

# Sustainable Business

*Economic development and  
environmentally sound technologies*



The Malaŵi Development Corporation (MDC) was established in 1964 – its mission to stimulate development in the agricultural, commercial and industrial sectors and in the country's mineral resources.

Acting as the engine for growth by identifying, promoting and implementing projects either through expanding businesses within its existing portfolio or in the establishment of new ventures, MDC participates through direct investment, equity or loans and in partnership with domestic and foreign private investors. But whilst economic growth is essential to Malaŵi, protecting the environment is equally important to the future of the country.

#### EXISTING INVESTMENTS

- The Corporation requires companies to provide goods and services whilst at the same time taking into account the need for the protection of health and the environment.
- It encourages industries that produce hazardous wastes – including damaging gases – to develop corporate strategies to manage them properly and to adopt new environmentally sound technologies.
- MDC works closely with companies researching ways of reducing the amounts of toxic pollution and by encouraging recycling and safe treatment and disposal.
- As part of the monitoring process conducted by the Ministry of Research and Environmental Affairs, MDC also ensures that environmental impact assessment studies are undertaken in all projects involving rehabilitation, diversification, restructuring and expansion.



Better hospitality at Mount Soche Hotel, owned by Tourism Development and Investment Company (TDIC). MDC holds a major interest in TDIC.

covering the protection and/or replanting of trees and the contamination of water resources are rigorously applied.

In both existing and new investments, MDC encourages the use of renewable resources – water, soils and forests – in a sustainable manner, offering support to ensure that those resources that have become degraded can be made usable once more.

Whilst it is not possible to eliminate environmental damage from pollution, MDC aims at prevention and control measures which achieve an optimum level of pollution – that is, the level where the costs are balanced by the benefits. These measures include: waste minimization through recycling processes and self-appraisal systems to assess compliance with environmental regulations, as well as environmental impact assessments of all new projects and better management of hazardous wastes.

#### A LEADERSHIP ROLE

MDC is playing a leadership role in protecting Malaŵi's environment in other ways: by supporting the work of environmental organizations, as a member of a government-coordinated Task Force on industry dealing with environmental protection; and by providing information to the public through the relevant organizations on the effects of environmental damage.

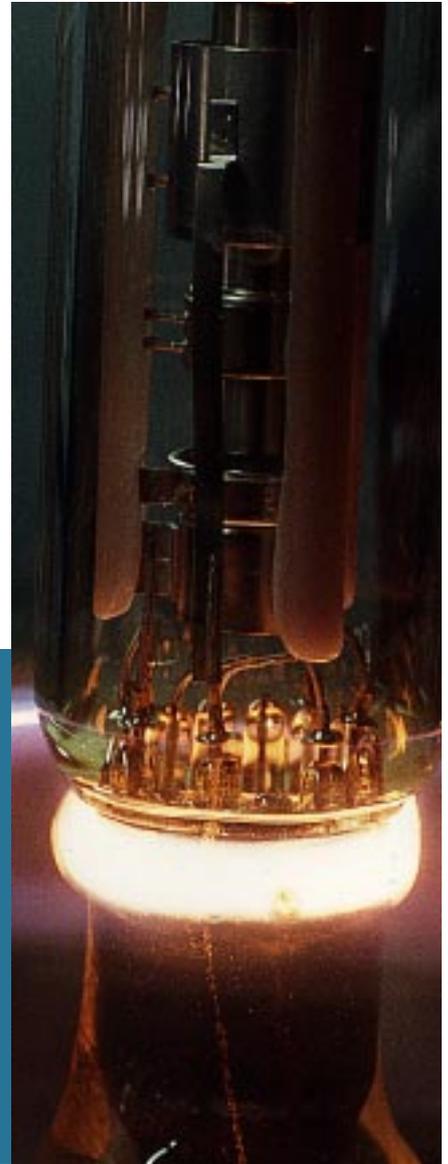
The future development of Malaŵi must be sustainable and MDC is playing its part to encourage both economic growth and the protection of the environment.

#### NEW PROJECTS

- In line with World Bank regulations, MDC undertakes environmental impact assessment studies of each new project, working closely with the environmental regulatory authorities in addressing industrial waste management problems.
- The Corporation is the lead agency in the building of industrial estates and factory shells in urban and semi-urban areas, thereby encouraging industrial development, supporting the government's export processing zone scheme and attracting foreign investment. It also ensures that the regulations

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with the United Nations Environment Programme**



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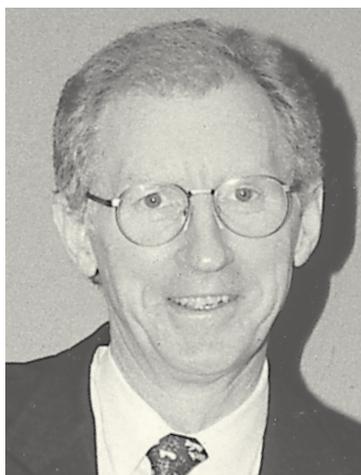
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In view of limited global resources, an increase in the world's population, and the need for development as well as the need to protect the ecosystems that sustain the world's productive capacity, the importance of achieving environmentally sustainable forms of development is inescapable. Resource-efficient and cost-effective technologies are crucial in the quest for sustainable development. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, was the first major event to highlight the fact that business and industry play a crucial role in bringing about sustainable development.

An important pathway towards sustainability for business and industry is the improvement of production systems through technologies and processes that utilize resources more efficiently and at the same time produce fewer wastes, in other words, achieving more with less. Environmentally sound technologies play a key role in improving productivity while protecting the environment. They are less polluting, use resources in a more sustainable manner, and recycle more of their wastes and products. Also important are the 'soft technologies' such as technical know-how, procedure, and organizational and managerial structure.

The central role of environmentally sound technologies in sustainable production means that governments, industry and business associations, and environmental organizations, as well as industry and business themselves, must actively promote their implementation if we are to realize

the goal of sustainability. UNEP, through its Industry and Environment Centre (IE), has for many years promoted the use of environmentally sound technologies in industry to achieve eco-efficiency and to develop cleaner and safer processes, products and services. Through its International Environment Technology Centre (IETC), it promotes the use of environmentally sound technologies for urban and waste management. UNEP is therefore pleased to have been associated with this publication which highlights the efforts of many companies.

UNEP hopes that *Sustainable Business* will help guide business and industry to incorporate environmentally sound technologies into their daily business and production activities and encourage governments and local authorities to favour the use of such technologies. It is only by efficiently using and re-using the resources we have that we can even begin to hope for a sustainable future.

**Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel, Director  
UNEP Industry and Environment Centre**

**John Whitelaw, Director  
UNEP International Environmental Technology Centre**

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