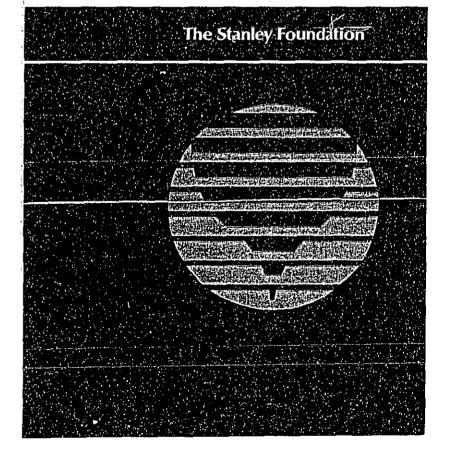
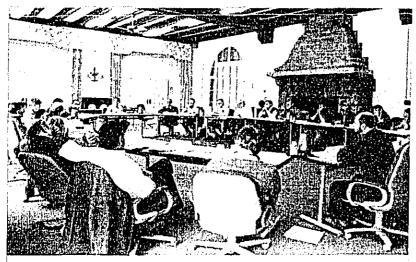
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Environment and Development: Breaking the Ideological Deadlock

21st UN Issues Conference 1990





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Environment and Development: Breaking the Ideological Deadlock

Report of the Twenty-first United Nations Issues Conference

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Executive Summary

The twenty-first UN Issues Conference was convened to facilitate preparatory work for the 1992 World Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil. Participants discussed steps which could be taken to enhance prospects for a successful 1992 conference, stressing the following organizing themes and priorities.

Urgancy. There is more than enough scientific evidence about environmental degradation to support the urgent need for collective action. The group acknowledged that there is continuing debate within the scientific community about the causes and degree of some environmental threats such as global warming, but the Preparatory Committee should not be swayed by those who would minimize the environmental threat.

Fairness. The adoption of General Assembly Resolution 44/228, which establishes the mandate for the 1992 conference, indicates a convergence of views among member states on questions of environment and development. Participants at the Stanley Foundation conference noted that efforts are being made to avoid ideological deadlock along traditional North/South lines. However, it should

be remembered that individual member states and groups of member states have different priorities and hopes for the outcome of the Brazil conference.

Action not rhetoric. The 1992 conference should be action-oriented. Rather than passing resolutions about actions to be taken in the future, agreements need to be concluded in Brazil. To that end the Preparatory Committee should pull together lead agencies of the UN system and direct them to take priority actions and negotiate priority agreements in their areas of expertise. Among those agreements should be a climate convention that is more than just a framework for future protocols. In addition, agreements should be prepared on biodiversity, depletion of rain forests, and regional seas. Any such agreements need to include: provisions for technology transfer where necessary, provisions for technical cooperation, and costs.

Change perceptions. The conference in Brazil should advance thinking and understanding about the integrated nature of environment and development. There will be no effective action on the environment without equally effective action on development.

In every part of the world, investment decisions have both developmental and environmental consequences. Many of those decisions have consequences that extend far beyond national borders and may have global repercussions. Therefore, international action to protect against possible threats from those decisions is appropriate and necessary. Yet it must be remembered that international intervention raises questions about the sovereign rights of nations. Rethinking the world in a manner that is more in step with the times may require a redefinition of sovereignty.

Values must be reassessed. The Western model of profligate consumption has had environmentally disastrous consequences, yet it is the model to which most people in developed and developing countries aspire. Changes in lifestyle and values are needed if the world is to survive, and the changes need to begin in the developed world.

The actions of national governments and international institutions must be designed to foster changes in perception and behavior. Three types of action are available:

- education and encouragement;
- incentives and disincentives;
- regulation and enforcement.

These are not mutually exclusive, and a balanced approach to their use is needed.

Accounting. Systems of national accounting, including measures of gross national product, must be reformed to reflect factors like environmental enhancement or degradation and depletion of resources. Reform is also needed to internalize environmental impact, resource depletion, and development impact into microeconomic decision making for projects and other investments.

Funding. Creative funding is needed for environmentally sound development. The Preparatory Committee should look at new ways to raise funds. Included in this review should be the relationship of the debt problem to the issue of environment and development.

Also on the issue of funding, it was noted that as information about the economic and environmental problems of Eastern Europe become better known there is a danger that money intended for developing countries will be diverted. Participants agreed that resources which flow to the East should not come at the expense of the South.

Representation. The 1992 conference should be convened at the highest political level. Several participants suggested that the conference could be a world summit meeting. High-level attention to these issues should also foster improved policy coordination within governments.

NGOs. Much attention was given to the extremely important roles that nongovernmental organizations and the private sector can have. Provisions should be made to involve NGOs in the conference preparation, and they should be encouraged to organize parallel activities. Likewise, the private sector should be seen as a part of the solution to environmental and development problems and not just as the source of the problem.

Institutions. Participants believed that the conference should not focus on creating new institutions but rather consider ways to strengthen existing institutions and bolster cooperation among them.

Participants

Chair

Richard H. Stanley, President, The Stanley Foundation

Rapporteurs

Christiane Hartnack, Program Officer, The Stanley Foundation Jeff Martin, Vice President, The Stanley Foundation

Participants

- Richard Elliot Benedick, Senior Fellow, The Conservation Foundation and World Wildlife Fund
- Gordon Brady, Senior Advisor for Environmental Economics, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, US Department of State
- Christine Dawson, Member, Policy Planning Staff, US Department of State
- Hassen El-Ghouayel, First Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations
- Lars-Goran Engfeldt, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations
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- Michael M. Gucovsky, Deputy Assistant Administrator and Director, Technical Advisory Division, Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation, United Nation Development Programme
- Eduard Kudryavtsev. Deputy Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations
- John E. R. Martin, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations
- Joan Martin-Brown, Special Advisor to the Executive Director and Chief, Washington Office, United Nations Environment Programme
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- Kenneth W. Piddington, Director, Environment Department, The World Bank
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- Ulf Svensson, Assistant Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Sweden
- Enrique ter Horst, Assistant Secretary-General for Development and and International Economic Co-operation, United Nations
- Peter Thacher, Senior Counselor, World Resources Institute
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- Jack Vanderryn, Agency Director for Energy and Natural Resources, US Agency for International Development
- Everton Vieira Vargas, First Secretary of Embassy, Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations
- Sandy Vogelgesang, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of International Activities, US Environmental Protection Agency
- Wang Baoliu, Minister, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations
- John L. Washburn, Director, Executive Office of the Secretary-General, United Nations

Stanley Foundation Conference Staff Mary Gray Davidson, Producer, "Common Ground" Carol Matthews, Conference Coordinator

Affiliations are listed for identification purposes only. Participants attended as individuals rather than as representatives of their governments or organizations.

Opening Remarks
Richard H. Stanley
President, The Stanley Foundation

The forty-fourth session of the UN General Assembly acted to convene a UN Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil in June 1992 and to establish a Preparatory Committee for it. In a few days, this Preparatory Com-mittee will hold its first meeting in New York.

The primary purpose of our discussion here at Arden House is to identify ways to build trust between the North and South, to address the need for environmentally sound economic development, and to facilitate the work of the 1992 conference and its Preparatory Committee.



Negotiations on the 1992 conference's mandating resolution at the forty-fourth General Assembly were protracted, difficult, and in some cases, inconclusive. Important differences remain to be resolved by the Preparatory Committee and the conference itself. Yet is is difficult to overstate the importance of the 1992 conference and the issues with which it must deal.

I am convinced that the 1990s must be considered as the decade of the future. The decisions and actions which are taken or not taken this decade by the nations of the world and the international community will surely determine the life conditions, and indeed, the survivability of humanity on our fragile planet. Global environmental problems are jeopardizing the life-sustaining capabilities of the earth and threaten to upset its ecological balance. Among these problems are climate change, depletion of the ozone layer, transboundary air and water pollution, contamination of the oceans and seas, degradation of land resources including drought and desertification, and the increasing presence of hazardous and toxic materials in food chains. None of these problems can be

solved by individual nations acting alone. All require concerted and coordinated effort by the international community with actions taken at the global, regional, national, and local levels.

At the same time, it is clear that environmental problems are closely related to poverty and economic stagnation in developing countries and poorer areas of the world. When one is scratching for each morsel of food, it is difficult to be concerned about environmental considerations or future patterns of production. Creative new thinking is needed to deal with the problems of environment and development. Only by recognizing the seriousness and interrelatedness of these issues and exploring the relationships between them will we have an opportunity to identify and define our common interests and develop programs that will safeguard and enhance our common future.

That is why the work of the Preparatory Committee and the 1992 conference must not be hampered by old thinking and ideological posturing. More than five billion people now share this one small planet. Many things divide us, but it is increasingly apparent that we have the capacity to destroy the planet we share either by polluting it to death or by pushing desperately poor people into a position of overusing resources in an attempt to scrape out an existence.

Two Extremes

Extremism and ideological inflexibility pose the greatest threats to successful negotiations on environment and development. The people who hold extreme positions are not extreme people. They are sincere and motivated by deeply held views that their perspective is correct. Nevertheless, vigorous pursuit of an extreme position can easily destroy prospects for progress through cooperation. One extreme position on this subject comes from those in the North who see environmental degradation as strictly a scientific problem. They believe that international cooperation should be limited to efforts to coordinate scientific research and to use the findings of that research to guide negotiated limits on pollutants and on practices (such as the burning of rain forests) which further harm the environment. Many proponents of this viewpoint believe it is mistaken to mix issues of development into international negotiations on the environment.

Adherence to this extreme is doomed to failure. It ignores the fact that desperately poor people are almost required to overtax natural resources in order to make ends meet. Developing coun-

tries which face impossible debt burdens and shrinking prices for their exports will follow environmentally dangerous development programs because they hold lower short-term costs. They will do so even though they know of the long-term perils simply because other immediate human needs are more urgent. Ultimately, reason and threats are not sufficient to keep people from doing what they must to get through today. As the World Commission on Environment and Development, chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, put it in its report, Our Common Future, "The pressures of poverty and rising populations make it enormously difficult for developing countries to pursue environmentally sound policies even in the best of circumstances. But when international economic conditions are bad, the problems can become unmanageable."

Another extreme position comes from some in developing countries. It recalls the 1970s. This group sees environment as the same kind of issue in the 1990s that energy was in the 1970s. They hope that the developed countries' high interest in the environment can be used to wring concessions on economic and development issues from the North. In the 1970s, developing countries tried to use energy as the South's lever in the proposed Global Negotiations. The strategy failed when immediate shortages of energy disappeared.

Use of environment as an economic lever in the 1990s is even less likely to be successful and is very shortsighted. It is hard to see how this approach could serve the best interests of developing countries. Using environment as a bargaining chip in negotiations requires that countries be willing to degrade the environment in ways that are at least as destructive to their own citizens as to others around the world.

Middle Course

A more flexible centrist appmach is required, one that grows out of a more creative reading of the situation than that which has driven the politics of this issue to date. Such an approach acknowledges that environmental problems are real and that pursuing environmentally disastrous development plans is folly. It requires that some environmental problems be seen as global in character and, therefore, subject to international negotiation. It acknowledges the need for changes in living and production activities in developed countries as well as developing ones. However, it also requires that problems of poverty and underdevelopment be seen as contributing to environmental damage, as threats to the whole globe, and therefore, as subjects for negotiation and global action. Deal-

causal?

ing with the casual problems of poverty and underdevelopment places responsibilities on developing countries which must manage their systems and resources effectively and on developed countries which must be forthcoming on necessary economic and technical assistance.

Where will we find this fruitful middle course? The obstacles are formidable. We will have to balance short-term costs and actions against long-term benefits. Political institutions are not very good at this. We will have to deal with forecasts of risk and act in spite of uncertainty. Our record here is less than enviable. Finally, we will have to find a constructive relationship between environment and development. Must we choose? Can we have both? In what relationship?

The Brundtland Commission's concept of sustainable development is a major contribution. It helps us understand our global interdependence and the relationship between environment and development. Sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to met their own needs." It declares that we must have both development and safeguarding of the environment. It contains the concept of "needs," particularly the essential needs of the world's poor, as well as the idea of limits imposed by the earth's ecosystems.

It seems to me that exploration of the concept of sustainable development will help us find that middle course which will break the ideological deadlock. I am not suggesting that this will result in a single grand design or global compact to solve environmental and development issues. Rather, exploration of the guiding concept will likely suggest many specific disaggregated actions.

We need a more clear definition of sustainable development, both in concept and in practice. But both concept and practice can move in parallel. There are development and environmental projects underway which are fully consistent with sustainable development. Many more are needed. Working together, even on a small scale, can help build trust. Some of that trust is already being built between development practitioners, environmental scientists, engineers, and economists. That trust should be reflected in the negotiations carried out by diplomats participating in the Preparatory Committee, the 1992 conference, and other international and national political bodies. Ideological confrontation is most likely to occur in such bodies. It is there that ideological deadlocks must be

avoided or broken. As a step in this direction, the Preparatory Committee should consider means of drawing on the experience of those who have succeeded in cooperative efforts so that the work of the committee can be infused by a positive, yet realistic, spirit.

In recent years, East-West tensions have been dramatically reduced. The parties involved, the Soviet Union in particular, decided that it was self-destructive to continue to pursue ideological ends on the international stage. Properly pursued, this lessening of East-West tensions should free resources for more constructive allocation and should allow issues of environment and development to be pursued unencumbered by East-West ideology.

In a similar way, progress toward sustainable development will be enhanced if national leaders from the North and South can avoid rigid ideological positions. It should be noted that North-South ideological rhetoric has become much more moderate in recent years. If the 1990s are to be the decade of the future, there must be renewed recognition that pursuit of ideological goals will ultimately impede progress on environment and development.

We inhabit one planet and need to see ourselves as survivors sharing one lifeboat. We have diverse backgrounds and different visions of what it will take to survive and where we want to go. Some of us have come aboard with considerable food and fresh water; others have very little. Each of us is capable of sinking the lifeboat, some of us with crude implements and others with more high-technology devices. It doesn't matter.

We can choose to fight over the allocation of resources or the course of the boat. If we do so, we probably will swamp the boat and all with perish. Alternatively, we can share our resources, combine our talents, improve the quality of life on board the boat, and negotiate a middle course that leads to survival.

We are most certainly in this together. We need the will to cooperate. We must ever keep that in mind as we consider the course that institutions, nations, enterprises, and individuals take in addressing the closely related goals of environment and develorment.

Conference Report

Environment and Development: Breaking the Ideological Deadlock

Interest in the environment is growing rapidly around the world. Environmental movements in developed and, more recently, some developing countries are pressing for economic development that is more consistent with preservation of the planet.

In December 1989 the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution setting the time, place, and scope of a World Conference on Environment and Development. The meeting will take place in Brazil in 1992, and preparatory work will be conducted under the auspices of the General Assembly, Just days before the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee, a panel of twenty-two experts from UN delegations, the UN Secretariat, and US government offices, universities, and nongovernmental organizations discussed steps which would be taken to enhance prospects for a successful 1992 conference.



Rapporteurs Hartnack and Martin

The rapporteurs prepared this report following the conference. It contains their interpretation of the proceedings and is not merely a descriptive, chronological account. Participants neither reviewed nor approved the report. Therefore, it should not be assumed that every participant subscribes to all recommendations, observations, and conclusions.

Organizing Themes
The Conference on Environment and Development is neither the beginning nor the end of humanity's journey toward sustainable development and planetary survival. Rather, it is a milestone along the way which offers a significant opportunity for effective progress on some of the world's most pressing problems. If it is to be successful, its preparations must be marked by a sense of urgency and a quest for balance.

Conferees agreed that there is more than enough scientific evidence to support urgent collective action. The present rate of destruction of biological diversity, desertification, emission of greenhouse gases from fossil-fuel combustion and other sources, and water, soil, and air pollution poses threats to human life. The issue now is to find ways to reduce and reverse these threats and cope with environmental degradation and destruction which they cause. Domestic solutions as well as agreements between neighboring states and international cooperation will be necessary to assure that the planet is habitable for future generations.

There are differences within the scientific community about the degree of some environmental threats, such as global warming. Nevertheless, political actions are almost never based on complete certainties. Conferees noted that in the international arena, and especially at the United Nations, the test of certainty is not applied to the political and security fields. But it is often used as a standard in the economic and social sectors, a ploy that is seen as an excuse for delaying or taking no action on these problems. The international community should not allow that ploy to be used successfully by those who want to avoid environmental action.

Balance

General Assembly Resolution 44/228, which sets the mandate for the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development, showed a convergence of views, though not a consensus, among member states on questions of environment and development. The key to that convergence comes from focusing on the linkage between environment and development, and the concept of sustainable development is a constructive avenue for pursuit of this relationship. Separation of environmental from development issues will prevent effective progress on either. There was strong agreement that the environmental agenda cannot be brought to fruition unless there is substantial concurrent action on development. This will include dealing with a range of economic issues including trade, debt, and investment decisions.

At the same time it must be remembered that individual member states and groups of member states have different reasons for wanting a successful 1992 conference; they have different priorities and hopes for the outcome. These stem, in large part, from different historical experiences and political circumstances affecting them:

- Western industrialized countries have been the primary source of pollutants because of their heavy industrialization and relatively recent concern for environment. But participants noted that they now have growing environmental movements which have evolved beyond the conservation movements that were previously dominated by the upper middle classes.
- Eastern countries have, in the words of one participant, "a real sense that the course taken has been (environmentally) disastrous."

 Official concern for environmental issues is a very recent development, and much damage has been done.
- Newly industrialized countries of the South are primarily interested in economic growth and tend to disregard or minimize environmental concerns. Nevertheless, there are signs of increased environmental concern among grassroots organizations and some national leaders there.
- The least-developed countries are most inclined to regard environmental concerns as a luxury. However, with the growing number of environmental refugees due to soil depletion, crosion, descrification, and deforestation, and the dumping of toxic waste from the North in some countries, this perception has begun to change, and voices of concern about the environment have become stronger.

All of these parties are necessary for a solution; only if a standard of fairness and balance is applied will all be included. One of the greatest fears of the South is that new "green" conditionalities will be placed on the acquisition of aid and finance. They are concerned that environmental requirements may necessitate technology they do not have. With that in mind, every effort must be made to make the preparations and the outcome of the 1992 conference address the legitimate concerns of all these groups of nations.

Conference Mission

Participants identified two major tasks for the 1992 conference: changing perceptions and taking action on priority measures.

Changing Perceptions

The conference should advance thinking and understanding about the integrated nature of environment and development. Every investment decision in every part of the world has both developmental and environmental consequences. Many of those decisions have consequences that extend beyond national borders and may have global repercussions. Therefore, international action to protect against possible threats from those decisions is appropriate and necessary. Yet many in the South worry that the environmental agenda will be set in the North and imposed upon the South in the name of globalism. International action will raise questions about the sovereign rights of nations. However, sovereignty has never been absolute, and rethinking the world in a manner more in step with the times may require that the parameters of sovereignty for all nations be re-examined.

Values must be reassessed. The Western model of profligate consumption has had environmentally disastrous consequences, yet obviously this is the pattern of consumption to which most people in developed and developing countries aspire. Changes in lifestyle and values are needed if the world is to survive, and these changes should begin in the developed world. The concept of sustainable development must replace development which cannot be sustained and which jeopardizes the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Participants recognized that environment and development progress is determined by an almost infinite number of decisions and actions taken by individuals, enterprises, institutions, and public bodies. Hence, national and international resolutions and agreements will be ineffective unless they can be translated into better decisions and actions at all levels down to the individual worker and consumer. Accordingly, national and international actions must be designed to change perceptions and behavior. Three types of action are available:

- Education and encouragement. Efforts are needed at all levels to change perceptions of the world and understandings of the consequences of actions so that better decisions can be made.
- 2. Incentives and disincentives. Market forces are increasingly considered the most effective driver of decisions and actions. Individuals and enterprises reliably act in ways which they perceive to be in their own interest. To the maximum practical extent, incentives and disincentives should be used so that individuals and

enterprises see actions consistent with sustainable development as serving their own interests.

3. Regulation and enforcement. Some actions must simply be regulated and, in some cases, prohibited with adequate enforcement to assure compliance.

Another area in which perceptions must be changed is popula-tion. Too often population stabilization is a missing agenda item in discussions of environment and development. Sustainable development cannot be achieved unless world and regional populations are stabilized at levels which allow acceptable standards of living within the limited carrying capacity of Earth's ecosystems.

While population issues are politically sensitive and potentially divisive, they cannot be ignored if meaningful progress is to be made on environment and development.

Priority Actions
The 1992 conference should be action-oriented. Participants identified several areas which should receive priority attention between now and the conference. These fall into the areas of environmental agreements, environmental economics, and questions of funding.

The Preparatory Committee should pull together appropriate agencies of the UN system and charge them with taking priority actions and negotiating priority agreements in their areas of exper-tise. The committee and its working groups should avoid duplicating negotiations that are going on in other competent fora.

Environmental Agreements. The 1992 conference should have before it several agreements on international environmental issues. There should be a climate convention that is more than a framework agreement which sets out areas for future protocols. It should include the mechanics for implementation, including: a) targets and timetables; b) provisions for technology transfer; c) funding levels.

Industrialized countries hold a disproportionate amount of responsibility for global warming because they are the major contributors of greenhouse gases. Therefore, they should not wait until 1992 to reach agreement on limiting the emissions of those gases. An early agreement among the developed countries would also contribute to the success of the 1992 conference by showing that they are serious about cleaning up their own pollution and not

trying to preserve the environment by limiting development in the South.

In addition to a climate convention, the 1992 conference should have before it agreements on biodiversity, depletion of rain forests, and regional seas. These agreements should include provisions for technology transfer where needed, provisions for technical cooperation, and funding mechanisms.

In addition, the agreements should contain provisions for enhancing the capacity of decisionmakers in developing countries to assess options and make decisions that are in their best interests. This ability — sometimes called "endogenous capacity" — is aimed at breaking the pattern of dependency on more highly developed countries. Sustainable development requires that policymakers be able to think in integrated terms about the relationship between economic options and environmental consequences. In order for that to happen in developing countries, it is necessary to build the capacity to hold national policy dialogues without requiring outside support.

Environmental Economics. Environmental economics should be rethought, and much of this should happen before 1992. Current economic and statistical practices do not adequately reflect environment and development. Two areas of reform are needed:

- 1. Systems of national accounting, including measures of gross national product (GNP), must be made to reflect factors like environmental enhancement or degradation and depletion of resources. Present methods of computing GNP allow the environmentally disastrous Alaska oil spill to be reflected as a net increase in gross national product. Similarly, the lack of capital accounting lets the selling off of a finite mineral or biological resource be reported as a boost to GNP.
- 2. Environmental impact, resource depletion, and development impact must be internalized into microeconomic decision making for projects and other investments. Present practices externalize many of these costs, encouraging investment decisions that ignore the effects of these factors on society. Use of impact fees and other incentives and disincentives applied to enterprise activity should be considered.

International institutions and national governments should press economists and statisticians to reform the economics of environment and development. Significant progress should be reported to the 1992 conference.

Funding. Participants discussed whether significant additional funds are necessary to carry out environmentally sound development. National leaders see a high cost attached to environment policies, and many participants saw the need for major new resource commitments. However, others said that substantial progress on the environment can be made by redirecting resources away from environmentally unsound programs. Excessive calls for additional resources may perpetuate the myth of conflict between development and environment. Many agencies within the UN system are integrating environmental considerations into their programs in large part because donor countries are demanding it.

A major fear of developing countries is that lending agencies and aid donors will place environmental conditions on the dispersal of badly needed funds for development programs. Such conditionality is seen as a threat to the sovereign right of nations to use their resources and develop their economies as they wish.

All relationships between lenders and borrowers have conditions built into them. Those who provide funding, it was said, have a responsibility to integrate environmental considerations into their decision making. However, those considerations should not be applied as a litmus test at the point of final project decision. Rather, the funding agencies should encourage early consideration of environmental as well as technical and developmental factors in project conception and planning. And they should review funding proposals to make sure that this has taken place.

Two other issues were raised in connection with funding:

- 1. The heavy indebtedness of many developing countries cannot be ignored. This factor should be taken into account by the Preparatory Committee when it is considering costs and funding for environment and development.
- As economic and environmental problems of Eastern Europe become better known, it is feared that money will be diverted there from developing countries. Participants agreed that resources which flow to the East should not come at the expense of the South.

Procedural Issues

Participants were in agreement on several procedural issues directly related to the 1992 conference.

Representation

The 1992 conference should be convened at the highest political level. Several participants suggested that the conference could be a world summit meeting. This would have implications for the level of representation throughout the preparatory process, including the Preparatory Committee itself as well as various other negotiating fora.

High-level attention to these issues should also foster improved policy coordination within governments. All portfolios of national governments carry significant environment and development implications. National governments often are ineffective in coordinating their national policies through all ministries, and too many relegate issues related to sustainable development to secondary roles. Preparation for 1992 should be used to attack this problem.

Nongovernmental Participation

Much attention was given to the important roles that nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector can have. Every effort should be made to have broad involvement throughout the preparatory process. This includes participation by industry and other enterprises, technical and professional organizations, and public interest groups. Governments themselves cannot solve all problems, and they will not be able to move, in any event, without public pressure.

At the same time, the leaders of powerful NGOs and businesses must recognize that some developing countries feel threatened by their affluence and influence. They need to be sensitive to these concerns.

Institutions

Participants agreed that the conference should not create new institutions. It should rather consider ways to strengthen existing institutions and to bolster cooperation between them.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in particular should be reinforced. One essential need is a more secure funding base. The practice of annual contributions to the Environment Fund leaves UNEP in a precarious position from year to year. Some participants suggested that a longer-range pledge of money from governments — for example, five years — would enable UNEP to plan programs with a longer horizon.

Conclusion

While there are significant obstacles to effective international cooperation on environment and development, the participants saw reasons for hope and determination. The General Assembly's mandating resolution for the 1992 conference, though the result of difficult negotilations, represented some convergence of views among nations. The 1992 conference also has the attention and support of UN leadership. The UN system is gearing up for it and putting more resources into sustainable development activities. The Brazilian government, which hosts the 1992 conference, is taking its role very seriously, and that can make an important difference, just as Sweden's strong support was an important element in the success of the 1972 World Conference on Man's Environment in Stockholm. The "green" movements throughout the world are demanding action and holding political leaders accountable for commitment and progress.

Together, these factors raise hope that the 1992 conference will be action-oriented and will mark significant progress on environment and development. The stakes are high. Human survival demands that these issues be the high politics of the decade of the

The Stanley Foundation

Activities

The Stanley Foundation works toward the goal of a secure peace with freedom and justice by encouraging study, research, and discussion of international issues. Programs strive to enhance individual awareness and commitment and to affect public policy.

International conferences for diplomats, scholars, business people, and public officials comprise a major portion of foundation activities. Other foundation activities include an extensive citizen education program which provides support and programming for educators, young people, churches, professional and service groups, and nonprofit organizations and offers planning assistance and resource people for collaborative events; production of "Common Ground," a weekly world affairs radio series; and sponsorship of the monthly magazine, World Press Review. Individual copies of conference reports are distributed free of charge. Multiple copies of publications and cassette recordings of "Common Ground" programs are available at a nominal cost. A complete list of activities, publications, and cassettes is available.

The Stanley Foundation, a private operating foundation, welcomes gifts from supportive friends. All programming is internally planned and administered; the foundation is not a grant-making institution.

Related Publications

Environmental Problems: A Global Security Threat, Report of the Twenty-fourth United Nations of the Next Decade Conference, June 1989, 36pp.

Science and Technology for Development, Report of the Nineteenth United Nations Issues Conference. February 1988, 32pp.

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