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SUMMARY OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 11-28 APRIL 1995

Nearly three years after the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the third session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) has made progress in positioning itself as the focal point for the examination of sustainable development at the international, national and local levels. The revised format of the Commission, which included numerous panel discussions, enabled the participants to enter into a dialogue. The two days dedicated to the sharing of national experiences in implementing Agenda 21 was a departure from the CSD's previously UN-centered focus. The Day of Local Authorities, combined with the NGO and government-sponsored panels and workshops throughout the session, enabled the CSD to examine the local aspects of implementing Agenda 21. While it remains clear that the journey to true sustainable development is long and arduous, it was heartening to see that despite the decline of official development assistance and the lack of new and additional financial resources, the journey is clearly underway.

During the course of the session, the Commission, under its new Chair, Henrique Cavalcanti (Brazil), examined the second cluster of issues according to its multi-year thematic programme of work. Delegates discussed: trade, environment and sustainable development (Chapter 2); combating poverty (3); changing consumption patterns (4); demographic dynamics and sustainability (5); integrating environment and development in decision-making (8); major groups (23-32); financial resources and mechanisms (33); transfer of environmentally sound technologies, cooperation and capacity-building (34); science for sustainable development (35); and information for decision making (40).

The sectoral cluster for this year included: an integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources (Chapter 10); combating deforestation (11); combating desertification and drought (12); sustainable mountain development (13); promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development (14); conservation of biological diversity (15); and environmentally sound management of biotechnology (16). The Commission also established an Intergovernmental Panel on Forests to "pursue consensus and formulation of coordinated proposals for action" with regard to the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests. The session concluded with a two-and-a-half-day High-Level Segment, attended by over 50 ministers and high-level officials.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CSD

Agenda 21 called for creation of a Commission on Sustainable Development to: ensure effective follow-up of the UN Conference on Environment and Development; enhance international cooperation and rationalize the intergovernmental decision-making capacity; and examine progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national, regional and international levels. In 1992, the 47th session of the UN General Assembly set out, in resolution 47/191, the terms of reference for the Commission, its composition, guidelines for the participation of NGOs, the organization of work, the CSD's relationship with other UN bodies, and the Secretariat.

1993 SESSION: The CSD held its first substantive session at UN Headquarters in New York from 14-25 June 1993. Amb. Razali Ismail (Malaysia) was elected the first Chair of the Commission. During the course of the session, the Commission addressed the following items: adoption of a multi-year thematic programme of work; the future work of the Commission; exchange of information regarding the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level; progress in the incorporation of recommendations of UNCED in the activities of international organizations and within the UN system; progress in facilitating and promoting the transfer of technology, cooperation and capacity-building; and initial financial commitments, financial flows and arrangements to give effect to UNCED decisions. On 23-24 June 1993, over 50 ministers participated in the High-Level Segment to discuss issues related to the future work of the CSD and implementation of Agenda 21.

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of the CSD	1
Report of the CSD.....	2
1995 Programme of Work.....	2
Drafting Group A.....	2
Drafting Group B.....	4
Drafting Group C	5
Presentations of National Experiences	7
Day of Local Authorities	8
High-Level Segment	9
Closing Plenary	12
A Brief Analysis of the CSD	13
Things To Look For Before CSD-4	14

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*© <enb@econet.apc.org> is written and edited by Johannah Bernstein, Pamela Chasek <pchasek@pipeline.com>, Peter Doran <foeireland@toppsi.gn.apc.org> and Virginia Hulme. The managing editor is Langston James Goree VI "Kimo" <kimo@pipeline.com>. The sustaining donors of the *Bulletin* are the International Institute for Sustainable Development <iisd@web.apc.org>, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Pew Charitable Trusts through the Pew Global Stewardship Initiative. General support for the *Bulletin* for 1995 is provided by the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit and the World Bank. The authors can be contacted at their electronic mail addresses and by phone or fax at +1-212-888-2737. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD and other funders. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* can be found on the gopher at <gopher.econet.apc.org> and in searchable hypertext through the *Linkages* WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/> on the Internet. This volume of the *Bulletin* is uploaded into the APC conferences <enb.library> and <un.csd.general>.

1994 SESSION: The second session of the CSD met in New York from 16-27 May 1994. During the course of the session, the Commission, chaired by Klaus Töpfer (Germany), examined the first cluster of issues according to its multi-year thematic programme of work. Delegates discussed the following cross-sectoral chapters of Agenda 21: Chapters 2 (trade, environment and sustainable development); 4 (consumption patterns); 33 (financial resources and mechanisms); 34 (technology transfer and cooperation); 37 (capacity-building); 38 (institutions); 39 (legal instruments); and 23-32 (major groups). On the sectoral side, delegates examined the progress in implementing the following chapters of Agenda 21: Chapters 6 (health); 7 (human settlements); 18 (freshwater resources); 19 (toxic chemicals); 20 (hazardous wastes); 21 (solid wastes); and 22 (radioactive wastes).

The Commission also adopted a decision on intersessional work, which called for the establishment of a new *ad hoc* open-ended intersessional working group to examine the sectoral issues to be addressed by the Commission at its 1995 session (land management, agriculture, desertification, mountains, forests and biodiversity). The session concluded with a High-Level Segment attended by over 40 ministers and high-level officials.

The members of the CSD determined that although some progress was made, until there is an increase in official development assistance and an improvement in the international economic climate, it will be difficult to translate the Rio commitments into action. Likewise, many participants agreed that unless the CSD's format is changed, it will be impossible to shift from rhetoric and speech-making to dialogue and action.

AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUPS: The CSD's *Ad Hoc* Open-Ended Working Group on Sectoral Issues met from 27 February - 3 March 1995, under the chairmanship of Sir Martin Holdgate (UK). Delegates discussed the six reports of the Secretary-General on the following sectoral issues: integrated management of land resources, forests, combating desertification, sustainable mountain development, sustainable agriculture and rural development, and biological diversity. Among the recommendations was a request for the CSD to consider establishing an intergovernmental panel on forests to assess work already done and to propose further action. The Working Group also recommended that the CSD promote: the exchange of views by governments on integrated land management; the development of tools for integrated land management; priority to technology-related issues; the signature, ratification and implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification; action for the sustainable development of mountain areas; integration of energy-related issues into efforts for sustainable agriculture and rural development; and future work on the protection of traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant to conservation and sustainable use.

The *Ad Hoc* Open-Ended Working Group on Finance met from 6-9 March 1995, under the chairmanship of Dr. Lin See-Yan (Malaysia). The Working Group recommended that the CSD should: secure the implementation of all financial recommendations in Agenda 21, including meeting the accepted target of 0.7% of GNP for ODA as soon as possible; urge developed countries to take appropriate new measures towards a solution to the external debt problem of developing countries; encourage international financial institutions and development agencies to continue to enhance their efforts in support of sustainable development; promote capacity-building to enhance the use of economic instruments; prepare a detailed feasibility study on an environmental user charge on air transport; encourage interested parties to undertake a pilot scheme on internationally tradeable CO₂ permits; examine the concrete modalities and usefulness of establishing environmentally sound technology rights banks; promote a detailed study of the Matrix approach; provide leadership in encouraging governments and organizations to launch

specific initiatives to support and enrich its work in financing sustainable development; encourage the Working Group to involve private enterprise, research organizations, IFIs, development agencies and NGOs; and further promote the use of debt-for-sustainable development swaps, as appropriate.

REPORT OF THE CSD

Outgoing Chair Klaus Töpfer opened the third session of the CSD on Tuesday, 11 April 1995, and highlighted some of the ongoing CSD-related initiatives. He called for more dialogue to ensure that all countries benefit from trade liberalization and that debt relief measures are developed to support sustainable development. He added that the financial resources needed to implement the Rio commitments are still far from adequate, and called on developed countries to honor ODA commitments. The CSD must ensure that the goals of sustainable development are integrated into all sectoral areas and the UN must demonstrate its capacity to secure ecological and social stability through partnership and shared responsibility.

Henrique Cavalcanti (Brazil) was then elected Chair of the CSD. Cavalcanti proposed three operational aspects for the new intersessional period: assessment of Agenda 21 implementation and commencement of work on sectoral and sustainability indicators; enhanced engagement of the UN system in CSD activities; and establishment of a dialogue with the private sector to better define the CSD's role and commitment to sustainable development.

In other opening statements, Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development Nitin Desai said that the success of the CSD depends on the political weight given to it by governments. The Co-Chair of the High-Level Advisory Board on Sustainable Development, Birgitta Dahl, outlined the recommendations from the Board's third meeting on: sustainable food security; the links between trade and environment policies; value-based education for sustainability; and new partnerships.

The Commission then elected the Bureau: Yordan Uzunov (Bulgaria); Takao Shibata (Japan); Magnús Jóhannesson (Iceland); and Henry Aryamanya-Mugisha (Uganda). Cavalcanti introduced Agenda Item 2 (adoption of agenda and other organizational matters), noting that drafting groups will be established on: (a) finance; poverty; consumption; trade, environment and sustainable development; and demographic dynamics; (b) technology transfer; science; decision making structures; and major groups; and (c) sectoral issues and biotechnology.

1995 PROGRAMME OF WORK

The Commission began its substantive work by convening two panel discussions. The first panel, on financial resources and mechanisms, featured Prof. Grzegorz Kolodko, the Polish Minister of Finance; Andrew Steer, the World Bank; Vito Tanzi, IMF; Hilary Thompson, National Westminster Bank; and Maximo Kalaw, Green Forum, the Philippines. The second panel focused on sectoral issues and featured Franz Fischler, European Commissioner for Agriculture; Graham Blight, IFAP; David Harcharick, FAO; John Falloon, Minister of Forestry of New Zealand; and Elizabeth Dowdeswell, UNEP. These panels were followed by a more general debate. There were also three days of general debates on progress in the implementation of Agenda 21. After the general debates, the Chair and the Secretariat distributed draft decisions on each of the items, which were then discussed by three drafting groups. Drafting Group A was chaired by Magnús Jóhannesson, Drafting Group B was chaired by Takao Shibata and Drafting Group C was chaired by Henry Aryamanya-Mugisha.

DRAFTING GROUP A

TRADE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: In the general discussion of Chapter 2, Norway highlighted the need for green buying policies, green

liability rules and full access to environmental product information. Brazil noted the importance of trade liberalization in promoting an environmentally-supportive international economic system. The US defended the role of trade policies in pursuing environmental objectives. Morocco said environmental concerns should not serve as a pretext for hindering developing countries' access to markets. Malaysia stressed improved market access and expressed concern about environmental conditionalities that restrict trade.

The issues that arose during the negotiations included: the use of trade measures in environmental agreements; sustained economic growth; "integrated" dispute settlement; life-cycle approaches; "discouraging" unilateral actions outside international trade rules; least trade-restrictive environmental policies; and internalization of environmental costs.

The final decision notes that: trade and environmental policies should be mutually supportive in promoting sustainable development; the needs of developing countries should be taken into account; and there is a need for capacity-building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. It also notes: issues related to the links between trade, environment and sustainable development; cooperation to promote an international economic system that will lead to economic growth and sustainable development and address environmental degradation; the Uruguay Round Agreements; the work of the WTO's Committee on Trade and the Environment; access to markets; transfer of environmentally sound technology (EST); finance for small firms; environmental regulations and standards; the need to analyze impacts of product-specific policies; consumer preference for "environmentally friendly" products; progress achieved through relevant international organizations; preparation of a paper reviewing research on trade, environment and sustainable development links; studies on the relation between environmental protection, job creation and development; avoiding adverse effects of product specific policies; eco-labeling and recycling; technical assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition; assessment of the environmental effects of trade policies; coordination between environment and trade policies; implementation of trade and development principles in accordance with Agenda 21; and the importance of transparency, openness and public participation in work on trade and the environment.

COMBATING POVERTY: In the negotiations of the Chair's draft decision on Chapter 3, the G-77/China tended to replace references to poverty "reduction" with poverty "eradication." Other points of discussion included references to: the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Declaration on the Right to Development; private sector accountability; and "women as the majority of people living in poverty."

The final decision notes: the complexity of the link between sustainable development and poverty eradication; the importance of economic growth in combating poverty; the need for an integrated approach to poverty eradication; the need for programmes focusing on women, children and youth; relevant international instruments and declarations; and the rights of people living in poverty. The Commission also notes: the need for a favorable international economic environment, including financial and technical assistance flows, better terms of trade and access to markets, debt relief, and transfer of EST; public accountability of private business; implementation of agreed commitments; cooperation and synergy between the CSD and other commissions concerned with poverty eradication; and links between programmes aimed at poverty eradication and sustainable development.

CHANGING PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS: In the general discussion of Chapter 4, the EU noted that developed countries have a special responsibility to reduce unsustainable production and consumption patterns. Australia, Bulgaria and Algeria highlighted the CSD's role in consumption issues. Consumers International Environment said that projected

energy increases highlight the responsibility of developed countries to address consumption and production patterns.

In the negotiations of the Chair's draft decision, references to the gaps between and the responsibilities of developed and developing countries, the life-cycle approach, procurement policies in developing countries, ecological tax reform, and eco-labeling generated discussion.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.12) notes that: unsustainable patterns of consumption and production are the major cause of environmental deterioration; there are common but differentiated responsibilities in this field; and developed countries have agreed to take the lead by promoting change in their own countries. It also notes: the results of the Oslo Roundtable; the imbalances between developed and developing countries; measures to reduce production and consumption; the need for long-term studies; internalization of environmental costs through the polluter-pays principle and the introduction of economic measures; natural resource accounting; international cooperation for setting product standards; and the exchange of experience on all levels. The Commission's future work programme will include: identifying policy implications of projected trends in consumption and production patterns; assessing the impact of changes in developed countries on developing countries; evaluating the effectiveness of policy measures intended to change production and consumption patterns; eliciting time-bound commitments from countries; and revising guidelines for consumer protection.

DEMOGRAPHIC DYNAMICS AND SUSTAINABILITY:

There was little general discussion of Chapter 5, and in the negotiations most of the discussion focused on language rather than substance. References to health, education technology, empowering women, populations at risk, and cooperation between the CSD and the Commission on Population and Development were added.

The final decision also notes: the need to study the links between poverty, health, education, technology, patterns of production and consumption, development and the environment; the ICPD Programme of Action and the additional resources necessary to implement it; the integration of population issues into sustainable development planning; populations at risk from environmental degradation; the links between development, environmental protection and the empowerment of women; and NGO contributions.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISMS: The consideration on Chapter 33 began with a panel discussion, and there was also a report on the intersessional *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Finance. Many countries expressed concern about declining ODA levels. Colombia said that the question of external debt should be seen as an opportunity to free resources for sustainable development. Norway called for green tax reform and increased use of economic instruments, and noted that although private investment flows are at a high level they are unequal in a regional sense. Ecuador expressed concern about the detrimental impact of financing on the environment and the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability.

The G-77/China said that the debate should focus on: increasing ODA; a solution to the debt problem; and direct foreign investment. Malaysia called for an increase in ODA levels, innovative financial mechanisms, and assessment of the effectiveness of the policy instruments in the Matrix. Algeria said that: new and additional financial resources must be mobilized; the debt problem must be resolved; and the issue of economic issues should be left to governments. Brazil said that private capital flows are essential, but should not replace ODA. The Philippines recommended studying the feasibility of adopting economic instruments and urged developed countries to encourage private sector investment in developing countries.

In the negotiations, topics that generated discussion included: the decline of ODA in absolute terms; the 0.7% ODA target;

reform measures in recipient countries; international safety nets to address negative effects of private capital outflow for developing countries; debt-for-equity swaps; GEF replenishment; efforts to direct national action; environmental taxes; economic instruments; application of innovative mechanisms; intellectual property rights; sustainable development indicators; a user charge on air transport; and EST rights banks.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.11) calls for: increased ODA for developing countries and more effective use of ODA; private capital flows and investment; debt-relief measures; expanding the mandate of international financial institutions to include sustainability; development of sustainable development indicators; mobilization of domestic financial resources; economic instruments that take national conditions into account; and support from governments and international organizations for strengthening national capacities in the use of economic instruments. The decision also notes: the Intersessional *Ad Hoc* Open-Ended Working Group on Finance's consideration of innovative measures; internationally tradeable CO₂ permits; the consideration of national needs and IPRs in ESTs and biotechnology transfer financing; further study of the Matrix approach; the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; and the use of national experience as case studies.

DRAFTING GROUP B

INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN DECISION-MAKING: In the general debate on Chapter 8, it was noted that the Secretary-General's report (E/CN.17/1995/19) reflects attempts to develop methodologies for sustainable development strategies, reviews the work on integrated environmental and economic accounting, and examines the link between international agreements and national law. The World Bank called for more attention to the information systems that countries will need as national and local initiatives proliferate. Canada noted the importance of national commissions for sustainable development, participatory strategies and enhanced economic methodological work. In the negotiations on the Chair's draft decision, Belarus proposed an international conference on sustainable development and countries with economies in transition.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.9) recommends: the establishment of national mechanisms to develop integrated, participatory strategies for sustainable development; the participation of governments in the work of the IACSD; development of methodological approaches to integration; the development of government initiatives on environmental and economic accounting for sustainable development; and continuation of the work of UNSTAT and others on integrated economic and environmental accounting.

MAJOR GROUPS: In the general debate on the role of major groups, India and Malaysia called for the participation of NGOs in the work of the CSD and funding to enhance the contribution of major groups. The US welcomed governments' commitment to the participatory approach to Agenda 21 implementation, and noted the importance of voluntary support for major groups and NGOs. The EU said that national implementation must be supported by inclusive dialogue, involving NGOs and major groups on national delegations to the CSD. The International NGO Steering Committee for the CSD urged governments to support the regularization of NGO participation, currently under ECOSOC review.

Some of the key issues that arose during the negotiation of the Chair's draft decision included: convening a one-day programme on major groups for the 1996 session of the CSD; encouraging major group representation on CSD delegations; encouraging representation in national coordinating mechanisms; establishing linkages between major groups; providing funding for major groups in developing countries; and the importance of the ECOSOC NGO review.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.10) recommends that: national coordination mechanisms should be broadly representative; major group organizations should choose their own representatives; participation of major groups should be enhanced, especially at the international and regional levels and at CSD-relevant meetings; and roster status should be continued through the completion of the ECOSOC review.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, COOPERATION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING: In the general debate on Chapter 34, the Secretariat identified three priorities: EST transfer; access to and dissemination of information; and financial arrangements. The emerging trends in ESTs include a shift from end-of-pipe to cleaner production technologies and a gradual shift from environmental regulation to the use of economic and voluntary instruments. The Republic of Korea said that the workshop on ESTs, held in Seoul in November 1994, highlighted the need for a consultative mechanism to be established to enhance cooperation and the exchange of information.

During the drafting group sessions, the key areas of disagreement were: whether ESTs should be transferred on concessional or preferential terms; the role of the private sector; whether the commercial sector should be the only one to benefit from EST centers; whether steps should encourage new and additional financial resources or merely the flow of financial resources; and the enabling conditions needed for ESTs.

In the final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.6), the work programme addresses: access to and dissemination of information on ESTs, including workshops or expert panels and case studies on experiences in the implementation of transfer operations; institutional development and capacity-building for managing technological change, including cooperation in the development of basic criteria, joint ventures and the development of environmental performance indicators; and financial and partnership arrangements, including the provision and mobilization of resource flows, enhancement of North-South and South-South cooperation through joint research, and assessment of the potential impact and benefits of technology transfer.

SCIENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: In the general debate on Chapter 35, Gisbert Glaser (UNESCO) identified four strategic priority areas: science, education and capacity-building in developing countries; the strategic importance of better international cooperation in scientific research; improved communication between scientists and policy-makers; and links between research institutions and the economic sector.

Some of the key issues that arose during the negotiation of the Chair's draft decision included: the importance of indigenous peoples' knowledge; cooperation between the Parties to the various environmental conventions; additional funding; enhancing the capabilities of decision makers to use existing scientific information; and the Global Environment Observing Systems.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.7) calls on governments and other bodies to: share information concerning scientific capacities and know-how through case studies; enhance the scientific capacities of developing countries; promote the networking of national and international centers of excellence; enhance the participation of developing countries in international research programmes on global environmental issues; improve communication between science, industry, policy makers and major groups to enhance the application of science; and stimulate the donor community to consider targeted financial support for scientific capacity-building.

INFORMATION FOR DECISION-MAKING: In the general debate on Chapter 40, Sweden said that the Working Group on the Advancement of Environmental Statistics has agreed on a first list of environmental indicators. In order to coordinate the activities in the development of sustainability indicators, it is important that the CSD work closely with the UN Statistical Division. Australia

advocated an inclusive and consultative approach to the development of indicators that reflect national conditions.

Some of the key issues that arose during the negotiation of the Chair's draft decision included: bilateral and multilateral channels to facilitate access to sustainable development information; the feasibility study on access to information for SIDS; the development of indicators of sustainable development (ISDs); coordination between UNSTAT and other institutions in the development of ISDs; and the linkages between the different dimensions of sustainable development.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.8) recommends: that developed countries use bilateral and multilateral channels to facilitate access by developing countries and countries with economies in transition to sustainable development information; the strengthening of Earthwatch as an international partnership to ensure adequate flow of environmental information; cooperation between UNDP, UNEP, DPCSD and others in further defining Development Watch; the development of a common system of access to the databases of UN bodies; studies on the development of ISDs; and the implementation of the work programme, which focuses on the training and capacity-building, as well as development, testing and evaluation of ISDs.

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS: In the general debate, the Secretariat noted that governments' positive responses to the new guidelines have been reflected in improved national reporting.

The final decision refers to: the work of the Secretariat in simplifying and streamlining reporting guidelines for the 1996 session; the need for relevant organizations and donors to provide assistance to developing countries for the preparation of national sustainable development strategies; national action plans and reports to the CSD; and the role of the Secretariat in providing draft guidelines for obtaining information on the implementation of Agenda 21 for the 1997 Special Session of the General Assembly.

DRAFTING GROUP C

REVIEW OF SECTORAL ISSUES — OVERALL CONSIDERATIONS: During the negotiations of the Chair's draft text, the US denied the implication of financial commitments in the language of Agenda 21 after China accused governments of failing to honor Rio commitments. China defended the repetition of demands for additional financial resources and action on EST transfers, saying "there are repetitions, and there are repetitions."

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.2) calls for: respect for national sovereignty as well as a comprehensive approach to implementation; international support for developing countries' efforts to mobilize resources at the national level; attention to the importance of financial commitments made at Rio; and the sharing of scientific knowledge and EST transfer on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed. States that have not already ratified and implemented the Conventions on Biological Diversity, Climate Change, and Combating Desertification are urged to do so.

INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND RESOURCES: In the discussion of Chapter 10, the US, the EU and Japan resisted attempts by the G-77/China to introduce new language linking implementation of the chapter to predictable means and additional flows of financial resources and EST transfers. China resisted an EU attempt to reformulate the poverty/environment linkage. No agreement was reached in the operative section on proposed references to the resolution of land- and water-use conflicts between and/or within cities and their surrounding areas.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.3) calls for: action on soil and water contamination; a people-oriented approach involving all stakeholders; and dissemination of information and use of assessment techniques including indicators. It notes the uneven pace of implementation of Chapter 10 of Agenda 21 and urges

Government action on national and/or local land use planning systems to achieve objectives within the time-frame. Special attention is to be given to stable land-use systems in endangered ecosystems and integrated planning and development where intensified settlement and agricultural production exist. The Secretary-General is requested to strengthen interagency support.

COMBATING DEFORESTATION: The discussion on Chapter 11 and the Forest Principles began within the context of the panel on sectoral issues and the subsequent general debate. A number of countries expressed their support for the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests proposed by the CSD *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Sectoral Issues. Canada said the proposed Panel should operate in an open and inclusive manner and coordinate initiatives on priority issues. Malaysia said that the terms of reference for the Panel should include: assessment of actions taken; enhancement of all types of forests; identification of cross-sectoral factors; and promotion of open and free trade in forest products. Brazil said the Panel should consider: broadening scientific knowledge; understanding factors affecting trade in forest products; and the feasibility of developing an agreed set of criteria and indicators. Australia encouraged the Panel to focus on indicators, labeling, institutional roles and analysis of the underlying causes of deforestation. Mexico said the Panel should develop criteria and indicators, encourage participation of relevant UN bodies and submit a preliminary report in 1996. The US said that the Panel should be guided by the FAO Ministers' statement.

During the negotiation of the draft decision on forests and the annex that sets out the terms of reference for the Forest Panel, a number of issues were raised including the relationship between the issue of certification and labeling of forest products, and the sustainable management of forests. A number of countries were concerned that the programme of work was not prioritized and that the panel will not have time to consider all of the issues in a comprehensive manner. Developed countries expressed concern that some of the proposed topics are under consideration in other fora, such as the Biodiversity Convention, the FAO and the ITTO. One such issue, which has proved controversial in other fora, is compensation for the commercial use of traditional knowledge. The US and others felt that this topic could detract the attention of the Panel away from the core issue of sustainable forest management. Other issues of concern included whether the Panel should examine the need for a legally-binding instrument, the feasibility of developing internationally-agreed criteria and indicators, and trade in forest products.

With regard to the panel composition, organization of work and secretariat support, the US and Canada stressed that intergovernmental organizations and major groups should participate fully as observers in the Panel and its subsidiary bodies. While most agreed that the DPCSD should provide secretariat support for the Panel, there was some question about the relationship with other UN agencies dealing with forests, the hiring of new staff and the source of funds for the Panel's budget.

The majority of the text was negotiated in a small informal-informal group that met all afternoon and through most of the night on Tuesday, 25 April. The final decision welcomes progress that has been made with regard to the level of awareness, adaptation of policies, strategies and action plans on forests, including the numerous government-sponsored meetings. The Commission also welcomed the Rome Statement on Forestry, as adopted by the Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forests (16-17 March 1995). The Commission urges full implementation of the Forest Principles and Chapter 11 of Agenda 21 and, in order to pursue consensus and formulation of coordinated proposals for action, establishes an open-ended *Ad Hoc* Intergovernmental Panel on Forests.

The mandate, modalities and terms of reference for the Panel are contained in Annex I to this decision. The objective of the Panel is to promote multi-disciplinary action at the international level

consistent with the UNCED Statement of Forest Principles. The main categories of issues to be considered by the Panel are:

- Implementation of UNCED decisions related to forests at the national and international levels, including an examination of sectoral and cross-sectoral linkages. This item includes: identifying the underlying causes of deforestation and difficulties in implementing sustainable forest management; considering ways and means for the effective protection and use of traditional forest-related knowledge, innovations and practices, consistent with the terms of the Biodiversity Convention; and monitoring actions to support afforestation, reforestation and restoration of forest systems.
- International cooperation in financial assistance and technology transfer, including exploring ways of improving the efficiency and coordination of bilateral and multilateral assistance.
- Scientific research, forest assessment and development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.
- Trade and environment related to forest products and services, including the development of methodologies to advance the full valuation of forest goods and services with a view to promoting full cost internalization.
- A review of international organizations and multilateral institutions and instruments, including appropriate legal mechanisms, to develop a clearer view on the work being carried out under existing instruments and the institutional linkages and the identification of any gaps, areas requiring enhancement and areas of duplication. The Panel will also consider and advise on the need for other instruments or arrangements to further implement the Forest Principles, including appropriate legal arrangements and mechanisms covering all types of forests.

The Panel will be composed of representatives from governments (including the European Community) and IGOs, NGOs and other groups can participate as observers, on an open-ended and fully participatory basis. The Panel will submit a progress report to the fourth session of the CSD in 1996 and its final conclusions, recommendations and proposals for action will be submitted to the fifth session in 1997. At its first session, the Panel will resolve issues on the modalities of work, including the election of officers. Secretariat support will be provided by the DPCSD, possibly coordinated by a temporary direct hire, with the secondment of relevant personnel from the UN system and other organizations. Funding will come from voluntary extra-budgetary contributions, secondments from international organizations, and in-kind contributions, including the hosting of meetings.

COMBATING DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT:

The discussion on Chapter 12 began within the context of the panel on sectoral issues and the subsequent general debate. Bo Kjellén, Chair of the INC for the Convention to Combat Desertification, noted that the Convention now has 103 signatures. The Convention rests on four pillars: the bottom-up approach; improved coordination between donors and governments of affected countries; the integrated approach; and strengthened scientific efforts. He asked the CSD for continued political support.

During the negotiation of the draft decision, the US wanted to stress the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification. Sweden, supported by Australia and Algeria, proposed a new paragraph that underlines the four pillars of the Convention. The EU felt that the paragraph on improving scientific knowledge should emphasize the great wealth of existing data and information on desertification. The US did not want to develop a monitoring system, since this would go beyond the provisions of the Convention and create a new institution.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.4) welcomes the conclusion of the Convention to Combat Desertification and urges all governments to recognize the urgent need for early signature, ratification and entry into force. The decision also: recognizes the four pillars of the Convention; urges governments to take an

integrated approach to combating desertification; and urges governments to enhance awareness of the Convention, including the observance of International Day for Combating Desertification (17 June). The decision also notes the importance of information-sharing and preserving the knowledge of farmers and indigenous and local people concerning dryland management.

SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT: During the negotiation of this draft decision on Chapter 13, the US did not want to link implementation and facilitation of the Chapter to the provision of new and additional financial resources and transfer of ESTs. The US also objected to a proposed international conference on mountains. A compromise reference to combating poverty was the outcome of a disagreement over the terms "reduction" and "eradication." The latter was preferred by the G-77/China.

The final decision (E/CN.17/1995/L.5) recommends: recognition of the need for strengthening existing institutional mechanisms and the knowledge base; and implementation of national and/or local mountain development programmes, as outlined in Chapter 13 of Agenda 21, including monitoring of the impact on mountain communities and ecosystems of, *inter alia*, production and land-use systems, tourism, transportation and energy production and use. A new look at resource and service flows is advocated, along with the integration of the "mountain agenda" into other chapters of Agenda 21 and global conventions. The decision also calls for action on combating poverty, mountain economy diversification, protection of the environment and food security of local communities, information networks, and the creation of new livelihood opportunities.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SARD):

After the initial discussion of the draft decision on Chapter 14, an informal-informal was convened among the Cairns Group with the G-77/China, US, EU and Japan agreeing on language welcoming the Final Act of the Uruguay Round. Stronger language was deleted regarding the environmentally damaging agricultural practices and agricultural markets distorted by many agricultural and trade policies.

The final decision recommends: further action to balance the need to increase food production, food security and combat poverty and the need to protect resources; more attention to small farmers in marginal lands and traditional agriculture; and increased understanding of the relations between farmers, the environment, households and community. The full implementation of the Uruguay Round is viewed as an important contribution to an undistorted sectoral and economy-wide policy framework for sustainable development. The impact of trade liberalization is to be monitored. Agricultural research should focus on developing location specific technologies. Governments are encouraged to integrate action on energy into action on SARD. The Commission urges national and international action to support the conservation and sustainable use of animal genetic resources, and calls for information exchange under the auspices of the FAO as SARD Task Manager.

CONSERVATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: At the start of negotiations on Chapter 15, the US argued that some of the original draft language re-opened controversial issues already agreed in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

In the final decision, the Commission stresses the principal role of the CBD. References to financial resources and technology transfers are reaffirmed within the commitments made in the CBD. There was some debate on the Commission's competence to refer to the replenishment of GEF funding and the introduction of a new paragraph in the operational section referring to the COP's inclusion in its medium-term programme of consideration of local knowledge and practices. The decision also calls for: ratification and implementation of the CBD by governments who have not already done so; international support for capacity-building, including technology transfer and measures to promote private sector access to joint development of technology; coordination of

relevant global and regional agreements; integrated action plans and sectoral strategies (for example, forests, agriculture, marine resources, rural development and land use); fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from biological resources; effective implementation of the CBD; information dissemination, noting the COP establishment of a clearing-house mechanism; development of economic assessment mechanisms to weigh costs and benefits; and protection of local knowledge and practices.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY: In the discussion on Chapter 16, the EU sought greater emphasis on ethical considerations with particular reference to genetic engineering involving human material. Both the US and the EU qualified references to the Commission's monitoring role to avoid any usurpation of the COP's work on a biosafety protocol. The US also resisted stronger language on an international regulatory framework as formulated by the EU. There was a prolonged debate in which the US also resisted the direct references to the precautionary principle with regard to biosafety. The US said such references would prejudge mechanisms set up to examine the issue. The G-77/China, notably Malaysia, stressed the risks involved, while the US sought to emphasize the immediate importance of biotechnology.

The final decision calls for: action to enhance the contributions of the private sector, financial, academic and research institutions, NGOs and other major groups; case studies on "best practice" in safe applications; establishment of biotechnology associations, particularly in developing countries to facilitate safe commercialization; and mobilization of public and private finance. Countries and IOs are invited to: prioritize the identification of problems and solutions associated with environmentally sound use and management of biotechnology; promote a balanced understanding of biotechnology within a sustainable development context; establish national databases; encourage ethical responsibility; reinforce safety measures; and enhance EST transfers. The COP is invited to keep the Commission informed about its work on a biosafety protocol.

PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS ON THE SECTORAL ISSUES ADOPTED BY THE SECOND SESSION OF THE CSD: The Secretariat's report (E/CN.17/1995/22) described action taken at the international level to follow-up on the CSD's consideration of health, human settlements, freshwater, toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes and radioactive wastes. The US referred to the International Coral Reef Initiative and the initiative to phase out lead, and requested the CSD to recommend that governments develop action plans to phase out lead in gasoline and other products. Mexico also noted that the CSD should support lead-free gasoline initiatives.

In the negotiation of the draft decision, the EU said that the text failed to reflect the entire agenda of the second session of the CSD and insisted that the title be changed to reflect the implementation of sectoral issues only. Belarus proposed the addition of new paragraphs on sharing national experiences, an international conference to promote sustainable development in countries with economies in transition, and a review of regional initiatives.

The final decision notes the WHO-UNDP inter-regional initiative that has incorporated health-environment concerns in the preparation of national sustainable development plans, as well as regional initiatives in this area. In the area of human settlements, the Commission notes two initiatives: the Urban Management Programme and the Sustainable Cities Programme. The Commission also notes: the comprehensive assessment of freshwater resources; progress in establishing the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Toxic Chemicals; the first meeting of the Intersessional Group of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety; the progress in the implementation of the voluntary Prior Informed Consent procedure; the efforts to develop action plans to achieve a phase-out in the use of lead in gasoline; the work of the

International Coral Reef Initiative; and the IAEA's General Conference, which initiated the preparation of a convention on the safe management of radioactive wastes.

PRESENTATION OF NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

On Tuesday, 18 April 1995, delegates listened to five presentations of national strategies for sustainable development and experiences in Agenda 21 follow-up.

Bolivia: Alejandro Mercado, Under-Secretary of Development Strategy, presented Bolivia's progress report on implementing Agenda 21. Bolivia's approach to sustainable development includes commitments to: economic growth, incorporating environmental costs; rational use of natural resources; social equity and participation; recognition of cultural diversity; and governability incorporating decision-making capacity and democratization. Unsustainable forestry practices have resulted from an inadequate institutional model for timber resource exploitation. Among actions to be taken is a new forest law that comprehensively addresses forest ecology. Bolivia is establishing a national system of protected areas, promoting conservation of wildlife and germplasm, and managing water basins.

India: N.R. Krishnan, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, described Agenda 21 implementation in India. A Planning Commission and National Development and Environmental Councils have been established. India's environment is taxed by heavy industrial and commercial demands, with 50% of the country's energy needs being met through coal and fuel wood, although alternative energy sources are being promoted. India has shifted from forest-based development to regeneration, conservation and sustainable harvesting. NGO involvement has also been key to India's sustainable agriculture practices. Some of India's rural development programmes address wage employment, water treatment, community health, rural youth training and integrated rural development. India has over 50 environmental laws, including provisions for eco-labeling, and numerous fiscal incentives to promote sustainable development, such as 100% deductions for pollution abatement equipment.

Poland: Professor Maciej Nowicki, Adviser to the Minister of Environmental Protection, presented Poland's progress report on Agenda 21 implementation. Poland's fundamental environmental and economic issues include restoration of industrially damaged regions, preservation of pristine areas, and protection from unsustainable development.

Czeslaw Wieckowski, Director of the Department of Ecological Policy, outlined national strategies for environmental conservation with the participation of civil society. Poland will have to spend more than US\$1 billion annually to achieve its sustainability goals.

Professor Nowicki said that energy consumption, after a 1990-91 decrease, has stabilized. Waste discharges have been reduced and protected areas have increased by 150%. Problems remain in the promotion of sustainable agriculture and the increase in transport use. In the long term, Western-style consumption will be the main obstacle to sustainability in Poland.

Uganda: Mr. Henry Aryamanya-Mugisha, Director of Environment Protection, presented Uganda's National Environment Action Plan (NEAP), which provides a framework to integrate environmental concerns into national development plans. The NEAP provides a legal framework for: creation of rights and obligations; environmental impact assessments; protection of fragile ecosystems; and the establishment of the National Environment Management Authority.

Action plans are being prepared for water, wetlands, forests, wildlife, biodiversity, agriculture, mining, climate change, population, drought and desertification. Raising awareness of environmental issues remains a priority, and the government requires the inclusion of environmental education in school

curricula. Uganda will produce a national "State of the Environment" report every two years, and district environmental profiles are being prepared. Uganda is also cooperating with Tanzania and Kenya to solve the problem of water hyacinth infestation in Lake Victoria. While the process of formulating the action plans has progressed well, implementation remains a problem.

United Kingdom: John Stevens, Assistant Secretary, Environmental Protection Division, Department of the Environment, reported on the UK's Strategy for Sustainable Development, which looks at both economic development and environmental protection toward the year 2012. The strategy examines: the principles of sustainable development; the state of the environment; the impact on the environment of different sectors of the economy; and different types of policy responses. The Strategy identifies new indicators for sustainable development and establishes a task force with representatives from all ministries. Three new bodies have been established to implement the strategy: the Government's Panel on Sustainable Development, the UK Round Table on Sustainable Development, and "Going for Green," a public awareness campaign.

PRESENTATIONS OF NATIONAL EXPERIENCES IN INTEGRATED LAND MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

On Wednesday, 19 April 1995, the CSD heard national presentations on integrated land management and rural development and agriculture.

Australia: Geoff Gorrie, First Assistant Secretary, Land Resources Division, Department of Primary Industries and Energy, described Australia's Landcare Programme — a community and government partnership. Planning approaches are developed according to local needs and with the involvement of interest groups. The concept of Landcare originated with farming communities in the mid-1980's and focuses on soil conservation. Landcare groups have provided a mechanism for local communities to identify and address the causes of soil, water and vegetation management problems as well as socio-economic issues.

Achievements of the first three years of the Decade for Landcare include: increased community awareness; the formation of 2,200 Landcare groups; increasing corporate support; and research and development on sustainable management of natural resources. Outstanding objectives are: encouraging sustainable practices on a voluntary basis; placing emphasis on implementation on the ground; and integration of production and conservation objectives.

Chile: Dr. Manuel Lladser Prado, Expert from INTEC (Technology Institute of Chile), gave a presentation on the influence of environmental measures on Chilean vegetable and fruit exports. Prado noted that the primary problems for developing countries include lack of technical know-how, excessive regulation, and restrictive trade practices and barriers. He highlighted some of Chile's environmental problems, including landfills, litter, depletion of the ozone layer, marine pollution, and exhaustion of non-renewable resources. He referred to the recently established Environmental Commission and the first Eco Fair, which was held in early 1995. In 1994, Chile enacted a framework environmental law. Prado described the state of fruit and vegetable production in Chile and the extensive work being undertaken to promote clean packaging, including the use of environmentally-friendly materials, eco-labeling and recycling.

Hungary: Mrs. Gabriella Mohacsy-Toth, Ministerial Senior Adviser, Hungarian Ministry for Agriculture, presented an historical overview of agriculture in Hungary. Since 1989, political, social and economic changes have included a transformation of the land tenure regime and production patterns, transition to a market economy, and harmonization with EU regulations. A partial compensation process has been implemented for confiscated lands.

New concepts in environmentally sound land use policies have been introduced, including: soil information systems; agrarian regional development, including provision for backward regions; a programme to reduce pesticides risk; legislation on land ownership and soil conservation; and financial facilities, including State funds for wildlife, forests and land protection. Outstanding problems include: fragmentation of land units; inappropriate financial provisions; and low regional level activity due to the historical dominance of central planning mechanisms.

Indonesia: Minister of Agriculture, Syarifudin Baharsjah, presented Indonesia's experience with sustainable agriculture and rural development. The goals of Indonesia's first 25-year plan were self-sufficiency in rice, the alleviation of poverty and prosperity and well-being for all. The plan, which began in 1969, focused on agriculture and rice self-sufficiency and was implemented in stages to improve nutrition, living standards and economic growth. Despite widespread problems with pests and disease, Indonesia became self-sufficient in rice.

By 1986, pesticides were being uniformly and frequently applied, irrespective of real need and local conditions. Over-fertilization had killed natural predators, resulting in an explosion of crop pests. The Government prioritized the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programme, which: restricted pesticide use; demanded that the choice of pesticides take account of the predator population; and banned many types of pesticides. Indonesia has once again achieved self-sufficiency in rice, and pesticide use has decreased 60%. New programmes have been implemented to enable small farmers to achieve self-reliance, take advantage of opportunities, obtain credit and accumulate savings.

Morocco: Korachi Taleb Bensouda, Inspector-General in Charge of the Environment, Ministry for Agriculture, reported on land management and sustainable development in Morocco. Only 12% of Morocco is suitable for agriculture. The rural population is ageing and declining in number. The Moroccan land management programme focuses on: food security; improving agricultural production; protection and conservation of natural resources; and better integration of agriculture into the economy. Morocco also has a number of national plans for managing irrigation and water use, reforestation, electrification, and preventing soil erosion and land degradation. The government is also trying to promote public awareness of sectoral-based projects and methods for sustainable agriculture and rural development. Twelve million hectares of land are subject to erosion. Morocco is applying reforestation and other techniques to prevent further erosion. Popular participation is fundamental to the success of such programmes.

DAY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

On Tuesday evening, 18 April 1995, the CSD focused its attention on local implementation of Agenda 21. Mark Hildebrand, UN Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), introduced the Day of Local Authorities and noted that preparations began at the second session of the CSD. The moderator, Jeb Brugmann, Secretary-General, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, said between 1000 and 1200 local authorities are implementing Local Agenda 21s in 26 countries. Mayor Luis B. Guerrero-Figueroa, Cajamarca, Peru, highlighted the need for a decentralized, participatory and democratic model for local decision-making to implement Local Agenda 21. Expansion of local leadership has improved democracy, urban-rural communication, conservation and recovery of natural resources. William Pearce, Head of Strategic Planning Division, Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth, Canada, said his formerly polluted municipality won an environmental achievement award in 1994. Using a consensus approach, a task force was set up to conduct consultations with local residents and organizations. He recommended sustainable development indicators that are measurable, credible and valid.

Derek Bateman, Chair, UK Local Agenda 21 Steering Group, said that 60% of the councils throughout the UK have committed to developing plans. The key elements are: managing and improving environmental performance; integrating sustainable development into policies; awareness-raising and education; partnerships; measuring, monitoring and reporting; and indicators. Local Agenda 21 should be a focus for UN initiatives.

Mr. T.P. Magere, Deputy Principal Secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister, Tanzania, described the project for a Sustainable Dar es Salaam to improve the standard of living. Solid waste management, urban renewal, air quality, liquid waste, the integration of the informal sector into the urban economy and the coastal economy were identified as priority areas. Communities choose their own priority areas and the government provides the infrastructure. Economic structural adjustment programmes take account of social services necessary for economic recovery.

Masami Shibuya, Vice Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture, Japan, introduced Agenda 21 Kanagawa, a social action programme based on cooperation between local governments, citizens, NGOs and the corporate sector. Agenda 21 Kanagawa has four goals: environmentally-friendly lifestyles; a society that respects the environment; a symbiotic social system; and international cooperation on the environment. The prefecture has had problems with pollution and population growth, and is planning a world Conference on Sustainable Cities.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

The High-Level Segment opened on Wednesday afternoon, 26 April 1995, with over 50 ministers and high-level officials in attendance. CSD Chair Henrique Cavalcanti noted the topics for consideration: financial resources and mechanisms, transfer of environmentally sound technology and capacity-building; consumption and production patterns; sustainable agriculture, rural development and food security; forests; and major groups. He also requested guidance on the CSD work programme for 1995-96.

Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, reviewed the role and impact of the CSD in catalyzing cross-sectoral policy actions. He also noted the impact of the CSD on the work of the UN system. Funding, regional and global-level implementation, and cooperation with external entities must be addressed.

The following is a summary of the general discussion.

DENMARK: Poul Nielson, Minister for Development, described how the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) affirmed commitments made in Rio. Denmark advocates: statistical benchmarks to monitor Summit progress; dynamic targets; independent financial resources for the UN system; and follow-up by an independent commission.

PHILIPPINES: Cielito F. Habito, Secretary of Socio-Economic Planning, said the Philippines has entered into debt-for-nature swaps with WWF and Switzerland, and will be sponsoring: an Experts Meeting on Persistent Organic Pollutants, a meeting of sustainable development councils in Asia, and a conference on population, environment and peace.

FRANCE: Michel Barnier, Minister of the Environment, on behalf of the EU, said the EU devoted nearly US\$30 billion to ODA in 1993. The UN objective of 0.7% of GNP for ODA remains a valid commitment. Such assistance should be increasingly concentrated on the poorest countries, particularly in Africa.

INDONESIA: Djameludin Suryohadikusumo, Minister for Forestry, recommended: criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management; further dialogue on trade in forest products and voluntary certification schemes; strengthened international cooperation and mobilization of financial resources; and implementation of existing forestry-related instruments.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Danilov Danilyan, Minister for Environmental Protection and Natural Resources, welcomed

progress on forests and noted a Belarus proposal for a conference on sustainable development for countries with economies in transition.

NETHERLANDS: Jan Pronk, Minister of Development Cooperation, said poverty eradication should be financed by domestic resource mobilization. Private capital flows are impressive, but are volatile and unevenly distributed. New financial mechanisms are needed.

MOROCCO: Dr. Nouredi Benomar Alami, Minister of the Environment, noted Morocco's recent efforts to: establish an Environment Ministry, a committee to combat desertification, and an environmental information system; implement the polluter-pays principle; and prepare water resources and forest plans.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA: Zoong Wie Kim, Minister of Environment, said his country has been using a Volume-Based Waste Collection Fee System to change consumption patterns and reduce waste. The Republic of Korea has offered to host an international workshop on this issue in September.

AUSTRALIA: John Faulkner, Minister for the Environment, Sport and Territories, welcomed proposals to streamline national reporting, and noted that the CSD's work on agriculture and rural development provides an opportunity to examine agricultural trade reform's contribution to sustainable development.

URUGUAY: Juan Chiruchi, Minister of Housing and Environment, noted Uruguay's advisory technical commission on the environment with the participation of government authorities and civil society. Uruguay is encouraging municipal authorities, local and regional governments to develop local Agenda 21s.

SRI LANKA: Mrs. S. Athulathmudali, Minister of Transport, Environment and Women's Affairs, noted recent initiatives such as: the Clean Air 2000 Action Plan; an Energy Conservation Fund; a forestry master plan; a coastal zone management strategy; and a phase-out of ozone depleting substances by 2004.

THURSDAY, 27 APRIL 1995

UNITED KINGDOM: John Gummer, Minister of the Environment, stressed the need to express CSD decisions in a vocabulary that is clear to the public. He noted the UK's leading role in promoting debt relief and offered to host an international workshop on oceans.

UNITED STATES: USAID Administrator Brian Atwood said environmental protection and international development are under political attack in the US. USAID will increase support for: forest conservation and the development of indicators; environmentally sustainable agriculture; lead abatement; and marine conservation.

SPAIN: José Borrell, Minister for Public Works, Transport and the Environment, urged increased support for: the Oslo Conference conclusions; environmental management tools and economic instruments; internalization of environmental costs; increased cooperation in the Mediterranean; and a world charter on tourism.

SWEDEN: Margareta Winberg, Minister of Agriculture, stressed the need for a commitment to long-term food security. Sweden supports a biosafety protocol and the forest panel. She said that gender equality is a prerequisite for sustainable development.

GABON: Martin Fidele Magnaga, Minister of the Environment, said the GEF should fund reforestation and forest management activities. He proposed the establishment of a working group on technology transfer, under the auspices of UNIDO and UNEP, to develop a legally-binding code of conduct.

NORWAY: Thorbjørn Berntsen, Minister of Environment, highlighted key recommendations from the Oslo Roundtable and called for progress reports on the implementation of Chapter 4 of Agenda 21 by the 1997 CSD session.

JAPAN: Sohei Miyashita, Minister in Charge of Global Environmental Issues, highlighted: Japan's Basic Environmental Plan; the development of sustainability indicators; the promotion of

Local Agenda 21s; and plans to host the World Conference on Local Initiatives for Sustainable Cities.

HUNGARY: Katalin Szili, Secretary of State, Ministry of the Environment, said Hungary has done its best to harmonize an integrated environmental policy, but economic transition, recession and agricultural privatization are creating difficulties.

DENMARK: Svend Auken, Minister for the Environment and Energy, said that while there have been important results since Rio, the momentum has been lost. Further progress is necessary before the 1997 review, especially on finance and ODA, trade and the environment, and international legislation.

SWITZERLAND: Federal Councillor Ruth Dreifuss highlighted several commitments: financial support for the forest panel; cooperation with the Dutch workshop on the technology transfer needs of developing countries; a seminar on biodiversity and biotechnology; and support for UNEP.

TURKEY: Riza Akçali, Minister of Environment, highlighted: the recent national environmental action plan; the Programme for Environmental Management and Protection of the Black Sea; formulation of an Agenda 21 for Central Asia and the Balkan Republics; and establishment of a regional environmental center.

BRAZIL: Gustavo Krause, Minister of Environment, Water Resources and the Amazon, welcomed the establishment of the forest panel, which will help assess the need for new international agreements, arrangements or mechanisms.

ARGENTINA: Maria Julia Alsogaray, Minister of the Environment, said Argentina is setting up a national council for sustainable development. She called for the removal of subsidies and protectionist policies.

GERMANY: Erhard Jauck, Deputy Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, urged the CSD to: focus on the linkages between Agenda 21 chapters; streamline reporting requirements; and ensure expedient work by the forest panel. Germany will host a workshop on indicators.

THE NETHERLANDS: Jozias J. Van Aartsen, Minister of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries, said that agriculture and nature management have been discussed as if they are unrelated and that attention to Chapter 10 has been inadequate.

COSTA RICA: Dr. René Castro, Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Mines, reported success in combating deforestation, and promoting energy conservation, eco-tourism and citizen involvement. He highlighted the Central American Alliance for Sustainable Development and a regional biodiversity agreement.

MEXICO: Julia Carabias, Minister for the Environment, Natural Resources and Fisheries, noted the recently established Advisory Council for Sustainable Development. She stressed the need for grassroots involvement and rural development.

CANADA: Sheila Copps, Minister of Environment, said that the CSD must be taken out of the UN basement and onto the streets. She stressed the importance of the participation of major groups and the work of the forest panel. She proposed holding the fifth session of the CSD away from UN Headquarters.

THE NETHERLANDS: Margaretha De Boer, Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, said that the Netherlands will introduce an energy tax in 1996, host a workshop on the relationship between government and industry and host a meeting on national needs assessment studies.

BURKINA FASO: Anatole Tiendrebeogo, Minister of Environment and Tourism, said that the CSD must focus on the mobilization of resources for implementation. He urged countries to ratify the Desertification Convention and achieve the target of 0.7% GDP for ODA, while periodically reviewing this rate.

UNEP: Executive-Director Elizabeth Dowdeswell said the post-UNCED context requires a strengthened role for UNEP to raise the world's consciousness about actions harmful to the

environment. UNEP's role is to bring the environmental perspective to the CSD's work.

GERMANY: Dr. Klaus Töpfer, Minister for Regional Planning, Building and Urban Development, noted that the IMF, the G-7 finance ministers and the CSD are meeting at the same time without interaction. Sustainability must be integrated in the economic and financial framework.

EGYPT: Mostafa Tolba proposed: setting a date for developing sustainability indicators and selecting innovative financial mechanisms; country-specific studies of production and consumption patterns; and establishing a task force to develop a methodology for reviewing implementation of Agenda 21.

BULGARIA: Jordan Uzunov, Deputy Minister of Environment, said that Bulgaria has established a high-level council to integrate environmental concerns in social and economic activity and polluter-pays legislation. He noted the 1995 conference in Sophia to promote Rio goals in Central and Eastern Europe.

COLOMBIA: Ernesto Guhl, Vice-Minister for the Environment, noted that Colombia's new constitution includes the principle of sustainable development. He welcomed the creation of the forest panel, but expressed concern about establishing a legally-binding instrument.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: Marius Enthoven, Director-General for Environment, Nuclear Safety and Civil Protection, described agricultural policy reform in the EU. The forest panel should concentrate on: criteria and indicators; timber certification; and examining the need for a Forest Convention.

FRIDAY, 28 APRIL 1995

ITALY: Paolo Baratta, Minister of the Environment, said that Italy is the most energy efficient of the OECD countries. He proposed that sustainable urban development be included in next year's agenda. He noted that UNEP and the WTO should cooperate to find a balance between free trade and environmental regulations.

GHANA: Christina Amoako-Nuama, Minister for Environment, Science and Technology, noted that Ghana has: established environmental committees to integrate environmental concerns into development initiatives; launched a new Forest and Wildlife Policy; and established a National Biodiversity Committee.

BARBADOS: Richard Cheltenham, Minister for Tourism, International Transport and the Environment, said that in preparation for next year's review of Chapter 17 of Agenda 21, the CSD should carry out an initial review of the steps taken to implement the Barbados Programme of Action.

POLAND: Dr. Andrzej Szujewski, Deputy Minister for Environmental Protection, Natural Resources and Forestry, described Poland's experiences with deforestation and recent afforestation efforts, including the opening of the first forest gene bank and the establishment of forest reserves and parks. He praised the new CSD format.

FINLAND: Sirkka Hautojärvi, Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Environment, noted that Finland is prepared to organize a meeting on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. UNEP should study the environmental impacts of trade policies, internalization of environmental costs, and the implementation of the polluter-pays principle.

INDIA: Shri N.R. Krishnan, Ministry of Environment and Forests, called on developed countries to lead the way in changing production and consumption patterns. He called for international financial institutions to reorient their policies toward the further implementation of Agenda 21 and mechanisms for EST transfer.

CHINA: Amb. Wang Xuexian noted that environmental factors have led to the erection of trade barriers against developing countries, aggravating their poverty and hampering economic development. While intellectual property rights are important, they should not hamper the transfer of ESTs.

VENEZUELA: Luis Castro Morales, Vice Minister of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources, noted that Venezuela made a recent decision not to export logs and is promoting tree planting for commercial purposes. Venezuela is removing the lead from gasoline for export and domestic use.

MALAYSIA: Dr. Othman Yeop Abdullah, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Primary Industries, said that Malaysia has new forestry legislation and is developing a comprehensive national forestry action plan and is establishing a national committee on sustainable forest management.

CHILE: Alejandro Gutierrez, Vice Minister of Agriculture, said Chile has developed new legislation on the creation and management of national parks and a national plan to combat desertification. He highlighted the creation of the Valdivia Group in March 1995, which brings together temperate forest countries of the southern hemisphere.

BELGIUM: Amb. Alex Reyn suggested that the CSD achieve more political visibility to publicize sustainable development. He noted the dependency of sustainable development on socio-cultural factors. An instrument for internalizing environmental and social costs must be developed.

BANGLADESH: Amb. Reaz Rahman called for: measures to minimize negative effects on LCDs and food importing countries; measures to overcome negative effects of market reforms; a biosafety protocol; EST transfer; alleviation of debt; improved access to markets; and the establishment of EST centers.

BELARUS: Amb. Alexander Sychou noted the particular problems facing countries with economies in transition, highlighting post-Chernobyl problems. He proposed convening an international conference on sustainable development for countries with economies in transition.

PAKISTAN: Omar Kureishi, Member, Pakistan Environmental Protection Council, noted the establishment of Pakistan's National Conservation Strategy (NCS). He stressed the broad-based participatory mode of developing and implementing the NCS. The major obstacle to effective implementation of the NCS is the lack of financial resources.

UKRAINE: The delegate said that the CSD needs greater integration between the sectoral and cross-sectoral issues, rational reports and indicators for sustainable development. He hoped trade liberalization will increase financial resources for sustainable development.

CZECH REPUBLIC: Bedrich Moldan announced a new initiative to organize a workshop on education for sustainable development, which will take place in Prague later this year. The main outcome will be a set of recommendations to the fourth session of the CSD.

ECUADOR: Carlos Luzuriaga called for international support for the protection of ecosystems and a strategy for the sustainable use of wood, genetic and marine resources. He stressed the need for a Southern representative on the Forest Panel and the need to take sovereignty into account in these issues.

CUBA: Amb. Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla noted Cuba's National Environment and Development Programme, and emphasized that lack of political will and resources are the biggest obstacles to the implementation of Agenda 21. Cuba will host the ninth Meeting of Environment Ministers from Latin America and the Caribbean.

AUSTRIA: The delegate said that the CSD must use clear language to make the process accessible to the public and raise public awareness. He also noted that an environmental framework for trade is still needed. Austria will host the next Conference of Parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, to mark the Convention's 10th anniversary.

ITTO: Dr. B. C. Y. Freezailah, Executive Director, noted the ITTO's work on criteria and indicators and the guidelines for the sustainable management of forests. He called on States to

accelerate ratification of the new ITTA. He welcomed the Forest Panel and said ITTO will cooperate fully.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

During the course of the High-Level Segment two panel discussions were held on employment and sustainable development as well as on the media and sustainable development.

PANEL DISCUSSION ON EMPLOYMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The moderator, Naresh Singh of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, noted that poverty, employment and social integration are central to sustainable development. Poul Nielson, Denmark's Minister for Development Cooperation, called for policies on worker health and safety, working conditions, and education and training. He also noted that green taxes may contribute to employment and environmental protection, but that political action is needed.

Igor Khalevinski, Russian Deputy Minister of Labor, noted the factors that pose problems in addressing unemployment. He referred to recent initiatives to: attract investment from Russian business; promote social sustainable development; and shift attention from economic to social programmes. Marius Enthoven, Director-General for Environment, Nuclear Safety and Civil Protection, European Commission, suggested: integrating economic growth and environmental protection; stimulating the green industry; focusing on environmental performance rather than productivity; reviewing unsustainable subsidies and the tax system.

Dick Martin, Secretary-Treasurer of the Canada Labor Congress, noted the possible results if all 1.5 million ICFTU workplaces implemented a local Agenda 21. He suggested environmental audits and promoting workers' environmental rights. Clement Millin, Texaco, recommended: the adoption of key business principles to promote sustainable development and economic growth; promotion of market economies to promote investment; and the building of education infrastructure capacity.

In the discussion that followed, Paula DiPerna (Cousteau Society) noted the public's fear of job loss. Nielson responded that education is the key to change. Nielson referred to the jobs that were generated from the newly established SO₂ exhaust-cleaning industry. Simone Bilderbeek (Netherlands Committee for the IUCN) highlighted the concept of job-sharing to ensure equitable resource-sharing. Martin responded that some people are working too hard, while some do not have enough work. Richard Tapper (WWF) noted that a sustainable economy is more likely to support higher employment because it increases efficiency in resource use. Carol Lubin (International Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centres) asked about women's under-employment. Martin said that women are usually at the bottom of the economic scale and the victims of environmental neglect.

PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE MEDIA AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: UNCED Secretary-General Maurice Strong said sustainable development cannot be presented as a generic term. The relationship between particular events and themes must be explained. Political interest depends on media interest. David Lascelles, Natural Resources Editor, *Financial Times*, said sustainable development must be explained in terms of its application to policy and business decision-making. Sustainable development is not yet an imperative, politically or legally. The CSD should avoid presenting the concept on an ethical basis. Barbara Pyle, Vice President for Environment Programmes, CNN/Turner Broadcasting, said the media needs more knowledge and policy makers need to be more accessible. Scientific uncertainty is a significant barrier. Censorship, high level interference and training inadequacies also create coverage problems. She suggested that the CSD: develop a stake in the issues; adopt a bold charismatic spokesperson; find local models of sustainable development; and highlight immediate issues.

Michael Keats, IPS World Desk Editor said that media coverage of development issues is confined to the occasional disaster story or global conference. Most stories have sustainable development dimensions, although many governments often prevent access to key information. Blair Palese, Chief Press Officer, Greenpeace International, said that CSD discussions must not be carried out in a vacuum. Real problems, people and issues must be highlighted. Problems in media coverage include the lack of linkage with other issues and the lack of coverage of available solutions. The Internet, the World Wide Web, interactive video and CDROM are useful communication tools. Ingebrigt Sten Jensens, JBR Rehlemebyra, described messages that could be used to market sustainable development: consumption levels in the developed world are unsustainable; political leaders do not communicate the importance of reducing consumption for fear of losing political support; the people of the rich world do not long for more garbage; and a society based on sustainable consumption is not a society based on unbearable hardship but on a better life.

In the discussion that followed, the UN Correspondents Association said the UN puts its news through a "blanding" machine. Algeria noted the lack of media coverage of desertification and drought. Friends of the Earth (UK) cited the importance of presenting sustainable development within a wider agenda. Sweden said television promotes unsustainable lifestyles.

CLOSING PLENARY

The closing plenary convened Friday afternoon, 28 April 1995.

CHAIR'S SUMMARY OF THE HIGH-LEVEL

SEGMENT: In his summary of the High-Level Segment, the Chair noted that over 50 ministers participated, including representatives of the ministries of: the environment, finance, planning, development cooperation, forestry, agriculture, labor and infrastructure. High-Level meeting participants described a number of encouraging initiatives, including action taken to phase out lead in gasoline. In this respect, the Commission has encouraged the exchange of national experiences, particularly among developing countries, in the use of environmentally sustainable technologies such as the use of ethanol and biomass as sources of energy.

One of the continuing areas of concern remains financial support for national efforts in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The setting up of an Intergovernmental Panel on Forests was unanimously supported. This decision was regarded as a real achievement, demonstrating the level of credibility attained by the CSD in fulfilling one of the main decisions reached at UNCED. Participants also highlighted the importance of documenting efforts and progress made at the national level in implementing Agenda 21. Fifty-three States and two organizations submitted national reports to the Secretariat. The presentation of national experiences during this session was also considered a valuable complement to the written reports and deserves follow-up at future sessions. The related work on indicators forms an important element in the reporting process. The participants also expressed their appreciation for the continued participation of major groups in the Commission's work. Many noted the crucial role of women, as well as youth and indigenous people and local communities in decision making.

Following the pattern of the previous intersessional period, two *ad hoc* open-ended intersessional working groups will be set up to address the sectoral items programmed for 1996, namely atmosphere, oceans and related technology issues, and the cross-sectoral issues of financial resources and mechanisms and changing production and consumption patterns. A special effort will be made at the Bureau level to prepare for the 1997 review.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA FOR THE FOURTH SESSION: Delegates then adopted the provisional agenda for the fourth session of the CSD (E/CN.17/1995/L.13). The provisional agenda includes: election of officers; adoption of the agenda and organization of work; cross-sectoral issues, with particular

reference to Agenda 21, Chapters 2-5 (trade, environment and sustainable development, combating poverty, changing consumption patterns and demographic dynamics); financial resources and mechanisms; education, science and the transfer of environmentally sound technology, with particular reference to Agenda 21, Chapters 34 (technology), 36 (education) and 37 (capacity-building); review of sectoral clusters, including Chapters 9 (atmosphere) and 17 (oceans and all kinds of seas), the progress report on the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and the progress report on the implementation of the CSD's decisions at its second and third sessions; progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States; and the high-level meeting.

ACTION ON DRAFT DECISIONS: The Commission then adopted all of the draft decisions that had been negotiated by the drafting groups.

Drafting Group A:

- E/CN.17/1995/L.11— Financial Resources and Mechanisms
- E/CN.17/1995/L.12 — Changing Production and Consumption Patterns
- Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development (unedited text)
- Combating Poverty (unedited text)
- Demographic Dynamics and Sustainability (unedited text).

Drafting Group B:

- E/CN.17/1995/L.6 — Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies, Cooperation and Capacity-Building
- E/CN.17/1995/L.7 — Science for Sustainable Development
- E/CN.17/1995/L.8 — Information for Decision Making
- E/CN.17/1995/L.9 — Integrating Environment and Development in Decision Making
- E/CN.17/1995/L.10 — Major Groups
- Information provided by governments and organizations (unedited text).

Drafting Group C:

- E/CN.17/1995/L.2 — Overall Considerations
- E/CN.17/1995/L.3 — Integrated Approach to the Planning and Management of Land Resources
- E/CN.17/1995/L.4 — Managing Fragile Ecosystems — Combating Desertification and Drought
- E/CN.17/1995/L.5 — Sustainable Mountain Development
- Combating Deforestation (unedited text)
- Promoting Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (unedited text)
- Conservation of Biological Diversity (unedited text)
- Environmentally Sound Management of Biotechnology — (unedited text)
- Progress in the Implementation of Decisions on the Sectoral Issues Adopted by the Second Session of the CSD (unedited text).

Gabon said that it could not accept the decision on forests since the document has not been translated into French. France agreed that it will only give its final approval to these texts when the French versions can be verified. Morocco added that this has been a problem in the CSD before and each year delegates are told that the problem will be rectified. Under-Secretary-General Nitin Desai assured delegates that the situation would be reviewed. With regard to the decision on financial resources, the US noted that it has not affirmed or reaffirmed a commitment to the UN target of 0.7% of GNP for ODA. With regard to the financial implications of the Forest Panel, the additional resources needed in 1996-97 should come from savings and other adjustments in the budget.

AD HOC OPEN-ENDED INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUPS: The Chair then proposed establishing two intersessional working groups to prepare for the fourth session of the CSD. The

group on sectoral issues will deal with protection of the atmosphere (Chapter 9) and protection of the oceans, all kinds of seas and coastal areas (Chapter 17). The other group will address financial resources and changing consumption patterns. Both groups will discuss transfer of technology, cooperation and capacity-building. The Bureau will consult with members of the Commission on the agenda and organizational modalities.

Morocco asked about the dates for the working groups and insisted that the schedule take into account other sustainable development meetings. Desai responded that the dates will be set in consultation with the Bureau.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS THIRD SESSION: The rapporteur, Yordan Uzunov (Bulgaria) then introduced the report of the Commission on its third session, as contained in E/CN.17/1995/L.1 and addenda 1-4. After adoption of the report and closing statements by the US, Canada, France (on behalf of the EU), the Philippines (on behalf of the G-77 and China), Papua New Guinea, Nitin Desai and the Chair, Henrique Cavalcanti, the third session of the Commission on Sustainable Development came to a close.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE CSD

Nearly three years after the Earth Summit, and after three meetings of the Commission on Sustainable Development, it is worth stepping back and evaluating just what progress has been made since Rio and how effective the CSD has been in fulfilling its mandate to monitor implementation of the UNCED decisions.

EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21: The Earth Summit may have been such a historic and pivotal turning point, that it established a benchmark that may be unrealistic for the international community to match. Some suggest that expecting anything dramatic after only three years may be too much to hope for. What is becoming increasingly clear is the immense difficulties faced by governments in meeting their Rio commitments, especially in light of the political and economic conditions that have changed dramatically for so many governments since 1992.

The last three years have been marked by unfulfilled promises on many fronts. In certain areas, such as finance, there have actually been retreats from the Rio "commitments" and the systematic unraveling of Agenda 21 language. Governments seem unable and unwilling to alter the very policies that are driving unsustainable development and that brought governments to Rio in the first place. Since these policies are not being changed, environmental degradation is actually increasing. This raises the question of how far the environment will be allowed to deteriorate before governments will actually take concrete action, assuming such action is feasible at all, given the limits imposed on State action by globalization processes.

This year, as in previous years, the CSD noted that although some progress has been made, until there is an increase in official development assistance and an improvement in the international economic climate, it will be difficult to translate the Rio commitments into action in many developing countries and countries with economies in transition. ODA levels have declined and the target of 0.7% of GNP for ODA remains a pipedream and a diversion from substantive discussion. While governments have argued that sustainable development can be funded by innovative economic instruments, debt reduction and swaps, and private investment, there has been more talk than action on this front. Likewise, while governments have been more willing to discuss changing production and consumption patterns and the relationship between trade and the environment, there is little concrete action to report. These issues constitute the key indicators of sustained political will.

Forests is another issue that has been the subject of more talk than action. While the dialogue on the sustainable management and conservation of the world's forests has made important strides over the past three years, there is little action to report. Nevertheless, the numerous intergovernmental initiatives on forests that have been held over the past two years have established a degree of trust between developed and developing countries that has laid the groundwork for the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests. However, many complain that the establishment of this Panel may be too late. It will still be another two years before the Panel reports its finding to the CSD and this could provide governments with another excuse for inaction. Some sceptics will claim this is no accident. Likewise, the Panel is not a guaranteed solution to managing the world's forests. Some fear that politically divisive issues such as finance, technology transfer and farmers' rights could sidetrack the work of the Panel. Others are worried that trade in forest products will dominate the discussion. The top priorities of the Panel should be to examine the underlying causes of deforestation and how to address them and to complete an independent review of all forest-related institutions and instruments to determine what is missing and where there is overlap. Although governments have given strong support to the Panel, it will be up to the Panel members themselves to prioritize the mandate and produce concrete results.

Despite the setbacks, there has been some, albeit limited, progress during the last three years. The Convention to Combat Desertification was adopted in June 1994. The Convention's four pillars represent important breakthroughs: the bottom-up approach; improved coordination between donors, governments and affected countries; the integrated approach; and strengthened scientific efforts. The Conference on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks and other work on the management of the world's living marine resources are making progress. The distressing reports of the dwindling state of the world's fish resources, the political dimensions and very real conflicts, have prompted more immediate governmental responses and important media attention than in other sectors. The International Coral Reef Initiative and the commitments made by countries in the Western Hemisphere at the Summit of the Americas to develop action plans to achieve a phase-out of the use of lead in gasoline are also positive developments.

Finally, as this session of the CSD clearly demonstrated, there is much progress on the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national and local levels. Indeed, some initiatives around local Agenda 21s are even serving as channels for the spectrum of UN Conferences such as the Fourth World Conference on Women. Many countries have established national councils for sustainable development. Agenda 21 is alive and well at the national and local levels. This was reflected by the formal meetings on the presentations of national strategies for sustainable development and national experiences in integrated land management and sustainable agriculture, as well as in the numerous parallel workshops hosted by governments, local authorities and NGOs. It is interesting to note that while a few governments highlighted their need for financial support to implement some of their programmes, the usual rhetoric that developing countries cannot implement Agenda 21 without new and additional financial resources was absent.

EVALUATION OF THE WORK OF THE CSD: There is no question that the CSD has established itself as an essential part of the process for reviewing implementation of Agenda 21. Some have suggested that relative to other UN bodies, the CSD is a step above in terms of its "lively, frank and substantive debate" and multi-media approach. In fact, this year the CSD made considerable progress by revising its format to encourage greater discussion and dialogue, rather than the traditional UN-style "general debate." In addition, unlike past years where the CSD appeared to be an intergovernmental forum for the review of UNCED implementation by UN agencies, this year the CSD dedicated two

full days to the exchange of national and local experiences in the implementation of Agenda 21. Members of the Secretariat also expressed hope that in the future, there will be more representatives of major groups on government delegations to further enhance this exchange of experiences. Moreover, there was virtual agreement on the need to raise public awareness about the work of the CSD. Many felt that the CSD should be liberated from the hallowed halls of the UN and a broader discussion about the issues should be expressed in terms that are accessible to the general public.

The CSD has also proven to be a true catalyst for policy action in numerous areas. Among other things, the CSD has: motivated numerous government-sponsored meetings and workshops related to the implementation of Agenda 21; fostered coordination on sustainable development within the UN system; helped to defuse much of the resistance to national reporting that was evident in Rio; and galvanized NGO and major group activities and action aimed at sustainable development at the international, national and local levels.

But despite these gains, many who have followed the CSD from its inception still believe there is considerable room for improvement. The fact that the CSD, in its third year, is still undergoing a very difficult birth, reflects the general reticence on the part of governments to get down to the business of implementation and action. The CSD should be a walking, talking child, but it is barely crawling. How long will it take the CSD to learn how to walk? But then, even Albert Einstein did not even start talking until the age of four!!

One of the central problems with the CSD is that despite its mission to bring together governments, UN agencies, NGOs and other interested parties for a meaningful dialogue, many suggest that real dialogue is still missing. While the panel discussions were aimed at encouraging dialogue, the presentations were often lengthy or disjointed, leaving little time for a comprehensive discussion. Once again, the High-Level Segment was more of a forum for speech-making rather than dialogue. Although there were representatives from development, agriculture, forest and other ministries in attendance, the majority were still from environment ministries. Few ministers commented on each other's statements and the vast majority relied on previously prepared speeches. The most passionate and pointed statements, however, were from those ministers who spoke "off the cuff," such as Denmark's Svend Auken, Canada's Sheila Copps, the UK's John Gummer and the Netherlands' Jan Pronk. It is refreshing to note that Conference Room 1 was silent during these statements, whereas at most other times the background conversations often drowned out the speaker.

The CSD has also given insufficient attention to the key linkages between environment and development issues. Like UNCED before it, the CSD has not been able to "de-sectoralize" environment and development. The chapters of Agenda 21 and the multi-year thematic programme of work serve to maintain the divisions between sectors and have not been able to facilitate substantive discussion on the linkages between different issues, such as the relationship between agriculture, deforestation, desertification, poverty, trade policies and debt. Likewise, the broad clusters in the programme of work have prevented any real substantive discussion on the issues.

Although, the CSD is taxed with a number of problems, this does not mean that NGOs or governments are prepared to abandon the process, despite a few rumblings in the corridors. The challenge ahead is for those governments who are truly committed to the process to mobilize and invest the time and energy needed to rekindle the political momentum that is in danger of being lost. The CSD must find ways to spotlight and reward those who blaze the trail.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR DURING THE INTERSESSIONAL PERIOD

ECOSOC: At its meeting in Geneva from 26 June - 28 July 1995, the Economic and Social Council will review the report of the CSD. ECOSOC will also have to review the programme budget implications for the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the dates for the first meeting of the Panel. One of the major challenges before ECOSOC this year is the discussion on the comprehensive and coordinated follow-up to the recent international conferences, including UNCED, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and Habitat II.

CSD AD HOC INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUPS: The CSD agreed to continue the work of the *ad hoc* open-ended intersessional working groups. The working group on sectoral issues will address atmosphere, oceans, all kinds of seas and coastal areas. The finance working group will address financial resources and mechanisms, and changing consumption patterns. Both groups will discuss transfer of technology, cooperation and capacity building. Look for an announcement on the dates and agendas of these two working groups, which are likely to meet early in 1996.

CSD INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS: The budgetary and staff implications of the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests by the third session of the CSD will be discussed at the ECOSOC meeting in Geneva this summer. Look for an announcement about the dates and location of the first meeting of the Panel.

GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES: During the coming months, individual governments and international organizations will be hosting meetings and workshops to contribute to the work of the CSD at its fourth session. During the CSD meeting, the following governments announced plans to hold such intersessional meetings:

- The Czech Republic will organize a workshop on education for sustainable development in Prague later this year;
- Israel and Japan will co-sponsor a symposium on water management in Israel from 15-19 May 1995;
- The Philippines and Canada will co-host a workshop on persistent organic pollutants in Vancouver, Canada, from 4-8 June 1995;
- The Philippines and the Earth Council will co-host a meeting of National Councils for Sustainable Development in Asia, which will take place in Manila from 18-19 June 1995;
- The Netherlands will host a workshop on biotechnology for cleaner production from 8-9 June 1995;
- The UK will host an international workshop on oceans this winter;
- The Republic of Korea will host an international workshop on changing consumption patterns and waste reduction;
- The Netherlands will host an international workshop on the relationship between government and industry;
- Germany will host a workshop organized by SCOPE, in cooperation with UNEP, to further promote the development of indicators for sustainable development;
- Bulgaria will host a conference in Sophia to promote Rio goals in Central and Eastern Europe;
- Belarus proposed convening an international conference on sustainable development and countries with economies in transition.
- Japan will host the World Conference of Local Initiatives for Sustainable Cities in Yokohama in November;
- Finland proposed organizing a meeting on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.