



23 April. H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden urged participants to “turn problems into opportunities” in his opening speech of the so-called Stockholm + 40 conference in the Swedish capital.

“We have to be smart enough to turn problems into opportunities,” he said, and pointed out the importance of the younger generation in these efforts.

The international conference on sustainable development 23-25 April is organized by the Swedish government to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the 1972 Stockholm conference which

,
in the words of King Carl Gustaf

,
“put global environmental and sustainability problems on the political agenda”.

The three-day **Stockholm** +40 conference brings together scientists, experts and ministers from more than 60 countries and is the last informal ministerial meeting ahead of the major UN Conference on sustainable development in Brazil in June.

The conference in Rio de Janeiro, the so-called Rio+20, is a follow-up to the landmark 1992 Earth Summit in the Brazilian city that galvanized the global environmental movement and paved the way for the Kyoto protocol on reducing CO2 emissions.

UN Under-Secretary-General Sha Zukang, who is also Secretary-General of Rio+20 pointed out in his speech that since the 1972 conference the world population had doubled

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the world economy tripled, but about half the forests that covered the earth were gone,

groundwater resources were being depleted and biodiversity was declining.



“We are currently living not only on one, but on several borrowed planets, and on borrowed time.”

Mr. Sha told a press conference in Stockholm that efforts by states to honour their agreed environmental commitments should be measured through a performance evaluation that should be created during the Rio Conference:

"We need accountability, some kind of evaluation," he said, noting that although he's against naming-and-shaming, such a review would help apply "friendly pressure" on countries that are lagging behind in their pledges to contribute to a greener global economy.

"What we need now is to just implement what we have agreed," he said, but did not single out any countries in particular.

Among the speakers is China's Prime Minister Wen Jiabao who will address the conference on 25 April.

“Turn problems into opportunities” , Swedish King tells Stockholm + 40

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