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TOPIC

/FIVE YEARS AFTER RIO - SO WHAT?

By Alison E. Drayton

If in the sixties we explored our revolutionary zeal and in the seventies our capacity for pleasure; if in the eighties we embraced greed greedily; then three years before a new millennium, it is fair to say that in the nineties we appear intent on finding new frontiers for our apathy. UNCED may have been the last demonstration of commitment in this decade, indeed of this century. Not unexpectedly, subsequent UN conferences did not generate anything approaching the same sense of urgency, commitment and belief that united action could make an appreciable difference to major global problems.

The debate and negotiations that followed UNCED seemed increasingly steeped in a sense of futility. Witness the frequency of comments in the past three years on the sterility of the process. We all seem to have lost our sense of urgency in tackling many critical issues, such as poverty and changing production and consumption patterns. We also appear to have mislaid our belief that international cooperation is a *sine qua non* for successful progress in achieving sustainable development. Is it that the issues are now seen as insurmountable or essentially insoluble?

Whatever the reason, a certain energy has vanished from the intergovernmental exchanges in the search for solutions to all these pressing problems. This criticism has been made of all the Commissions. NGOs commented that recent meetings of the Commission on Social Development and the Commission on the Status of Women all too often just rehashed the content and analysis of the conferences themselves, rather than focusing on mechanisms for promoting and monitoring the implementation of the conference programmes or the strategy necessary to achieve implementation.

Actions that impact our lives and contribute to both development and environmental degradation are increasingly being undertaken by the private sector, much of it outside the purview of governments. This is especially true in the developing world where the industrialized private sector is seldom home-grown. A large part of the problem is that governments, and by extension the United Nations, are to an ever greater extent peripheral to the real loci of power and hence limited in their ability to effect substantive change.

The issue of sustainable development cuts across too many sectors in which government has little or no influence. During the UNCED negotiations, governments recognized that the environmental crisis was rooted in the current economic and social paradigms and that the only way to have an impact on changing environmental policies and practices was to simultaneously tackle issues of development. However, the reality of the 1990s is that the ability to take action in achieving economic development lies not with governments, but with those corporations that operate on a global basis.

Transnational corporations (TNCs) have, as is often pointed out, a global reach and control budgets that are billions of dollars larger

than most government revenues. These TNCs are moving their production overseas more and more frequently to escape domestic environmental regulation and achieve lower production costs. The Asian tigers may have successfully wooed Nike, Reebok and Proctor and Gamble. The South American jaguars may have entered into relationships with Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz and General Motors, but this has been at a cost. In forging new economic relations, the Northern companies also export their pollution.

Negotiations that do not include private sector representatives will produce ever more barren exchanges. It is difficult, for instance, to see how governments can realistically enter into debate on changing production and consumption patterns without also including representatives of the producers, and even the advertisers, whose activities drive demand and are designed to promote high consumption patterns. The notion that governments alone will regulate such activity willfully ignores the reality of political funding in most developed countries and the lengths to which private enterprise will go to protect its industries.

The biggest weakness, therefore, of the post-Rio exchanges has been the failure to discuss the role of TNCs and the need to monitor and regulate their activities. Throughout Agenda 21, point after point implies action by business and industry, yet their role is only addressed peripherally as part of the Major Groups Chapter. References to business and industry focus almost exclusively on technical and managerial concerns and have failed to address fundamental issues about ways of doing business.

TNC activities are a major source of natural resource consumption and depletion. Their decisions are based on considerations of profit margins and take little account of the full environmental and social costs of their activities. The promotion of sustainable development practices and the pursuit of social equity cannot be left entirely to the magic of the marketplace and voluntary compliance by industry. One of the most important functions of government is to protect considerations of social equity. Therefore, governments must take an active role in elaborating standards and regulations and in monitoring industry practices to ensure compliance.

Consideration must also be given to the inherent dichotomy in the policies pursued by the Bretton Woods institutions and the pressures these exert on developing countries. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) implements policies to ensure that countries in structural adjustment programmes maintain an economic environment that is not "hostile" to investment. Some countries have been told by the IMF that if they take action to enforce tougher environmental standards on foreign companies, the country will be "decertified." Such action by the IMF would effectively destroy the credit rating of the country and increase its interest payments, further adding to its debt burden.

Meanwhile, the World Bank has, within the last decade or so, adopted policies on the environment, largely at the prompting of NGOs. The World Bank, for example, insists that borrowing members (developing countries) agree to environmental policies as a precondition for investment by the Bank. Developing countries are, therefore, required to have a *de facto* environmental "certificate." No similar policy applies for developed countries. Furthermore, donor governments, while imposing environmental conditionalities on developing countries, have reduced their levels of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and have redirected significant parts of it to the so-called "economies in transition." This is all the more reason why the performance of developed countries ought to be assessed by the Special Session. The same is true for their record on implemen-

tation of agreements reached in Rio regarding "new and additional" financial resources, as well as the transfer of technology.

The WTO, which has been created since Rio, has compounded the situation by paying scant respect to the Rio agreements and the conclusions of the subsequent thematic conferences. NGO observers of the Singapore WTO meeting noted that many of the trade ministers appeared totally unaware of the existence of Agenda 21, or in fact any of the UN conferences, and of the commitments made by governments with respect to trade. Notably neglected were commitments calling for improved market access for developing country exports and the need for developed countries to undertake the appropriate structural policies to facilitate improved market access.

Hiding behind an official fig leaf, a WTO official observed that: "The WTO has not officially become aware of the existence of the summits." While an authorized WTO representative admitted to a group of NGOs that the "WTO has not complied with what the Heads of State asked during the Social Summit, not is it planning to do so." [Social Watch No.1, 1997]. Unfortunately, the WTO exists outside the purview of the United Nations, although its decisions have a range of impacts that strike at the heart of the United Nations Charter, which mandates that the UN should be "the centre for harmonizing the action of nations" to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic nature [Charter of the United Nations: Article 1.3 and 1.4].

It is against the foregoing background that CSD-5 met in April, with the objective of undertaking the review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21. Concerns on the growing impact of WTO decisions on national policies were particularly highlighted by the farmers during the CSD-5 dialogue session with Major Groups. Farmers roundly criticized the WTO for the adverse effects its policies had on the farming community. Panelists noted that the global marketplace has become the single most important determinant for what is produced, who produces it and who decides what the product will be. The shift of decision-making from public institutions to the private corporate sector has significantly diminished the ability of the primary actors to influence those decisions.

What has happened? In preparing for and engaging in UNCED, the South for the first time in two decades believed in the possibility of reaching common ground with the North; not only on the need for immediate action to counter environmental degradation, but on the imperative of fostering economic development, especially in developing countries. The Group of 77's position in negotiations with the North was premised on this possibility, along with the conviction that commitments would be honored in the interests of all humankind. In this respect, the South emphasized the necessity of two core commitments from the North: assurance from the donor community that it would provide new and additional financing, from both public and private sources, to implement the provision of Agenda 21; and that environmentally sound technology would be transferred to the South to enable it to meet its development goals in a more sustainable manner and without repeating the mistakes of the North.

Based on past experience, developing countries may not have had much faith that the commitment to provide new and additional financing would be honored. However, there was genuine hope that, given the urgency of the situation, the North would take action to comply with the agreements and understandings regarding the transfer of technology on concessional terms. The five years since Rio have proven this an empty hope and demonstrated that the North is conceding nothing. The North bases its inaction on the contention that technology is controlled by private enterprises and hence its

transfer is outside the purview of governments. Developing countries were left to wonder whether there was some overlooked fine print in Agenda 21 stating that technology would only be transferred when TNCs themselves were engaged in developing countries. Unfortunately, even that is not the case. TNCs have displayed little interest in building capacity or sharing technology. Their chief concern seems to be in exploiting resources, both natural and human.

In subsequent negotiations, therefore, the South has retreated to well-defined entrenched positions and displays little indication of flexibility. During CSD-5, a number of developing countries expressed the view that there was little point in trying to forge a partnership with the North if the terms of that partnership produce asymmetric results that benefit only the North. Developing countries reason that they have only taken a number of initiatives at the national, regional and international levels to implement the provisions of Agenda 21, but that the industrialized countries have been less forthcoming in taking action to meet their international commitments.

In evaluating the outcomes of CSD-5, one cannot escape the view that it inadequately fulfilled its mandate to prepare for the Special Session evaluation of the implementation of Agenda 21. Negotiations were hampered by what seemed to be a complete lack of institutional memory on all sides. Much of the negotiations appeared to be *de novo* rather than anchored in the decisions of Agenda 21. Delegations spent an enormous amount of time negotiating new commitments on both the sectoral and cross-sectoral issues without conducting so much as an examination of areas of success or disappointment. Such an analysis could have served as a sound basis on which to construct a genuine "global partnership" between developed and developing countries, of which the Rio Declaration spoke so eloquently.

As matters stand, the recent exercise in re-negotiation points to a diminution of critical commitments of Agenda 21. Developing countries have promised to engage in further action without managing to extract similar substantive pledges from the North. Furthermore, the new text departs from the most important aspect of the Agenda 21 framework, in that the activities defined indicate a shift toward a more pronounced focus on national as opposed to international action. The individual chapters also lack a "means of implementation" section. In the current draft text the means of implementation has its own chapter, which removes the sense of immediacy from the recommendations. The linkage between national action and support from the international community on key issues such as trade, poverty eradication, transfer of technology and financial resources is less clear.

Beyond the document that will emerge from the Special Session, a number of missing linkages will continue to hinder the credibility of international environmental negotiations, if not the UN itself. Until important players from industry, particularly TNCs, are included in the discussions, until difficult issues of production and consumption are seriously considered, until the relationships with trade rule-making bodies are clarified, discussions in the UN will be unable to take serious steps toward sustainable development. In light of ongoing reform efforts, the last thing the UN needs to emerge from its environmental fora are more empty promises. Five years after Rio, the linkage that has proven most difficult to build is perhaps the simplest - a clear linkage between what is said and what is done.

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/COMMENTARY

/SYNERGIES TO BUILD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THEY'RE NOT JUST CONVENIENT, THEY'RE ESSENTIAL

By *Sálvano Briceño*

The linkage between environmental quality and economic growth is widely recognized and understood as an absolute priority for sustainable development. However, the need for connecting the institutional arrangements—organizations, legislation and programmes—that conduct and support the various processes involved remains insufficiently understood. While a great deal of institutional interaction, cooperation and networking is indeed underway, these linkages remain to a large extent superficial. A new approach for developing synergies among programmes and organizations would use more substantive and systematic involvement, which is gradually becoming a pre-condition for sustainable development.

The Search for Synergies¹ — the Remake of the Catalytic and Holistic Approaches of the Seventies.

At different moments in recent history, the linkages among economic, social, political, cultural and other elements of human and natural interdependence have been identified as an urgent requirement for addressing development. They have been pursued on international public policy grounds under various denominations.

In the sixties, it was a matter of integrated development approaches promoted by the United Nations, including the New International Economic Order (NIEO) launched by UNCTAD. At Stockholm in 1972, UNEP was established and was requested to exercise a catalytic role and promote a holistic approach to development. In the eighties, other international initiatives such as IUCN's World Conservation Strategy, the "Our Common Future" Report of the Brundtland Commission and others continued to insist on the need for linkages and connections among various complementary actions for development. This concept obtained an important boost at Rio in 1992 with Agenda 21 and the Conventions adopted or launched at UNCED. However, effective linkages are still not being implemented and continue to face formidable obstacles. The Fifth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-5)² reiterated the urgent need for greater coherence in intergovernmental organizations and processes.

The urgency has been heightened by a number of factors, such as the decreasing funds available for Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the increasing weakness in organizational and managerial approaches in international organizations. However, the need for short-term cost-effectiveness—high in the minds of international policy-makers and managers faced with shrinking funds for ODA—

must not be the only criterion for such convergence of actions. Likewise, the search for synergies and linkages would not require the establishment of any new organizations. A new approach would be to better utilize existing institutions and reform them as appropriate, with a focus on new approaches, new attitudes and, most importantly, increased management training.

Organizations are transformed by appropriate leadership and management; by vision and motivation. This is only possible by changing people, not plans or structures. It is essential that managers pay more attention to the needs of partner organizations and spend more time interacting and communicating with managers of organizations whose work is complementary to their own. It is not a matter of simply informing others through newsletters or inviting others to attend meetings. Beyond traditional communication mechanisms, it involves planning together, sharing resources and undertaking joint actions with long-term objectives. In other words, creating solid partnerships. If the needs and goals of relevant institutions and persons are not taken fully into account through solid partnerships, they will become not only a lost resource or missed opportunity, but more importantly, an obstacle. The sense of insecurity and rejection being more powerful than that of self-esteem and solidarity.

Current financial resources and investments being made to address various environmental and sustainable development issues are not only insufficient, but are still far from being effectively utilized due to a lack of coordination or "linkages and convergence." The GEF and many other multilateral and bilateral agencies consistently approve funds for projects and activities that are, to a very large extent, not only short-term oriented, but are not even requested to co-

2. CSD-5 (New York, 8-25 April 1997) includes in its recommendation for the proposed outcome of the UN General Assembly Special Session (New York, 23-27 June 1997) the following: "...Given the increasing number of decision-making bodies concerned with various aspects of sustainable development, including international

conventions, there is an even greater need for better policy coordination at the intergovernmental level, as well as for continued efforts to enhance collaboration among the secretariats of these decision-making bodies..."

"...The Conference of the Parties of Conventions signed at Rio or as a result of it, as well as other conventions related to sustainable development, should cooperate in exploring ways and means of collaborative work among them to advance the effective implementation of these conventions...To this end, *inter alia*, the COPs or governing bodies of the(se) Conventions should, if appropriate, give consideration to co-location of secretariats; to improving the scheduling of meetings; integrating national reporting requirements; improving the balance between (their) meetings...; as well as encouraging and facilitating participation in these meetings by Governments at an appropriate level..."

"...Institutional arrangements for the convention secretariat should provide effective support and efficient services, while ensuring that in order for them to be efficient, at their respective locations, appropriate autonomy is necessary..."

"...Efforts of convention secretariats, in response to requests from their COPs, to explore, where appropriate, modalities for suitable liaison arrangements in Geneva and/or New York for the purpose of enhancing linkages with delegations and organizations at those UN centres are welcomed and fully supported..."

1. The action of two or more substances, organs or organisms to achieve an effect of which each is individually incapable (Greek: *'sunergos*, working together).

ordinate their efforts with similar initiatives. Thus, they invariably fail to contribute to substantive or sustainable capacity building.

Aside from the issue of providing new and additional resources for ensuring sustainable development, a more important need is to enhance current investments by focusing on synergies and improving management capabilities of existing organizations. Both the Rio process and the establishment of the GEF have indisputably contributed to injections of interest and resources that, although still not enough, are clearly greater than previous investments. However, unlike the Stockholm process, which raised awareness and built capacities gradually through UNEP and Ministries of Environment, the present situation looks more like an explosion of resources scattered in all directions. Rather than stimulating synergy, this lack of focus contributes to unhealthy competition among organizations and hampers the institutional development and capacity-building required for managing the challenges of sustainable development, at both the national and international level.

Social Sustainability is as Important as Environmental Sustainability

At Rio, a substantive attempt was made to move forward and integrate new approaches and elements of analysis for social conduct, such as patterns of consumption and production, redistribution of wealth and other concepts contained in Agenda 21. These approaches were also integrated into the Convention on Biological Diversity, where the sharing of the wealth of biodiversity and the respect of traditional cultures are as important as the protection of the biodiversity itself. Likewise, the recognition of the common but differentiated responsibility is embedded in the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention to Combat Desertification.

Agenda 21, however, still addresses predominantly environmental issues rather than the social, economic, cultural or political elements that are equally relevant for sustainable development. This has allowed many to believe that “sustainability” refers mainly to ecological sustainability. Consequently, organizations such as UNDP feel the need to add “human” to “sustainable development” in order to ensure that the social side is not left unattended.

Therefore, there is a need to expand Agenda 21 to encompass all elements in social and international life without which development cannot be sustainable and with whom synergies are even more important to undertake. Health, education, agriculture and labor issues must be included, as well as human rights, humanitarian affairs, trade, technology, defense expenditure and disarmament—many of which have not integrated a sustainable development approach in their strategies.

How can an arms race be compatible with sustainable development? How can economies nurtured by the fear of war be transformed into economies for peace? How can authoritarian regimes be

confronted to facilitate sustainable development in the societies they lead? How can present styles of development and their inherent inequalities be turned around? Can we identify the unsustainable elements of development to be able to propose strategies to revert them? All these questions still remain challenges for the international community and the United Nations. Rio, therefore, was a wonderful step forward, but only the beginning of what may prove to be a long journey towards achieving sustainable development.

Conclusions

A process towards integration and the search for synergies cannot be undertaken globally because it would require previous agreement on principles, criteria and procedures, and would take too long to negotiate. Therefore, a better approach would be to move forward on a gradual trial-and-error basis, where short-term issues are worked out with the long-term vision in mind and the organizational approaches (improved management, decentralization, flexibility, institutional and political partnerships, sharing resources and skills, openness) are developed.

A few examples of urgently needed linkages could be developed and utilized as pilot experiences. Some have already started in the field of trade and environment, involving all relevant activities of the WTO, UNEP, UNCTAD, NGOs, private businesses and others. Many areas, however, remain largely unattended, such as disarmament and the production of environmental technologies, where efforts can be combined to achieve a large-scale reconversion of industrial resources. For example, a concentration of international efforts utilizing the relevant programmes could address the social, economic, human rights, environmental and other issues for priority areas such as Africa.

A smaller but equally challenging initiative would be the development of closer linkages among some of the Rio products that, despite containing the philosophy of sustainable development in their formulation, have yet to develop a common strategy. In particular, the three Rio Conventions—Biological Diversity, Climate Change and Desertification—and their respective chapters of Agenda 21 could be used as a testing ground and possibly replicated based on periodical assessments. The institutional challenge is for the Convention secretariats to agree among themselves on a joint partnership that in turn would be supported by other relevant international organizations such as UNEP, UNDP, GEF, World Bank, WMO, and IUCN.

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/UPDATES

/SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The fifth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-5) convened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 8-25 April 1997 to complete preparations for the UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) that is to review implementation of Agenda 21 in June. The fifth session began with a High-Level Segment and a review of reports from its Ad Hoc Intersessional Working Group and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests. At the end of the first week, a series of dialogues with the major groups began, in meetings parallel to negotiations, on the text to be adopted by UNGASS. Negotiations took center stage during the final week, with two Drafting Groups and numerous informal groups meeting late into the night. CSD-5 Chair Mostafa Tolba (Egypt) and Vice-Chair Monika Linn-Locher (Switzerland) conducted consultations on a draft political statement for the signatures of Heads of State and Government expected to attend UNGASS.

Delegates continued to identify the emerging priority issues that were considered at the CSD's Intersessional Working Group: freshwater, energy/atmosphere and forests as sectoral foci; and poverty eradication and changing consumption and production patterns as cross-sectoral foci. The voluminous amendments to the text generated some concern that three weeks of negotiating time at CSD-5 would be too short. Nevertheless, delegates rose to Chair Tolba's challenge to not leave the UN before reaching agreement on almost everything and adopted a text with fewer brackets than some thought possible. Critical debates on whether to move forward with a forests convention, how to balance financial resource language and the as-yet-unnegotiated political statement of Heads of State and Government were left pending for consideration at UNGASS.

In reflecting on the complexity of the three weeks of CSD-5, it may be useful to recall the mandate delineated by the General Assembly for CSD-5 and the Special Session: "discussions at both the preparatory meetings and the Special Session should focus on the fulfillment of commitments and the further implementation of Agenda 21 and related post-Conference outcomes." Did CSD-5 make any progress toward completing this mandate? On the opening day of CSD-5, delegates were given a useful set of criteria by which to measure the success of the session. Joke Waller-Hunter, Director of the Division for Sustainable Development, pointed out that CSD-5 was, in essence, a PrepCom for the Special Session and would to a large extent determine its outcome and success. She presented three criteria in a set of questions: does the assessment reflect the urgency of the situation; is the assessment followed by a unequivocal commitment to concrete action; and have partnerships been acknowledged, renewed and strengthened? Some answers to these questions emerge below.

From the beginning of the preparatory process for the Special Session, delegates heard repeated calls for the CSD to establish targets and timetables in order to move the process of sustainable de-

velopment to a higher level. In the Intersessional Working Group, Mostafa Tolba called for a number of measurable targets, such as a 10% increase in alternative energy source investments over ten years. He stressed that setting concrete goals is the way to move beyond rhetoric to action and provide a baseline against which progress toward the goals agreed at Rio can be better assessed in future reviews of implementation. A number of delegations called for specific targets and timetables at CSD-5 as well, such as Iceland's call for a 50% reduction of fishing subsidies by 2002 and the US' call for phasing out lead in gasoline within ten years. However, few if any targets remain in the text. Delegates and NGOs alike have expressed frustration at this apparent lack of political will to move forward and fear that this does not bode well for the "special-ness" of the Special Session or hopes that it would reinvigorate commitments to operationalize sustainable development.

Targets aside, a number of concrete action plans were tabled at CSD-5. Three EU initiatives, on freshwater, eco-efficiency and energy, were announced during the High-Level Segment and elaborated upon during the subsequent weeks. Some expressed an interest in their further elaboration prior to UNGASS, which will be necessary if the latter two initiatives, which are currently bracketed, are to survive in the text. It is promising that the forward-looking freshwater initiative emerged bracket-free.

The existing target of 0.7% of GNP for ODA was of special interest for many. Developing countries and NGOs especially sought a reaffirmation of commitment on financial issues. They were disappointed as the related discussion was one of the most polarized debates since Rio. Developing countries called for renewed donor commitment and objected to policy reforms that appeared to be recommended for developing countries only or would create conditionalities for assistance. The EU distinguished between UNCED "commitments" and "objectives," while the US stressed domestic resource mobilization and private sector resources. The result seemed to be a narrowing of the interpretation of Agenda 21 rather than its reaffirmation.

One delegate noted that this debate is taking place during a critical point in the post-Cold War discussion regarding multilateralism. Prior motives driving development assistance have disappeared and the developed world is reevaluating the role of ODA specifically, and more generally its desire to remain engaged globally. Many expressed concern regarding the future that the CSD's debates portend. The same delegate noted that while multilateralism is contagious, so is unilateralism. The amendments that donor countries added, calling for "equitable burden sharing," point to a decreased willingness of Northern States to play the "godfather," championing the CSD's objectives and encouraging others to follow. The Northern retreat has been perceived in other UN fora as well, engendering concern among developing countries that the burden for multilateralism is shifting towards them.

Ambassador Razali Ismail, President of the General Assembly, told UNEP's High-Level Segment in February, "Agenda 21 and the CSD will only bring about sustainable, equitable and ecologically sound development if we can break out of the North-South schism...the real political challenge is to reshape North-South relations." The negotiations on finance during CSD-5 suggest that States are not only failing to break out of the North-South schism but that the schism is increasingly polluting the UN's response to sustainable development with suspicion. For developing countries the decline in ODA since 1992, and attempts during CSD-5 to switch the burden of international funding for sustainable development to private sec-

tor investment, which developed countries would argue is a case of acknowledging actuality, have helped to discredit the very concept of "sustainable development."

An illustration of the unraveling of the UNCED agenda, under the pressure of competing priorities and interpretations, was the debate on the cardinal principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" (Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration). The US, Canada and the EU view this principle in the context of global environmental responsibilities. The G-77/China tried, unsuccessfully, to incorporate it into a paragraph on fostering a dynamic and enabling international economic environment for sustainable development. The exchanges demonstrated just how far apart (at least rhetorically: a senior European commentator ventured to suggest that part of the problem is that the G-77 no longer exists in reality outside the UN) the so-called parties to the Rio global compact can be when it comes to interpreting the core elements of the UNCED agreements. The fragility even threatens the integrity and use of the concept of "sustainable development" itself. During negotiations on finance, one delegate resorted to warning his fellow negotiators that they should not begin to treat sustainable development as a pariah concept. He was responding to repeated attempts to accompany, qualify or replace references to sustainable development with a reference to each of its three components — economic growth, social development and environmental protection. The Chair, in a frank explanation of a phenomenon that often goes unstated, explained that developing countries fear that sustainable development has become, in the mouths of developed country advocates, a code for environmental protection while the social and economic dimensions are under-valued. An experienced European participant conceded later that five years after Rio the words "sustainable development" were not so acceptable. This is a major step backwards.

A number of industrialized countries questioned the validity of a reference to the widening gap between developed and developing countries and would concede only to single out the least developed countries. One observer noted that developing countries at the CSD, by maintaining alliance despite their diversity, often seem to take "helpless" negotiating stances reminiscent of their position in the 1970's. A contemporary developing country finance minister, another observer noted, would not likely take this position that denies the importance of infrastructure for investment. To genuinely move the concept of sustainable development from the margins to the center will require that the negotiating positions on all sides more accurately mirror economic realities and the ensuing changes in needs and responsibilities that are taking place in the real world.

The question of acknowledgment, renewal and strengthening of partnerships extends to a number of actors and issues. Partnerships with major groups received a significant amount of attention at CSD-5. One tangible development since UNCED has been the considerable growth of partnerships in and among the major groups and the resulting improvement in their organization, communication and activities. During the dialogue sessions, panelists supplied a catalogue of activities and voiced a number of concise and specific recommendations for action. Discussants at the dialogue with local authorities noted that in 1995 they were struggling for recognition of their role in sustainable development. They are now discussing obstacles to implementation of over 1800 Local Agenda 21s in 64 countries.

Major groups also reported accomplishments ranging from establishing networks, strategies for gaining credit, conducting studies and educational efforts and mobilizing members. All groups noted a

heightened awareness of sustainable development issues among their members and some noted increased partnerships among major groups. The partnerships between these major groups and CSD delegates, however, continue to leave something to be desired.

While major groups have gained an increasingly high profile in the CSD as partners in sustainable development, some were left with the impression that major groups were talking among themselves and not making a real impact on the negotiating process. While major groups were allotted an unprecedented amount of space and time within the official CSD session with the innovation of the dialogue sessions, there was little genuine dialogue. Few delegates even attended the dialogues, in part, because they were scheduled in parallel to the official negotiations. The recommendations emanating from the dialogues came too late to be included in the "critical" compilation negotiating text.

Some observers, including major group representatives themselves, have pinpointed some of these problems. For instance, it has been noted that major groups often expend a great deal of time and energy drafting their own alternative declarations rather than drafting amendments to the text under negotiation and lobbying delegations to take these on board. One method for developing the vital relationship between the CSD's agenda-setting role and civil society's contribution to operationalizing sustainable development was proposed by a group of Canadian NGOs. This proposal, which found its way — after some diversions and alterations — into the agreed text on CSD Methods of Work, is based on the idea of extending the task manager system to the world at large. In other words, major groups would be invited to "adopt arrangements for coordination and interaction in providing inputs to the Commission." The idea presents a major organizational challenge to NGOs and other major groups.

The sense of urgency at CSD-5 was best measured in quantities of frustration at the pace and progress of the negotiations. As Amb. Razali noted during the High-Level Segment, the compact at Rio has eroded along with much of the high-profile attention to sustainable development generated by the Earth Summit itself. The most promising results of Rio are taking place at anonymous and local meetings around the world — anonymous but keenly monitored and cited as proof that Agenda 21 is alive and well by officials at the UN Division for Sustainable Development. One observer recalled that, in 1992, one could scarcely escape the news of UNCED and/or the environment in the media. This is not the case today. In international relations, perceptions are everything, and if UNGASS is ultimately billed as a non-event it will not bode well for the future of sustainable development or the UN in general during this critical time in its reform. The most that can be expected, in terms of urgency perhaps, is that the Special Session will not permanently damage the historic accomplishment of UNCED itself.

On the final day of CSD-5, a UN official privately recalled a Bee Gees song that sums up a process that has generated over 400 pages of negotiated text since 1993: "It's only words..." And words they will remain until one more official translation becomes embedded in the business of the CSD: the translation of words into action. The most valuable role for the Special Session will be to critically reflect on Waller-Hunter's criteria for success and deliver a renewed political mandate to translate popular concern into urgent and concrete instructions to politicians, translate the information-rich assessments into unequivocal action plans, and translate illusions of top-down sovereign authority and competence into partnerships that span a globalizing world.

G-7 ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS MEETING: The G-7 Environment Ministers' Meeting held in Miami ended on 6 May 1997. On climate change, the Environment Leaders stressed the overwhelming scientific evidence that links the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere to changes in the global climate system, and the likelihood that these climate changes will lead to unacceptable impacts on human health and the environment in all nations. They noted the conclusion of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that "climate change is likely to have wide-ranging and mostly adverse impacts on human health, with significant loss of life." Major threats to human health and safety include the potential for more severe heat waves, more intense air pollution, the spread of infectious diseases and more extreme storms and droughts.

Safe drinking water may be compromised by rising sea level and salt-water intrusion, by warmer temperatures that promote growth of disease organisms, and by changes in rainfall patterns that affect water quantity and quality. Changes in regional weather patterns are likely to lead to loss of forests, wetlands, and other natural ecosystems, with significant adverse effects on wildlife and biodiversity. The relationship of these ecosystem changes to human health could be significant. The Leaders agreed to work together to enhance international efforts to further develop global systems for monitoring climate change and other environmental trends in order to continue strengthening scientific support for international action.

The Environment Leaders stressed their commitment to achieving a strong agreement for controlling greenhouse gases at the Third Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Kyoto. They agreed that developed nations need to take the lead and show their seriousness of purpose by adopting quantified legally binding emissions targets and significant and realistic emissions reductions within specified time frames. They supported an agreement that allows the Parties flexibility in meeting those targets so that the most efficient and cost-effective policies and measures are used.

They stressed the importance of an appropriate mechanism for monitoring and ensuring compliance among the Parties. The Leaders recognized that in order to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention actions by developed countries alone would not be sufficient. They agreed to work in partnership with developing countries to assist them in taking concrete steps to help address this problem. An agreement in Kyoto that reflects these approaches will be an important next step on the long-term path toward stabilizing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at an acceptable level.

On environmental enforcement and compliance, the Environment Leaders discussed the fundamental importance of compliance with domestic environmental law. They agreed that effective enforcement of environmental law is essential to deter environmental violations, ensure fairness for those who pay the costs associated with environmental compliance, and to provide incentives for voluntary efforts to improve environmental performance. The Leaders agreed to move forward with efforts to improve the integration of environmental enforcement with traditional law enforcement institutions.

The Environment Leaders committed themselves to support and enhance the emerging international cooperative efforts among their governments and international bodies. They noted the value of compliance mechanisms under international environmental agreements and the importance of individuals and groups having access to environmental information and effective administrative and judicial mechanisms. They agreed to enhance a collective focus on trade that is illegal under international environment law, including shipments

originating in developed countries and those having adverse impacts on developing countries. They also agreed to further consultations under existing mechanisms to implement these cooperative efforts.

On the United Nations General Assembly Special Session, (UNGASS), the Environment Leaders agreed that UNGASS provides a unique opportunity for world leaders to reaffirm their commitment to sustainable development. They highlighted the importance of moving toward pragmatic, results-oriented implementation of the outcomes of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. They stressed the need for: continued integration of environmental, economic, and social issues; rapid progress in the eradication of poverty; and recognition that good governance, protection of human rights and democracy are essential elements of sustainable development. It was agreed that UNGASS should embrace a frank assessment of successes since Rio as well as the shortcomings. Against this background, it was stressed that UNGASS should identify central priorities for future action in key areas.

On forests, given the continued loss and degradation of forests in many regions, there is a critical need for immediate action to implement the proposals agreed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and for a long-term commitment to a holistic, balanced and integrated approach to the sustainable development of all types of forests. The Environment Leaders agreed to continue to work together to that end.

On freshwater, UNGASS should launch a process for the development of a global program of action on freshwater in the CSD, with the ultimate goal of making safe drinking water and sanitation available to all the world's population.

On energy, UNGASS should initiate a process coordinated in the CSD for promoting sustainable energy use, focusing on energy efficiency and the use of renewables, while addressing the needs of people without access to energy services. The Environment Leaders stressed that progress cannot be made without strong international institutions for environment and sustainable development. They strongly endorsed the recent decisions to restructure and reform the UN Environment Programme, recognizing its role as the leading global environmental authority, as confirmed in the Nairobi Declaration. They called for an early first meeting of the UNEP High Level Committee of Ministers to advance the future work of UNEP.

The Leaders reaffirmed the CSD as the strategic forum for sustainable development issues. The successful reform of UNEP governance and the emerging consensus on the work of the CSD will enable more attention to be focused on the substantive agenda for the environment and sustainable development. They further agreed that the CSD should focus on freshwater and energy in the next five years. In addition, they agreed that it should address oceans issues, including: combating marine pollution; promoting the sustainable management of marine resources and integrated coastal zone management; and improving coordination among relevant international institutions. They also called on the CSD to deal with the issues of trade and investment, tourism and transport, including by promoting the phase out of leaded gasoline as soon as possible and considering initiatives to improve sustainability in air transport.

In addition to these priorities for future action, the Environment Leaders stressed that UNGASS should send strong messages to ongoing multilateral environmental negotiations on climate change, the Montreal Protocol, biosafety, prior informed consent and persistent organic pollutants' as well as to the first Conference of Parties to the Convention on Desertification.

The Environment Leaders highlighted the need for further action at UNGASS on a number of key cross-cutting issues of sustainable development. They agreed on the need to make progress in moving toward sustainable production and consumption patterns and significantly improved eco-efficiency. They agreed on the need to facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries, to increased efforts to mobilize both public and private sector financing, including ODA, and to ensure an adequate replenishment of the Global Environmental Facility. They also reaffirmed the principles on trade and environment from their last meeting in Cabourg, and agreed on the need to make trade and environment mutually supportive.

Looking ahead to the holding of a "Rio plus 10" conference in 2002, the Environment Leaders called on UNGASS to consider inviting eminent experts to assess the challenges of sustainable development at the start of the 21st century.

INFORMAL MEETING OF ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS: Environment ministers and representatives from 19 countries met in Dresden, Germany from 21-23 March 1997 to discuss key issues of sustainable development. Austria, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, the US, Zimbabwe and the European Commission were represented. Participants agreed that UNGASS must send out important political signals and articulate the central priorities for concrete action in the years to come. They also agreed that governments must urgently reconcile the two central challenges of sustainable development: eradication of poverty and the sustainable management and protection of natural resources and ecosystems by changing patterns of consumption and production. Participants also considered the increased involvement of all major groups, including the private sector and NGOs, and welcomed their activity in CSD and UNGASS.

They noted that CSD must consider the three options for further international action presented in the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), including the elaboration of a global convention on forests.

Participants stated that a joint strategy for a sustainable energy future is necessary, particularly for energy efficiency and the use of the renewable energies, including solar energy and access to commercial energy sources. Also emphasized were: the condition of and access to water resources throughout the world as a particularly urgent problem; the "acute danger" facing the oceans; and the drastic worldwide increase in emissions from transport.

Participants also recommended that the CSD treat sustainable tourism as a new subject area and characterized unsustainable patterns of production and consumption as one of the central challenges, even though some progress has been made since Rio. An integrated approach, which compromises administrative and economic instruments, is needed. They also noted that the CSD, as well as UNEP and UNCTAD, will have an important role to play in the debate on trade and the environment and said that further steps in the WTO are needed to clarify the rules of the multilateral trading system with a view to ensuring that they pay due respect to the decisions of governments acting jointly in negotiating multilateral environmental agreements, including positive measures such as the transfer of finance and technology.

They noted that globalization presents environment ministers with considerable challenges because globalization can substantially limit a country's capability for national action in environmental pro-

tection. Participants also emphasized the need to fulfill their obligations with regard to Chapter 33 and 34 of Agenda 21, which called for enhanced international cooperation and reaffirmed the need for UNEP to be the leading environment authority in the UN system. They called for UNGASS to send out a clear signal to the negotiators. For more information contact the Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN; tel: +1-212-856-6200; fax: +1-212-856-6280.

MEETING OF THE OECD COUNCIL AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL: The OECD Council at Ministerial level met on 26-27 May 1997 in Paris, under the Chair Jean Arthuis, Minister of Economy and Finance (France), to discuss: sustainable growth and social cohesion; multilateral trade and investment liberalization; and the role and evolution of the OECD in a globalizing world economy. Ministers welcomed the accession of Poland and the Republic of Korea to the OECD, and their contribution to the work of the OECD.

Ministers underlined their conviction that globalization offers a real opportunity to improve living standards in their own countries and to allow all countries to participate in sustainable world development. The rapid advance of technology and the growth of a knowledge-based society, requires individuals, businesses, governments and whole societies to adjust and innovate. The challenge for governments is to pursue policies whereby the benefits of globalization are fully realized and widely shared by all groups of society.

The Ministers noted that there is a historic coincidence of interests for OECD and non-OECD countries in today's globalizing world economy. The OECD's linkages study, *Towards a New Global Age*, outlines a vision for the year 2020 that promises a large increase in prosperity and welfare across the world, and the progressive integration of developing and transition countries into the global economy. However, realizing it requires governments to seize the opportunities and continue to move forward with trade and investment liberalization, macroeconomic discipline, comprehensive product and factor market reforms, strengthening of financial systems and implementation of effective environmental policies. They also must respond to, and anticipate the needs and opportunities of, the emerging knowledge-based societies, which are driven by new information and communication technologies. Ministers affirmed their determination to implement this ambitious agenda.

Ministers called on the OECD to use its unique strength to analyze important national and international problems in a multidisciplinary and future-oriented way. Ministers noted the important analytical work that has been carried out and welcomed the successes in implementing OECD decisions, recommendations and agreements. They also recognized that much remains to be done.

On promoting sustainable growth and social cohesion, Ministers agreed that macroeconomic policies focused on sound public finances and effective control of inflation, combined with enhanced structural reforms, are essential to achieving improved and sustainable growth and employment outcomes. Both are necessary components in the fight to eliminate persistent and unacceptably high unemployment that exists in most OECD countries. They agreed on the need for regulatory reform, for the elimination of structural rigidities in product and factor markets and for policies to improve the innovative capacity and competitiveness of enterprises, so that economic activity can flourish more robustly. They also agreed that attention needs to be given to improving the prospects for the most vulnerable in society.

Ministers noted that economic growth in 1997-98 is projected to average 2 ¾ to 3 per cent in the OECD area. Growth will be more balanced, and inflation will remain low almost everywhere, but sub-

stantial output gaps and high levels of unemployment will remain in some countries. Ministers confirmed their commitment to pursue policies that promote strong sustainable non-inflationary growth. They recognized that transforming this growth momentum into rising employment would require some differences in the short-run orientation of macroeconomic policies to reflect countries' varying cyclical positions while respecting the medium-term objectives of fiscal consolidation. They also noted that the pursuit of sound monetary and fiscal policies, combined with continued co-operation on exchange rates, sound financial systems and structural reforms, can contribute to smoothly functioning international financial markets.

Ministers agreed that fiscal consolidation would continue to be a priority in most OECD countries to create the conditions for sustained growth. Many OECD countries have budget deficits or debt levels that are still too high, and population aging threatens to push up public spending further. Given high tax burdens, the main effort in cutting deficits must focus on reducing expenditures. In addition to the need for rationalization, Ministers agreed that improving the quality of expenditure requires increased focus on programmes that contribute to economic growth through enhancing human capital and innovation. Continuing reform of public sector management to increase policy effectiveness and expenditure efficiency will also assist in controlling budgets.

On employment and implementing the OECD jobs strategy, Ministers noted a major finding of the country review process: that those countries that had moved ahead with the comprehensive implementation of the macroeconomic and structural policies recommended in the Jobs Strategy, including labor and product market reforms, had experienced significant improvements in their employment situation. Ministers also acknowledged that the structural changes often required difficult adjustments for some firms, regions, sectors and segments of the work-force. They agreed that hindrances to competition and technological progress or other sources of structural change would constrain growth and thus run counter to the interests of Member countries. At the same time, Ministers recognized that the gap between the "haves" and "have nots" within some OECD countries may have widened, the latter more often than not being less skilled. While the key preoccupation is to boost employment, there are also some concerns about widening income inequalities or unequal access to opportunities and there is a need to prevent people from drifting into long-term unemployment and social exclusion. Ministers agreed that a key element in dealing with marginalization is putting in place policies that improve access to work, encourage greater employment and raise future earning prospects.

On regulatory reform, Ministers agreed that the attack on structural rigidities in their economies should encompass comprehensive regulatory reform, including higher quality regulation and deregulation where existing regulation is excessive. Regulatory reform aims at improving economic efficiency and the ability of economies to adapt to change and to become more productive. By enhancing competition, it can create new businesses and jobs, speed the diffusion of new technologies and business methods, enhance trade and investment opportunities, and reduce the scope for trade frictions. Reform can also provide more cost-effective means of attaining important social and environmental goals.

On trade and investment liberalization, Ministers affirmed the central role which international trade and investment play in creating employment, improving economic efficiency, and raising standards of living in all nations. They are therefore committed to work for a strong, rules-based, open and effective multilateral system of

trade and investment, capable of responding to the challenges of globalization and enhancing sustainable development. Actions on a broad front are needed to achieve further liberalization of measures directly affecting such flows and the reform of domestic policies that can also act as important barriers to market access and presence.

On support for the multilateral trading system, Ministers welcomed the outcome of the WTO Singapore Ministerial Conference, which advanced and broadened the trade agenda, thereby giving strong impetus to further liberalization, including through the subsequent success in achieving the information technology agreement and the agreement on basic telecommunications services. Ministers reaffirmed the important role of the OECD in support of the WTO and the multilateral trading system. They attached utmost importance to maintaining the momentum of trade liberalization in 1997 and beyond. Ministers continue to place high priority on the full and effective implementation of the Uruguay Round Agreements. Accordingly, they are determined to pursue vigorously the built-in agenda agreed to at the end of the Uruguay Round, together with the WTO work programme as agreed at Singapore, which includes the new and important work on investment, competition, trade facilitation and transparency in government procurement. They encouraged the WTO to continue its work on trade and the environment.

Ministers pledged to work towards successful conclusion of the current WTO negotiations on financial services with a high level of liberalization on a full MFN basis by December 1997. They agreed to: explore further market opening initiatives; refrain from actions that would undermine progressive liberalization; continue their efforts to ensure that public opinion fully understands the benefits of open, two-way trade, globalization and liberalization; and resolve disagreements cooperatively and in consistency with the WTO's Dispute Settlement Understanding.

On global environmental issues, the integration of economic, social and environmental objectives underpins global sustainable development and Ministers noted that the OECD's analytical work on these issues helps Member countries ensure that environmental considerations are properly taken into account in the elaboration of policies. Its work also assists OECD Members in their preparations for international work in this area, including UNGASS and the FCCC Conference of Parties scheduled for December in Japan. They further acknowledged the need for Member countries to advance research and development, and dissemination, of relevant technologies as one way to address global environmental problems. Ministers welcomed the report on green taxes and noted that a report on evaluating the impact of subsidies on the environment will be discussed in 1998. Ministers urged the OECD to consider how better to integrate the environment in other relevant activities of its work.

On development issues, Ministers welcomed the coordinated efforts embodied in the OECD's partnership strategy to help countries assume responsibility and ownership for their programmes, strive for sustainable development and avoid marginalization, including in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Ministers welcomed OECD's continuing review and discussion of the objectives set out in the OECD's partnership strategy that is now shared by many developing countries and international organizations. Ministers recognized the need to increase the volume of development assistance and called for the effective mobilization of financial resources for development from all sources — private and public, internal and external — including the maintenance of substantial levels of official bilateral and multilateral development assistance, as part of a comprehensive and

coherent approach to development, in particular towards the poorest countries.

Ministers also addressed aging populations, corporate governance, information societies and electronic commerce, export credits, harmful tax competition, combating bribery in international business transactions, the OECD's global role, membership issues, co-operation with non-members, co-operation with international organizations and the OECD's future role.

In the Ministerial Statement on the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), Ministers stated their commitment to the importance of international investment and the need for fair, transparent and predictable rules for investors and investments. They welcome the progress made in developing a comprehensive Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) with high standards for the liberalization of investment regimes and investment protection and with effective dispute settlement procedures. They recall that the MAI will be a freestanding international treaty open to all OECD countries and the European Community and to non-OECD countries.

Ministers expressed their determination: to resolve outstanding questions and achieve a high standard of liberalization and investment protection; to achieve a satisfactory scope and balance of commitments; to pursue intensified dialogue with non-member countries, particularly those interested in joining the MAI; and to conclude the Agreement in time for the 1998 Ministerial Meeting. For more information contact the OECD; tel: +33-01-45-24-82-00; fax: +33-01-45-24-85-00; e-mail: news.contact@oecd.org. Also try <http://www.oecd.org/>

EXPERT MEETING ON SYNERGIES AMONG THE CONVENTIONS: The Expert Meeting on Synergies Among the Conventions on Climate Change, Biological Diversity, Desertification and the Forest Principles was held in Sede Boqer, Israel from March 17-20, 1997 by UNDP. The meeting, which involved 40 experts representing every continent, was designed to bring together experts at the national and international levels that are involved in helping to implement the four Rio agreements. Their task was to explore ways to create synergy between and among the instruments—in particular at the national level—to help foster better implementation and to improve the prospects for sustainable development. In doing so, they considered a number of questions: how can cross-cutting environmental Conventions best be implemented through the sectoral mechanisms of governments; how can such sectors benefit from the implementation of the Conventions; how do they affect the Conventions; and what can the sectors do to support the goals of the Conventions? Participants also asked what the Conventions have in common, and how can these overlaps be used to produce synergy?

Participants developed a number of proposals, options, and recommendations to improve implementation of the Conventions, reduce conflicts and overlaps and produce synergy. A number of themes and messages emerged. Participants highlighted the importance of harmonized data collection and the establishment of common data sets, through better coordinated reporting processes and schedules, and through public awareness activities incorporating information about a range of environmental issues. However, participants noted that producing such synergy is no easy matter; it is the culmination of a process in which complementarities between the Conventions are identified and used to further implementation while overlaps are eliminated (or at least conflicts between them reduced). Taking advantage of the complementarities and reducing conflicts (e.g., the potential for conflict between a biodiversity strategy and a forest strategy) requires the ability to design necessary actions and

then having the means to act. Even before a potential point of synergy is reached, eliminating or reducing the conflicts can go a long way toward improving implementation of the instruments. In addition, complementary provisions of Conventions can be implemented in ways that improve cost effectiveness by achieving the same or greater results with fewer resources.

On planning and policy, the overlaps among the four instruments extend to other international agreements such as Ramsar, CITES, the Montreal Protocol, and the Law of the Sea. The requirements (including reporting obligations) of these instruments can lead to duplicative effort and place a substantial burden on countries—particularly a strain on human and financial resources. To turn such potential burdens into possible synergies requires planning—national and sectoral development planning and plans built specifically for national implementation of the Conventions. The key is to anchor implementation plans into national development priorities and policies. In many countries, there may be no cohesive planning framework, which makes the integration of the instrument-related plans into sectoral policies essential. One option countries may want to pursue is to identify a strategic entry point for analysis. For example, a country with an extensive forest cover may find this a better entry point than the climate change issue—and then direct its resources to addressing a range of environmental issues through this point.

On capacity requirements, participants noted that Conventions are implemented in countries at the national, regional, district and community levels. A high priority is to develop the institutions and capacities necessary to enable countries to translate these international agreements into action at these levels. One problem countries face is that capacities diminish from the national to the local level, therefore the efforts of governments to decentralize and devolve authority must be supported by additional resources of skilled, trained people and money.

On institutional requirements, the experts noted that there are no quick institutional fixes for coordinating implementation of the agreements. Nor is there an institutional blueprint for most effective implementation. Coordination among the instruments must be nationally driven, with synergies allowed to form to support national priorities. Institutional structures aimed at coordinating implementation of international agreements need to fit into the existing institutional and planning frameworks to the extent possible. Coordinated implementation is likely to require horizontal structures to support inter-ministerial consultation and cooperation, as well as involve multi-stakeholder participation at all levels. In this, the national focal points for each Convention can become important driving forces for synergistic action by carrying out their individual instrument responsibilities in coordination with one another.

On information Systems and Reporting, participants stated that underlying the challenge parties face in fulfilling the reporting requirements of the Conventions is the more fundamental issue of the lack of an information system in many developing countries. Where there is no information system, reporting is necessarily *ad hoc* and demanding. Worse, a country has no real means for saying whether the Conventions are being implemented or even whether progress is being made toward the goals of sustainable development. An information system not only allows a country to have the data necessary to fulfill its obligations and generate reports, but also to define, guide and assess the progress achieved on its development policies.

Participants also noted that interventions at the international level can support—and may even be required in order to produce—synergy at the national level. For example, instructions by the COPs to

their Secretariats to work collaboratively/synergistically with the Secretariats of the other Conventions would contribute greatly to opportunities for national-level synergy.

By the completion of the meeting, participants agreed that Parties to the Conventions could benefit substantially from useful information on ways to maximize complementarities, remove or reduce obstacles and overlaps and produce synergies. Such information could be in the form of a country-level handbook designed to provide a range of approaches to promote implementation. This document would not be prescriptive, but would contain information on options that might be applicable in certain settings. UNDP could play the lead role in developing such an information handbook, working in close collaboration with the Secretariats to the Conventions and in consultation with national and international experts.

IULA WORLD CONGRESS: The thirty-third World Congress of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) took place in Mauritius from 6-10 April 1997. IULA, which represents local governments and their national associations in nearly 100 countries around the world. The Congress was hosted by the Association of District Councils and the Association of Urban Councils of Mauritius and was attended by more than 750 delegates from 85 countries. Plenary sessions and working groups focussed around the theme: Local Governance for the Third Millennium—Decentralization, Diversity and Partnership.

The Congress developed a Declaration, under which delegates stated that: the national governments' commitments to decentralization, as stated most recently in the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda, must encompass real devolution of power and decision-making to the local level in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity; the full sense of democratic decentralization must be translated into policies, programmes and action by all levels of government and all international bodies concerned with social and economic progress; decentralization should provide a policy framework for the conduct of civic affairs by all members of the local community under the leadership of democratically elected representatives, and serve as an essential guide to the governance of human activity.

The Declaration also states that: that decentralization is not an end in itself, but is a mode of policy implementation that responds to the real-life demands of communities for empowerment and socio-economic development; decentralization should be considered a response to both the need for the consolidation of democratic processes and the urgent necessity of a community's participation in its own development; so-called decentralization policies and laws that do not assure local government full access to revenue sources and legal authority, and institutional capacity to raise adequate revenue sources for local requirements, fall far short of what is essential to progress in serving the needs of citizens.

Participants noted that: diversity encompasses a multiplicity of different citizens and groups who are often denied full participation in the governance of their communities; to govern fairly, to serve their citizens adequately and to develop their communities properly, local government must devise and implement new pro-active forms of Partnership with national government, the private sector, and non-governmental and community-based organizations; partnership is a dynamic approach to communal and global life that challenges all sectors of society to engage actively in public endeavor.

The Declaration states: the principle of democratic decentralization must become a reality of policy and international agencies. National governments must not only recognize this fact, but take all steps necessary to enable democratic self-governance in the region-

al, national and local contexts. It also states that effective decentralization requires that local self-government must be established on a secure constitutional or statutory basis and the preparation of an official world-wide Charter setting out the universal guiding principles of local self-government, as called for by WACLA in Istanbul, should be urgently pursued.

It also declares that: children's and women's rights are an integral part of human rights; "diversity" means that citizens of all ages and in all social and ethnic groups must be given proper consideration in policy and programming decisions by all levels of government; partnership, reflecting the democratic mandate and accountability of local government, must become a normal and natural way of conducting public affairs; and local government should seek all possible means of building on the strengths of all sectors of society to ensure dynamism in achieving sustainable economic and social progress.

Participants called upon international agencies and national governments to: ensure that democratic decentralization of public policy implementation, concurrent with assurance of access to the necessary financial and human resources, becomes the norm in all aspects of domestic government and international cooperation; guarantee full recognition of diversity; take all possible steps to promote total respect for women, and their full involvement in government; and work together with local governments and their national, regional and international associations and networks to develop and promulgate through the UN a World Charter of Local Self-Government and to pursue its progressive implementation in all continents through a World Decade of Local Government (2000 - 2009). For information contact the Conference Secretariat: +(230) 211 9494; fax: +(230) 211 9495. Also try <http://dcdmc.intnet.mu/client/iula/default.htm>

FIRST EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE ISLAND DEVELOPMENT: This meeting, held in Minorca from 23-26 April 1997, brought together representatives from more than one hundred and fifty European islands to discuss their future and reach agreement on a specific framework. The Conference produced three major agreements that will constitute a sound foundation on which to build sustainable development, solidarity and prosperity for European island regions. The Ciutadella Declaration, signed by government representatives of the island regions who attended the Conference, takes a position on the Treaty of Union that takes on board island aspirations (north, south, peripheral and ultra-peripheral) with a maximum sense of equity and projects the common interest of the islands. The Minorca Commitments give form to the broad framework of the declaration of co-operation for development, peace and collaboration between islands, with integration in the European context being the point of reference.

The European Island Agenda, conceived as an open instrument and a basic co-operation document in the fields in which sustainable island development is most important and most urgent in Europe. Fields such as the environment, the cultural heritage of the islands, tourism, energy, telematics, waste and transport are areas where science, technology and culture should merge in tangible proposals for the islands. The Conference merely represents the starting point of the process by providing an index of priority objectives and basis for action, with a view to completing the complex task of articulating individual island efforts to foster sustainable development over time.

These instruments, particularly the European Island Agenda, constitute a foundation for providing follow-up and continuity to the process that has been initiated. The Follow-up Committee, therefore, faces the task of enhancing its capacities. It must establish a

time-table of actions in all areas, giving effective continuity to the agreements that have been reached. The proposal made by the island of Minorca, to provide logistic support for the job of co-ordination through a Secretariat for the Follow up Committee, is an important, tangible agreement that constitutes an executive nucleus and a point of reference for developing the common island strategy outlined in the Conference. For more information contact UNESCO; +33-1-45684056; fax: +33-1-45685804; e-mail: eurisland@insula.org. Also try <http://www.insula.org/conf.htm>.

PATHWAYS TO SUSTAINABILITY: The International Conference on Local Initiatives For Cities and Towns was held from 1-5 June 1997 in Newcastle, Australia. The Conferences produced, *inter alia*, the Newcastle Declaration. The Declaration contains a commitment from local governments and communities, to enhancing global sustainability, by developing processes at the local level based on: assisting communities to progress toward local sustainability by sharing and learning; ensuring that all sectors, groups and citizens in local communities, including adults, youth and children are given equal opportunity for active participation and partnership in the process of developing Local Agenda 21 action plans; simultaneously achieving economic, social, cultural and ecological goals by integrating them in the design and implementation of all local policies, programs and projects and recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples and the special contributions they can make.

The Declaration also calls upon all local governments to embrace the goal of global sustainability by implementing Local Agenda 21 action plans by the Year 2000 and monitor and review on an annual basis and report on progress at the Rio + 10 review in 2002. The Declaration also calls upon: the UN and national governments to recognize the progress made by local governments and their communities in enhancing the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda; national governments to provide a policy framework and the necessary resources to support national Local Agenda 21 programs; national and international investment and development assistance programs to support Local Agenda 21 action plans; and all governments to increase their proportion of annual expenditure on demonstration projects that enhance sustainability.

The Declaration also affirms the need for international and national local government organizations to: facilitate the exchange of examples of information on best practice in implementation of Local Agenda 21; recognize the importance of research, community education, capacity-building and monitoring in local action for sustainability; and Report on the progress of Local Agenda 21 on behalf of local governments and communities. For information contact the Secretariat; tel: +61-2-9252-3388; fax: +61-2-9241-5282; e-mail: capcon@ozemail.com.au. Also try <http://bicentary.ncc.nsw.gov.au>.

CONFERENCE ON HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT: World Information Transfer's (WIT's) Sixth Annual Conference on Health and Environment: Global Partners for Global Solutions was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 18 April 1997. The conference entitled, "Environmental Degradation: Its Effect on Children's Health" was co-sponsored by the Government of Chile and supported by the UN Department of Public Information. International experts spoke on a number of topics including: the impact of toxins on child development; environmental contamination in the Southern Hemisphere and its effect on children's health; dietary influences on behavior; environmental degradation and learning; women's health and the environment; media and health; updates on the impact of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster to children's health; and the influences of lead poisoning to chil-

dren's health. The morning and afternoon sessions of the conference were attended by members of government delegations, members of the UN Secretariat and NGOs working in the areas of the environment, social development, gender issues and children's health. For information contact WIT; tel: +1-212-686-1996; fax: +1-212-686-2172; e-mail: wit.igc.apc.org.

CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION: The International Conference on the Sustainable Development of Countries with Economies in Transition was held in Minsk, Belarus from 16-18 April 1997 with the participation of Ministers of the Environment and Economy of countries with economies in transition. Also participating were representatives from UNDP, UNEP, WHO, IAEA, UNIDO, OECD and others. The Conference evaluated the progress made in the field of implementing sustainable development principles in countries with economies in transition, identifying the major priorities and problems.

Participants noted that a transition to sustainable development should be brought about to resolve socio-economic problems, protect the environment and satisfy the needs of the present and future generations pursuant to Agenda 21. The transition to sustainable development demands coordinated efforts of all countries and a re-orientation of social, economic and environmental institutions. In doing so, the responsibility of the State as a guarantor of environmental protection and environmental safety remains high.

The participants stated their conviction that the aspiration of countries with economies in transition to integrate into the world economy must be underpinned by international measures to assist these countries and appealed to donor States and international financial institutions to earmark adequate resources for strengthening the national capacities of countries with economies in transition and facilitating their access to environmentally sound technologies.

Participants also draw attention to the need for international effort to resolve the Chernobyl problem, rehabilitate the Aral region, prevent consequences of floods of the Caspian Sea and restore ecological equilibrium of transboundary water courses and reservoirs. Participants also recommended using the "Environment for Europe" process for the implementation of Agenda 21 in countries with economies in transition. For information contact the Conference Secretariat at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection of Belarus, 10 Kollektornaya St. 220048 Minsk, Belarus; tel: + 0375-172) 204771.

CROSS-CULTURAL PROTECTION OF NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: The international seminar on cross-cultural protection of nature and the environment was held from 5-7 May 1997 at the Humanities Research Center in Odense University, Denmark. The seminar focused on several issues including: general and culturally different aims of the protection of nature and the environment (cleanliness, harmony, stability, diversity, integrity, ecosystem health, or human survival and welfare); responsibilities towards posterity; and implementing global aims of environmental protection across cultural differences. There were 75 participants from 11 countries present, most of them from Western Europe. The participants came from a variety of academic disciplines; the largest groups were anthropologists and philosophers, but there were also participants from geography, history, history of religion, history of art, literature, law, biology and economy.

In the joint sessions, lectures were given by key-note speakers from 4 different countries: Bryan Norton from Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, spoke about two different ways of approach-

ing the problem of sustainability. Darrell Posey from Oxford University presented research on conflicts and conciliations in relation to national and international regulations affecting indigenous peoples. Avner de-Shalit from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem confronted liberalist and communitarian values and understandings in relation to environmental problems. Poul Pedersen from Aarhus University, Denmark, discussed the role of modern scientific knowledge for the understanding of environmental problems. A speech by Paul Richards from Wageningen Agricultural University, Netherlands/University College, London were presented on common knowledge and resource utilization. And John O'Neill from Lancaster University, UK, discussed the proper relation between environmentalism and conceptions of the "good life."

In 6 different workshops 18 papers were presented during the first 2 days. The main topics were sustainability (in various versions), biodiversity, cross-cultural communication and partnerships of various kinds, and the differences, conflicts and harmonies between the local and the global level, especially in relation to indigenous peoples in different parts of the world. For information contact: Dr. Finn Arler; Odense University; Hollufgaard; Hestehaven 201, DK 5220 Odense S; Denmark; tel: +45 65 95 94 93; fax: +45 65 95 77 66; e-mail: arler@humcenter.ou.dk.

/TRADE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

WTO SYMPOSIUM ON TRADE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The World Trade Organization (WTO) Symposium on Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development was convened from 20-21 May 1997 in Geneva. The Symposium was divided into seven topical sessions designed to enrich the discussions in the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE), which was held immediately thereafter. During the sessions, participants from over 70 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) representing business, environment, development and consumer organizations, presented their views on specific WTO-related issues and engaged in discussions with Members of the CTE and other NGOs. The sessions addressed: globalization, trade and sustainable development; synergies between trade liberalization and the environment; multilateral environmental agreements and the WTO; agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPs) and the environment; market access; tariff, non-tariff measures and the environment; and relations with NGOs.

The Symposium was a direct result of the WTO General Council Decision of July 1996 on Guidelines for Arrangements on Relations with NGOs. The Decision indicated that the Secretariat should play a more active role in its direct contacts with NGOs who, as a valuable resource, can contribute to the accuracy and richness of the public debate. The objectives of the meeting were inextricably tied to the process of the meeting and many participants considered the Symposium a success because, for the first time, there was actual interaction between NGOs and member States. Most came away with a greater understanding, though perhaps not sympathy, for the positions of their traditional "opponents." As well, most agreed that this meeting might represent the first of a number of such informal sessions tied to CTE meetings. Two previous NGO sessions at the WTO, in June 1994 and September 1996, had been criticized by a number of NGO participants for their lack of interaction with Members. Few members spoke at the 1994 session and no Members even attended the session in 1996. There was speculation that this meeting might represent the first of a number of such informal sessions tied

to CTE meetings. The door having been opened and, no monsters having been found on the other side, the beginnings of trust between the trade community and civil society may have been established.

Interaction between Members and NGOs, when it took place, was direct and frank -- a result undoubtedly stemming from the informal nature of the sessions. One participant noted that the NGOs were obviously more accustomed to such interaction, and their remarks dominated the sessions. Another commented that NGOs, having been denied access to Members in the past and uncertain of future opportunities, were poised and ready to communicate the full range of their concerns. Most of the NGO interventions wasted little time on formalities and spoke directly to their concerns.

While observers noted that the divide between Northern and Southern NGOs was not as striking as in the June 1994 session, there was a discernible difference in focus and priorities. Many Northern environmental NGOs emphasized changes that could be made to specific rules within the multilateral trading system to further environmental protection. Business representatives highlighted maintaining certainty in trading rules and expressed concern regarding existing and future rules that could hinder their ability to import and export. A number of Southern NGOs, however, appeared unwilling to focus on rule changes and objected to the WTO system as a whole, characterizing it as unfair to developing countries and blind to equity concerns.

Members' assessments of the symposium were mixed. Some claimed to have heard it all before and expressed concern that a number of NGO speakers failed to appreciate the complexity of the issues. However, more said that the meeting had been valuable in exposing them to a range of new views. It is worth noting that while many Members cautioned the Secretariat before the symposium that their remarks would not be intended for attribution, by the meeting's end, all speakers indicated their comfort with being identified.

NGOs seemed pleased, for the most part, to have been heard, though many doubted that the substance of their presentations would have much immediate impact on the CTE meeting that followed. Most participants agreed that they could provide more substantive input if future symposia focused on issues to be discussed at subsequent CTE meetings. The Committee meets again in September and in November, but it may be premature to speculate on whether similar symposia will be associated with either or both of these meetings.

Nonetheless, a number of NGO participants noted that the symposium represented a first step in the WTO's evolution away from the closed practices of the GATT. They argued that as the Organization moves from a focus on tariffs to issues of an increasingly domestic nature, such as rules for environment, investment and intellectual property, it must either take into account the input and expertise of civil society, and other international organizations, or face a crisis of credibility.

ASIA-PACIFIC ECONOMIC COOPERATION (APEC): Environment ministers and delegates from the member economies of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) met from 9-11 June 1997 in Toronto, Canada for the 1997 APEC Environment Ministerial Meeting on Sustainable Development. The purpose of the meeting was for ministers to further advance each of the three themes of Sustainability of the Marine Environment, Cleaner Production and Sustainable Cities in their ongoing efforts to promote sustainable development. Ministers and delegates held discussions on these three agenda items, as well as on the Impact of Expanding Population and Economic Growth on Food, Energy and the Environ-

ment (FEEEP) and the Promotion of Environmentally Sustainable Growth in APEC. Ministers and delegates also conducted dialogues with youth, business leaders and local authorities and discussed and adopted a Joint Ministerial Statement.

Environment ministers left Toronto one step closer to their goal of integrating sustainable development into APEC's overall agenda by endorsing these strategies, which they will now present to heads of government at the upcoming Economic Leaders meeting in November. Despite this accomplishment, however, a number of fundamental questions, particularly regarding the scope of issues and of coordination, will need to be addressed if APEC is to succeed in its sustainable development endeavors.

A Joint Statement was prepared and adopted by ministers at the Environment Ministerial Meeting on Sustainable Development on Wednesday, 11 June. A Chair's drafting group prepared an initial draft of the Statement at the meeting for consideration by SEOs, and modified the draft over the course of the meeting based on private consultations among SEOs and a short round of negotiations on the final day. In this brief negotiating session, only three parts of the text, on environmental industries, radioactive waste and climate change, remained outstanding and were discussed. The majority of the statement was adopted by consensus without further negotiation. The Statement is outlined below, followed by a brief summary of the discussion on the outstanding issues.

Environment ministers left Toronto one step closer to their goal of integrating sustainable development into APEC's overall agenda. They endorsed concrete, action-oriented strategies to implement the three themes of Sustainable Cities, Cleaner Production and Sustainability of the Marine Environment, which they will now present to heads of government at the upcoming Economic Leaders meeting in November. Despite this accomplishment, however, a number of fundamental questions, particularly regarding the scope of issues and of coordination, will need to be addressed if APEC is to succeed in its sustainable development endeavors.

The adoption of the three strategies, which some praise as pragmatic and focused, represents tangible progress in this regard. Others, however, suggest that this focus is tantamount to "tunnel vision." Upon closer examination, the specific actions outlined to operationalize these strategies, with a few exceptions, are limited to information exchange, training seminars and loose commitments to "cooperation." For this reason, some observers express concern that the nature of these actions is indicative of a certain modesty in APEC's sustainable development agenda. If APEC, under the optimal circumstances of having an environmentally-minded Chair such as Canada, cannot define a more ambitious sustainable development agenda, then when can it?

In addition, it is often noted that APEC member economies not only represent a dynamic economic force, but are major contributors to, and therefore key to the resolution of, many global environmental problems. One minister noted that APEC has the potential, if not the responsibility, to add value to multilateral environmental discussions. In this respect, both the US and New Zealand emphasized that APEC should address climate change. Others have expressed concern that failure to consider the global dimension will weaken APEC's environmental credibility.

The challenge will be for APEC to consider these issues without losing the "value-added" of its innovative approach. This approach, based on APEC's strengths of capacity-building, information sharing and partnerships between the public and private sectors has to date enabled them, despite diverse development levels, to avoid the

clash between weaker economies' development concerns and stronger economies' environmental concerns. APEC's focus on cooperation, rather than confrontation, could provide the comparative advantage needed to distinguish it from other, frequently deadlocked, international fora. APEC's current efforts to integrate sustainable development into its trade and investment liberalization and economic cooperation agenda may provide a useful framework for the practical implementation of global environmental agreements.

One of the pressing questions considered at this meeting pertains to APEC's institutional coordination of environmental issues. Member economies agreed to refrain from creating a new, discrete working group on the environment -- a decision owed at least in part to APEC's aversion to bureaucratic proliferation. As a result, the economies have underscored the benefits of a coordinating mechanism comprised of already existing groups: the SEOs and the Joint Fora (which consists of the Lead Shepherds of the ten APEC Working Groups, a representative from the Economic Committee and the Committee on Trade and Investment and the SMO Chair). The current proposal is for a joint meeting of the SEOs and the Joint Fora to be held periodically for the purpose of reviewing environmental work in APEC and providing guidance on policies and priorities. This meeting would immediately precede regularly scheduled Joint Fora meetings so that additional resource requirements are minimized.

Some agree that this proposal seems innovative and presents the potential for more effective work by ensuring that, as ministers agreed is desirable in the context of both the FEEEP process and the Sustainable Cities agenda, environment is a cross-cutting issue that should be integrated into all aspects of APEC's work. Such an approach would also respond to ministers' reluctance to commit substantial resources to discussions that do not produce new and additional results. However, without a strong environmental "home," there remains a risk that the sustainable development agenda will not command the prominence that some claim it requires within the APEC process.

Although APEC is a relatively young body, it is nonetheless approaching a critical stage in its development when it will have to clarify its role and scope and prove its mettle. A fundamental concern is that while APEC has been characterized as a "club of winners," operating on the basis of consensus and the premise of equality of members, real differences in member economies' levels of development remain a reality. During deliberations on Sustainable Cities, for example, some countries focused on cleaner production as a "fix-it" strategy, whereas others emphasized that poverty eradication must be the basis for any solution. Such potentially divisive issues could jeopardize the long-term success of the institutions efforts to address sustainable development. No one can state with certainty whether APEC will evolve into a forum for genuine cooperation on the environment, but given its rapid economic and population growth, all eyes are fixed on the region.

One key challenge will be to exercise vigilance in getting the coordinating mechanism up and running and to maintain its momentum over time. Some observers have expressed concern that due to the ad hoc nature of the institution and the prospect that next year's Chair will not host an environment ministers' meeting, the momentum that has been built in Toronto could dissipate. As APEC continues efforts to integrate sustainable development into its agenda, the consideration being given by the SEO ad hoc group to this issue may prove vital. For the future, APEC will have to build on the suggestion made by this group that it "carve out a niche that capitalizes on

its strengths" so that further economic growth in this dynamic region is truly sustainable.

NAFTA: The fourth annual session of the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was held on 13 June 1997 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. The CEC -- made up of Mexican Secretary of Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries Julia Carabias, US Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner, represented by Deputy Administrator Fred Hansen, and Canadian Environment Minister Christine Stewart, represented by Environment Ambassador John Fraser -- agreed on joint actions taken to meet the goals set under the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), the environmental side accord to NAFTA. During an open dialogue with members of the public from Canada, Mexico and the US, the environment leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the CEC as a dynamic and open forum for helping the NAFTA partners meet global goals to ensure a cleaner, healthier environment for future generations.

The Council completed regional action plans for the reduction and eventual elimination of two dangerous pesticides, chlordane and DDT, from the North American environment. A regional action plan for the reduction of PCBs was completed in April, and is already being implemented. These action plans are a regional response to growing local and international concern over the detrimental impact of these toxic substances on human health and the environment. Implementing these action plans will also contribute to the reduction of long-range transport of air pollutants to the Arctic. The Council expects a draft regional action plan on human-caused releases of mercury to be made public for comment and review by 15 July. A final plan will be ready in September. Criteria to select additional toxic substances for priority action will be presented to Council this fall.

On strengthening efforts to improve environmental compliance, the CEC affirmed the primary role of governments in establishing environmental standards, and for verifying and enforcing compliance with laws and regulations. Strong and effective governmental programmes to enforce environmental laws and regulations are essential to ensure protection of public health and the environment. The Council also recognized the potential contribution of voluntary programs, such as ISO 14000, to complement environmental laws and regulations. The Council called upon industry to become partners in efforts to protect the North American environment and to pursue innovative private sector approaches for improving environmental compliance.

On transboundary environmental impact assessment, the CEC built upon the work of the North American Intergovernmental Group on Transboundary Environmental Impact Assessment, and agreed to complete a legally binding agreement consistent with their obligations under Article 10(7) of the NAAEC by 15 April 1998. This agreement will include provisions on assessment of transboundary environmental impacts, notice to the country potentially affected by those impacts, consideration of mitigation measures, and public participation in decision making. The Council also agreed that a working document on a transboundary environmental impact assessment agreement will be distributed publicly in the fall.

The Council agreed to initiate the review process of the Guidelines for Submissions on Enforcement Matters under Articles 14 and 15 of the NAAEC. The Council will exchange proposed modifications no later than September 1. The Joint Public Advisory Committee, the advisory group of the CEC, will have an opportunity to comment on the mutually agreed-upon modifications during a

60-day period. Final modifications reflecting this public input will be ready by 15 December. The Council also agreed to develop model rules for dispute settlement between the signatories to the NAAEC by the end of the year.

On environment and trade, a group of trade and environmental officials from Canada, Mexico and the US will develop recommendations on how the CEC and the NAFTA Free Trade Commission can best fulfill the mandate of the environmental side accord by working together on a number of trade-related activities. The three-year NAFTA Environmental Effects project will report results by the end of 1997. The general objective of the 1997 project was to provide the Council with elements for an analytical approach to assess whether NAFTA's trade liberalization has influenced the Canadian, Mexican, and the US economies in ways which have had environmental effects and, to the extent possible, identify any specific environmental effects related to NAFTA. In order to carry on with the side accord's ongoing obligation in this area, the trade and environment officials group will develop the terms of reference for the 1998 work program on NAFTA Environmental Effects.

The Council recognized progress on increasing the number of transboundary air monitoring and modeling initiatives in North America. Two pilot projects are currently underway along the US-Mexican and Canadian-US borders. One initiative is aimed at reducing pollution along a primary NAFTA transportation corridor, US Interstate 35 in Texas, and connecting highways in northern Mexico. The other initiative is investigating the transboundary flow of ground-level ozone in the northeastern US and eastern Canada.

The Council agreed to a process for reviewing the NAAEC. This review will include public consultations. The final report on the operations and effectiveness of the NAAEC implementation will be made public by the Council at the end of the year. For additional information, contact Rachel Vincent at the CEC Secretariat; tel: +1 (514) 350-4308; e-mail: rvincent@cceamt.org.

BIODIVERSITY

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: The Seventh Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA-7) was held at FAO Headquarters in Rome from 15-23 May 1997. During the meeting, delegates continued negotiations on the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Commission also established the mechanisms that will allow it to carry out its broadened mandate effectively, considered reports from FAO and international organizations, and addressed follow-up to the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources (ITCPGR-4), which was held in Leipzig, Germany, from 17-23 June 1996.

Two working groups addressed various aspects of the International Undertaking. The Working Group on Scope and Access worked on the principles and procedures that might underlie systems of access to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA). Progress on this issue since the last negotiating session was most clearly reflected by the fact that a vast majority of the participants agreed, in principle, to establish a multilateral system to facilitate access to PGRFA in an efficient, effective and transparent way. The Working Group on Farmers' Rights clarified positions as countries gained a better understanding of the precise objectives of various groups and the logical limits of those objectives. Given that the

negotiations on the International Undertaking took up the bulk of substantive debate, it is not surprising that the Commission agreed to call for another extraordinary session devoted exclusively to the IU as a matter of first priority.

Most delegates agreed that CGRFA-7 marked the beginning of real negotiations toward revising the IU. However, the level and seriousness of the negotiations were not consistent across issue areas: while deliberations on Farmers' Rights remained largely rooted in rhetoric, scope and access were the subject of intelligent and detailed discussion.

While a working group was constituted to negotiate both scope and access, the scope issue, which was the focus of much attention at CGRFA-EX-3 in December, was almost absent from the discussions. While considering the article on scope in the Working Group, delegates quickly accepted a Bureau formulation, arising out of regional group submissions, which stated that "the IU relates to PGRFA". Some delegates attributed this formulation to an informal agreement - reached during regional consultations - not to add qualifiers to PGRFA, which would include or exclude particular categories of PGR such as forest or medicinal resources, or pre- or post-CBD collections of genetic material. A developing country delegate noted that, with the definition of "plant genetic resources" still at large, this agreement signaled a decision to defer these discussions until later, when both PGR and PGRFA would have to be defined under Article 2 of the IU. This strategy allowed delegates to focus their full attention on access issues, where debate centered around the system(s) and conditions of access, and benefit sharing within an access regime.

A clear marker of progress within the access discussions was the agreement among a vast majority of the delegations - most notably the EU and the G-77 - on the need for a multilateral system of access and exchange, which is efficient, effective and transparent, to facilitate access to PGRFA. The modalities for such a multilateral system remained nebulous, and questions about how it would function were raised throughout the week. Nonetheless, a number of delegates noted that even an agreement in principle on the need for a multilateral system was a crucial first step. This was the case, noted one delegate, because in order for a multilateral system to be "efficient, effective and transparent" it would have to include benefit-sharing provisions that were acceptable to all Parties. This provided the much-needed meeting ground from wherein to debate the operationalization and modalities of such a system. A further conceptual advance was the understanding, among a number of countries, that a multilateral system of access and exchange should constitute more than just a set-up for exchange of germplasm, but rather that it should generate benefits, whether monetary or non-monetary, through its very existence and functioning.

Notwithstanding this progress, deliberations during the meeting seemed to encounter an almost unavoidable chicken-and-egg problem, whereby discussions and decisions on one issue appeared to be contingent upon another. Delegates noted, for example, that without discussing conditions of access to PGRFA, it would be inopportune or even impossible to designate the material to which the access system would pertain. At the same time, without knowing the material to which access was sought, conditions of access would be difficult to specify. A number of delegates noted that if one had to choose, a focus on conditions of access, along with benefit-sharing, would be a logical place to begin, since decisions in these areas would allow countries to decide whether or not their best germplasm would be available through the multilateral system.

Discussions on benefit-sharing also reflected the complexity of the issues. While not debated in any detail, the brief references to the distinctions between the country of origin versus the provider country, in the sharing and exchange of PGRFA, hinted at the fact that this will be a key area of contention in future deliberations.

Another point of confusion related to whether benefit-sharing pertained to every single transaction or exchange of germplasm. Delegates noted that this would be a logistical nightmare, in addition to being inefficient and costly. While a number of countries - both North and South - emphasized that a link between benefit-sharing and individual transactions was emphatically not what they desired, it remained unclear whether that was the general understanding. One delegate clarified that only in the event of commercialization of a product developed from PGRFA, made available through the multilateral system, that benefit-sharing provisions would take effect, rather than applying to routine exchanges for research or breeding. In general, however, benefit-sharing would relate to access to the PGRFA, technology transfer, sharing of information, and research and training activities relevant to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA.

It is noteworthy that while discussions on scope and access provided a good foundation for future deliberations, consensus text was not adopted, largely as a result of the wariness on the part of a few delegations about making an explicit link between the access and benefit-sharing provisions of the IU. Some delegates also indicated their reluctance to enshrine recognition of the "sovereign rights of States over their PGRFA" as a potential future legal principle. The fact that these constituted minority views was evident in the closing plenary when delegates applauded to signal their approval of a clause on benefit-sharing in the meeting's final report.

The Commission also entered into negotiations on Farmers' Rights (FR) as it began to seek a better understanding of the objectives of various regional groups and the boundaries of those objectives, aided in part by a consolidated text that assisted in delineating the parameters of the debate. This was also the first time discussions on FR went beyond the entrenched positions of OECD and G-77 blocks.

In particular, there has been a convergence of positions between a number of EU countries and most of the G-77 countries, in that both recognize FR as more than a concept. Consequently, several non-European OECD countries have found themselves increasingly isolated on this issue. Although they have not formally constituted themselves as such, several delegates anticipate the establishment of the JUSCANZ Group (Japan, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand - with the exception of Norway) within the IU negotiations.

While the debate remains largely rhetorical and a precise definition of FR remains elusive, some delegates consider that it may be possible to reach a common understanding of the meaning of FR by specifying who recognizes such rights, where, and under what circumstances, and whether their realization requires the creation of an international fund.

Nonetheless, the Working Group on Farmers' Rights current modus operandi has been unproductive. To date, any progress made through informal consultations has been quickly undermined in formal working group negotiations. One factor that has limited the effectiveness of the Working Group is its inability to agree on the meaning of basic entities such as farmers, traditional, indigenous and local farming communities. Another important area of ambiguity is whether the rights to be defined are national or international in scope. Indeed, many delegates expressed concern that it will be

much more difficult to achieve consensus on an international right because the answers to questions such as "What is a farmer?" vary in each country. Such questions underscore the challenge inherent in forging common understandings when there are divergent frames of reference.

Given the difficulties outlined above, some delegates have privately cautioned against attempts to force a consensus on Farmers' Rights at this stage of the negotiations. Still, several delegates have pointed to the rapprochement of the African Group and the EU as a possible way forward.

In starting negotiations on the most complex and contentious aspects, the Commission may have underestimated the difficulties inherent in revising the IU. Numerous delegates expressed concern that focusing exclusively on the toughest aspects of revising the IU is a high-risk strategy - one that may backfire in later stages of the negotiations.

With actual negotiations underway, several delegates have commented that more thought should be given to a proper negotiating structure. For example, the Commission could establish one or more parallel working groups to address other aspects of the IU, such as the relationship with other legal instruments, international cooperation, role of international organizations and information exchange. Reaching agreement on these less contentious provisions within the IU would serve as a confidence-building exercise among delegates.

Nonetheless, the decision to devote the first two days of the meeting to regional consultations signals an effort to better structure the negotiating process. There was general acknowledgment that the negotiations on both scope and access, and Farmers' Rights had resulted in an understanding of regional and inter-regional positions on these highly contentious issues. Delegates saw this as an important advance from consideration of these issues only six months earlier at CGRFA-EX3.

The formal outputs of the IU negotiations at this meeting - heavily bracketed texts on access and Farmers' Rights - cannot capture the progress made during CGRFA-7. The meeting resulted in the clarification of issues, further formulation of interests and consolidation of positions - key ingredients for the effective completion of negotiations for the revision of the IU. The Commission's designation of the IU negotiations as its uppermost priority for the next biennium should provide ample opportunity to build on the progress made at this meeting.

OPEN-ENDED AD HOC GROUP ON BIOSAFETY: The second meeting of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on Biosafety (BSWG-2) met from 12-16 May 1997 in Montreal and continued its discussions on the elaboration of a protocol on safety in biotechnology. Working from *aide-memoires* tabled by Chair Veit Koester (Denmark), delegates discussed a range of issues, including: objectives; procedures for transfer of living modified organisms; competent authorities, information sharing and a clearinghouse mechanism; capacity-building; and risk assessment and management. BSWG-2 also convened contact groups to consider the proposals on definitions of key terms and studies to be completed by the Secretariat in preparation for BSWG-3.

Koester opened BSWG-2 by urging delegates concentrate on core issues and identify the elements of a biosafety protocol for their next session. Under his guidance, delegates displayed a cooperative spirit and agreed to a structure for discussions and the programme of work for this meeting as well as future meetings. After previous meetings characterized by some as "talk shops," many BSWG-2 delegates left

Montreal satisfied they had at last begun to move from generalities to specifics and taken substantial steps toward a protocol. Despite this progress, some fundamental disparities of opinion, particularly on the scope of the protocol, remain, which threaten to derail the process when negotiations get underway.

If the initial questions raised at BSWG-2 on advanced informed agreement (AIA) alone are indicative of negotiations to follow, delegates have a sizable task ahead of them. Delegates discussed whether AIA will be required for all LMO imports or only under certain conditions, whether importing or exporting countries will be responsible for assessing and managing risks from LMOs, which party will be responsible for notifying and taking action in case of unintended movements, whether there will be any legal requirement for compensation or liability placed on producers or exporters of LMOs, and whether LMO-containing commodities will be treated under this protocol at all. Equally lengthy debates are also looming over risk assessment and management, responsibilities for unintended movements of LMOs, compensation and liability, and treatment of commodities produced with LMOs.

The developing countries' insistence on addressing the impact of the movement of LMOs on socio-economic conditions could prove to be the most troublesome. Many, but not all, developing countries and developing country NGOs expressed strong concerns about the ramifications of LMO transfers, such as loss of employment and export markets, uncontrolled growth in the power of multinational corporations and an dangerous expansion of the concept of patentability. In contrast to BSWG-1, which witnessed a rift among developing countries, BSWG-2 saw a seemingly more unified G-77/China, at least in their call for a study on socio-economic issues in response to a developed country call for a study on genetically-modified commodities. While both proposals for studies were ultimately withdrawn in favor of roundtable discussions, the G-77/CHINA exhibited a strong, if fleeting, unity on the issue. Some observers cautioned, however, that several deep-seated divergences of opinion remain unsettled and will likely emerge at future meetings.

Other position shifts were also apparent, most notably in the cooperative demeanor of some developed country delegations that were, as one observer noted, "obstructive" at BSWG-1. Some delegations that previously appeared adamantly opposed to the development of a protocol provided cautiously constructive interventions in Montreal. While it is far too early to assume an emerging consensus on a protocol or a successful outcome, the behavior of some delegations exhibited an acknowledgment of the importance of being "at the table" as the negotiations unfold and consensus on its necessity emerges.

Failure to achieve that consensus would not bode well for the Convention or the state of the world's biological resources. The Convention has devoted a considerable amount of its time and energy to this issue, drawing criticism from some that there are a myriad of more urgent threats to biodiversity, such as habitat loss, overproduction and consumption and increased population pressure. Given the fluctuations in country and regional positions, it is too early to speculate on successful outcome.

In the calculations of some, the likelihood of agreeing on a draft text is great. However, any adopted protocol must still be ratified. Because of the perceived threat of strong international oversight and difficulties with ratification, successfully completing a protocol will be tempered by the fact that its effectiveness is limited if it is too restrictive. Nonetheless, a protocol lacking sufficient restrictions

would prove equally ineffective-leaving delegates between an LMO and hard place. Biotechnology is expanding at an unprecedented rate and any unforeseen consequences may not wait on the adoption or ratification of a protocol.

The Chair invited delegates, for the next meeting, to submit legal texts on some of the items discussed and said the Secretariat will propose text as well, which will hopefully take the process one step further toward a protocol. However, as the potential commitments become more focused, so too must the subjects to which they apply and, as seen at this meeting, consensus is anything but clear. There are a number of difficult questions awaiting future BSWG meetings and the whether any or all of them emerge at the next session meeting remains to be seen. Only one thing remains certain. Given the magnitude of the protocol's possible implications, the urgency of the problem and the relatively short time frame for negotiations, some tough decisions will need to be taken soon. As one observer noted, these global negotiations in particular do not have "all the time in the world."

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF ENVIRONMENT MINISTERS ON BIODIVERSITY AND TOURISM: This conference, held in Berlin from 6-8 March 1997, and was attended by representatives from 18 countries and six international organizations, including UNEP, GEF, the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and World Tourism Organization. The meeting resulted in the Berlin Declaration, which notes that tourism increasingly turns to areas where nature is relatively undisturbed so that a substantial number of the world's remaining natural areas are being developed for tourism activities. The Declaration also expressed concern that tourism may importantly contribute to socio-economic development but can degrade the natural environment, social structure and cultural heritage, and expresses conviction that sustainable forms of tourism have the potential to contribute to the conservation of biological diversity outside and inside protected areas.

Participants agreed to general and specific principles. In general, tourism activities should be environmentally, economically, socially and culturally sustainable and those contributing to the conservation of biological diversity and benefiting local communities should be promoted. Regarding specific principles, participants agreed, *inter alia*, that: inventories of tourism activities and attractions should be developed and coordinated efforts should be developed undertaken to agree on criteria to measure and assess the impacts of tourism on nature and biodiversity; tourism activities that are likely to have significant impacts on nature and biological diversity should be subject to prior environmental impact assessment; tourism activities should be planned with a view to integrate socio-economic, cultural and environmental considerations and should be based on environmentally-friendly concepts.

The Ministers participating at the conference recommended that the COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) develop guidelines or rules for sustainable tourism development on a global level; agree to submit the "Berlin Declaration" to COP-4 of CBD; called upon UNGASS to support this initiative under the CBD and recommend that UNGASS include the subject of sustainable tourism in the future work programme of the CSD; and called on the bilateral and multilateral funding organizations to take into account the principles and guidelines of the "Berlin Declaration." For more information contact: the Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN; tel: +1-212-856-6200; fax: +1-212-856-6280.

AD HOC LIAISON GROUP ON FOREST BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: The meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Liaison Group on Forest

Biological Diversity was convened in Helsinki from 25-28 May by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to identify priority elements for a work programme on forest biological diversity under the Convention. The programme is being prepared in close cooperation with the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF). The meeting focussed on forest ecosystem management, criteria and indicators for best forest management practices, development of technology and traditional knowledge. These areas were identified by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties as the basis for a focused work programme on forest biological diversity under the Convention. Participants recommended that the CBD should promote research in ecologically-sound forest management.

The four-day meeting was hosted by the Government of Finland and attended by representatives from Canada, Colombia, France, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Philippines, Poland, Peru, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, the UK and the US. It was facilitated by Professor Jukka Salo (Finland) and Ms. Amelia Torres Cuadros (Peru). A number of UN agencies, treaty bodies, non-governmental and research organizations were also represented at the meeting. For information contact the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; tel.: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: biodiv@mtl.net. Also try <http://www.biodiv.org>

SIXTH GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FORUM: The application of biodiversity indicators and targets was the subject of a workshop at the Sixth Global Biodiversity Forum (GBF-6). More than 85 scientific, technical and policy experts at the UN Headquarters attended the workshop from 3-4 April 1997, prior to the fifth Session of the CSD. The workshop emphasized the use of targets and indicators as tools to support implementation of Agenda 21 and the CBD. Participants used "targets" to indicate specific goals or end results set at appropriate levels for implementation of agreements. "Indicators" refers to selected measures of progress in achieving such targets.

The workshop developed recommendations for CSD, including a recommendation to launch a process under the CBD to elaborate a universal core set of indicators to be incorporated into reporting processes by the year 2000. Countries would use a global core set to: identify and track biodiversity trends, threats and related phenomena that are regional or global in nature; highlight resource needs related to biodiversity objectives; and manage biological and other related resources that cross national borders. Participants also stressed that the development of adequate capacity is critical to the effective long-term application of targets and indicators and noted that capacity can be most effectively built up through practice and adaptation.

Participants also called for: harmonizing information for use in monitoring; establishing a new global initiative in the applied biological sciences; and continuing the dialogue on biodiversity indicators and targets. For more information contact BIONET; tel: +1-202-547-8902; +1-202-265-0222; e-mail: bionet@igc.apc.org.

SEVENTH GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FORUM: The Seventh Global Biodiversity Forum (GBF-7), which focused on CITES, was held in Harare 6-8 June 1997 and organized by Zimbabwe Trust, IUCN - The World Conservation Union, World Resources Institute (WRI) and the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS). More than 200 participants from over 20 countries attended GBF-7, representing research, education, resource management, industry, government, NGOs, and local and traditional communities. The Forum consisted of three workshops on the following themes: Non-Detrimental Export and Sustainable Use; Community-Based Resource Management; and Access to Plant Resources.

The workshop on Non-Detrimental Export and Sustainable Use identified several areas for consideration by the Conferences of the Parties to both conventions to facilitate action at the international and national levels. In particular, the Parties should explore synergies, such as the possible role of CITES in implementing certain provisions of the CBD, particularly with respect to the impact of international trade. Further, they should strive to promote a coordinated global environment regime in support of efficient, effective and more successful conservation and sustainable use practices. The Parties should also address any potential for conflict between CITES and the CBD, as well as other environmental agreements. The workshop also recommended that the Parties explore positive incentive structures between CITES and the CBD to address the proximate and underlying causes threatening biodiversity. In particular, they should seriously address the issue of tenure and the role of markets for species products and services as positive conservation measures.

The Community Conservation workshop brought together 120 participants, mostly representatives of local community and indigenous peoples' groups, to examine the links between community conservation, CITES and CBD. Participants noted that there is a need to increase the local level of awareness about the two conventions. Participants noted that the potential benefits of CBD have yet to be realized, particularly in terms of community participation and rights. Despite the fact that CBD recognizes the principle of sustainable use, the need to incorporate local and traditional knowledge and the need for equitable distribution of benefits from biodiversity conservation, most local communities have yet to see positive results. With respect to CITES, participants noted that while CITES in some cases helps protect community interests from destructive and unsustainable international demand, it fails to recognize that trade in wildlife can be a positive incentive for community-based conservation and development, and thereby CITES itself can threaten species conservation.

The workshop on Access to Plant Resources recognized that both CBD and CITES focus on conservation and sustainable use, and there is no conflict between the two. CBD is broader and more philosophical, covering all components of biodiversity—genes, species and ecosystems -- while CITES limits itself to species threatened, or potentially threatened, by international trade. While CITES recognizes the economic value of such species, it does not concern itself with how benefits are shared. With CBD, the Parties must endeavor to facilitate access to genetic resources on mutually agreed terms and with prior informed consent of the source country, while ensuring equitable sharing of benefits from use of such resources.

The strength of both conventions will be realized by implementation at the national level. As Parties pass national legislation to implement the CBD, implementation of CITES will need to be harmonized with the requirements of the CBD. In terms of access to plant resources, CITES authorities will need to consult local communities in determining non-detrimental findings and coordinate with national CBD authorities. To enable communities to effectively negotiate terms of access and benefit-sharing, governments and NGOs will need to help in capacity-building. For more information contact BIONET; tel: +1-202-547-8902; +1-202-265-0222; e-mail: bionet@igc.apc.org.

CONFERENCE ON THE COMMERCIAL ISSUES OF BIODIVERSITY: This conference, held from 7-10 April 1997 in San Jose, Costa Rica, was sponsored by the Scientific American and Scherago International and brought together approximately 60 participants from the pharmaceutical industry, academia, environmen-

tal groups and government. The conference heard 21 presentations, including Jose Maria Figueres (President of Costa Rica), Thomas Lovejoy (Smithsonian Institute) and Ismail Serageldin (World Bank) and engaged in panel discussions. The presentations covered the commercial aspects of several topics, including: biotechnology, bioprospecting, investments, intellectual property rights, bioethics, indigenous collective rights and the CBD.

Participants stressed that industries who are bioprospecting, or searching for valuable natural substances, in the tropics should contribute to the protection of forests and the development of neighboring communities. Participants also discussed Costa Rica's National Institute for Biodiversity (INBio), which is currently working with companies that are bioprospecting in the region. In exchange for samples of specific plants and animals, the institute receives a percentage of any profit made from marketable substances that result from that research. A number of developing country participants expressed interest in developing a similar programme in their countries. For more information contact Scherago International; tel: +1-212-643-1750; fax: +1-212-643-1758; e-mail: biodiversity@scherago.com. Also try <http://www.scherago.com/biodiv.html>.

/DESERTIFICATION

PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE: This conference was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 12-21 March 1997 and adopted eight resolutions. Regarding the preliminary assessment of the implementation of Resolution 5/1 on urgent action for Africa, the Conference invited all African countries, sub-regional and regional organization, NGOs and CBOs to provide all useful information to the CCD Secretariat for the final report to be presented at COP-1. Participants stressed the importance of information concerning: partnership arrangements or agreements concluded during the interim period from 1994 to date; the exact percentage in comparison to the total national budget earmarked by national government during the interim period for the implementation of the Resolution in 1994-1997; resources, including financial, technical and otherwise received from developed countries; status of the process towards the organization of the National Forum and the implication of NGOs and CBOs on the elaboration of National Action Programmes; and special difficulties on implementation of the Resolution on Urgent Action for Africa.

On the process of elaboration and implementation of the African Regional Action Programme, participants recommended that the joint African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) Secretariat and ADB participate in the actions initiated with a view to accelerating the process of developing a Regional Action Programme for Africa. They also called upon the CCD Secretariat to facilitate the Regional Action Programme elaboration process and recommended the pooling of efforts aimed at supporting regional cooperation in priority areas of action, as identified in the Convention in its Annex for Africa.

The resolution on preparations for the first Conference of the Parties (COP-1): invites the COP to consider the establishment of a subsidiary body entitled "Committee on the Review of the Implementation of the Convention;" invites all African countries to submit their nominations for the roster of experts; stresses that the COP, in appointing its Bureau, shall pay due regard to the need for equitable geographic distribution and adequate representation of affected Parties, particularly those in Africa; and stresses that the

COP-1 should accredit African NGOs that had previously participated in the work of the INCD.

The resolution on financial mechanisms and resources for the implementation of the CCD suggests the establishment of a Regional Ad Hoc Contact Group at the highest political level that would meet Heads of State or Government of developed countries with a view to finding appropriate solutions to outstanding negotiating issues on the Global Mechanism. It also recommends that the Contact Group use UNGASS as an opportunity meet and deliberate further on outstanding issues on the Global Mechanism. On preparations for UNGASS, the Pan African Conference stresses that all African countries, relevant sub-regional organizations and NGOs concentrate their efforts during the forthcoming five years on sectoral issues, such as desertification and drought, freshwater, food security and sustainable agriculture. Cross-sectoral issues should include eradication of poverty, sustainable human settlements, health and mutually supportive trade, environment and sustainable development. Regarding the means of implementation, participants called for a focus on financial resources, capacity building and transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

Participants also called upon the international community at UNGASS to consider as a matter of urgency the establishment of an International Financial Mechanism to address sectoral issues including eradication of poverty, sustainable human settlements, changing consumption and production patterns and development of environmentally sound traditional and local technology, knowledge, know-how and practices. Resolutions were also adopted concerning: the programme budget of the COP, the physical location of the permanent secretariat and the organization of the COP-1. For information contact Mansour N'Diaye, CCD; tel: + 41-22-979-9111; fax: + 41-22-979-9030; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.ch.

MEETING ON SUB-REGIONAL ACTION PROGRAMMES FOR THE SADC COUNTRIES: This meeting, held from 3-5 March 1997 in Maseru, Lesotho focused on the elaboration of Sub-Regional Actions Plans (SRAP) projects and activities, reviewed the six priority areas and assessed the scope of each. On capacity-building and institutional strengthening, participants recommended the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia as the lead institution for facilitating the capacity building of sub-regional, national and local institutions. The Foundation will facilitate the development and exchange of educational materials and improvements in environmental curricula, take inventory of existing institutions in the sub-region and strengthen them as necessary and organize training programmes for the sub-region. On the strengthening of Early Warning Systems, participants called for a review of existing institutions, such as the Programme in GIS/Environmental Information System, by SADC-ELMS. On cooperation in sustainable management of shared natural resources and ecosystems, respective SADC sectors will implement projects under the coordination of SADC-ELMS, which should ensure that desertification is addressed with these sectors and that they are aware of their responsibilities in implementing the CCD.

Participants also considered the financing mechanism for SRAP and recommended that SADC-ELMS: identify and formulate projects and programme proposals that will transcend national interests; identify resources from the sub-region and determine the gaps for supplementary funding from external sources; review current projects and reorient ongoing programmes as appropriate to align them with the CCD; conduct a feasibility study on the applicability of a flexible facilitation fund; explore the relevance of a sub-regional

lead donor; and develop ways to facilitate private sector contributions to the facilitation fund and other SRAP activities.

Participants also considered aspects of the Multi-Disciplinary Scientific and Technical Consultative Committee (MSTCC). On its functions, the MSTCC should provide a detailed survey of research priorities to be undertaken within the sub-region in support of SRAP implementation and propose modalities for effective scientific and technical cooperation. MSTCC should also, *inter alia*: give advice to SADC-ELMS on research priorities and the transfer, acquisition and adaptation of technologies; facilitate the establishment and/or strengthening of scientific information data bases; and assist SADC-ELMS in identifying technology and practices relevant to the fight against desertification and drought mitigation. For more information contact Mansour N'Diaye, CCD; tel: + 41-22-979-9111; fax: + 41-22-979-9030; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.ch.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM AND WORKSHOP "COMBATING DESERTIFICATION: CONNECTING SCIENCE WITH COMMUNITY ACTION": The International Symposium and Workshop on "Combating Desertification: Connecting Science with Community Action" convened in Tucson, Arizona, USA from 12-16 May 1997, under the sponsorship of the United States Bureau of Land Management and the International Arid Lands Consortium. The objective of the Symposium was to allow a significant exchange of ideas between the developers of science and technology related to combating desertification and the community-level decision makers dealing with the problems of desertification and drought on a day-to-day basis. Approximately 200 participants from 32 countries, representing the scientific and academic communities, government agencies and non-governmental organizations, attended the Symposium.

During the week, 18 scientific papers were presented on the Symposium's six topics: stressors, indicators and processes; monitoring and assessing techniques; lessons learned at the community-level; socio-economic and human dimensions; knowledge sharing; and regional aspects of desertification. Additional research on these topics was offered through the submission of 140 poster presentations and papers that were available to participants. The main work of the Symposium was carried out in small discussion groups organized around the six topics. These groups identified obstacles and offered recommendations related to these themes. A number of participants remained in Arizona for an additional week-long "training package" to learn about efforts related to desertification in the southwestern US.

The International Symposium's themes of dryland degradation, science and community action were welcomed by participants as important and timely and will undoubtedly activate thinking at a time when the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) has just entered into force and is preparing for its first Conference of Parties. The CCD's unique emphasis on bottom-up approaches and scientific cooperation were the driving force behind this symposium, whose contribution to further raising the profile and recognition of dryland issues was commended by participants. The 1997 Symposium linked participants that attended the 1994 Symposium and newcomers into a larger informal network of researchers from universities, government institutes, aid agencies and a few NGOs working on land degradation in over 30 countries.

By bringing together natural scientists, the Symposium's deliberations will likely enrich CCD debates on arid land agriculture and development with concerns pertaining to ecological parameters, such as ecosystem functions and biodiversity. During the Sympos-

sium, complexities surfaced regarding divergent paradigms of ecosystem change, proposals for alternative dryland use and distinctions to be made between stressors, endpoints, threshold indicators and subtle day-to-day degradation processes, demonstrating that the "science" of desertification is far from complete. At times, even the definitions of "desertification" and "community" were subject to different interpretations by participants. Discussions revealed that dryland ecology and operational mechanisms to merge science with informal local knowledge require further exploration.

The contributions of the policy makers and social scientists present were calls for developing socio-economic and policy indicators of desertification and even more calls for linking science to communities through participatory, action-oriented research and development. Amb. Ryan's contrasting of the "technology fix" paradigm to the bottom-up approach espoused by the CCD captured this concept. Several Symposium participants emphasized the need for a paradigm shift by exploring existing obstacles and initiating debate about what such a shift would entail. It proved difficult, however, for the Symposium to clarify precisely what actions and institutional frameworks would be needed to make bottom-up approaches a reality. Many commented that the greatest accomplishment of the Symposium was that participants were able to begin to learn from each other's experience and approaches to dryland management. The impact of this learning process will be magnified if all participants respond to the Symposium Chair's challenge to tell at least one colleague about the lessons they learned.

For some, the important roles that the CCD and the Symposium ascribe to scientists in connecting their science with community action may not be the right question to be addressing. The point, some suggested, is rather to address socio-economic factors causing land degradation and to focus on issues of governance, institutions and appropriate policy frameworks and roles for national and local governments and civil society in dryland management. While many of the recommendations formulated by the groups emphasized the importance of sensitizing scientists to local concerns and traditional knowledge and practices, it became apparent in many instances that this was problematic. Scientists are often not aware of or focused on policy-level efforts and initiatives to address desertification, nor do they necessarily think it is scientists' place to take on the task of communicating and consulting with communities. This revealed the considerable gaps between science, policy and community action. The recommendation for NGOs to serve as mediators between scientists, policy makers and communities in this regard provided a tangible and constructive recommendation for how to connect science with community action.

Relative to other environmental issues being considered at the intergovernmental level, desertification has received disproportionately less attention from scientists, political officials and the public. The 1994 and 1997 Symposia have contributed to increasing the awareness of desertification by bringing together policy makers, scientists and, to a lesser degree, representatives of communities affected by desertification, to inform each other and the wider international community that there is a considerable level of interest and activity on the problem. Although the recommendations may not be ground-breaking or explicitly operational, they reflect an awareness of the complexities driving land degradation and a recognition that much remains to be learned, paradigms need to be shifted, thinking must be reoriented, action must be taken in a more collaborative manner, and the dialogue must be opened to voices emanating from local communities.

/CHEMICAL MANAGEMENT

PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT: The third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-3) for an International Legally Binding Instrument for the Application of the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade was held from 26-30 May 1997 in Geneva. Delegates considered the revised text of draft articles for the instrument as well as proposals from the US, Canada and the European Community in Plenary, a Technical Working Group and a Legal Drafting Group. Additional negotiating sessions every evening and a number of contact groups were also convened.

Considerable debate centered on the scope of the proposed Convention; the brackets scattered liberally throughout the text denote a fundamental disagreement on the purpose of the entire PIC negotiations. Notwithstanding questions of scope, delegates face a substantial task in finalizing a treaty by the end of the year. While a net loss or gain of brackets is difficult to gauge, the brackets remaining represent a considerable hurdle with only one INC remaining and the chance for some "fine tuning" before the diplomatic conference in December.

Transforming an existing voluntary procedure into a legally binding agreement sounds like a simple task. It isn't. Precedents for such a task are scarce in international environmental negotiations, and the mandate given to this INC by the UNEP Governing Council, therefore, looms large in the current negotiations. Considerable debate centered on the scope of the proposed Convention; the brackets scattered liberally throughout the text denote a fundamental disagreement on the purpose of the entire PIC negotiations. Some observers noted that the EC was seeking to build a broader framework for chemical management, and thus tried, where possible, to extend the scope of the Convention beyond the existing voluntary scheme.

Several delegates said a proper framework agreement could not be created simply by broadening the scope of PIC. The EC, however, noted the INC was not convened to simply "photocopy the London Guidelines" and send them to the Legal Drafting Group. Failing to address a broader picture would effectively turn a blind eye to the experience gained through the voluntary scheme, and miss an opportunity to combat a growing global threat. Expected support for this position did not emerge from developing countries, with many of them noting that the administrative and technical obligations in a convention of narrower scope would be challenging enough. Unless there is resolution of this fundamental rift, further progress will be difficult. Many expressed the hope that the intersessional negotiations would provide a forum for reconciling the positions. The traditional North-South divide familiar in other international environmental negotiations did not emerge on most issues, except for financial provisions. Many countries — North and South — are both exporters and importers of hazardous chemicals and pesticides and the divisive issues of differentiated responsibilities have not ruled the day for what will be, in essence, an information-sharing agreement. Nevertheless, as negotiations progress and potential obligations become clearer, developing countries could likely send a message similar to that sent recently in other fora; namely, that discussions of obligations without coinciding discussions on financial and technical assistance were pointless. Several obligations presently exist under other international environmental agreements and more may be on the way. Some developing country delegates appeared concerned that this Convention could potentially increase the strain on their already limited regulatory abilities.

Other groups were also concerned about the relationship of a PIC instrument to existing international agreements. Several environmental NGOs carefully monitored the Legal Drafting Group's deliberations on Article 19 bis, the so-called "GATT-saving clause". The clause specifies that nothing in the Convention would alter the rights and responsibilities of the Parties under other agreements to which they are Parties. Under this wording, any conflict between the Convention and WTO rules would be settled in favor of the latter. The current draft article contains bracketed language noting "except where the exercise of those rights or performance of those obligations would cause serious damage or threat to human health or the environment" — language drawn from the CBD. NGOs were worried that a weak precedent in these negotiations might bode badly for the future POPs negotiations, and some delegations wondered whether the language of a weak clause in PIC might frustrate the WTO's development of a constructive approach to addressing legal conflicts with multilateral environmental agreements.

Notwithstanding questions of scope, delegates face a substantial task in finalizing a treaty by December. While a net loss or gain of brackets is difficult to gauge, the brackets remaining represent a considerable hurdle with only one INC remaining and the chance for some fine tuning before the diplomatic conference. In the opinion of at least one delegate, the progress at INC-3 was welcome but the process remained "one INC behind". Much effort to reach agreement on some of the outstanding issues during the intersessional period will be needed if INC-4 is to be successful.

Several delegates noted that progress in all three INCs had been slowed by the "inexperience effect", estimating that a third of the negotiators in INC-3 had not attended the previous two Conferences and time intended for meaningful negotiations was spent revisiting old debates. Others complained that some delegates dwelt on points irrelevant to the issues at hand. Some observers were hopeful, however, that as the negotiations neared completion, familiar faces would increasingly return to the negotiations.

Time constraints, along with several other issues, provide a challenge to completing an agreement by the end of the year. For example, while financial resources and mechanisms are a key component of any international agreement, delegates in this process only began serious discussions on this issue at this meeting. Moreover, the choice of administrative structure will have implications not only for the financing of daily administrative costs but more importantly for the resources needed to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement their legally binding obligations under PIC. As was noted by the Chair of the informal contact group on this issue during the final Plenary, however, there is no agreement yet as to whether contributions should be mandatory or voluntary, whether existing mechanisms should be used, or whether a new mechanism (such as a trust fund) should be created.

Second, developing countries remain concerned about their ability to meet the obligations of a legally binding procedure. In their opinion, they need the legitimacy and authority that a legally binding agreement would give them in to secure sufficient domestic resources in order to successfully implement the Convention. At the same time, however, their lack of capacity means that the obligations of such an agreement should not be overly burdensome. This will require a careful balance of commitments undertaken by both exporting and importing Parties as well as by the provision of appropriate information and resources for capacity building.

Lastly, some participants raised the question of the relationship between the voluntary procedure and the Convention, once the Con-

vention enters into force. Delegates deleted a reference to non-Parties but there was no clarification as to how those who remain in the voluntary procedure should be treated as compared to those who become Parties.

With only six months left to go before the PIC Convention is due to be adopted, the negotiators have a formidable task ahead of them. While perhaps lacking some of the fundamental North-South political divisions that haunt other international environmental regimes, the negotiations for a legally binding PIC procedure nevertheless reveal that the road to sound chemicals management, as well as sustainable development, is neither straight nor narrow. The PIC negotiations are only the first step down this road. With a request to begin negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on POPs in early 1998, delegates in this INC are under considerable pressure to fulfil their current mandate by the end of 1997 so the next stage of the process can begin.

/WILDLIFE

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES (CITES): The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) held its tenth session (COP-10) in Harare, Zimbabwe from 9-20 June 1997. COP-10 decided to permit some highly controlled exports of elephant ivory by transferring the elephant populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe from Appendix I, which completely bans commercial trade, to Appendix II, which allows strictly managed international trade. The decision will allow trade in ivory, which was banned in 1989, to resume on a limited basis in 1999. The trade will be tightly regulated through strict international verification and control procedures. If certain conditions are met, experimental quotas will be authorized allowing each country to export to Japan a specified amount from the existing legal stocks.

Proposals by Japan and Norway to transfer to Appendix II five populations of grey, minke and Bryde's whales from Appendix I were not accepted. The debate centered on scientific arguments, the issues of sustainable use, possible enforcement problems, the precautionary principle and the existence of a commercial whaling moratorium by the International Whaling Commission.

The whole family of sturgeon, the basis of the multi-million dollar caviar industry, was added to Appendix II. Sturgeon populations have been dangerously depleted in recent years owing to pollution as well as overfishing, much of which has been illegal. Five sturgeon species threatened by trade, as well as 18 look-alike species were listed. This action was designed to give the sturgeon range States, such as the Russian Federation, Iran and other States bordering the Caspian Sea, the tools and international support they will need to regulate the international caviar trade and ensure sustainability.

Delegates to COP-10 rejected a proposal to transfer the Cuban population of hawksbill turtles from Appendix I to II. Proposals to include big-leaf mahogany in Appendix II and transfer Asian and European populations of the brown bear to Appendix I were also rejected. Nearly 75 proposals to amend the CITES appendices were considered. For information contact the CITES Capacity Building Unit in Geneva; tel: +41-22-979-9139; fax: +41-22-797-3417; e-mail: cites@unep.ch. Also try: <http://www.unep.ch/cites.html>.

CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES: The Fifth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-5) to the Convention on Migratory Species (COP-5), held from 10-16 April 1997 in Geneva, added 40 species of wildlife — including various flamingos, dol-

phins, albatrosses and waterfowl — to an international listing of migratory animals that require stronger international protection. The meeting also adopted a resolution highlighting the urgent need for action to protect the mountain gorilla of Central Africa, the Siberian Crane and other species that are highly endangered.

COP-5 was attended by 43 Parties as well as 38 observing States, many of which are considering joining the Convention, plus observers from over 20 non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations. Some 170 delegates and experts participated. The Convention's Scientific Council met from 7-8 April, the Standing Committee on 9 April, and the COP from 10-16 April.

The 20 animals facing the most immediate risk of extinction were admitted to Appendix I of the Convention. Among them are a number of African-Eurasian waterfowl, including the Aquatic Warbler, Lesser White-fronted Goose, Red-breasted Goose, Marbled Teal, Ferruginous Duck, Steller's Eider, Lesser Kestrel and Sociable Plover. The Greater Spotted and Imperial Eagles were also listed. Hunting, the destruction of wetlands and other habitat, and tourism and other human disturbances are among the threats to these species.

Newly listed endangered species from South America include the La Plata Dolphin (threatened by accidental fishing catches and by habitat destruction), South Andean deer (with perhaps 2,100 individuals remaining in Argentina and Chile), Southern River and Southern Marine Otters, Humbolt Penguin (with 6,500-9,500 breeding pairs left in the wild), Andean and Puna Flamingos (threatened by habitat destruction and pollution), and Olrog's Gull (with 2,300 breeding pairs left). From southern Africa, the Whitewinged Flufftail and the Blue Swallow (perhaps 200 individuals left) were placed in Appendix I, as was the Amsterdam Albatross of the South Indian Ocean (about 90 individuals).

The animals whose "unfavorable conservation status" requires the development of international conservation agreements within the framework of the Convention on Migratory Species were added to Appendix II. Among them are 12 species of Albatross -- Wandering, Royal, Waved, Black-footed, Laysan, Black-browed, Buller's, Shy, Yellow-nosed, Grey-headed, Sooty and the Light-mantled Sooty. Nesting on ocean islands, albatrosses are particularly vulnerable to feral animals (cats, rats, goats), drift nets and other fishing activities, and pollution from pesticides, oil and plastics.

South American species added to Appendix II were the Burmeister porpoise (killed in particular as by-catch in tuna fishing operations), Chilean and Dusky dolphins (fishing and habitat destruction), and the Tucuman Amazon parrot. Southern Africa species were the African Penguin (oil pollution, cats and other predators, and habitat destruction), and the Whitewinged Flufftail and Blue Swallow (listed in both Appendixes I and II).

In addition to updating the appendixes, delegates evaluated the progress being made by the various species-specific agreements that have been concluded or launched within the CMS framework. They also examined a number of critical administrative and procedural issues. For further information, please contact the CMS Secretariat, Bonn; tel: +49-228-815-2401/2; fax: +49-228-815-2449; e-mail: cms@unep.ch. Also try <http://www.wcmc.org.uk/cms>. Also contact: Michael Williams; UNEP; tel: +41-22-979-9242/9111; fax: +41-22-797-3464; e-mail: mwilliams@unep.ch

/OCEANS AND COASTS

CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF SEA: The States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) held their seventh meeting on 19 - 23 May and adopted the budget of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea and the Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the Tribunal. The session also dealt with a number of other issues, including the rules of procedure of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, as well as amendments to its own rules of procedures. The States Parties held a brief discussion on the future role of their meetings in monitoring developments relating to the oceans and the law of the sea. It was decided to ask the Secretary-General to look into the issue of coordination of matters relating to the law of the sea, and to keep the item on its agenda for the next session.

The budget of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (document SPLOS/CRP.13) was adopted after the President of the meeting of States parties, Helmut Tuerk (Austria), presented the report of the working group, which undertook informal consultations on the original draft as proposed by the Tribunal. The meeting adopted the draft agreement on the privileges and immunities of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, further deciding to request the Secretary-General to act as depositary of the Agreement. The Agreement will be opened for signature on 1 July and remain open for a period of 24 months. The draft agreement has been subject to discussion in an open-ended working group, under the chairmanship of Martin Smejkal (Czech Republic), for several sessions of the meetings of States Parties. At the sixth session, in March, the Agreement was nearly completed with the exception of a few outstanding issues, which were resolved at the just concluded meeting.

In a brief discussion of the future role of the meeting of States Parties in monitoring developments relating to the law of the sea, a number of delegations underscored the need to enhance the role played by the meeting and the secretariat, through the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, in the coordination of the various activities related to the oceans and the law of the sea. The representative of Israel, for example, suggested that a report be prepared on the scope of activities of specialized agencies as they relate to the Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the efforts undertaken to carry out those activities.

The US said the combined expertise of the meeting of States Parties would be highly relevant during the General Assembly debate on the law of the sea. Consequently, experts should be involved in the preparation of the annual resolution on the law of the sea. He noted that recent decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development had confirmed the role of UNCLOS in the overall framework of the law of the sea. He also said that the report of the meeting should reflect that the Division on Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea performed an important function in drawing together information on all aspects of oceans into a comprehensive format. He agreed that the report on the Law of the Sea should be exempt from the length imposed on other reports of the United Nations.

A number of delegations, including New Zealand, the UK, the Russian Federation, India, Norway and Mexico spoke in support of the US. It was also suggested that the Secretary-General prepare a report for future consideration by the meeting of States parties concerning the future role of their meetings. It was decided, however, that the Secretary-General should look into the issue and that the item be considered once again at the next meeting. For information contact doalos@un.org or try <http://www.un.org/Depts/los>.

CONVENTION FOR MARINE ENVIRONMENT OF EAST AFRICA: The Parties to the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region (Nairobi Convention) formally approved the establishment of the Regional Coordinating Unit for the Eastern African Action Plan at their first meeting held in Mahe, Seychelles, on 17-18 March 1997. The first meeting was marked by strong statements of commitment towards regional cooperation and integration in all matters related to the sustainable development of the marine and coastal environment of East Africa. The Parties approved the 1997-1998 workplan for the Coordinating Unit, located in the Seychelles, and decided that an ad hoc technical and legal working group should be established to consider the feasibility and modalities of updating the Nairobi Convention and its related Protocols. The EU requested closer collaboration with UNEP on several projects related to the implementation of the Nairobi Convention and Action Plan.

UNEP will continue supporting the implementation of the priority actions determined by Governments for the protection and sustainable management of the marine and coastal environment of the Indian Ocean. The establishment of a Coordinating Unit in the Seychelles and the commencement of its operations will facilitate this task. For information contact Jim Sniffen, UNEP, New York; tel: +1-212-963-8094; fax: +1-212-963-7341; e-mail: sniffenj@un.org.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY: The GEF Council met from 30 April – 1 May 1997 in Washington, DC, US. Mahmoud Ould El-Ghaouth (Mauritania) was elected Chair of the meeting. Statements were made to the Council by Claude Ducret (CBD) and Tahar Hadj-Sadok (FCCC). On the FCCC, the Council encouraged the Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies to make every possible effort to assist in the preparation of national communications by recipient countries for purposes of the third session of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997.

Jurgen Holst (UN Division for Sustainable Development) made a statement informing the Council of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and preparations underway for UNGASS. Dr. Pier Vellinga (STAP), also made a statement to the Council on the work undertaken by STAP, and responded to questions. In commenting on Dr. Vellinga's statement, the Council expressed its interest in the revision of the STAP roster, and requested STAP to seek to include experts with cross-cutting expertise as well as individuals with expert knowledge of the interests of local stakeholder groups, such as indigenous people and farmers. The Council also requested that when STAP undertakes a selective review of projects, the Implementing Agencies provide the Council with information on how they are responding to the recommendations of the STAP review as well as the project's technical review. This issue should be addressed on a generic level in the issues paper to be prepared by the Secretariat for the November Council meeting on the experience of the Implementing Agencies in incorporating the work of STAP in general in their activities, follow-up to the work undertaken to date, and plans for publication and dissemination of STAP's work.

Regarding replenishment, the Council considered the Summary of the Co-Chairs Planning Meeting for the Second GEF Replenishment, held in Paris on 12 March 1997 (GEF/C.9/Inf.6). The Council noted the proposed meeting schedule and work plan for the replenishment. In reviewing the summary of the planning meeting, Mem-

bers stressed the importance of the replenishment of the GEF as the leading multilateral funding mechanism for the global environment. The Council also noted the importance of equitable burden sharing, and the need to address the question of arrears in commitments to the GEF Trust Fund. NGO's indicated the interest and willingness of the NGO community to assist in support of the replenishment process.

On the Work programme, the Council agreed that the Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies should develop a standard project format, based on the logical project framework, so as to streamline project documentation. In reviewing the standard project format, consideration should be given to using clear definitions for project financing other than that provided by the GEF, which among other things, distinguish between the Implementing Agencies and other co-financing. This should assist the Council, *inter alia*, in understanding the extent to which GEF projects are helping in mainstreaming global environment objectives in the regular activities of the Implementing Agencies.

In the view of many Members of the Council, the projects should also include, as appropriate, more information on: the public participation process, issues raised through this process and plans for public involvement in project implementation; the project's economic and environmental sustainability as well as its operational viability; how the project relates to the GEF operational programs, national strategies, action plans and other national activities, and planned and existing projects of the Implementing Agencies and other development organizations; and incremental costs analysis, reference to global environmental benefits and indicators of cost effectiveness. Gender concerns should be appropriately integrated into the projects and project development.

In the biodiversity focal area, the Council called for an appropriate balance between activities addressing conservation and those addressing sustainable use and welcomed the collaboration of the Convention Secretariat and the GEF Secretariat in preparing a proposal on the means to address the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of genetic resources, including assistance to developing country Parties.

The Council also requested the Secretariat, in consultation with the Implementing Agencies, to prepare for Council review a note on the issues of intellectual property rights and potential use by other industries of technology developed with GEF financing. The Council also requested the Secretariat to examine closely the share of GEF financing in total project costs and the incremental costs analysis in relation to the size of the project financing, particularly in the case of climate change projects involving large GEF grants.

On the GEF corporate budget for FY98, the Council welcomed the shift in focus from project development to project implementation as the portfolio matures. The Council nevertheless expressed concern over the rate of growth in the administrative budget. The Secretariat was requested to prepare a note for the November 1997 Council meeting on disbursements, their linkage to administrative costs and projected trends in costs associated with project implementation. This note should provide clarification of the differences in disbursement rates among the Implementing Agencies.

On the principles for GEF financing of targeted research, the Council made the following comments: targeted research proposals should include a strategy for disseminating the results of the research; targeted research proposals concerning biodiversity and climate change should be consistent with the guidance of the relevant Conference of the Parties; there should be coordination between GEF targeted research and the scientific and technical subsidiary

bodies of the Conventions so as to avoid duplication of effort. It was agreed that projects should be primarily carried out by recipient country research institutions. However, when appropriate, research institutions from developed countries could assist in project activities, particularly through twinning arrangements with recipient country institutions. Such twinning arrangements should contribute to capacity building and training of recipient country experts.

The Council had an extensive discussion on the monitoring and evaluation work program (GEF/C.8/4/Rev.1), and in particular, on the scope and timing of the overall performance evaluation. It was clarified that the target of the evaluations are GEF policies and GEF country-based activities. One Member expressed concern over the preparation of new studies and analyses. The Council also considered follow-up action to STAP workshop on land degradation, the forthcoming first GEF Assembly. The Secretariat is invited to explore with the Implementing Agencies possibilities for providing the Council with regular information on GEF project proposals in the pipeline. For more information contact Marie Morgan at the GEF Secretariat, tel: +1-202-473-1128; fax: +1-202-522-3240. The GEF Web Site is at: <http://www.worldbank.org/html/gef>.

UN COMMISSIONS

COMMISSION ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: The sixteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements met from 28 April – 7 May in Nairobi and adopting a series of 27 resolutions geared toward preparing the UN Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) for the major role it was assigned in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Global Plan of Action adopted at the second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). The Commission -- which was established in 1977 and consists of 58 members elected for a four-year term -- sets policies and priorities for Habitat and oversees the work programme and budget of the Centre. The sixteenth session of the Commission was opened by President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya. At the closing meeting, the Executive Director of Habitat, Mr. Wally N'Dow, said that the session had marked a new beginning for Habitat.

In December 1996, the General Assembly designated Habitat as a focal point for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and called for a comprehensive and in-depth assessment of the Centre with a view to its revitalization. The Commission was entrusted with the task of deciding what form that revitalization would take, which was one of the most contentious issues during the session. In a resolution entitled "revitalization of the Habitat Centre," the Commission set out guiding principles and recommendations to focus the work of the Centre and improve its efficiency. The resolution makes several recommendations with regard to general and administrative management, finance, staff policies and programme management. It also requests the UN to provide Habitat with specialists in finance and management to support the expanding role of the Centre.

In December 1996, the General Assembly requested the Commission to review its working methods in order to involve the representatives of local authorities or international associations of local authorities, as appropriate, and the relevant actors of civil society, particularly the private sector and NGOs. Although there was consensus at the Commission that the involvement of local authorities,

NGOs, the private sector and other members of civil society was vital to Habitat's work, several delegations were of the view that Habitat's proposal to expand membership of the Commission to include partners from civil society was not "legally tenable." However, delegations agreed that there was a need to involve members of civil society in an ongoing process of consultation and in implementing projects in member countries.

In a resolution entitled "review of the working methods of the Commission on Human Settlements: the involvement of partners", the Commission decided that at its future sessions, it would provide opportunities for partners to engage in a dialogue among themselves and with governments. The dialogues would serve as an input to the deliberations of the Commission.

In a resolution on its future role, the Commission decided that, as a subsidiary body of ECOSOC, it would assist it in monitoring, reviewing and assessing progress made in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The Commission further decided that at its seventeenth and eighteenth sessions, it would focus on monitoring the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and assessing its impact.

On Habitat's activities towards the realization of the human right to housing, the Commission decided that a joint programme be established between Habitat and the Centre for Human Rights in order to assist Member States with the implementation of their commitments in the Habitat Agenda to ensure the full and progressive realization of that right. The Commission decided that it would focus on local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, with particular attention to Agenda 21, and international cooperation for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at its next session in 1999.

On the work plan, the Commission endorsed the overall orientation of Habitat's medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 toward implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Its main objective was to establish a general framework for the Centre's role in promoting and supporting the Habitat Agenda's Plan of Action. Several delegations had expressed the need for a clear linkage of the 1998-1999 work programme with the Habitat Agenda and the financial aspects of its implementation. The Commission decided to request Habitat to prepare, by 15 June, a revised work programme that would take into account the revised budget of the Centre.

The proposed budget for Habitat was the subject of considerable debate during the session. Habitat noted that while the overall level of voluntary contributions to the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation continued to grow, the level of non-earmarked contributions continued to decline, thereby affecting various activities of the Centre. However, the Centre had introduced a variety of measures to reduce expenditure and was preparing a fund-raising strategy based on the new medium-term work plan. The Commission approved a budget of \$24 million for the biennium 1996-1997 and a budget of \$21 million for the following biennium. During the session, 23 governments pledged contributions to the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation.

For more information, contact Christina Engfeldt, UNCHS (Habitat); tel: + 254-2- 623067/3149; fax: + 254-2-624060; e-mail: christina.engfeldt@unchs.orrg or Rasna Warah, Information Officer, UNCHS (Habitat); tel: + 254-2-623988/3147; fax: + 254-2-624333; e-mail: rasna.warah@unchs.org.

UPCOMING

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON A NEW STRATEGY FOR WATER ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH: An International Symposium on A New Strategy for Water Environmental Research (ANSWER'97) will be held in Wuxi-Nanjing, China from 20-25 July 1997. For information: fax: +81-775-26-4803; e-mail: kumagai@lbri.go.jp.

COLLOQUIUM OF MAYORS ON GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH: The Colloquium of Mayors on Governance for Sustainable Growth and Equity will be held from 28-30 July 1997 at UN Headquarters in New York. The Colloquium is being organized in conjunction with three other fora: the Ministerial/Senior Officials forum, Forum for Parliamentarians and Civil Society Organizations Dialogue. The Colloquium is a follow-up activity of Habitat II. For information contact Jonas Rabinovitch, UNDP; tel: +1-212-906-6791; Fax: +1-212-906-6973; e-mail: jonas.rabinovitch@undp.org.

US-CHINA CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT: The US-China Conference on the Environment will be held from 5-8 August in Beijing, China. The conference is designed to share best practices among academics, practitioners, and representatives of business and industry that will address environmental issues and promote economic development. For information: e-mail: global@goodnet.com. Also try <http://www.goodnet.com/~global>.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE TERRITORIAL APPLICATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The NIKAN Conference will be held from 10 - 14 September 1997 in Jonquiere, Quebec, Canada. The NIKAN ("future" in the Ilnu language) Conference seeks to share sustainable development experiments and serve as platform for understanding territorial realities and measuring the effects of local actions on global issues. The meeting will include speakers, workshops, plenary sessions and theme visits showing experiments in sustainable development. For information contact the NIKAN Conference Secretariat, 350 cote du College, C.P. 101, Alma (Quebec) Canada G8B 5V6; tel: +1-418-668-7533; fax:+1-418-668-3466; e-mail: info@nikan.org. Also try <http://www.nikan.org>.

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON ECO-TECHNOLOGIES: This workshop, entitled "Implementation of Eco-Technologies," will be held from 22-24 September 1997 in Graz, Austria, is organized by the International Ecological Engineering Society (IEES) and supported by the Austrian Ministries for Environment & Family and for Agriculture & Forestry. The meeting will address issues such as eco-social market economy, strategies for eco-technologies as a new discipline, and eco-restructuring of anthropo- and eco-sphere. For information contact Prof. Anton Moser, Institute of Biotechnology; tel.+43-316-692097-0; fax +43-316-692097-10; e-mail: f543mosr@mbox.tu-graz.ac.at.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE SOCIETY FOR HUMAN ECOLOGY: The Ninth International Conference

of the Society for Human Ecology will be held at the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine from 15-18 October 1997. The topic will be "Local and Global Communities: Complexity and Responsibility." For information contact the Society for Human Ecology; tel: +1-207-288-5015; e-mail: she-conference@ecology.coa.edu.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON URBAN, REGIONAL, ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND INFORMATICS: The International Conference on Urban, Regional, Environmental Planning and Informatics to Planning in an Era of Transition will be held in Athens, Greece from 22-24 October 1997. For more information contact Prof. Dimitri Georgoulis, National Technical University; tel: +30-1-772-1591; fax: +30-1-772-1587; e-mail: dimi@upln.ntua.gr.

FOURTH EUROPEAN ROUNDTABLE ON CLEANER PRODUCTION: The 4th European Roundtable on Cleaner Production (ERCP 97) will take place in Oslo, Norway from 1-3 November 1997. This meeting intends to contribute to the critical evaluation and dissemination of cleaner production options and programmes and to highlight the mechanisms aimed at accomplishing the shift from supply driven to demand driven cleaner production. For information contact: Jostein Myrberg, National Institute of Technology Akersveien; 24 CP.O. Box 2608, St. Hanshaugen, N-0131 Oslo; tel: +47 22 86 51 07; fax: +47 22 11 12 03; e-mail: myrj@teknologisk.no. Also try the Conference web site at <http://www.teknologisk.no/ercp97>.

WORLD CONGRESS ON ECOTOURISM: The World Congress on Ecotourism will be held in Fotalaza, Ceara, Brazil from 19-22 November 1997. For information contact BIOSFERA, Rio de Janeiro; tel: +55-21-221-0155; fax: +55-21-262-5946.

IEP '98: Issues in Environmental Pollution (IEP'98), the first in a new series of international symposia, will take place from 23-26 August 1998 in Denver, Colorado, US. The symposium will focus on the state and use of science and predictive models. The main scientific issues in environmental pollution--persistent organic chemicals; metals and radioactivity; ozone and acidic deposition; particulates and global climate change--will be linked with the use of science and predictive models. For more information contact Lyn Quirke at the Conference Secretariat; tel: +44-0-1235-868380; fax: +44-0-1235-868420; e-mail: lynquirke@compuserve.com. Also try <http://www.elsevier.nl/locate/iep9>

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS CONSERVATION CONGRESS: This Congress, scheduled from 14-18 September 1998 in Kirstenbosch, Cape Town, South Africa, will have the theme "Plants, People and Planet Earth - the role of botanic gardens in sustainable living." The Congress will be hosted by the National Botanical Institute of South Africa and organized by Botanic Gardens Conservation International. For further information contact Prof. Brian J. Huntley, National Botanical Institute, Private Bag X7, Claremont 7735, South Africa; tel: +27 21 762 1166; fax: +27 21 761 4687; e-mail: bgci98@nbict.nbi.ac.za or from Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Descanso House, 199 Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey, TW 3BW, UK; tel: +44 181 3325953/4/5; fax: +44 181 3325956; e-mail: bgci@rbgkew.org.uk.

TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT

APEC MEETINGS: The following is the list of upcoming APEC meetings: Transport Ministerial Meeting: 22-24 June 1997 in Victoria, British Columbia; Third Senior Officials Meeting (SOM III): 20-31 August in St. John's, Newfoundland; Ministerial Meeting

on Energy: 26-27 August in Edmonton, Alberta; Symposium on Food, Energy, Environment, Economic Development and Population (FEEEP): 2-4 September in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Ministerial Meeting on Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises: 18-19 September in Ottawa, Ontario; Ministerial Meeting on Human Resources Development: 25-26 September in Seoul, Korea.

The APEC Economic Leaders Meeting will be held in 21-25 November in Vancouver, British Columbia. For information contact the APEC Secretariat; tel: +65-276-1880; fax: +65-276-1775; e-mail: info@apsec.stems.com. Also try <http://www.apsecsec.org.sg>.

PEOPLES' SUMMIT ON APEC: The Peoples' Summit on APEC will be held from 19-24 November 1997 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The Summit will allow all types of organizations, including women's groups, trade unions, indigenous peoples, to take part in a series of events designed to highlight their concerns about APEC. For more information contact the Conference Secretariat; tel: +1-212-604-682-1952; fax: +1-212-682-1931; e-mail: popsum97@bc.sympatico.ca.

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION: The following is a list of upcoming WTO meetings: Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE), 22-24 September and 5-7 November 1997; Dispute Settlement Body, 25 June and 30 July; Council for TRIPs, 15 July. For more information, contact the WTO Secretariat; tel: +41 (22) 739-5111; fax: +41 (22) 739-5458; e-mail: webmaster@wto.org. Also try <http://www.wto.org>.

OECD: The Development Assistance Committee will convene the Workshop on Trade, Environment and Development Cooperation from 2-3 July 1997. The Environment Directorate will convene the Meeting on Eco-Efficiency from 26-28 August. A Workshop on the Involvement of Parliaments in Development and Implementation of National Environmental Action Programmes (NEAPs) in Central and Eastern Europe and the fifth NEAP Co-ordinators Meeting will be held in Stockholm, Sweden from 4-5 September. A Workshop on Environmental Taxes in China will be held from 2-3 October by the Environment Directorate. For more information contact the OECD; tel: +33-01-45-24-82-00; fax: +33-01-45-24-85-00; e-mail: news.contact@oecd.org. Also try <http://www.oecd.org/>

/CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

WORKSHOP ON ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED JOINTLY IN THE AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EAST REGION: This workshop will be held in Cairo, Egypt from 4-8 July 1997 and will be sponsored by the International Centre for Environment and Development (ICED) and the US Initiative on Joint Implementation (USIJI). The workshop intends to contribute to the understanding of the concept of AIJ and international discussions supporting the FCCC, and provide an opportunity for countries to identify and discuss AIJ projects of regional importance. For information contact: Eng Hadia El Zayyat; tel: +20-2-304-6032; fax: +20-2-304-6033; e-mail: iced@intouch.com, or Jackie Kreiger; tel: +1-202-586-3487; fax: +1-202-586-3485/861; e-mail: cmst@igc.apc.org.

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TECHNOLOGIES & COMBUSTION FOR A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT: This conference is scheduled from 7-10 July 1997 at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, Portugal. For information contact: Prof. Maria da Graca Carvalho, Instituto Superior Tecnico, Av. Rovisco Pais, 1096 Lisbon Codex, Portugal; tel: +351-1-841-7372 or 7162; fax: +351-1-847-5545 or 726-2633. Also try: <http://www.navier.ist.utl.pt/cleanair/>

REIA '97: The REIA '97 Hemispheric Conference and Exhibition on Renewable Energy will be held from 7-11 July 1997 at the Hotel Inter-Continental in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The conference will spotlight business opportunities for renewable energy and energy efficiency throughout the Americas. REIA '97 has been organized to allow the countries of the Americas to work together in the advancement of renewables and efficiency as a means to achieving economic independence, energy security, and a quality environment for our hemisphere. For information contact: tel: +55-2-29-4597; fax: +55-21-511-2185; e-mail: ml@usecre.org. More information is available in Portuguese, Spanish, and English, as well as exhibitor, sponsorship, and presentation information, registration information, and a conference agenda at <http://www.reia.com/>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POWER ENGINEERING-97 (ICOPE-97): This Conference is scheduled from 13 - 17 July 1997 in Tokyo, Japan. For information contact: Masanori Ishii, Chief Engineer, Energy Plant, Ishikawajima-Harima Heavy Industries Co. Ltd., 2-2-1 Ohtemachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan; tel: +81-3-3244-5109; fax: +81-3-3244-5313; e-mail: ishimsnr@ecp.hq.ihl.co.jp.

REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON GREENHOUSE GAS INVENTORIES: A regional training workshop on preparing GHG inventories from 15-18 July 1997 in Asuncion, Paraguay. The workshop is designed familiarize participants with GHG Emissions Inventories and international methodology. For more information contact Stephen Gold, CC:TRAIN; tel: +41-22-733-1383; fax: +41-22-733-1383; e-mail: sgold.unitar@unep.ch.

FCCC SUBSIDIARY BODIES: The next sessions of the subsidiary bodies are scheduled to take place in Bonn from 28 July to 7 August 1997 at the Hotel Maritim. SBSTA, SBI and AG-13 will meet from 28-30 July and will likely meet once more the following week. The AGBM will begin on Thursday, 31 July. The subsidiary bodies are scheduled to meet again from 20-31 October 1997 at a conference facility in Bonn to be determined. At present, all subsidiary bodies except for AG13 are scheduled to meet in October. The third Conference of the Parties is scheduled for 1-12 December 1997 in Kyoto, Japan. COP-3 will immediately allocate the completion of decisions of the Berlin Mandate process to a sessional Committee of the Whole, open to all delegations. The political negotiations will be finalized in a ministerial segment, which will be convened from 8-10 December and where the final text of a protocol or other legal instrument will be adopted. For all meetings related to the FCCC, contact the secretariat in Bonn, Germany; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.de. Also try the FCCC home page at <http://www.unfccc.de> and UNEP's Information Unit for Conventions at <http://www.unep.ch/iuc.html>.

FLORENCE WORLD ENERGY RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM: CLEAN ENERGY FOR THE NEW CENTURY: The Florence World Energy Research Symposium (FLOWERS'97) will be held from 30 July to 1st August 1997 at the Hotel Sheraton, Florence, Italy. For information contact: Prof. G. Mafrida, DEF Department of Energy Engineering, University of Florence, Via S. Marta 3, 50139 Florence, Italy; tel: +39-55-479-6346; fax: +39-55-479-6342; e-mail: Flowers@eners.ing.unifi.it. Also try: <http://eners.ing.unifi.it/flowers>.

REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON VULNERABILITY AND ADAPTATION ASSESSMENT: The Regional Training Workshop on Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment will be held from 4 - 23 August 1997 in Lima, Peru. The meeting is designed to familiarize participants with all aspects of vulnerability

and adaptation assessment and international methodology. For information contact Stephen Gold, CC:TRAIN; tel: +41-22-733-1383; fax: +41-22-733-1383; e-mail: sgold.unitar@unep.ch.

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON PRESENTING NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: The Training Workshop on Presenting National Implementation Strategies will be held from 25-27 August 1997 in Lima, Peru. The objective is to prepare national implementation strategies. For more information contact Stephen Gold, CC:TRAIN; tel: +41-22-733-1383; fax: +41-22-733-1383; e-mail: sgold.unitar@unep.ch.

CONFERENCE ON THE WORLD CLIMATE RESEARCH PROGRAMME: The Conference on the World Climate Research Programme - Achievements, Benefits and Challenges will be held in Geneva, Switzerland from 26-28 August 1997. For information contact the Conference Coordinator at the WMO; tel: +41-22-730-8494; fax: +41-22-734-0357; e-mail: wcrpconf@gateway.wmo.ch.

US REGIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOPS: Regional workshops will examine the vulnerabilities of various regions of the United States to climate variability and climate change and to aggregate information across regions to support national-scale scientific assessment (called for in the Global Change Research Act). The New England Workshop will be held from 3-5 September 1997 in Durham, New Hampshire. For more information contact: Clara Kustra; tel: +1-603-862-3484; fax: +1-603-862-1915; e-mail: clara@unh.edu. Also try <http://www.necci.sr.unh.edu/>. The Southwest Regional Workshop will be held from 3-4 September in Tucson, Arizona. For more information contact Jon Unruh; tel: +1-520-621-7189; e-mail: unruhj@u.arizona.edu. Also try: http://vpr2.admin.arizona.edu/udall_center/CLIMATE.HTM. The National Workshop on Climate Change Impacts will be held from 10-12 November 1997 in Washington, DC.

THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON NEW ENERGY SYSTEMS AND CONVERSIONS: This Conference is scheduled from 8-13 September 1997 in Kazan, Russia. For information contact: Prof. V. S. Tereshchuk, Kazan State Technical University, K. Marx Str., 10, 420111 Kazan, Republic of Tatarstan, Russia; tel: +7-8432-385-260/365-653; fax: +7-8432-366-032; e-mail: root@kaiadm.Kazan.su.

ICCDU IV - THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CARBON DIOXIDE UTILIZATION: This conference is scheduled from 7-11 September 1997 at the Kyoto International Conference Hall in Kyoto, Japan. For information contact: Prof Tomoyuki Inui, Secretariat of ICCDU IV, Division of Energy & Hydrocarbon Chemistry, Graduate School of Engineering, Kyoto University, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606-01, Japan; tel: +81 75 753 5682; fax: +81 75 771 7285; e-mail: inui@scl.kyoto-u.ac.jp.

REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP ON MITIGATION ANALYSIS: The Regional Training Workshop on Mitigation Analysis will be held from 8-19 September 1997 in Havana, Cuba. Another workshop on mitigation analysis will be held from 23 September -3 October 1997 in Benin. The objective is to familiarize participants with all aspects of mitigation analysis and international methodology. For more information contact Stephen Gold, CC:TRAIN; tel: +41-22-733-1383; fax: +41-22-733-1383; e-mail: sgold.unitar@unep.ch.

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CARBON DIOXIDE CONFERENCE: The fifth International Carbon Dioxide Conference will be held from 8-12 September 1997 in Queensland, Australia. For information contact the Conference Secretariat; tel: +61 3 9239 4661;

fax: +61 3 9239 4444; e-mail: 97CO2@dar.csiro.au. Also try http://www.dar.csiro.au/pub/events/co2_conf/.

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE WORLD ENERGY COUNCIL: The Congress will be held from 13-17 September 1998 in Houston, Texas, US. Industry and government leaders from over 100 nations will discuss and debate the key issues that will guide energy resource development for the next 100 years. The Congress theme is "Energy & Technology Sustaining World Development Into the Next Millennium." For more information contact: the Houston World Energy Congress, Inc.; tel: +1-202-331-0415; fax: +1-202-331-0418. Also try <http://www.wec98congress.org/>

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON PRESENTING NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: The Training Workshop on Presenting National Implementation Strategies will be held from 15-19 September 1997 in Senegal. The objectives is to train participants to prepare national implementation strategies. For more information contact Stephen Gold, CC:TRAIN; tel: +41-22-733-1383; fax: +41-22-733-1383; e-mail: sgold.unitar@unep.ch.

FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AIR POLLUTION: The Fifth International Conference on Air Pollution, sponsored by the Wessex Institute of Technology (WIT), will be held from 16-18 September 1997 in Ashurst, Southampton, UK. For more information contact WIT; tel: +44-1703-293223; fax: +44-1703-292853.

REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES, PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE FOR ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION: This workshop, scheduled from 22-26 September 1997 in Budapest, Hungary will provide a forum for the facilitation of projects on greenhouse gas mitigation technologies between energy efficiency and renewable energy project developers and the international financial community. Participants will be able to share and discuss the current state of their work on mitigation measures and project development. The major topics will include introductions to and explanations of market risks, project economics, project finance, and what investors demand and expect from project developers. The workshop is being organized by the U.S. Country Studies Program (USCSP), the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Training Institute (REETI), and the Hungarian Country Study Team. For information contact: Christopher Bordeaux; tel: +1-202-586-3070; fax: +1-202-586-3485/3486; email: christopher.bordeaux@hq.doe.gov.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS TRADING MEETING: The OECD Environmental Directorate will hold a meeting to discuss "International Greenhouse Gas Emission Trading" from 29-30 September 1997 in Paris. For more information contact the OECD; tel: +33-01-45-24-82-00; fax: +33-01-45-24-85-00; e-mail: news.contact@oecd.org. Also try <http://www.oecd.org/>

KLIMA '97 LEIPZIG: This conference and trade fair, scheduled from 25-28 September 1997 in Leipzig, Germany, encompasses all technical, scientific, economic and social measures relating to the protection and preservation of the climate. More than 500 exhibitors and over 3000 conference participants will be presenting their latest research results and problem solutions on energy saving and energy efficiency, CO₂-reduced energy sources, renewables, environmentally acceptable transport, industrial production, environmentally sounder agriculture, and air pollution control. For information contact: Ingomar Brandl, UTEC International Kongress-und Ausstellungs-Service GmbH, Hainstrasse 16, D-04109 Leipzig; tel: + 49-341- 960-6797; fax + 49-341-960 6798.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE: The thirteenth session of the IPCC will be held 9-11 September 1997 (to be confirmed) in Geneva, Switzerland. During the third week of August in Oslo, Norway, the IPCC will hold the Workshop on the Impacts of the Actions of Annex I Parties on all Parties. For information contact the IPCC Secretariat at the WMO Building, 41 Av. Giuseppe-Motta, Case postale No. 2300, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland; fax: + 41-22-7331-270. Also try <http://www.unep.ch/ipcc/ipcc-s.html> or <http://www.usgcrp.gov/ipcc/html/aboutipc.html>.

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON PREPARING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: The Training Workshop on Preparing National Implementation Strategies will be held from 29 September - 3 October 1997 in Benin. Other training workshop will be held in Chad from 20-24 October 1997 and in Bolivia from 5-7 November 1997. The objectives is to train participants to prepare national implementation strategies. For more information contact Stephen Gold, CC:TRAIN; tel: +41-22-733-1383; fax: +41-22-733-1383; e-mail: sgold.unitar@unep.ch

WORLD POWER AND ENERGY '97: World Power and Energy '97 will be held from 7-9 October 1997 in Birmingham, UK. For more information contact Alan Gibbs, Nexus Media, Ltd.; tel: +44-1322-660070; fax: +44-1322-667633

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT, EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF ENERGY AND WATER RESOURCES: This conference is scheduled from 12-14 October 1997 in Limassol, Cyprus. For information contact: Dr. Savvas Tassou, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Brunel University, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 3PH, United Kingdom; Fax: +44 (0)1895-256392; e-mail: savvas.tassou@brunel.ac.uk.

ELEVENTH WORLD CLEAN AIR & ENVIRONMENT CONGRESS (& EXPO): The Congress is scheduled from 13-18 September 1998 in Durban, South Africa. For information contact the Conference Secretariat, P O Box 36782, Menlo Park 0102, South Africa; fax: +27-12-460-170; e-mail: wissing@iafrica.com.

ASIA-PACIFIC INITIATIVE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY '97: Asia Pacific Initiative for Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency '97 will be held from 13-16 October 1997 in Jakarta, Indonesia and is sponsored by Alternative Development Asia; tel: +852-257-49133; fax: +852-257-41997; e-mail: altdev@hk.spuer.net.

WORKSHOPS ON THE SADC POWER POOL AND CO2 ABATEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ZIMBABWE: These workshops, scheduled for the second and fourth quarters of 1997, will be held in Harare, Zimbabwe and are sponsored by the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ). The workshops will focus on the creation of a common project output base and provide a forum for exchange between policy makers and technical resource persons. For more information contact Holger Liptow, Energy Division, GTZ; tel: +49-6196-79-3282; fax: +49-6169-79-7144; e-mail: gtz-co2@geod.geonet.de.

MONTREAL PROTOCOL: The preparatory meeting for the Ninth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (MOP-9) is scheduled from 8-12 September 1997 and MOP-9 will be held from 15-19 September 1997 in Montreal. For information contact the Secretariat for the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol, P.O. Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: + 254-2-62-1234/62-3851; fax: + 254-2-52-1930; e-mail: ozoneinfo@unep.org. Also try <http://www.unep.org/unep/secretar/ozone/home.htm>.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY COLLOQUIUM: This colloquium, scheduled for 13 September 1997 will review the past contributions of natural and social sciences, policy and technology to the development and implementation of the Montreal Protocol. Environment Canada is the principle organizer, with advice from UNEP. This one-day event will be one of the key activities marking the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Montreal Protocol. For information contact the 10th Anniversary Colloquium Secretariat, Ms. Yarrow McConnell, Canadian Global Climate Change Program, Royal Society of Canada, 225 Metcalfe St., Suite 308, Ottawa, Ontario K1M 1Y1 Canada; tel: +1-613-990-9648; fax: +1-613-991-6996; e-mail: ymconn@rsc.ca. Also try <http://www.ec.gc.ca/ozone>.

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH NGO CONFERENCE: Friends of the Earth is holding an NGO Conference from 7-8 September 1997 in Montreal entitled "Consolidating Environmental Debts: Planning for Ecosystem Recovery." There will be three concurrent themes: "Closing the Books on Chemical Soup," which will consider phasing out the production and consumption of ozone depleting substances, accelerating adoption of methyl bromide alternatives, recovery and permanent disposal strategies for chemical soups; "Negotiating Ecosystem Recovery," which will consider illegal trade in banned substances, technology dumping, implications of exemptions, innovative financing; and "Adding up the Health Risk" will consider immune systems under attack, engaging the public and environmental effects monitoring. For more information contact Friends of the Earth; cmcmullen@cyberus.ca.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON OZONE PROTECTION: The International Conference on Ozone Protection, sponsored by the Alliance for Responsible Atmospheric Policy, will be held from 12-13 November 1997 in Baltimore, Maryland, US. For more information contact the Alliance; +1-703-807-4052; fax: +1703-243-2874.

/BIODIVERSITY

FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: COP-4 is scheduled for 4-15 May 1998 in Bratislava, Slovakia. SBSTTA-3 will be held in Montreal from 1-5 September 1997. For more information contact the CBD Secretariat, World Trade Centre, 413 St. Jacques Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2Y 1N9; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: biodiv@mtl.net.

AD HOC GROUP ON BIOSAFETY: The third meeting of the Ad Hoc Group on Biosafety (BSWG-3) is scheduled for 13-17 October 1997 in Montreal. During BSWG-2, delegates discussed the possibility of a fourth meeting to be held February/March 1998. They also considered a fifth meeting in late 1998. For more information, contact the CBD Secretariat.

OTHER CBD MEETINGS: A Latin American and Caribbean regional meeting on the Clearinghouse Mechanism is tentatively scheduled for July in Colombia. A workshop on the implementation of Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge) is tentatively scheduled from 10-14 November 1997 in a venue to be determined. For more information, contact the CBD Secretariat.

EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: The next session of the CGFRA will take place during the second half of April 1999. For more information contact FAO: Viale delle Terme di Caracall, 00100 Rome, Italy; tel: +39-6-52251. Also try <http://www.fao.org> or <http://web.icppgr.fao.org>.

GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FORUM: A Workshop on the policy research capacity to implement the CBD will be held during the Eighth Global Biodiversity Forum, scheduled from 29-31 August 1997 in Montreal, Canada. The Workshop objectives are to: bring together experience from around the world on the contributions of policy research and public policies to CBD implementation; synthesize and exchange lessons learned from this experience; and develop recommendations for SBSTTA and COP on action priorities for building policy research capacity to implement the CBD. For information contact the Land and Agriculture Policy Centre; tel: +2711-403-7272; fax: +2711-339-6423; e-mail: lapc@wn.apc.org or Christine Elias, World Resources Institute, 1709 New York Ave. NW, Washington DC 20006, US; tel: +202-662-3766; fax: +202-638-0036; e-mail: celias@wri.org.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW IN AFRICA: Workshop on Incorporation of Conventions Related to Biological Diversity into National Laws will be held, also, in Mozambique from 30 June - 3 July 1997. This training programme will be organized by the UNEP/UNDP Joint Project on Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa. For more information contact UNEP, PO Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: +254 (2) 624283/4284; fax: +254 (2) 623928; e-mail: roainfo@unep.org. Also try <http://www.unep.org/regoffs/roa/home.htm>.

CONFERENCE ON BIOTIC RESERVES AND MASS EXTINCTIONS: The Conference on Biotic Reserves and Mass Extinctions, convened by UNESCO, will be held from 12-14 September 1997 in Prague, Czech Republic. For information contact: Petra Hovorkova; fax: +42-2-612-11247; e-mail: recovery@gli.cas.cz.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MEDICINAL PLANTS CONSERVATION, UTILIZATION, TRADE AND BIOCULTURES: This meeting is scheduled from 16-20 February 1998 at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Indian Institute of Science Campus, Bangalore, India. The meeting will focus on the issue of medicinal plants for survival. For further information contact the Foundation for Revitalization of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT), No. 50, 2nd Stage, MSHLayout, Anandnagar, Bangalore 560 024, India; tel: +91 80 333 6909/0348; fax: +91 80 333 4167; email: root@frlht.ernet.in.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON ECOLOGY: The International Congress on Ecology will be held in Florence, Italy from 19-25 July 1998. For information contact: Almo Farina, INTECOL; tel: 39-187-400-252.

/OCEANS AND COASTS

INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION: The Nineteenth Session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Assembly will be held at UNESCO in Paris from 1-2 July 1997. For information contact UNESCO; tel: +1-212-963-5974; fax: +1-212-963-8014; e-mail: unescony@undp.org. Also try <http://www.unesco.org>.

THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON REMOTE SENSING: The Third International Remote Sensing Conference and Exhibition on Technology, Measurements and Analysis will be held from 7-10 July 1997 in Copenhagen, Denmark. For information contact: Robert Rogers, ERIM Conferences, Box 134001, Ann Arbor, MI 48113-4001; tel: + 313-994-1200; fax: + 313 994-5123; e-mail: raeder@erim.org Also try <http://www.erim.org/CONF>.

SEVENTH STOCKHOLM WATER SYMPOSIUM AND THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF ENCLOSED COASTAL SEAS: The Seventh Stockholm Water Symposium and the Third International Conference on the Environmental Management of Enclosed Coastal Seas will be held in from 10-15 August 1997 in Stockholm, Sweden. The theme is "Interaction of Land Activities, Fresh Water and Enclosed Coastal Seas." For further information contact the Stockholm City Conference Center; tel: +46-8-791-66-00; fax: 46-8-10-90-71.

UN CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA: The International Seabed Authority (ISBA) will hold its resumed third session from 18-29 August 1997 in Kingston, Jamaica. The resumed first session of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf will be held from 2-12 September 1997. The Eighth Meeting of States parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) will be held from 18-22 May 1998. For information contact doalos@un.org or try <http://www.un.org/Depts/los>.

SUMMIT OF THE SEA: This meeting is scheduled for 1-6 September 1997 in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. The Summit of the Sea is a gathering of people from around the world to explore the sustainable development of ocean resources, and set the tone for the International Year of the Ocean. Speakers include Director-General of UNESCO Dr. Federico Mayor, oceans advocate Dr. Sylvia Earle, Michael Sutton of WWF, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador Brian Tobin, and Dr. Art Hanson, President and CEO of IISD. Topics include sustainable fisheries, ocean management and international law, ocean science and technology, oceans in history and culture, aquaculture, maritime education, international development, offshore oil and gas, as well as detailed technical topics. For information or to register contact: Summit of the Sea, John Cabot 500th Anniversary Celebrations, Box 1997, Station C, St. John's, Newfoundland, A1C 5R4 Canada; tel: + 1 (709) 579-1997; fax +1 (709) 579-2067; email: myablon@CABOT500.gov.nf.ca. Also try <http://www.newcomm.net/cabot500/summit.htm>.

INDEPENDENT WORLD COMMISSION ON THE OCEANS: The Independent Commission on Oceans will hold fifth session in Cape Town, South Africa from 11-14 November 1997 and its sixth session in Lisbon, Portugal in July 1998, in conjunction with EXPO'98 - "The Oceans: A Heritage for the Future." The Commission seeks to draw attention to the issues of ocean development and encourage the further development of the ocean regime evolving from UNCLOS. For information contact Secretariat in Geneva; tel: + 41-22-710-0711; fax: +41-22-710-0722; e-mail: secretariat@world-oceans.org.

MEDCOAST CONFERENCE 1997: This conference, scheduled from 11-14 November 1997 in Qawra, Malta. The MEDCOAST initiative aims to contribute to coastal and marine conservation in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, through improved coastal management practices. The Conference will focus on: physical, ecological, and conservation issues; integrated coastal and ocean resource management and development; and coastal engineering, modeling and data management. For information contact the MEDCOAST Secretariat; Middle East Technical University, 06531 Ankara, Turkey; tel: +90 312 210 54 29; fax: +90 312 210 14 12; e-mail: medcoast@rorqual.cc.metu.edu.tr. Also try <http://ps.superb.net/icod/medcoast/MEDINIT.HTM>.

/FORESTS

MONTREAL PROCESS WORKING GROUP: The Ninth Meeting of the Montreal Process Working Group will be held in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, from 7-11 July 1997. The meeting will: provide opportunities to discuss common issues on criteria and indicators with all members of the Montreal Process; review the draft First Approximation Report for the Montreal Process; review the presentation for the 11th World Forestry Congress; and learn about Korean Forestry based on experiences in sustainable forest management. For more information contact Kathryn Buchanan, Montreal Process Liaison Office; tel: +1-613-947-9061; fax: +1-613-947-9038; e-mail: kbuchanan@forestry.ca; or Hoduck Kang, Conference Secretariat; tel: +82-2-961-2382; fax: +82-2-961-2386; e-mail: F2382@chollian.dacom.co.kr.

ELEVENTH WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS: The Congress, with the theme "Forestry for Sustainable Development: Towards the 21st Century," is scheduled for 13-22 October 1997 in Antalya, Turkey. The technical programme has been structured into seven main programme areas, which follow the seven basic criteria of sustainable forest management (SFM) under consideration by the various processes (Montreal, Helsinki, Tarapoto, etc.). For information contact: Mesut Y. Kamiloglu, Ministry of Forestry, Ataturk Bulvari 153, Ankara, Turkey, tel: +90-312-4177724, fax: +90-312-4179160, e-mail: obdi-f@servis.net.tr or Luis Santiago Botero, FAO, Forestry Department; tel: +39 6/5225 5088, fax: +39 6/5225 5137, e-mail: luis.botero@fao.org.

Also try <http://www.fao.org/waicent/faoinfo/forestry/wforcong/>.

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION (ITTO): The twenty-third session of the ITTC and the twenty-first session of the Permanent Committees will be held in Yokohama, Japan from 12-20 November 1997. For more information contact the ITTO Secretariat, International Organization Centre, Pacifico-Yokohama 220, Japan; tel: +81-45-223 1111; e-mail: cprebble@itto.or.jp.

PERU FORUM: The Amazon Center for Environmental Education and Research (ACEER) Foundation will sponsor this international forum on the role of indigenous women in rainforest conservation in November 1997 in Iquitos, Peru. The forum will be a mechanism for rural women in Amazonia to meet with their counterparts from other parts of Latin America and other throughout the world to explore the changing nature of their roles in natural resource decision making. For information contact: Yvonne Mejia, SCEER; +1 (800) 255-8206; fax: +1 (205) 428-1714; e-mail: rmustalish@wcupa.edu.

/DESERTIFICATION

CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION: The resumed INC-10 is scheduled from 18-22 August 1997 in Geneva. COP-1 is currently scheduled for 29 September - 10 October 1997 in Rome. For more information, contact the CCD Secretariat; Geneva Executive Center, 11/13 Chemin des Anemones, CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: +41 (22) 979-9419; fax: +41 (22) 979-9030/31; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.ch Also see the INCD World Wide Web site at <http://www.unep.ch/incd.html>.

INTER-REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES: The Commonwealth of Independent States will host an inter-regional conference in Tash-

kent, Uzbekistan, in August 1997, to develop a subregional action programme. Contact: Anatoli Ovchinnikov, Deputy, Hydrometeorology at the Cabinet of Ministers, 72 St., Tashkent, Uzbekistan; tel: +737 (12) 35-69-56; fax: +737 (12) 33-20-25 / 33-20-50.

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON RANGELAND DESERTIFICATION: This workshop, scheduled from 16-19 September 1997 in Iceland, will bring together knowledge in several fields, such as agronomy, geography, range ecology, soil science and conservation policy. The meeting will emphasize: critical review of rangeland degradation science; desertification assessment methods; and rangelands conservation policy. For information contact: Olafur Arnalds, Agricultural Research Institute, Keldnaholt; 112 Reykjavik, Iceland; tel: + 354-577-1010; fax: +354-577-1020; e-mail: ola@rala.is Also try the Conference web site at <http://www.rala.is/rade>

INTERNATIONAL FORUM OF MAYORS ON DESERTIFICATION AND URBANIZATION: The City of Rome and the CCD Secretariat are hosting meetings in Rome, Italy, in October 1997 concurrently with COP-1, to discuss strategies for decentralized cooperation in implementing the CCD in cities. For more information, contact: N. Mattana, CCD Secretariat, (see above); e-mail: nmattana.incd@unep.ch.

NGO FORUM ON EMPOWERING LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND INSTITUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DRYLAND DEVELOPMENT: The International NGO Network on Desertification (RIOD) will facilitate an NGO Forum in Rome, Italy from 29 September - 10 October 1997, to bring together NGOs as a parallel event to CCD COP-1. Contact: Baudouine Kamatari, Global Focal Point of RIOD, Environmental Liaison Centre International (ELCI), P.O. Box 72461, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: +254 (2) 56-20-15 / 56-04-76; fax: +254 (2) 56-21-75; e-mail: bkamatari@elci.sasa.unep.no / bkamatari@elci.gn.apc.org.

NATIONAL INFORMATION AND AWARENESS SEMINAR ON THE CCD: The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA) will host this meeting in October 1997. The meeting will bring together land owners, rural communities, NGOs, local authorities, universities and governmental agencies for the design and implementation of the National Action Program. For information contact: Dr. Leyla Derya Celikel; tel: +1-212-281-1027; fax: +1-212-281 1132; e-mail: deryal@boun.edu.tr.

/WETLANDS

RAMSAR: The Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel will meet from 18 - 20 November 1997. The Ramsar Subregional Meeting for Southern Africa will be held from 3 - 6 November 1997 in South Africa. For information contact the Ramsar Convention Bureau, Rue Mauverney 28, CH-1196 Gland, Switzerland; tel +41-22-999-0170; fax +41-22-999-0169; e-mail: ram-sar@hq.iucn.org

/CHEMICAL MANAGEMENT

PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT: The fourth session of the INC for the preparation of an international legally-binding instrument for the application of a prior informed consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals in international trade (INC-4) will be held in Brussels from 20-24 October 1997. A diplomatic conference

with a short preparatory INC session is envisaged for December 1997 in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The UNEP Governing Council, at its last meeting, adopted a decision calling for completion of negotiations on a legally-binding agreement by the end of 1997. For more information contact: UNEP Chemicals (IRPTC); tel: +41 (22) 979 9111; fax: +41 (22) 797 3460; e-mail: IRTPC@unep.ch.

BASEL CONVENTION: The Fourth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on Hazardous Wastes will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 6 - 10 October 1997. For information contact I. Rummel-Bulska, Basel Secretariat; tel: +41-22-979-9213; fax: +41-22-797-3454, e-mail: sbc@unep.ch. For information contact: UNEP's Information Unit for Conventions at <http://www.unep.ch/iuc.html>.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON CHEMICAL SAFETY: Japan offered to host ISG-3 in Tokyo in late 1998. Brazil will forward its decision to host FORUM III, scheduled for late 2000, to the IFCS as soon as possible. The Plenary also agreed tentatively to hold ISG-4 in 2002. Mexico will host a working group meeting in 1997 for developing countries to discuss the sound management of chemicals. For information on these meetings, contact the IFCS Secretariat, World Health Organization, CH-1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland; tel: +41 (22) 791 3588; fax: +41 (22) 791 4848; e-mail: ifcs@who.ch.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PESTICIDE USE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES - IMPACT ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT: This meeting, scheduled from 23 February - 1 March 1998 in San Jose, Costa Rica, will discuss and exchange knowledge about pesticides concerning their impact on the environment, impact on health, economic issues, regulations, policies and clean technology in developing countries. For information contact Yamileth Astorga, PPUNA, Universidad Nacional, Apdo. 86-3000 Heredia, Costa Rica; tel: +506-277-3584; fax: +506-277-3583; e-mail: ppuna@irazu.una.ac.cr

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

WORLD BANK: The Third Annual Bank Conference on Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, entitled "Trade: Towards Open Regionalism," will be held from 29 June 29 - 1 July 1997 in Montevideo, Uruguay. The meeting is sponsored by the World Bank and the Government of Uruguay. For information contact L. Kumar Arora; tel: +1-202-473-9328; fax: +1-202-676-0368; e-mail: LARORA@WORLDBANK.ORG. Also try the Conference web site at <http://www.worldbank.org/abcdlac3/>.

GEF COUNCIL: The schedule for GEF meetings are as follows: 4 September, Replenishment Meeting; 3 November, NGO Consultation; 4-5 November, Council Meeting; 6 November, Replenishment Meeting. For more information contact Marie Morgan at the GEF Secretariat, tel: +1-202-473-1128; fax: +1-202-522-3240. The GEF Web Site is at: <http://www.worldbank.org/html/gef>.

UNCTAD: The second session of the Commission on Investment, Technology and Related Financial Issues will met from 29 September - 3 October in Geneva. The Trade and Development Board's Meeting of Experts on Government and Private Sector

Roles and Interactions in SME Development will be held in Geneva, 23-25 July 1997. The forty-fourth session of the Trade and Development Board will be held from 13-24 October 1997. The second session of the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services and Commodities will met from 17 - 21 November 1997 in Geneva. The second session of the Commission on Investment, Technology and Related Financial Issues will be held in Geneva from 29 September - 3 October 1997. For information contact Carine Richard-Van Maele Press Officer of UNCTAD; tel: +(41 22) 917 5816/28; fax: +41 22 907 0043; e-mail: press@unctad.org

ECOSOC: The substantive session of the UN Economic and Social Council is scheduled from 30 June to 25 July 1997. For more information try <http://www.un.org/Overview/Organs/ecosoc.html>.

UNDP/UNFPA: The third regular session of the Executive Board for UNDP/UNFPA will be held in New York from 15-19 September 1997. For information try <http://www.undp.org>

ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONS

THIRD INTERNATIONAL INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT: This meeting will be held in Cambridge/Boston, Massachusetts, USA from 25-28 June 1997 at the Sheraton Commander Hotel by the Interdisciplinary Environmental Association (IEA), in conjunction with Assumption College of Worcester, Massachusetts. The Conference is motivated by the need to combine ideas and research findings from different disciplines to enhance our understanding of the interactions between the natural environment and human institutions. For information contact IEA c/o Demetri Kantarelis & Kevin L. Hickey, Conference Co-Chairs, Economics/Foreign Affairs Department, Assumption College, 500 Salisbury Street, PO Box 15005, Worcester, MA 01615-0005, USA; tel: D. Kantarelis, +1-508-767-7557; K.L. Hickey, +1-508-767-7296; fax: +1-508-799-4502; e-mail: dkantar@eve.assumption.edu Information about IEA, previous Conference Programs and Proceedings can be found at <http://www.assumption.edu/html/academic/conf/iicecall.html>.

FIFTH GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: The Fifth Global Conference on Environmental Education will held from 18-22 August in New Delhi. The Conference, entitled "Global Strategy for Sustainable Development Through Environmental Education in the 21st Century," is sponsored by the Indian Environmental Society and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. The Conference will feature technical sessions and working groups on conservation of natural resources, population, education and women, ethical values and responsibilities, policies, people's participation on environmental issues and global experiences. For information contact the Indian Environmental Society; tel: +91-11-222-3311; fax: +91-11-331-7301.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: The International Conference on Environmental Education will be held in Chambéry, France from 18-20 September 1997. For information contact Dr. Herve Boileau, University of Savoy; tel: +33-7975-8812; fax: 33-7975-8772; e-mail: herve.boileau@univ-savoie.fr.



/READINGS

/SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

J. Brunnee and Stephen J. Toope, "Environmental Security and Freshwater Resources: Ecosystem Regime Building," *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 91, No. 1, January 1997. This article evaluates existing freshwater regimes and offers suggestions for the elaboration of future regimes that can promote environmental security. The authors argue that ecosystem-oriented principles are essential to shaping effective freshwater regimes as they evolve along a continuum from dialogue and sharing of information to more defined frameworks of cooperation to binding legal norms. They suggest that this process of regime formation and consolidation will further benefit from an emphasis on implementation and dispute avoidance, rather than on enforcement and dispute settlement.

International Monetary and Financial Issues for the 1990s, UN Publications. This collection of research papers covers the evolution of private capital flows to developing countries in the 1990s, the integration of developing countries into the international financial system and the management of capital flows between developing countries. UN Publications offices can be contacted at 2 UN Plaza, Room DC2-0853, New York, NY 10017; fax: +1-212-963-3489; e-mail: publications@un.org; or the Palais de Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; fax: +41-22-917-0027; e-mail: unpubli@unog.ch.

World Development Indicators, World Bank. This report combines key economic information from major public and private organizations worldwide and statistics from over 200 economies to provide a comprehensive picture of modern development. The report also contains over 75 tables on topics such as malnutrition, global patterns in tax rates and traffic congestion. Available from the World Bank, 1818 H Street, NW, Washington DC 20433, US; fax: +1-202-473-1796; e-mail: phay@worldbank.org.

Tough Choices: Facing the Challenges of Food Security, Earthscan Publications. The shortage of food may be a defining issue of the modern era and the first major economic manifestation of an environmentally unsustainable global economy. This book argues that food scarcity and the kinds of choices that governments will have to make to try to ensure security of food supplies in the years ahead. Earthscan publications; tel: +44-171-278-1142; e-mail: earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk.

/TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT

Richard H. Steinberg, "Trade-Environment Negotiations in the EU, NAFTA and WTO: Regional Trajectories of Rule Development," *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 91, No. 2, April 1997. This article compares trade-environment rules and their negotiation and implementation in the context of the EU, NAFTA and the

WTO. As economic integration deepens in each organization, the development of trade-environment rules becomes of increasing interest to richer, greener countries. Professor Steinberg concludes that the interests and power of those countries explain why environment-friendly rules are developing more quickly and thoroughly in the two regional organizations than in the multilateral organization.

Thomas J. Schoenbaum, "International Trade and Protection of the Environment: the Continuing Search for Reconciliation," *American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 91, No.2, April 1997. The November 1995 report issued by the WTO's Committee on Trade and Environment is only a timid first step toward reconciling trade and environmental values. This article advocates the establishment of an ongoing process to deal with trade and environment issues and offers specific suggestions for resolving these issues largely within the framework of existing agreements and jurisprudence. Nevertheless, amendments and clarifications of WTO agreements will be required, and a role for unilateral action will remain.

/OCEANS AND COASTS

L. Anatheia Brokks and Stacy D. Vandever, eds. *Saving the Seas: Values, Scientists and International Governance*. College Park, MD: Maryland Sea Grant Book, 1997. *Saving the Seas* is a collection of eighteen essays by leading thinkers in the area of marine and environmental management. The focus falls on the world's coastal seas, where stakeholders compete for intensely sought-after resources-not only fisheries, harbors, shipping and defense infrastructure, but also culturally important places and traditional ways of life.

/CHEMICAL MANAGEMENT

Donald Munton, Ed. *Hazardous Waste Siting and Democratic Choice*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. The authors explore promising new approaches to siting based on voluntary choice by host communities. This volume analyzes the politics of siting hazardous waste facilities in developed countries, such as the US, Canada, Germany and Japan.

/CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

Lynne M. Jurgielewicz, *Global Environmental Change and International Law: Prospects for Progress in the Legal Order*. Lanham, NY, 1996. This book looks at the global change problems of ozone depletion and climate change from the perspectives of international law and regime analysis. It contains discussions of the international legal order and international regimes and reviews international efforts to address the problems.

/FORESTS

Peter Dauvergne, *Shadows in the Forest: Japan and the Politics of Timber in Southeast Asia*. Cambridge, MA: the MIT Press, June 1997. The author assesses the environmental impact of one country on resource management in another country or area. He focuses on the effect of Japan's timber management in Indonesia, East Malaysia and the Philippines and highlights links between state officials and business leaders that reduce state funds, distort policies and protect illegal unsustainable loggers.

/POPULATION

Robert Engelman, "Rio + 400 Million: Some Environmental Progress Due to Slowing Population Growth," Population Action International, Washington, DC. The article notes that five years ago, as participants gathered for the Earth Summit, a news magazine emblazoned its cover with the headline "The Issue that Rio Forgets," and explains how it remains an open question whether five years later the Special Session will remember what that issue was. The article can be found on Population Action International's web site at <http://www.populationaction.org/news/rio.htm>

/INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY

Jacob Werksman, Ed. *Greening International Institutions*. London: Earthscan, 1996. This is a collection of 15 chapters, written by a wide range of authors, on international institutions that in some way have a bearing on the environment. Most chapters focus on one or two existing institutions, such as the UN General Assembly, the World Bank, the IMF and the CSD. Other examine specific types of institutions such as the Conference of Parties to international treaties. The volume contains useful descriptive material on and analyses of specific international institutions.

Lynton Keith Caldwell, *International Environmental Policy: From the 20th Century to the 21st Century*, 3rd Edition, Durham, NC: Duke University Press. The revised and expanded version of an earlier work contains a comprehensive history of international cooperation on environmental issues, focusing primarily on the development of international agreements and institutional arrangements, along with the impact of science, technology, trade and communication on environmental policy.

International Negotiation: A Journal of Theory and Practice, is a professional journal that examines the theory and practice of international negotiation and mediation processes across all governmental and non-governmental contexts. It is aimed at the research, diplomatic and international business communities. The journal is planning two future thematic issues -- one on international environmental negotiations since Rio and another on nontraditional security negotiations (including negotiations concerning food security and environmental security). Paper submissions are invited. For more information contact Bert Spector at negocenter@msn.com. Also try <http://www.business.carleton.ca/interneg/reference/journals/in/>

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/NEW ON THE WEB

/CLIMATE CHANGE

GLOBAL WARMING CENTRAL: Global Warming Central is an on-line project of the Pace University School of Law and is sponsored by the Pace Energy Project (PEP). Global Warming Central is designed to guide non-experts through the complex issue of global warming by presenting the views of experts representing a cross-section of opinion. It also provides links to other climate change web sites, as well as related laws, government documents and international treaties. Global Warming Central can be found at <http://www.law.pace.edu/energy/globalwarming.html>.

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