Abstract
This paper discusses ways to reconcile the United Nations Millennium Development Goals with environmental sustainability at the national and international levels. The authors argue that development and better use of sustainability relevant knowledge is key, and that this requires capacity building globally, and especially in the less developed regions of the world. Also essential is stronger integration of high-quality knowledge creation and technology-and policy-development, including, importantly, the creation of centers of excellence in developing regions which effectively use and produce applications-directed high quality research and bring it to bear on decision making and practices related to environmental change and sustainable management of natural resources. The authors argue that Southern centers of excellence are a necessary first step for bottom-up societal transformation towards sustainability, and that such centers must help design innovative ways to assess and place value on ecosystem services.

Keywords
Sustainability, Large-Scale Biosphere-Atmosphere Experiment in Amazonia (LBA), knowledge, development, ecosystem services.