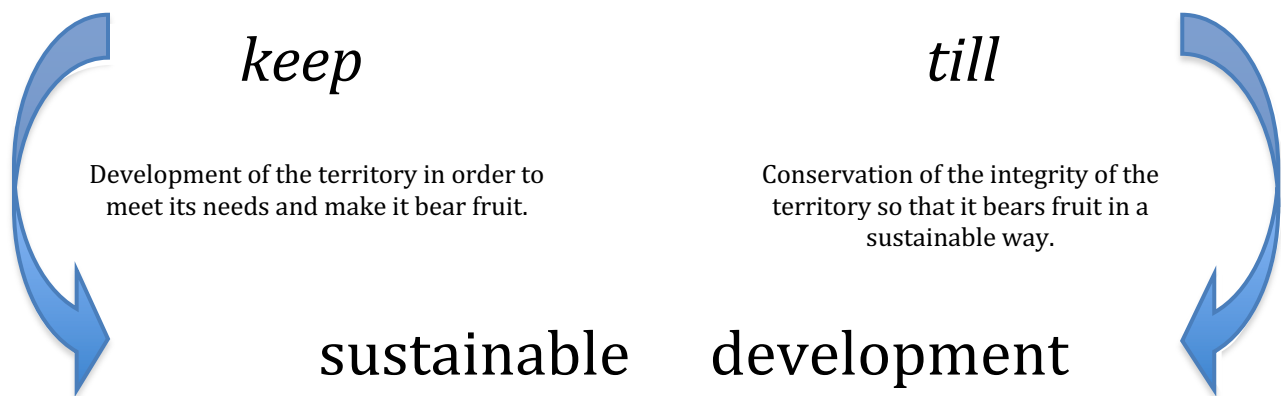


Genesis 2 :15 : till and keep the garden

And what is the role of humans in this garden? God invites him to guard it and cultivate the soil. (Gn 2:15) The verb to cultivate, in Hebrew *lavda*, also means to serve. Man must serve the earth! In the Bible it is more often about serving God. But when you think about it, "serving the earth" and "serving God" both ensure a fruitful life!

Both verbs are important. First of all, the verb to cultivate refers to the idea of land development. It implies cutting, sowing, building, developing. The 1987 Brundtland Report stressed this positive dimension of development, particularly for poor countries. Then, the verb to keep concerns a long-term vision, a sustainable garden. We then realise that, in the first pages of the Bible, there is the inspiration for sustainable development! This concept is already there in our Judeo-Christian tradition.



Origin of the word :

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development in the Brundtland Report preferred the notion of "Sustainable development", defined as follows:

"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Two concepts are inherent to this notion :

- the concept of "needs", and more particularly the essential needs of the poorest, to whom the highest priority should be given ;
- the idea of the limitations that the state of our technology and social organisation imposes on the capacity of the environment to meet current and future needs. »

