



**HIGHLIGHTS FROM FORUM '97:
NEW LINKAGES IN CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT
16-17 NOVEMBER 1997**

Forum '97: New Linkages in Conservation and Development opened on the evening of 16 November 1997 in Istanbul, Turkey. Participants attended a welcome reception where they heard opening addresses and enjoyed Turkish cultural performances. On Monday, 17 November, delegates attended an opening Plenary, Plenary sessions on Ethics and Responsibility in Environmental Action and on Business as a Partner in Environmental Action, and a number of simultaneous conference sessions. In the afternoon, participants attended a theater presentation by Teatro del Ogro of Bolivia, El Cuento del Karai, and in the evening heard remarks from the Counselor of City Planning of Istanbul's Municipality of Sisli at the Conference Banquet.

PLENARY SESSIONS

WELCOME RECEPTION

Imren Akyut, Turkish Minister of Environment, stated that the environment has the potential to unite all countries around a common goal, and is a matter that concerns not only governments but also individuals on a personal level. She stressed the need to accept a new environmental ethic to ensure that the needs of future generations are met. In the 21st century, the most important agenda will consist of human rights, democracy, economic and environmental issues, and NGOs will play an important role in this agenda, particularly in public education and participation. She was pleased that this conference, which takes into account the human, social, cultural, economic and political aspects of environmental conservation, is taking place in Istanbul, a city with important cultural and natural heritage but one also facing considerable environmental threats.

Talat S. Halman, former Turkish Minister of Culture, chronicled the rich history of Istanbul. He stressed the need to fight greed and malfeasance, to combine ethics with aesthetics, and to work hard with a sense of love and solidarity that should govern human as well as international relations.

OPENING PLENARY

Steven Sanderson, Conservation and Development Forum (US), welcomed participants, thanked the conference sponsors and organizers and underscored the support given by the people of Turkey. He noted that the coming together of people with such diverse backgrounds was a kind of blessing. He called attention to the power of such an event that is meant to bring people together to learn from each other, to create innovative networks and to initiate creative interactions within those networks. He indicated that the

challenge for participants at Forum '97 is to think the unthinkable and voice the unheard in terms of new linkages in conservation and development.

E. Walter Coward, Ford Foundation (US), said that Ford's involvement as a co-sponsor for Forum '97 stood as an indication of a new way of thinking about the linkages between the conservation of the environment and the achievement of sustainable livelihoods for people. He noted that the challenge is to think about new ways to better integrate ecology, economy and equity. He hoped that Forum '97 will help in overcoming the social, geographical and conceptual isolation faced by many people working on conservation and development issues, and called upon participants to engage actively in establishing contacts. Quoting Margaret Mead, he said that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens could change the world.

ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Larry Rasmussen, Union Theological Seminary (US), traced the history of three waves of globalization that have resulted in the current world order: colonization, development and trade liberalization. He explained the societal, geo-planetary and biophysical impacts of globalization and how they disrupt intact local communities, transform life forms and institutionalize the conquest of nature as the key to progress. He noted several transitions that must occur in order to address social and ecological problems, including: an economic transition to living off nature's income rather than its capital; a social transition to a far wider sharing of nature's income and wealth; an institutional transition towards increased international cooperation; a demographic transition to control population explosion; a technological transition to minimize environmental impacts; and a religious transition towards "earth keeping." He proposed moral norms for an ethic that addresses the social and ecological questions together, including: participation as optimal inclusion of all voices in society; a commitment to meet basic material needs of all life forms; equity as basic fairness among nations, species, generations and genders; material simplicity and spiritual richness as the markers of quality of life; and responsibility on a scale that people can realistically achieve.

BUSINESS AS A PARTNER IN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Rebecca Adamson, First Nations Development Institute (US), said that in traditional indigenous models of resource management there is no hierarchy, but rather ancient wisdom, trophic webs, energy flows and kinship-based "enoughness." She highlighted that First Nations strike a balance between people and the land and control demand and supply of natural resources. Customary law determines where to hunt and when to hunt, and decrees that: the resources belong to everyone but no one can sell them; the mere act of being born guarantees access to all resources; and all access is negotiated on the basis of supply rather than exclusion. This approach stands in marked contrast to industrialized values of individual competition and ever-growing demand, to the world of pure

finance where corporations have to compete for capital, where numbers and competition are key and where the players with the most money have the advantage. She questioned whether this society can sustain itself and asked if as a society we can reflect the beliefs we can all live and prosper by. She stressed that interdependency is returning as a fact of life and we should draw from ancient wisdom for our future.

CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Financing Conservation and Development: Panelists presented case studies on: the development of community trust funds to address human needs in the Cao Hai nature reserve in China; strategies for sustainable community enterprise development through self-sustaining commercial infrastructures as a conservation tool in the South Pacific; promoting wildlife conservation outside of designated areas in Kenya through the creation of economic incentives for communities, including revenue and benefit-sharing programs; conservation of endangered wildflower species in Turkey through exportation of sustainably cultivated wildflower bulbs; and the importance of conducting research on the sustainability of harvesting before business plans for marketing wild products are carried out.

Evaluating Eden: Lessons from Community-based Wildlife Management: The moderator introduced the International Institute for Environment and Development's "Evaluating Eden" project and said that its aim is to explore the myths and realities of local community participation in wildlife conservation. He indicated that IIED coordinated the implementation of the project in different regions of the world. Panelists presented case studies of community-based wildlife conservation and management in the following regions: Central America; the South Pacific; East, West and South Africa; and Southeast Asia. In each case, they identified key factors for the success of conservation strategies, as well as the types of problems that had been encountered.

Participatory Approaches to Conservation and Development: Indigenous Peoples: Panelists presented projects that: use a multi-stakeholder consensus-based approach to sustainable fisheries management in British Columbia, Canada; incorporate indigenous knowledge and grassroots innovations in development action in Southern India; conduct research and information exchange on traditional land-use systems in Bolivia; provide development grants to US indigenous communities to build endogenous capacity, increase economic productivity and mitigate dependency on federal programs; and use a bottom-up, holistic, integrated approach to engage indigenous peoples in participatory development projects in Guyana. Participants discussed indigenous communities' conflicts with governments and corporations over resource-rich indigenous lands, and the perceived contrast between Western, "scientific" knowledge and indigenous knowledge.

Engaging Communities in Conservation and Development: Case Studies: Panelists presented papers on the following issues: pastoralism and conservation in the Ngorongoro conservation area in Tanzania; integrating conservation and development through local community participation in managing the Goksu Delta protected area in Turkey; engaging communities in conservation and development in Botswana; and TEMA's experience with integrated conservation and development projects in several Turkish villages. The ensuing discussion focused on the importance of getting local communities involved as full-fledged stakeholders. Several panelists and participants insisted that conservation need not conflict with the interests of local communities.

Culture, Conservation and Development: Panelists discussed: how efforts to develop communities or nations economically has undermined peoples' cultural and spiritual development and suggested that culture is the missing link between conservation and development; the importance of including community-based knowledge in land management, provision of alternative income sources for local populations, consideration of local culture and granting of land rights for sustainable development in the Ngoron-

goro Crater conservation area in Tanzania; and the political, cultural, sociological and ecological dimensions of protected areas in the Brazilian rainforest.

Local Communities and Protected Areas in Latin America: Panelists presented three case studies of protected areas in Latin America: the Mayan biosphere reserve area in Peten, Guatemala; the Beni biological station/biosphere reserve in Bolivia; and the Tambopat-Candamo reserved zone in Peru. They discussed key aspects for the management of reserved areas, including the number and type of inhabitants, geographical location, ecological characteristics, legal and institutional frameworks and the degree of local community participation. Problems were identified and varied according to specific political, socio-economic, cultural, institutional and legal conditions in each of the reserved areas.

Issues of Governance in Conservation and Development: Panelists delivered presentations on: the root causes of conflicts over natural resources in Kenya and Uganda, including resource scarcity, population growth, lack of equitable access to resources, and changing ecological conditions; the impact of trends towards local community-based control and international regimes as challenges to nation-state governance; the effectiveness of environmental conservation under a responsible authority compared with current environmental exploitation under popular rule in India; and the history of the Chinese environmental regulatory system, challenges to the enforcement of these laws, new law enforcement programs and drafting and reform of environmental law in China.

Business as a Partner in Environmental Action: Panelists highlighted innovative approaches that combine conservation and business components through presentations on WWF's Marine Stewardship Council, Ecotrust and Canada's National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy. The Marine Stewardship Council aims to balance the interests of conservation efforts with those of the stakeholders. Ecotrust has set up a bank through which it educates environmentally conscious producers about the "green market," better business practices and access to loans. The Canadian Roundtable brought together environmentalists and CEOs of major corporations to foster better understanding between the two groups. Some participants asked how fair labor practices could be included in efforts to balance business and the environment.

Gender Issues in Conservation and Development: Panelists outlined studies on: differing incentives for women and men to participate in conservation projects in Peru; incorporating gender in natural resource management plans in protected areas in Ecuador; gender dynamics in subsistence and economic activities in extractive reserves in the Brazilian Amazon; women as gatherers of wild food plants and transmitters of this knowledge in Turkey; and empowering women through a community-based natural resource management approach in a CAMPFIRE program in Western Zimbabwe. Participants discussed: awareness of gender issues among men; the need to consider ethnicity issues in conservation and development projects; and incorporation of gender issues at a regional level.

Conservation and Development in Ukraine: Panelists discussed: the development of environmental business in Ukraine; greening the economy as a principal path toward sustainability; environmental ethics and responsibility in trade processes; strategies for environmental rehabilitation in mining and industrial regions; and engagement of communities in environmental processes. Points were raised regarding the relationship between environmental policies in Ukraine and its transition to a market economy. In this respect, the moderator indicated that Ukraine is at an initial stage where development is taking priority over conservation, but noted that the country is striving for a shift of emphasis in the future. Comments were made on the types of economic incentives being used for the "greening" of business in Ukraine. Specific examples of incentives and strategies for environmental rehabilitation in the mining sector were given. One participant highlighted the irony of so-called ecotourism to the Chernobyl disaster site.