

## Rio+20 ends with weak text, emboldened observers

**Date:** 25-Jun-12

**Country:** BRAZIL

**Author:** Paulo Prada and Valerie Volcovici

Courtesy: planetark.org, Reuters

<http://planetark.org/wen/65746>



U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton speaks at the plenary of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development summit in Rio de Janeiro June 22, 2012.

Photo: Paulo Whitaker

Global leaders ended a U.N. development summit on Friday with what was widely considered a lackluster agreement, leaving many attendees convinced that individuals and companies, rather than governments, must lead efforts to improve the environment.

Nearly 100 heads of state and government gathered over the past three days in efforts to establish "sustainable development goals," a U.N. drive built around economic growth, the environment and social inclusion. But a lack of consensus over those goals in Rio de Janeiro led to an agreement that even some signatory nations said lacked commitment, specifics and measurable targets.

A series of much-hyped global summits on environmental policy has now fallen short of expectations, going back at least to a 2009 U.N. meeting in Copenhagen that ended in near chaos. As a result, many ecologists, activists, and business leaders now believe that progress on environmental issues must be made locally with the private sector, and without the help of international accords.

"The greening of our economies will have to happen without the blessing of the world leaders," said Lasse Gustavsson, executive director of the World Wildlife Fund.

(Please read the entire article at the link provided)



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