



# *The National Round Table Review*

*Canada's National Newsletter on Sustainable Development*

*Summer 1991*

## **PRIME MINISTER MULRONEY SAYS NATIONAL ROUND TABLE TO BE GIVEN LEGISLATIVE BASE**

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney believes the National Round Table should become a legislated body. In a recent letter to NRT Chair George Connell, Mulroney expressed the view that the effectiveness of the NRT would be enhanced with legislation. In the letter Mulroney suggests that the National Round Table legislation be designed along the same lines as the Economic Council of Canada a departmental corporation that reports to Parliament through the Prime Minister. Mulroney also said that he had

asked Jean Charest, in consultation with the Prime Minister's Office, the Privy Council Office, and the NRT Executive Committee to work out the details of the proposed legislation.

Mulroney's letter follows comments made earlier in June by federal Environment Minister Jean Charest who said that "the National Round Table is going to be called upon to play a pivotal role in helping the government and Canadians make sustainable development happen". In the letter to Connell, the Prime Minister said he was very

pleased with the progress of the NRT and had asked his staff to explore the possibility of his attending one of the regular plenary sessions of the NRT, in addition to his regular meetings with Dr. Connell.

The draft legislation is currently being drawn up and is expected to be passed in Parliament, possibly as early as this fall. The move by the government to legislate the NRT will ensure that the NRT plays an active and influential role in implementing sustainable development in the years ahead.

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### **NRT 1991 ANNUAL REPORT RELEASED**

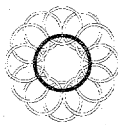
The NRT's second annual report was released in Ottawa on Friday July 19, 1991. The report is an overview of the progress of the National Round Table from June 1990 until June 1991. Committee work is explained in terms of past and ongoing projects. Throughout the report the winners of the NRT-sponsored Youth Science Awards are featured, as well as sustainable development ideas that have been put into action at either a local level or in businesses. Other highlights of the report include a NRT publications listing and a letter from Chairman George Connell to the Prime Minister that an indication of the path the NRT intends to follow in 1992. The design of the Annual Report is very different from last year in its layout, photographs, and visual impact. The theme in the design is the need to use "green development practices". Several thousand reports have been mailed and additional copies can be obtained by contacting the NRTEE.

The NRTEE has a mandate "to consider and promote ways to integrate environmental and economic decision making in Canadian society." Some call this Sustainable Development - We call it Common Sense!



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## ***CBC TO RUN NATIONAL ROUND TABLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS***

A series of National Round Table television public service announcements will begin running on CBC in both French and English at the end of July. The announcements were developed by the NRT last year to encourage all Canadians to participate in sustainable development. The NRT has also approached Much Music, Global TV, and CTV to run the announcements and is expecting replies from those networks in the near future.

The message of sustainable development is a political necessity and an intellectual imperative. Let us all, sharing insights and informing one another's choices, work together in broadening the options for the present generation and keeping open the options for future generations.

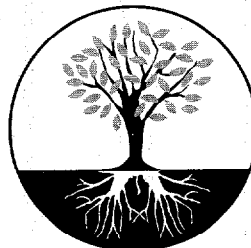
Gro Harlem Brundtland

## ***NRT COMMITTEE GUEST SPEAKERS GIVE EXCELLENT PRESENTATIONS AT BANFF PLENARY***

The Banff Plenary discussion on biodiversity was well received by all those attending the meeting. Guest speakers Monte Hummel of World Wildlife Fund Canada, Dr. Merlin Shoemsmith of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, and Dr. Kenton Millar of the World Resources Institute on Biodiversity and Sustainable Development discussed key issues of biodiversity.

Hummel said that across Canada many habitats are in extreme danger. Old-growth forests are being logged at an alarming rate and have all but disappeared in Atlantic Canada. Tall grass and mixed prairie are rapidly being converted to agricultural use. The Carolinian forests in southern Ontario, which are home to a large number of

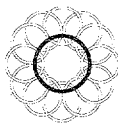
plants are further eroding the ecosystem. While Hummel spoke of these alarming events in a passionate and serious tone, he was cautiously optimistic about the future. He said Canada's national parks system is only half complete and more work needs to be done. Dr. Shoemsmith spoke of the need to protect endangered species and to restore wetland habitats. Most important, the three guest speakers spoke of the need for co-operation amongst industry, business, government, environmental groups, and citizens to ensure the goals of biodiversity are reflected in all decision making.



**Congratulations to Leone Pippard** - who was a nominee in the June 7, 1991 Environmental Achievement Awards. The nomination for the awards comes from Canadians from across the country who wish to have a particular individual or group recognized for work on environmental issues. The Canadian Environmental Advisory Council selects the winners. Leone is known mostly for her work in helping the beluga whales in the St. Lawrence. She conducted a pioneering behavioural study on the beluga. It identified that the population as well as many of its critical habitats, is in trouble. She ensured the beluga was put on Canada's endangered species list. Leone of course has many other achievements to her credit, one of them being that she is a member of the National Round Table and Chairperson of the Communications and Education Committee.

### ***Why plant trees?***

*Mother Earth News* points out that a young tree absorbs up to 26 pounds annually of carbon dioxide (blamed for global warming). But plant plenty; a typical family of four would need to plant six acres of trees to offset its CO<sub>2</sub> generation.  
(July/August 90)



## **DOROTHY RICHARDSON LEAVES NRTEE RON DOERING NAMED AS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Dorothy Richardson is leaving the National Round Table. Richardson was the first Executive Director of the National Round Table and is credited with setting up much of its current structure. In her term as Executive Director, she advised the Chair and all members on many matters pertaining to the strategic development of the organization. Dorothy also established many of the contacts the Round Table now uses both resource people and organizations. She ensured that sustainable development would be included as a key element of the discussions leading to the Green Plan. She was also responsible for the NRT being invited to participate in many federal government initiatives. Dorothy has agreed to act in an advisory capacity for a short period to ensure a smooth

transition for the new Executive Director. She is a truly remarkable person and we wish her the very best in the future.

The new Executive Director of The National Round Table is Ronald L. Doering. Ron holds a B.A. and M.A. in Public Administration from Carleton University and an LL.B from the University of Ottawa. He practised law in Ottawa from 1974 to 1984 with emphasis on real property, native and environmental law. From 1984 to 1988 he served as Chief of Staff to the Hon. David Crombie (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Secretary of State). Since 1988 Ron has been Executive Director and Counsel to the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront. He has lectured and published extensively on native and

environmental law and policy. Long time member, Ron is currently Chairman of the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee. We welcome Ron to his new position, which takes effect July 1, 1991.

### **THE WASTE REDUCTION HANDBOOK NOT A WASTE OF TIME**

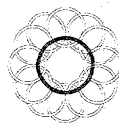
The Waste Reduction handbook was mailed out to 2500 individuals and groups across Canada including over 680 municipalities. (The Federation of Canadian Municipalities graciously provided their mail list to assist us in this process). The response from the handbook has been very positive.

*"I am convinced that there is a solution to constitutional reform that can preserve Canada and reinforce the ability of the country to achieve strong sustainable economic growth."*

*Jack MacLeod, the President and CEO of Shell Canada and Member of the National Round Table in an address to the Alberta Select Special Committee on Constitutional Reform, June 1, 1991.*

## **ROUND TABLE CHAIRPERSONS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS MEETING IN TORONTO A SUCCESS**

On May 10 and May 11 the executive directors and chairpersons of all of Canada's Round Tables met in Toronto. The attendees agreed on an agenda for the joint meeting of Round Tables on November 21, 22, 23, 1991. The B.C. Round Table agreed to host the meeting. The agenda includes concurrent workshops on sustainable energy, sustainable communities and a dispute resolution workshop. A full agenda and more details on this conference will be in the autumn newsletter. A key part of the meeting was the Chairperson's breakfast on Saturday morning. The meeting was a chance for all of the chairpersons to get to know one another. The Chairs agreed that the Round Table process should continue in each province in Canada. Other issues discussed at this meeting were joint communications projects on Round Tables and the participation of provincial and territorial Round Tables in a series of regional workshops for their input in federal government documents being presented at the UNCED meeting in Brazil in 1992.



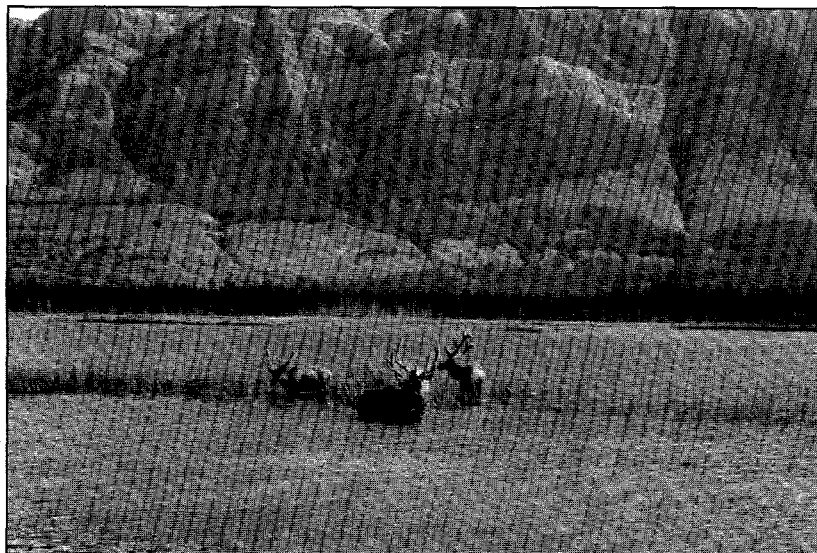
## WETLANDS CONSERVATION

The Canadian Wetlands Conservation Task Force has been established to provide implementation strategies and actions on the recommendations made at the **Sustaining Wetlands Forum**, convened by the NRT in 1990. The multi-stakeholder Task Force is addressing the 73 recommendations made by more than 200 representatives of business groups, as well as professional planners, environmentalists, federal and provincial government managers, and members of the agricultural community. The Task Force is directly linked with the North American Wetlands Conservation Council (Canada), the body responsible for allocating more than \$1 billion of primarily private sector contributions to implement the North American Waterfowl Management Plan in Canada. The Task Force will be providing progress reports on each recommendation, nailing down strategies for implementation, publishing a "Sustaining Wetlands Paper Series," and finishing its work by early 1993. For more information, contact Ken Cox, Chair of the Task Force, at (613) 228-2601; Suite 200, 1750 Courtwood Crescent, Ottawa, Ontario, K2C 2B5.

## MEASURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

One of the Socio-Economic Impacts Committee's (SEIC) two activities is to clarify the concept of sustainable development by producing measurable indicators. About 50 participants, representing many diverse interests, spent two days applying their skills at a workshop sponsored by the NRT's Socio-Economic Impacts Committee — "*Measuring Sustainable Development: Energy Production and Use in Canada*", February 28 - March 1, 1991. The participants surpassed the workshops goals, providing many new ideas, modifying several of the indicators contained in the background documents, and providing insights into the practical side of developing indicators.

The second stream of SEIC activity is to identify, evaluate, and recommend a balanced set of economic instruments to complement regulation in achieving sustainable development. To this end, a discussion paper titled *Exploring Incentives*, which identifies and examines many of the possible incentives and disincentives, has been published by the Committee. The Committee will continue its activities this summer.



BANFF Alberta, May 1991

## EXPLORING INCENTIVES

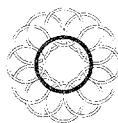
Much of human behaviour depends on an existing system of rewards and penalties for various choices we make. We often think of this system as unchanging, but in fact there are many reforms made to the rewards system offered by government. Providing a tax credit for contributing to your RRSP encourages saving for retirement. Increasing taxes on selected items such as cigarettes discourage their use.

The Socio-Economic Impacts Committee published a background

paper on the application of such incentives and disincentives to encourage more sustainable economic activity, and to discourage less sustainable behaviour. This short paper, titled *Exploring Incentives*, provides an introduction and overview of using taxes, regulations, fees, subsidies, fines, and information as policy tools in the pursuit of more sustainable forms of economic development.

The NRT is following up in more specific applications of economic policy instruments. At the May meeting of the NRT, Gordon Lambert of Esso Resources Ltd. made an excellent presentation on the possible application of a tradeable coupon system for controlling SO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Alberta. Mr. Lambert was reporting on a study conducted under the auspices of Alberta Environment, the Canadian Petroleum Association, and Alberta Energy. The study, titled *Market-based Approaches to Managing Air Emissions in Alberta*, also included and examination of taxes and tradeable coupons for controlling CO<sub>2</sub>.

Mike Kelly



## ***THE NATIONAL WASTE REDUCTION HANDBOOK. AN INTRODUCTION TO SOURCE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING FOR MUNICIPAL DECISION MAKERS***

In 1988 the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers established a target to reduce the amount of solid wastes going to landfills by 50% by the year 2000. The development and publication of The National Waste Reduction Handbook is one of the steps that the NRTEE's Waste Reduction Committee has taken to help achieve that target.

The handbook is intended to serve as a starting point for Canadian municipalities in investigating the different waste management options. It was designed to help decision-makers determine whether or not their communities should get involved in waste reduction programs; what options exist; when and how to develop such a program.

It is clear that the handbook is not a blueprint. Each municipality has its own set of conditions that must be carefully considered in making the decisions.

The handbook gives an honest analysis of the potential barriers and opportunities involved in different waste management options. Experiences of municipalities across the country are described to demonstrate the breadth and

scope of programs from which other municipalities can learn.

Recognizing the lack of consensus in the literature on the terms used to describe different approaches to waste management, the terms used are defined and examples are given. For example the distinction made between waste reduction and source reduction is explained at the outset. In the handbook "source reduction" is the "the design, manufacture, purchase and use of a product/material in such a way as to reduce or eliminate the waste that results". The term "waste reduction", on the other hand, refers to a broader range of activities including recycling and recovery.

Chapter One gives an overview of the forces that are converging behind the grassroots movement for waste reduction: declining landfill space, increasing costs of garbage collection and disposal, increased public awareness of wasteful lifestyles, and provincial/federal policies. Chapter Two focuses on source reduction, giving different examples of this relatively unknown option and discussing both the strengths and weaknesses of the approach.

Chapter Three looks at the recycling option, describing the conditions that need to be considered in setting up a municipal recycling program. A list of contacts and other resources is given in Chapter Four to direct those who seek more information.

Two strong messages emerge from the handbook. One is that the options chosen must be part of an integrated solid waste management strategy that adheres to the hierarchy of the 4R's. At the same time, convenience, compatibility, cost-effectiveness, and resource efficiency cannot be ignored if the program is to be sustainable. Recycling programs, for example, must balance markets, revenues, and waste diversion.

The second message is that decisions have to be made by policy-makers in government and industry, by communities, and by individual citizens. The decisions are not always easy nor straightforward. But they have to be made. As stated in the handbook, "Remember, if we don't reduce or recycle it, we're throwing it all away".

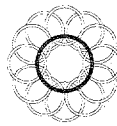
*Nonita Yap*

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### ***INTERNATIONAL TRADE, THE ENVIRONMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN TORONTO IN NOVEMBER***

The Foreign Policy Committee of the National Round Table, under the direction of Pierre Marc Johnson, Geraldine Kenney-Wallace, and Jim MacNeill will hold a conference in Toronto in the first week of November 1991. The idea for the conference arose when committee members became concerned that rising environmental consciousness abroad poses a threat to Canada's traditional export industries (green protectionism). Also of interest are the export opportunities this same consciousness offered to those Canadian firms in the forefront of "green exporting".

The Committee will invite about 75 individuals from across Canada's major exporting industries. After the conference, the Committee will look forward to preparing a report for broader circulation and, where appropriate, recommendations for the Prime Minister. Given the recent rise in protectionism against Canadian exporters and the Canadian government's emphasis on competitiveness in the recent Speech from the Throne, the Committee believes it is timely to address this subject.



## CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY: MAKING THE LINKS

The underpinning of the economic and social strength of Canada has traditionally been our abundance of natural resources. Throughout our history, the lands and waters of this country have provided wood, soils, minerals, and wildlife. Alarm over the exploitive use of these resources in North America led to the birth of the conservation movement more than a century ago, and the early conservationists such as Gifford Pinchot, John James Audubon, John Muir, and Aldo Leopold were perhaps the first advocates of what we now call sustainable development.

In recent years, public concern over the natural environment has shifted from its earlier focus on wildlife and wilderness to a greater emphasis on human health and well being. Consequently, most discussions of sustainable development tend to deal with economic, social, and human health factors, while the natural world is given secondary consideration. However, wildlife can act as an important barometer of environmental health; and as the basis for much of our economic and social strength, biodiversity is central to sustainable development.

Biodiversity is defined in A *Wildlife Policy for Canada* as "the variety of different species, the genetic variability of each species and the variety of different ecosystems they form". The present

draft of the revised World Conservation Strategy, *Caring for the World*, states that we should preserve biodiversity for three reasons: an ethical responsibility not to tamper with the evolution of life on earth; in the interest of our own survival; and for the economic benefit we derive from naturally functioning ecosystems.

Habitat loss or degradation accounts for approximately 70% of species extinction. To save wildlife we must save wilderness. The Brundtland Commission recommended that countries set aside 12% of their lands and waters in order to protect representative samples of all the Earth's ecosystems. Canada has been mapped into 350 natural regions, of which about half are represented in some form of protected area.

In response to the Brundtland recommendation, the Government of Canada indicated in The Green Plan that "Canada's long-term goal is to set aside as protected space 12% of the country". At present, 2.6% of the land has been set aside in parks protected from resource extraction and exploitation. Only two of Canada's 29 marine regions are adequately represented in the national parks system. The Auditor General of Canada noted that, as time passes, the option to complete a representative network of protected areas is lost. That network must be com-

pleted in the next ten years if we are to meet our stated goal.

Preserving biodiversity requires an "anticipate and prevent approach". While efforts to establish parks and protected areas and to restore endangered species are needed, a review of resource management practices is required to ensure that the preservation of biodiversity is reflected in all decision making. Conservation of biodiversity must take place in a two-pronged approach that links parks and protected areas with sound land-use management practices. The Standing Committee on Education and Communications is working to promote this integrated approach and to ensure that biodiversity and conservation are integral considerations to the debate on sustainable development.

*Shealagh Pope*

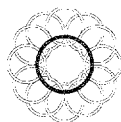
The Decision Making Committee will hold an alternative dispute resolution seminar in PEI on August 13th and 14th. The objectives of the two-day seminar will be to demonstrate how consensual decision making can be applied to assist in achieving sustainable development. The long term objective of the seminar is to institute consultation and negotiation techniques as part of decision making processes before substantive decisions are taken. The seminar will involve CEAC the NRT and Maritime Round Tables. The meeting will be chaired by Barry Stuart and Diane Griffin.

## FOREST DIALOGUE MAKING PROGRESS

The National Round Table hosted its first meeting of stakeholders in a Forest Dialogue to develop common principles and action plans for sustainable development in Montreal on June 20-21. Participants included environmental groups, industry as-

sociations, union and government reps, as well as, representatives from the academic community. The group will meet again in Ottawa on August 16, and in Alberta on September 9, for a workshop on forest environments.





### **LIST OF NRT PUBLICATIONS**

1. The National Waste Reduction Handbook: An Introduction to Source Reduction & Recycling for Municipal Decision-Makers
2. Exploring Incentives: An Introduction to Incentives and Economic Instruments for Sustainable Development
3. Pamphlet: The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy
4. National Round Table Objectives for Sustainable Development
5. International Brochure: The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy
6. Sustainable Development and the Municipality
7. Symposium on Decision Making Practices for Sustainable Development
8. The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy: A Report to Canadians
9. Managers Handbook on Sustainable Development

***The above publications are available for free by contacting Patti Bacon at (613) 992-7189.***

### **NRTEE MEMBERS**

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**The Honourable Jean Charest**

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**Pierre Marc Johnson**

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**The Honourable Michael Wilson**

*Minister of Industry, Science and Technology  
Government of Canada*

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**Director of Operations:**

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**Communications Advisor:**

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**Education and**

**Communications**

Mike Kelly:

**Socio-Economic Impacts**

Nonita Yap: **Waste Reduction**

**Secretary:** Patti Bacon

**Finance Officer:**

Pierrette Guitard

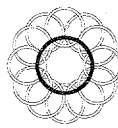
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Patricia Larkin, Liza Will

*The National Round Table Review is a free newsletter published quarterly by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. We welcome submissions about sustainable development issues and activities, particularly within Canada. If you would like to be on our mailing list or want more information on the National Round Table please contact the Round Table Secretariat. Our address is 1 Nicholas Street, Suite 520, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7B7. Telephone: (613) 991-7189. Fax: (613) 992-7385.*

*Edited by Dan Donovan. Design and Desktop Publishing by Patti Bacon.*

*Thanks for the assistance in the production of this issue to Liza Will and David Jones and other secretariat staff.*



## ***National Round Table Objectives for Sustainable Development***

### ***Introduction***

In recent years it has been recognized increasingly that there are mounting harmful effects and economic costs associated with the environmental degradation of our planet. To address this, the concept of sustainable development has arisen, that is, development in all its facets – cultural, economic, social, political – which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Achieving a sustainable society means going beyond questions related just to the biophysical sustainability of natural life support systems. It also means altering beliefs which give rise to unpleasant environmental consequences. Thus, a sustainable society is one that is sustainable in environmental, economic and socio-political terms.

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) has developed the following Objectives for Sustainable Development to serve as a guide for all Canadians working towards the goal of a sustainable society. The NRTEE welcomes public comment on these objectives and is prepared to revisit them in light of the commentaries we

The natural world and its component life forms and the ability of that world to regenerate itself through its own evolution has basic value. Within and among human societies, fairness, equality, diversity and self-reliance are pervasive characteristics of development that is sustainable.

### **I Stewardship**

We must preserve the capacity of the biosphere to evolve by managing our social and economic activities for the benefit of present and future generations.

### **II Shared Responsibility**

Everyone shares the responsibility for a sustainable society. All sectors must work towards this common purpose, with each being accountable for its decisions and actions, in a spirit of partnership and open cooperation.

### **III Prevention and Resilience**

We must try to anticipate and prevent future problems by avoiding the negative environmental, economic, social and cultural impacts of policy, programs, decisions and development activities. Recognizing that there will always be environmental and other events which we cannot anticipate, we should also strive to increase social, economic and environmental resilience in the face of change.

### **IV Conservation**

We must maintain and enhance essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems of our environment and natural resources.

### **V Energy and Resource Management**

Overall, we must reduce the energy and resource content of growth, harvest renewable resources on a sustainable basis and make wise and efficient use of our non-renewable resources.

### **VI Waste Management**

We must first endeavour to reduce the production of waste then reuse, recycle and recover waste by-products of our industrial and domestic activities.

### **VII Rehabilitation and Reclamation**

Our future policies, programs and development must endeavour to rehabilitate and reclaim damaged environments.

### **VIII Scientific and Technological Innovation**

We must support education and research and development of technologies, goods and services essential to maintaining environmental quality, social and cultural values and economic growth.

### **IX International Responsibility**

We must think globally when we act locally. Global responsibility requires ecological interdependence among provinces and nations, and an obligation to accelerate the intergration of environmental, social, cultural and economic goals. By working cooperatively within Canada and internationally, we can develop comprehensive and equitable solutions to problems.

### **X Global Development**

Canada should support methods that are consistent with the preceding objectives when assisting developing nations.

