustainable development in relation to oceans and coasts, and the effect of global warming on future development varied between the people I interviewed. They did however all have one thing in common; concern for the future and a lack of confidence in their own knowledge and how to act in order to create a

sustainable future.

#### **References:**

Brundtland, G. (1987). Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future. United Nations General Assembly document A/42/427.