



NATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY
TABLE RONDE NATIONALE SUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET L'ÉCONOMIE

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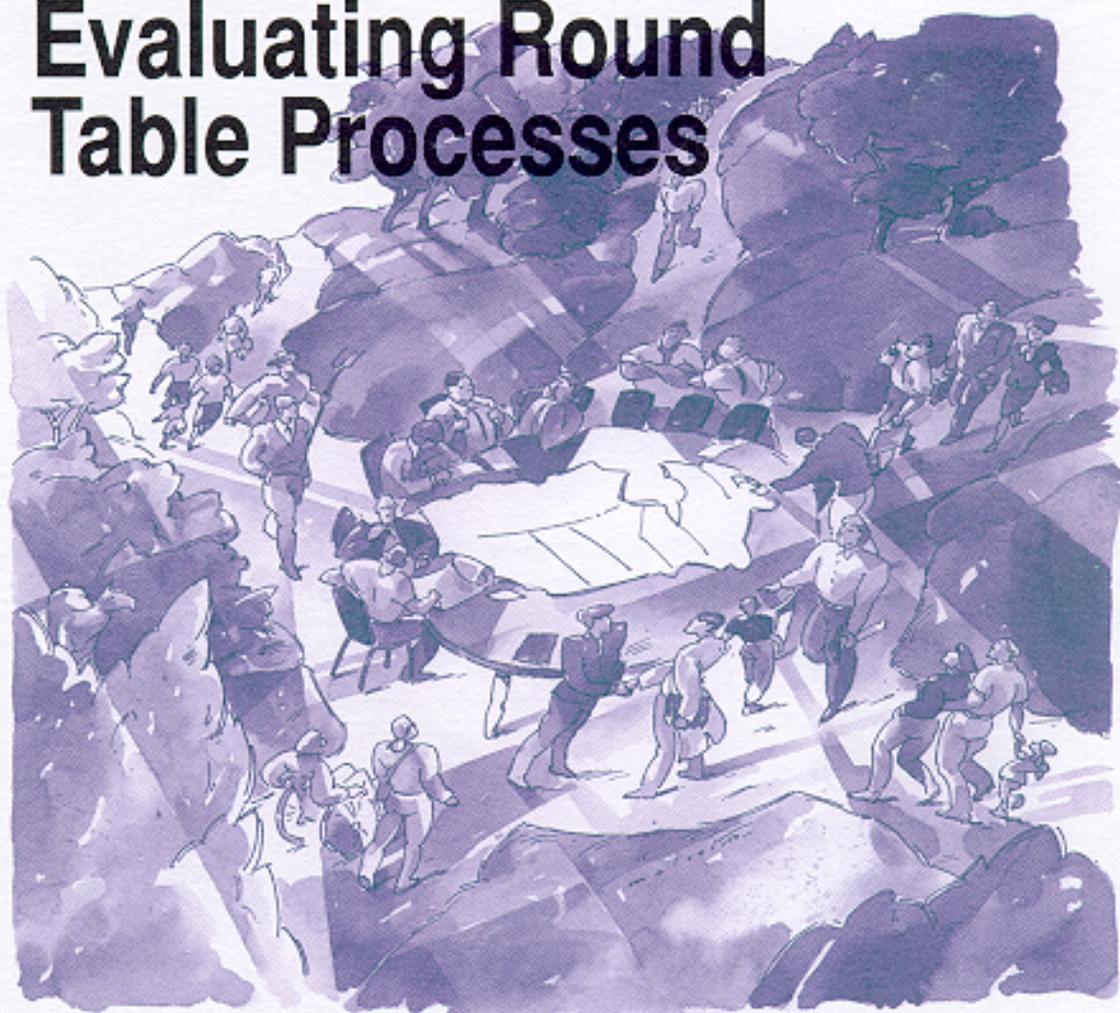
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REVIEW

Evaluating Round Table Processes



Canadians are widely seen as leaders in the use of multistakeholder processes. In this special issue we ask: What have we learned from these experiences? Are they worth the effort?

Ronald L. Doering

Everywhere people are demanding more meaningful input into decisions that directly affect them or the place where they live. In making these decisions we will have to find ways to accommodate deeply held and differing values. Nowhere is this more evident than in coping with the complexities that issues of sustainability present.

The principal institutional response to the cross-sectoral, cross-disciplinary and cross-temporal challenges of sustainable development in Canada has been round tables or multistakeholder processes. Not only have we been described as world leaders in their use, we have even been credited with invent-

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EDITORIAL

Multistakeholder processes

In the previous issue of the *NRT Review* (October, 1994) we examined Canada's progress toward sustainable development. This issue takes a critical look at one of the principal means of moving toward sustainability — multistakeholder processes, or round tables, which have grown in number and popularity over the last decade. As contributing Editor Ronald Doering notes on the facing page, it is still too early to judge whether or not multistakeholder processes have been successful. This issue asks the questions: What have we learned from multistakeholder experiences in the past decade? Have they been worth the effort? To help answer these questions, the NRTEE convened a panel of experts from across the country to talk candidly about their experiences — the successes, failures and lessons learned. That panel discussion begins on page 10.

Readers' Survey

A reader's survey was included in the last issue of the *NRT Review* to solicit feedback on the newsletter and other NRTEE publications. Results suggest that interest in sustainable development issues remains strong in Canada, among many different sectors. The survey indicates that the *Review* is read by over 60,000 people. Our readership spans a variety of different sectors and occupations: 27 percent from government (municipal, provincial, federal); 19 percent from business; 16 percent from individuals and consultants; 16 percent from academics and 21 percent from non-profit groups. Overall, your feedback was extremely positive and encouraging, suggesting that we keep the current format of the *Review*. Eighty-nine percent of respondents rated the previous issue as "good" or "excellent". Thank you to all the readers who took the time to respond. We will incorporate your suggestions into future issues.

K.H.B.

NRT REVIEW

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The *National Round Table Review* is a free newsletter, published quarterly by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. The *NRT Review* aims to provide a cross section of information and opinions on sustainable development and related issues in Canada. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the National Round Table.

Quotation with appropriate credit is appreciated and encouraged.

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ing round tables and coining the term "multistakeholder". They have been variously described as round tables on the environment and the economy (of which Canada now has hundreds at the national, provincial and local levels), multistakeholder task groups (such as the Climate Change Task Group and the recent Task Force on Economic Instruments and Disincentives to Sound Environmental Practices) and commissions, councils or collaboratives (such as the Economic Instruments Collaborative). While diverse in make-up and function, they share certain basic characteristics. They attempt to bring together a broad range of competing interests to work together toward a solution beneficial to all. They often use neutral chairs and usually rely on consensus for decision making.

While neither new nor unique to sustainability issues, multistakeholder processes have been particularly common in recent years and have been widely used to carry out a variety of functions relating to sustainable development policies.

Their relationship to the policy process has been diverse. They have been used to develop broad framework sustainability strategies, as well as to implement or monitor these strategies; sometimes they have developed principles and action plans which they then self-implement; they have been used to formulate specific advice or to identify policy options for government and others on either a temporary or permanent basis; and they have often been used to carry out public consultation phases in the development of various sectoral policies.

These multistakeholder processes have been described as innovative institutional adaptations that will play an increasingly important role in future years as we reinvent government by trying to improve our ability to engage citizens more deliberatively in policy choices. According to Carleton University political scientist Glen Toner, "The institutionalization of multistakeholder forums is the most significant innovation in the Canadian policy process in the past decade." On the other hand, they have also been described as superficial, mere window-dressing, a waste of time, or as a disguise for a vacuum by encouraging talk rather than action. Ironically, at the same time that many people complain of insufficient and inadequate public engagement on public policy issues, others are suffering from consultation fatigue with the same few

"elites" being consulted again and again. The corporate business sector displays less interest in these processes while non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have a declining capacity to participate.

While it is too early to judge in any definitive way the efficacy of these processes (and certainly the alternatives are not immediately evident), it is useful to pause and ask, even in a preliminary way, two fundamental questions: What have we learned from these experiments? Are they worth the effort?

What Have We Learned?

1. **When designing a multistakeholder process it is important to distinguish *consultation* from *consensus*.**

Consultation occurs when one party (often government but not always) consults with a broad range of interests usually to obtain comment on a prepared draft document. The function of the multistakeholder group is to provide feedback through comment and discussion according to the pace and terms of the initiating party. What emerges is information or advice to be considered by that party.

On the other hand, *consensus* processes are participant-determined and -driven. A group is convened, asked to define a process to achieve certain shared objectives, and through that process the parties

develop, at their pace, a position that each party or "stakeholder" can live with. The consensus-seeking process does not necessarily result in a document, but if it does each member of the group "owns" it. These "round tables" invariably use a neutral chair or facilitator.

Obviously, the role of a multistakeholder group is quite different in these two cases, yet often this distinction is not made clear at the outset. Round tables that must make decisions by consensus because no one is in charge are not the same as multistakeholder groups that are established to provide consultation to a sponsoring agency. Many of the frustrations of past efforts have resulted from a lack of clarity on this critical distinction or from confusion arising from an attempt to blend the approaches. They do not blend easily. Governments and others still have to learn that you can't have the "buy-in" and other advantages of a consensus process until you're willing to let go and allow the participants to design and manage the process. If that is not possible

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or desirable, we should be clear that the process is simply a form of consultation. The Canadian experience suggests that all parties should be clear *before they begin* on the nature of the process, and especially its goals, objectives, and the status of the output.

2. Whether true consensus processes or merely used for consultation, **multistakeholder processes can rarely achieve the desired goal without experienced, neu-**

Guiding Principles of Consensus Processes

Consensus processes are participant-determined and -driven that is their very essence. No single approach will work for each situation — because of the issues involved, the respective interests and the surrounding circumstances. Experience points to certain characteristics that are fundamental to consensus — these are referred to as the guiding principles.

Principle #1 — Purpose-Driven

People need a reason to participate in the process.

Principle #2 — Inclusive not exclusive

All parties with a significant interest in the issue should be involved in the consensus process.

Principle #3 — Voluntary Participation

The parties who are affected or interested participate voluntarily.

Principle #4 — Self-Design

The parties design the consensus process.

Principle #5 — Flexibility

Flexibility should be designed into the process.

Principle #6 — Equal Opportunity

All parties must have equal access to relevant information and the opportunity to participate effectively throughout the process.

Principle #7 — Respect for Diverse Interests

Acceptance of the diverse values, interests, and knowledge of the parties involved in the consensus process is essential.

Principle #8 — Accountability

The parties are accountable both to their constituencies, and to the process that they have agreed to establish.

Principle #9 — Time Limits

Realistic deadlines are necessary throughout the process.

Principle #10 — Implementation

Commitment to implementation and effective monitoring are essential parts of any agreement.

From: *Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future: Guiding Principles*, 1993.

tral facilitation. In most cases, multistakeholder groups bring together longstanding enemies, sectors profoundly adverse in interest, often with distinctly different values, world views and even vocabulary. There is a cross-cultural quality to these groups that we are only beginning to understand and it requires a sensitivity that only an experienced neutral facilitator or "convenor" can provide. The panel discussion (page 10) and the article by Dana Silk that follows (page 16) in this edition of the *NRT Review* address this issue more fully.

3. Every observer of the current Canadian experience in multistakeholder processes notes the problem posed by the inadequate resources of the non-government, non-profit sector to participate fully and well. Very few NGOs at the national level have a solid enough financial base to be confident of survival beyond next year let alone have the resources to obtain the professional economic, legal and scientific research that is necessary to understand today's complex issues and keep pace with other organizations with more resources.

Ironically, just as this problem is becoming more acute, there is growing public debate over the role of interest groups; many argue for decreased government funding. Environmental NGOs receive so little government funding now compared to groups in other sectors, that they have less to lose, but other factors have also exacerbated the financial crisis that they now face.

On the issue of NGO participation, the lesson seems to be that to avoid misunderstanding the matter should be dealt with clearly before the process begins. If the NGO can't justify participating in a round table process because of inadequate resources, and no sector needs their attendance enough to provide assistance, then that NGO should not participate. Of course, **the absence of major NGOs may significantly undermine the legitimacy and credibility of the exercise.**

More problematic is the issue of adequate resources to allow an NGO to go beyond mere attendance, that is to conduct research and obtain professional assistance. *Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future* (an initiative undertaken by Canadian round tables) sets out guiding principles for consensus processes including principle No. 6: "All parties must have equal access to relevant information and the opportunity to participate effectively throughout the process." (see box) This issue, though, is far from resolved and will be a major challenge for policy makers in the future.

4. **We need to recognize that in many situations round table multistakeholder processes may not be appropriate.** Other articles in this edition of the *Review* and the panel discussion on page 10 highlight several cases in which one could have predicted that the multistakeholder process was doomed before it started, whether

because of the subject matter, lack of timeliness, lack of commitment from key stakeholders or because of a poor design for the circumstances. *Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future* provides a list of useful questions to ask before proceeding (see box). This is also the conclusion of a recent consultant's report prepared for Environment Canada, called "Ensuring the Success of Multistakeholder Initiatives." In particular it singles out the need, especially in consensus processes, for firm political commitment to act on the agreement if it comes, citing as positive examples Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights and Alberta's Clean Air Strategy.

5. **Round table processes are still in the developmental stage.** We are beginning to understand their strengths and weaknesses but it is wrong to see them yet as a mature phase of the policy process. Therefore it is particularly important, as Environment Canada official Charles Brassard explains on page 14, that we carefully document our experience, strive to learn from one case to another, adapt to lessons learned and perhaps even try to develop government-wide procedures and guidelines.

Are They Worth the Effort?

Until more attractive alternatives emerge, it seems clear that we have no choice but to continue to experiment with multistakeholder processes. Current institutions are not coping well with the transition to sustainability. Round tables help them to engage in more participatory consultations and provide a mechanism to search for innovative

solutions. This is particularly true as multistakeholder processes are used more and more as a way to deal with the profound jurisdictional fragmentation that bedevils efforts to integrate decision making more fully (see box, page 15). One positive result of government deficits is that they are forcing governments to take more seriously what they call the "horizontality problem" — that is, the growing realization that the connectedness of problems requires a greater degree of cross-departmental cooperation.

Any discussion of round tables or the challenge of sustainable development inevitably expands to a consideration of the broader issue of governance. Our Round Table Panel was no exception. While struggling to cope with the economic and ecological crises, multistakeholder processes have been important experiments in policy making and public administration. Their role is essentially transitional and catalytic; they support rather than replace elected bodies. With all their flaws, and while still generally marginal to core policy making, Canadian round tables are common sense partnerships, modest and practical efforts to empower citizens to engage more deliberatively in the decisions of their governments. As governments everywhere at all levels are struggling with the governance crisis, why wouldn't we continue to nurture round tables and try to learn from these tentative Canadian efforts at helping democracy work in a complex world?

Ronald L. Doering is Executive Director of the NRTEE and has had many years experience with multistakeholder processes.

Assessment — Talking About Whether to Talk

Not all situations are appropriate for using consensus processes. Experience suggests the following questions should be asked before deciding to proceed:

- Is there a reason to participate in a process?
- Can the subject matter be addressed at this time?
- Can progress be made or issues negotiated?
- Can the major interests be identified?
- Are there representatives who can speak for these interests?
- Can meaningful deadlines be established for reaching agreements?
- Are there incentives for reaching agreement? What are the negative consequences of failing to agree?
- Are the decision makers who will be required to act on the results of this process willing to be involved or act on/respond to any agreement reached during the process?

- Can a viable process be structured? Or is another decision making process more applicable to resolving these issues?
- Are there preliminary matters that need to be dealt with before the process gets under way (for example, pre negotiation to get some participants to the table)?
- Are there parallel activities occurring that must be considered (for example, a pending legal action)?

Deciding whether a consensus process should be established is a step often not seen by the public and can be very time consuming. It may require the use of an impartial person who can help participants focus on the issues, exploring ways of recasting issues, pointing out linkages, and guiding the parties towards consensus.

From: *Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future: Guiding Principles*, 1993.

Multistakeholder Processes: Interest Group Politics versus the Public Good

Terry Fenge

Are round tables and other multistakeholder processes worth the effort? The question is fairly put. We now have many processes and institutions that bring together people holding different values, dissimilar interests, and often opposing objectives. Multistakeholder processes are found in many policy fields. More seem to be established every week.

Some might suggest that current multistakeholder processes follow logically the effort of the Trudeau government in the early 1970s to provide representation in the political marketplace for general, unorganized interests. Certainly aboriginal, environmental, consumer and other general interests are better represented in this marketplace now than ever before. Multistakeholder exercises that incorporate these newly organized interests are sometimes portrayed as expressions of a mature polity in a stable, self-assured liberal democracy.

I imagine the answer to the question posed in the first paragraph and in the introductory article to this issue of *The NRT Review* is that some multistakeholder processes are worthwhile and some are not, judged by both procedural and substantive outcomes. But this answer does not allay my concern about the potential long-term impact of "successful" multistakeholder processes on political decision making and development of public policy. We may be courting problems to the extent that multistakeholder processes result in politically compelling consensus which constrains the ability of elected politicians to make decisions.

Nearly 35 years ago, Joseph Tussman wrote his oft-quoted work on liberal democracy, *Obligation and the Body Politic*. He warned that liberal democracy was being undermined by the substitution of the values of the "marketplace" for the values of the "deliberative forum". Bargaining, he thought, was replacing the search for common good. Why, he pondered, should people show a degree of selflessness and painfully search for the

common good when the moral anesthetics of the marketplace allow them easily and guiltlessly to assert their self-interest? Tussman characterized "true" liberal democracy by the willingness and ability of elected representatives to make difficult political and policy choices in searching for the common good.

"We should be cautious of multistakeholder exercises, particularly successful ones."

Whether multistakeholder processes are worthwhile is an interesting question but the answer can only reflect the outcome of each and every exercise. But what is the potential effect of these exercises on our core public institutions such as parliament, provincial and territorial assemblies, and regional and city governments, particularly at a time when accord-

ing to polls and pundits many, perhaps most, Canadians hold their politicians in virtual contempt?

The utility of multistakeholder exercises should reflect both how and how well they assist elected representatives in their core task — searching for and defining the public good, and incorporating it in public policy. Of course this smacks of naivety. The public good is ever unattainable and, in any event, depends upon one's vantage point. But it is the application of the criterion or standard of public good that is important, and this is what we should expect our elected representatives to do.

This is not the realm nor the task of organized interests, whether they claim altruistic intent or not. Do multistakeholder processes enable and require stakeholders to search for the commonwealth, or are they exercises in which organized interests bargain amongst themselves, cut up the pie and invite elected representatives to serve the helpings? We should be cautious of multistakeholder exercises, particularly "successful" ones.

Terry Fenge is the Executive Director of the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (CARC).

No Sign of Consensus on Climate Change

Alfred LeBlanc

In 1993, the federal and provincial governments convened a multistakeholder task force to make recommendations on how Canada could meet its commitment of stabilizing greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by the year 2000. By October 1994, environmental groups had abandoned the process in disgust after the group failed to reach consensus on concrete measures. Has the bloom come off the multistakeholder approach to dealing with environmental issues or, in global warming, has it met more than its match?

This March in Berlin, Canada must reveal how it will keep its commitment to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000. It will do so with no help from the Climate Change Task Group. By October of last year, Louise Comeau of the Sierra Club and other environmentalists had had enough of the Task Group's multistakeholder process. It was "a waste of time," said Comeau, who has no intention of participating in future multistakeholder meetings. In her view, Ottawa was simply abrogating its responsibility. Government and industry were "co-opting us, keeping us from doing the work we should be doing."

Canadians are credited with developing the multistakeholder approach. It has been copied in a number of countries, including the United States: President Clinton's

Council on Sustainable Development is an exact copy of Canada's National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy.

The Climate Change Task Group was set up in 1993 by federal and provincial Environment and Energy ministers. Its purpose was to develop options to address Canada's goal of stabilizing emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000. It was an unwieldy group, with representation from industry, labour, consumers organizations, environmental groups and the federal and provincial departments of Environment and Energy. The Task Group failed to get consensus on concrete measures. Does that failure suggest the bloom has come off the multistakeholder approach to dealing with environmental issues or, in global warming, has it met more than its match?

"It is a good process," says Larry Lechner, from Saskatchewan's Department of the Environment, who co-chaired the Task Group with Sue Kirby from Natural Resources Canada. "It was necessary to bring everyone to the table." Denis Jones of Sun Associates found it a "learning experience," and a way to "get all points of view on the table."

Several of the participants now admit they began with unrealistic expectations. "Consensus was too ambitious an objective," says Lechner. "We might have gotten further if we had not been so focussed on consensus." Comeau is more blunt: "You shouldn't expect the Sierra Club and the Canadian Petroleum Association to agree."

The dramatic success of the Montreal Protocol (1987 and 1990) in dealing with chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) might have contributed to

those unrealistic expectations: perhaps similar commitments could be secured to cut greenhouse gas emissions. CFCs were, however, a much simpler problem. There was more definitive evidence of holes in and thinning of the ozone layer. As well, CFC producers were relatively few in number and the best-placed to profit by discovering and manufacturing substitutes.

Containing growth of the greenhouse gases not covered by the Montreal Protocol is proving a much more difficult challenge, and with good reason. Carbon dioxide emissions, almost entirely from energy production and consumption, account for 87% of man-made greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. They are a pervasive part of Canadian life and, as Jim Cramp of Imperial Oil puts it, stabilizing emissions will require that we "fool around with every part of the economy."

There is no question that human activity is increasing the volume of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, but no one knows how much and how quickly temperatures will rise as a result. There is even less certainty about the consequences. Rick Williams of B.C.'s Environment Department counts himself among those who want strong measures, but he admits it will be "at least 10 years before we can come up with some definitive assessment." There is enough uncertainty for people in the oil and gas industry to feel it is still legitimate to take the position, as Cramp puts it, "that there is no proof that there is a problem."

The uncertainty allows different interests to cling to studies that support their perspective. That helps explain a fundamental deficiency at the outset of the Climate Change Task Group process: there was no

agreement on the goal. On the one hand, for environmentalists like Robert Hornung of the Pembina Institute, the mandate was Canada's commitment "to achieve stabilization and go beyond that."

Industry and most of the provincial governments, on the other hand, were angry that such a commitment (the best estimates are that in the absence of any efforts, emissions would be 11% higher in 2000 than they were in 1990) had been made by then federal Environment Minister Lucien Bouchard with so little consultation. "The guy was an idiot to do something that important without thinking of the implications for Canada," says Bob Clapp of the Canadian Petroleum Products Institute. British Columbia was one of the few

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— Larry Lechner

provinces to embrace Ottawa's target. Other provincial government officials would insist participants use the term "federal" rather than "national" when referring to the stabilization commitment.

Many participants and observers complained about the lack of resources Ottawa devoted to the process. "It almost gave the impression Ottawa wasn't serious," says Clapp. Doug Miller, President of Synergistics Consulting Ltd., is critical of the government for not investing in professional facilitation. Far too little work was done costing the different measures that could be implemented to reach the targets. As Jones says: "It is difficult to come to a consensus when you don't have price tags." The macroeconomic

analysis was only being done at the end of the process. Not having these estimates earlier was "definitely a stumbling block," admits Lechner.

Given all the uncertainty, industry didn't want to go beyond a voluntary measures approach until it was proved inadequate. They wanted maximum flexibility to achieve reductions in the most cost-efficient manner possible. Environmentalists pointed out that we were already halfway to the year 2000 deadline with nothing accomplished. They were convinced a voluntary approach would fall far short of the target. They wanted a mix of regulatory and fiscal measures and pointed to studies suggesting those measures would impose marginal costs on the Canadian economy.

There are, in fact, studies claiming major gains can be made at little cost. A recent Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) study suggested that stabilizing CO₂ output to 1990 by the year 2050 could be done at a cost of 1% to 3% of world GDP. Much of it could be achieved by eliminating energy subsidies, estimated at \$235 billion in 1985.

It doesn't mean getting there will be easy. For years, the OECD has pointed out that hundreds of billions of dollars could be saved by eliminating agricultural tariffs and subsidies. Similarly, interprovincial trade barriers are estimated to cost Canadians over \$6 billion a year. In both cases, very little has been done to reap those benefits.

The configuration of gains and losses ensures that powerful political forces fight change. Obviously, some industries would be more adversely affected than others. Indeed, one of the problems with the Task Group, according to Hornung, was

that the potential winners from stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions were under-represented at the Task Group table. Worse still, says Hornung, it wasn't decision makers from industry who participated but industry association representatives who had to reflect "the least common denominator."

Similarly, not all provinces would be equally affected by efforts to stabilize emissions. Alberta and the Atlantic provinces contribute far more and BC and Quebec significantly less than their proportionate share of population. Very few of the provinces were prepared to go beyond voluntary measures. Comeau was disgusted with the whole dynamic: "Everyone supported measures that gored the other guy."

Comeau and Hornung think Ottawa should have come in with a proposal. At the very least, says Hornung, "when it was clear only weak options were being discussed, the government should have stepped in to defend the mandate [of stabilizing emissions]." Lechner admits governments were remiss in that they "didn't come [to the Task Group] with a position at all." However, he says, until the meeting of federal and provincial Environment and Energy ministers in Bathurst, in November 1994, a lot of provincial jurisdictions didn't know what position their own government would take. That is just an "excuse", retorts Comeau.

The Task Group was not a complete failure, however. It identified a shopping list of possible mitigating measures and, according to Alan Turner of Natural Resources Canada, "it provoked a lot of analytical work on the impacts of those measures." It has also had an educational effect. As Rick Findlay of

Environment Canada says: "While the process had its challenges from the outset, we now have thousands of Canadians engaged in discussions on a complex issue. That is progress no matter how you look at it."

The Task Group could not achieve consensus on a concrete action plan, so it was disbanded last October and the development of an action plan has become an internal government matter. Hornung says the action plan being drafted now is "a joke," nothing more than a reworking of the 1990 *National Action Strategy on Global Warming* already issued by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. "We haven't moved forward at all," he says.

"While the process had its challenges from the outset, we now have thousands of Canadians engaged in discussions on a complex issue. That is progress no matter how you look at it."

— Rick Findlay

Canada is not the only country having trouble keeping its commitment. The same kind of complex self-serving game that was played out around the Climate Change Task Group table is taking place in other OECD countries. France and Japan have defined stabilization in per capita terms; for France, this will entail a substantial increase in greenhouse gas emissions. A per capita target for Canada, with the fastest growing population in the OECD, would have allowed us very substantial increases. "We've got stalled," says Miller, who believes only two countries — Germany and the Netherlands — will hit their targets.

Task Group participants aren't clamoring to get back to the table. Many seem to agree with Rick Williams: "This process didn't work. We wouldn't gain very much by doing it again unless people change their positions." However, no one seems very happy with leaving the matter in government hands. Comeau worries the governments will continue their "kowtowing to the fossil fuel industry." On the other hand, industry representatives like Clapp fear "Environment Canada is going to get in there and do something dumb... they are absolutely the wrong people to be doing this."

Like it or not, measures to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions will only succeed if Canadians buy into them. Given current cynicism about government, this will only happen if the major stakeholders are involved, i.e., in some kind of multistakeholder process, what Miller calls "the solution fit for the 1990s." For the next round, they should at least be able to avoid some of the land mines that did in the Task Group. They'll need to have more realistic expectations, agree at the outset on the objective, and insist on better information not only about the costs of solutions but also the social and economic costs of inaction.

There isn't a lot of time. If the OECD countries fail to meet their relatively modest commitment to stabilize emissions, they will be hard pressed to convince developing countries, most notably China and India, to do their part. Without a major shift in direction, China alone could by the year 2050 be creating more greenhouse gas emissions than all the OECD countries combined.

Alfred LeBlanc, former editorial writer with the *Financial Post*, is a freelance writer based in Toronto.

Round Tables in Action: Some Examples

Steve Thompson

Odd isn't it? - that a *parliamentary democracy* like Canada would create an elite body, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, which would then encourage the elected representatives of multistakeholder groups to come to *consensus* on the issues that confront them. Why is the middle level, the National Round Table, necessary at all? Why, if problems are to be confronted, cannot stakeholder groups come together spontaneously to work out common approaches to the matters that concern them?

It seems that they can't because the motives of any individual stakeholder who convenes such a meeting are likely to be regarded as suspect by the others. A third party is needed to act as a catalyst and convenor of the group, and preferably a party that has some influence with, rather than power over, the protagonists.

In its early days, the National Round Table encouraged stakeholders in the main sectors of the economy to come together over several meetings to achieve consensus on the sustainable future of the sector. At the time, many advised that this approach would fail and that the National Round Table would be left with egg on its face. In fact, a tentative approach to the energy sector did not get off the ground because it really was too large to deal with in one chunk.

Forest Round Table

A subsequent approach to the forest sector was met with initial scepticism: one organization president declared: "You really want me to sit down with my *enemies!*" Nevertheless, after two years of concentrated effort, 26 stakeholder organizations, ranging from the Sierra Club through the Task Force on Churches and Corporate Responsibility to the Pulp and Paper Association, unanimously signed a set of common principles. Most stakeholders now have action plans in place for what each of them will do in support of those principles.

The forest sector encompasses a wide range of value sets which are backed with relatively little scientific data, so most of the talk was about values. Distrust was rampant at the initial meeting, and about all that was agreed was to meet again. It took another meeting for the members to realize that the National Round Table would not lead, and that content must come from them; only in the third meeting did a sense of shared responsibility arise. As part of the process, the group made site

visits to working forests. These visits were invaluable, even essential, to building understanding. Some of the best exchange of views and closest bonding came when the day's agenda was blown right off track by an impromptu debate sparked by something participants saw.

During a field visit to Vancouver Island, the group spent a rainy weekend examining clearcuts and old-growth forest around the Carmanah Valley. The following morning, members spoke of their reactions to what they had seen, and all experienced such a profound shared emotion that tears sprang to the eyes of many of the participants. As one member commented: "This trip has influenced my thinking. The dramatic field trip and observations by various individuals...have convinced me that we could play a pivotal role over the next few months."

At its final meeting, the Forest Round Table looked back and examined some of the practical lessons learned on how the round table process might be improved:

- The original objectives of the group (principles and action plans) were realistic and were achieved. In particular, the need for action plans provided a binding force for the group. Field and site visits were also invaluable in binding the group together.
- Clear and reasonable time limits for working towards a conclusion and reporting on results should be established. Sufficient flexibility, however, is necessary to embrace shifts or changes in timing.
- While the group was quite diverse, additional views from youth, community and multicultural groups, and the financial community would have been welcomed.
- The group supported participation by industry associations, plus one or two representatives from firms, rather than dealing directly with forestry CEOs in Canada.
- Some thought that government participation should be limited. Too many public servants could dampen progress.
- Funding for impecunious groups was a continuing problem.
- NGOs view this type of process with suspicion if there is any hint of their being co-opted or taken for a ride. Aboriginal groups may see direct negotiation with the federal government as being more productive.

- NGO resources are spread very thin. Personal attendance at all meetings was a problem for many. A well-briefed alternate should be allowed.
- Members saw the main benefits of the process as personal learning and networking. No one viewed a document on principles as the most important outcome.

Tourism Dialogue

The National Round Table has also engaged stakeholders in the tourism sector in similar discussions. This sector was characterized by less confrontational issues, a large number of small operations, and greater willingness to cooperate. Stakeholders did not need to see the whites of each others' eyes at every meeting, and much was achieved by hiring a consultant to meet with members before drafting sets of principles covering food service, accommodation and tour operators. The guidelines were enthusiastically adopted at the industry's annual general meeting in 1992 and have been picked up by several other countries.

Pulp and Paper Dialogue

Work is now under way with the pulp and paper sector to create a set of principles and action plans for the

sustainable production of pulp and paper products in Canada. Over 20 national organizations have met several times, and consensus has been reached on 17 principles. One principle remained the subject of much debate up until the last moment — but all stakeholders showed a strong commitment to understanding the views of their colleagues around the table, and ratification is now close at hand.

Did these dialogues work? Even to have reached a limited goal of increasing understanding amongst participants would have been regarded as a success in the Forest Round Table. To reach unanimous agreement, for the first time in Canadian history, among such a wide range of stakeholders would not have been thought possible at the outset. To have put in place a series of action plans was to achieve the almost unthinkable! So, did they work? By any standards — yes.

As governments strive to reduce deficits and divest themselves of many of the interventionist roles they have played in the economy, coming to decisions by consensus among stakeholders themselves may indeed be the next step in a participatory democracy.

Steve Thompson is Senior Associate at the National Round Table.

Case Study: Healthy Communities Parksville

The Vancouver Island community of Parksville, BC, has been undergoing profound and rapid change. Over the past five years, its population has jumped almost 60 percent, new housing starts and housing prices have skyrocketed, and the city's school district has become one of the fastest growing in the country.

In 1991, at the beginning of this wave of change, the residents of Parksville decided to lead rather than react to these new pressures on their environment. Healthy Communities Parksville (HCP) was created to introduce a multistakeholder process into local government. Using an accessible and inclusive public input process, HCP defined a set of community values and, at the request of city council, wrote a new official community plan. Residents were fully supported in their efforts with council members and city administrators championing the process both within City Hall and before the public.

Council then directed that a strategic plan for Parksville be developed using the healthy community process. A tri-commission was formed comprising Advisory Planning, Healthy Community, and Parks and Recreation Advisory commissions. Task groups have been created under the umbrella of each commission which focus on specific issues such as cycling, economic development, environment, housing and mobility/accessibility. Over 100 volunteers — young, old, and middle-aged; immigrant and native peoples; able-bodied and physically challenged meet as often as every two weeks. They have spearheaded many new initiatives including an environmental inventory, a housing needs survey, development of a cycling network, and incorpora-

tion of design criteria for the physically challenged into the city's engineering standards.

Parksville's Healthy Communities initiative has broadened the framework for local government decision making, with residents, city council and municipal staff identifying options, using tools and developing partnerships that never existed before. Four key ingredients have sustained this process: committed partnerships involving a broad community base and city council; a set of community-owned values as the basis for all decision making; an open, transparent process with no predetermined list of options; and regular verification with the public (through town hall meetings, open workshops, etc.) of proposed directions and actual outcomes.

When compared to the rapidity with which change is occurring in Parksville, this multistakeholder process may appear slow. However, it has produced concrete results. Parksville now has a new community plan based on a set of clearly defined community values. Innovative policies on affordable housing, environmental monitoring, transportation alternatives and mixed residential housing options have been introduced. It has also produced a mechanism for resolving differences of opinion over how new policies are implemented. Finally, Healthy Communities Parksville has helped forge a new, committed partnership between the city and its residents.

For more information contact Perry Perry, Healthy Community Coordinator, City of Parksville, Box 1390, Parksville, BC, V9P 2H3. Tel: (604) 248-6144; Fax: (604) 248-6650.

Multistakeholder Processes: A Panel Discussion

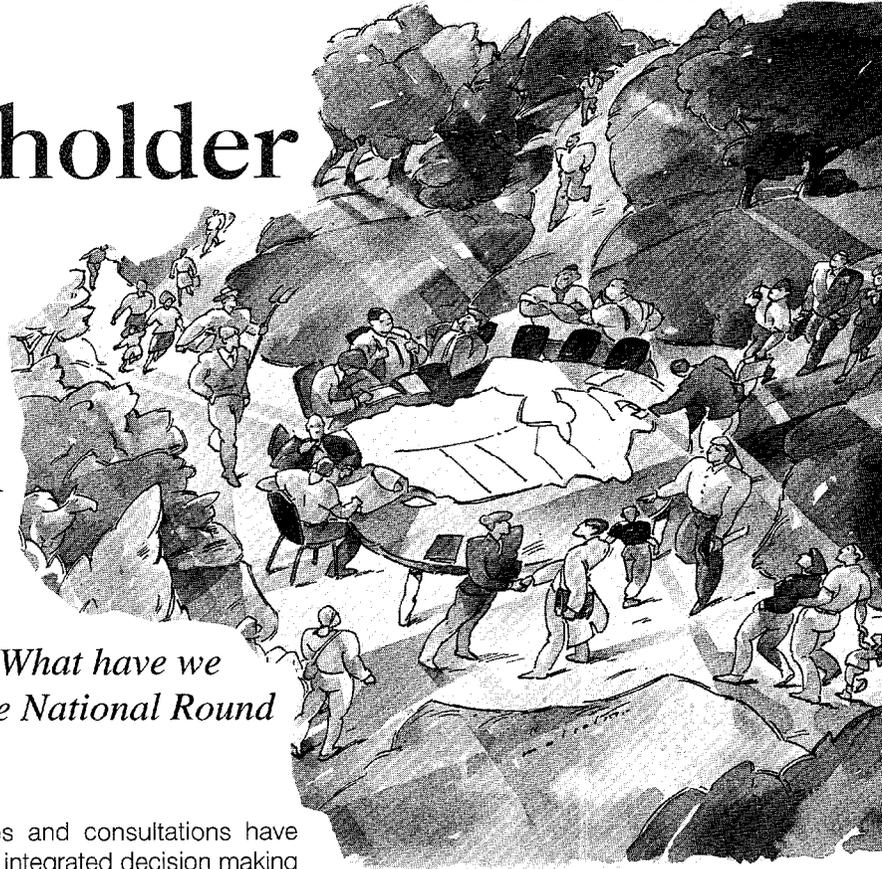
Sandy Scott

Do they work? Can they play a valuable role in policy making? What have we learned through experience? The National Round Table asked a panel of experts.

In recent years, round tables, collaboratives and consultations have emerged as innovative, alternative models for integrated decision making in public policy. While these multistakeholder processes are not unique to Canada, Canadians are seen to have been leaders in their development and application, particularly in the context of sustainable development.

Early in January, nine experts with considerable experience in multistakeholder processes, representing a variety of interest groups and regions of Canada, joined NRTEE Executive Director **Ronald Doering** in Ottawa for a day-long panel discussion to share experiences and contemplate the successes and failures of multistakeholder processes in public policy. They were: **Charles Brassard**, Director of Consultations at Environment Canada; **François Bregha**, Managing Partner at Resources Futures International; **Ann Hillyer**, lawyer with the West Coast Environmental Law Association; **Robert Keyes**, Vice-President, Economic Affairs at the Mining Association of Canada; **Sean Moore**, Public Policy Advisor at Gowling, Strathy and Henderson; **Beatrice Olivastri**, sustainable development consultant and President of Friends of the Earth; **Maureen O'Neil**, President of the North-South Institute; **Claude-André Lachance**, Director of Government Affairs and Issues Management at Dow Chemical Canada Inc.; and **Donna Tingley**, a lawyer and Executive Director of the Environmental Law Centre in Edmonton.

The short time this group had together enabled them to raise a number of interesting issues regarding their own experiences in multistakeholder processes. It is hard to discuss the role and effectiveness of multistakeholder processes in Canada without moving into a larger debate about governance and democracy, which is beyond the scope of this article. The panelists did, however, identify certain strengths and weaknesses apparent in multistakeholder processes, lessons that could be drawn from past experience, and larger questions that need to be addressed. What follows are highlights of their discussion.



Charles Brassard is Director of Consultations at Environment Canada. In addition

to participating in a variety of multistakeholder processes at Environment Canada, Charles was part of the Consensus Decision Making Task Force of the National Round Table, and played a leading role in the development of Guidelines for Consultations and Partnerships for the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.

“Multistakeholder processes typically encourage the involvement of ‘expert publics’ and have led to the flourishing of a stakeholder elite at the expense of a broader public. What is required is to design processes that have the flexibility to respond to the needs and interests of all publics.”

Different Forums, Different Purposes

Multistakeholder processes are designed to bring a range of interests around a single table to determine together, in an integrated way, how best to deal with a particular public policy issue. They have taken a variety of different forms, however, and have been used for different purposes and at different points in the decision-making process. Claude-André Lachance pointed out that not all multistakeholder forums are designed to reach consensus, just as consensus decision making can be used in forums that are not truly multistakeholder in design. "We need to clarify the confusion around always associating multistakeholder processes with consensus," he said.

In addition, while some processes are designed as ongoing forums (e.g., the International Trade Advisory Committees and the New Directions Group), others address a single issue and have a limited life (e.g., the Whitehorse Mining Initiative). The important point, as Lachance emphasized, is "to clarify in each individual case what a particular process is designed to be, and just as importantly what it is not intended to be."

For many of the Canadians who have been involved, multistakeholder forums are seen as an important tool with the potential to contribute to improved decision making. However, panelists agreed that they require commitment, hard work and time in order to succeed. Referring to his experience with the Whitehorse Mining Initiative (the mining sector's recent national multistakeholder forum), Bob Keyes of the Mining Association of Canada stated: "We feel very good about quite a number of aspects of the WMI, but we've got the scars to prove it. It's been a real learning curve for us and for our members and for the people that we interacted with. When you embark on a process like this you don't know what's going to happen, but I think we've come out of it for the better."

Strengths and Weaknesses

An important question to consider is whether multistakeholder processes are more successful in engaging the public in decision making than other more traditional approaches. If decisions are to be made in the context of economic, environmental and social considerations, a different approach to decision making is required. François Bregha maintained that the multistakeholder process presents a useful approach to negotiating these values and trade-offs in decision making.

Most of the panelists agreed that the opportunities for information sharing and interaction were not as well developed as they could be. "Maybe one of the responsibilities that we haven't assumed properly as participants is demanding that there be more accountability in the process right from the beginning," suggested Ann Hillyer. "We have to be more accountable to our constituencies, and the process has to be more transparent," she said. Donna Tingley explained how in response to the need for more accountability, the Environmental Law Centre in Alberta has used caucuses as a way of ensuring that their participation in a multistakeholder process is grounded within a larger community of interested individuals. Throughout a given process, participants report back to their caucuses, sharing information about progress being made.

Bob Keyes raised a concern about representation. "Stakeholders at the table should be able to state who they are and who and what they represent. If participants in a process are not able to bring their constituents' values



François Bregha is a Managing Partner at Resource Futures International (RFI), an

environmental consulting firm in Ottawa. He has participated in many multistakeholder processes, most recently as a member of the Task Force on Economic Instruments and Disincentives to Sound Environmental Practice.

"We've been doing multistakeholder processes for 10 years in Canada but we're too often re-inventing the wheel and not learning from previous experience. Yet we know the preconditions for success: a clear objective, sustained leadership — which sometimes means helping those who may have difficulty participating — the right mix of participants and a fair and transparent process."



Ann Hillyer is a lawyer with the West Coast Environmental Law Association in

Vancouver. She has been a participant in many multistakeholder processes, including the National Round Table's Pulp and Paper Round Table, the Key Stakeholders Group on the B.C. Environmental Assessment Act, and the Multistakeholder Working Group on Pulp Mill Regulation in B.C.

"I think (the Pulp and Paper Round Table) has been quite a positive experience and I think that people have felt quite heartened by the process itself and by the product of that process."



Donna Tingley is a lawyer and Executive Director of the Environmental Law Centre in Edmonton. She was a member of the Alberta Round Table, and has been a participant in many multistakeholder processes including the Task Force on Environmental Law Enforcement, the Contaminated Sites Liability Issues Task Force, and the Canada-Alberta Environmental Sustainable Agriculture Committee.

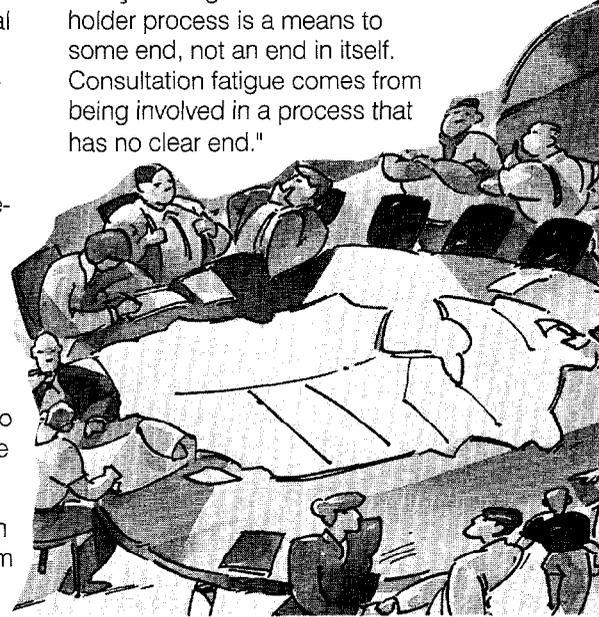
“I think that public consultation has been beneficial to the environmental community. It has provided us with access and influence beyond what would have been available using traditional models of policy development and lobbying. Nonetheless, there have been frustrations with some recent processes. What we need is an evaluation of public consultation by Canadian governments and the refinement of processes currently in use.”

and concerns to the table, then the final product may have little validity outside the small circle of participants,” he said. Identifying legitimate interests and representatives is not as difficult when dealing with a specific issue (e.g., developing a piece of environmental assessment legislation) as it is when broader public policy issues are discussed. And while there may not be clearly identifiable representatives in the latter cases, there can still be considerable value in bringing these interests together in a dialogue. In such instances, participants could be asked to “reflect” rather than “represent” an interest.

But even if the distinction between “reflection” and “representation” is made, it is not always easy to agree to the list of participants selected. Charles Brassard used the recent example of the Task Force on Economic Instruments and Disincentives to Sound Environmental Practices to show that what was originally intended to be a 15-person task force ended up as a 35-person task force because some stakeholders refused to accept that their interests were being adequately reflected. Bob Keyes felt that increased “fragmentation” amongst public interest groups adds to the difficulty in selecting participants for a process. Once selected, the issue remains of whether stakeholders can afford to participate in such processes (see Inequality of Resources).

“Overconsultation” or “consultation fatigue” is another serious problem which the panel agreed needs to

be addressed. There was some suggestion that the means have eclipsed the end and that governments are consulting for the sake of consulting with no clear purpose in mind. According to François Bregha: “A multistakeholder process is a means to some end, not an end in itself. Consultation fatigue comes from being involved in a process that has no clear end.”



Inequality of Resources

To what degree can multistakeholder processes make up for the inequality of resources between different sectors? While they do provide a more level playing field in which the non-government sector can meet with business and government to debate issues, they represent only one stage in a much larger decision-making process.

Despite the fact that governments normally pay the expenses of NGOs to participate in multistakeholder forums, these interest groups still end up devoting most of their time to these government-driven processes. As a result, they have limited resources to pursue their own agendas or to affect policy at other stages in the decision-making process. Private interests with more resources often have more staying power in the process and continue to affect decisions long after some NGOs have gone home.

However, Claude-André Lachance noted that even business lacks the resources to participate in all the multistakeholder processes under way, particularly international ones. It is frustrating to business when governments pay for NGOs to attend meetings that business cannot afford to attend.

The issue of funding for the independent or non-government sector was raised throughout the day-long discussion. While a successful multistakeholder process requires that all stakeholders be willing and able to participate, this is not always the case. Various concerns about the viability of the independent sector were raised, including the government’s increasing reluctance/inability to support such groups, the increased fragmentation of groups, the declining financial support from individuals for NGOs, and their tendency to focus on transformational versus accommodational lobbying.

While not the focus of the panel discussion, these issues emerged as real concerns needing to be addressed. [Ed: The National Round Table held a workshop on February 24, 1995, on the financial crisis facing NGOs. Call the National Round Table for details.]



Claude-André Lachance is Director, Government Affairs and Issues Management at Dow Chemical Canada Inc. He has been involved in many multi-stakeholder processes including the Environmental Contaminants Act Amendments Consultative Committee, CEPA, the Premier's Council on Environment, Health and Well-being in Ontario, the Green Plan consultations, and Environment Canada's Pollution Prevention Legislation Task Force.

Fatigue also results from the fact that there is no effective means of prioritizing these consultative or consensus-building efforts. Brassard stressed that much depends on which departments or units have the funds at any one time to carry out a consultation. This can result in elaborate consultations about some issues and less effective consultation on more important matters. Fatigue is also related to the representation issue. "Part of it is that we are always talking to the same stakeholders," Brassard pointed out. "It is important to build relationships beyond these people and invite others into the process in order to reduce the load on those we currently always turn to." A broader network of stakeholders would reduce the burden on the "overconsulted".

Bea Olivastri pointed out that many of the opportunities for informal "bonding" or mixing with other interests that happened during some of the early round table processes have been lost as the number of multistakeholder forums has increased and the issues they address have become more focussed. However, these proc-

esses do still permit the face-to-face discussions that are so important in creating a better understanding of the issues and a better sharing of information. This can also help to overcome some of the problems of working on issues in which there is considerable jurisdictional fragmentation (see Fragmentation of Jurisdiction, page 17).

Lessons Learned

Panelists agreed that one of the most important elements in a successful process is ensuring that stakeholders are clear on the scope and terms of reference of the process and understand

where it fits into the larger decision-making scheme. Stakeholders should take some responsibility for clarifying these questions before agreeing to participate.

Ann Hillyer stressed, however, that while we need to define these processes at the beginning, we need also to remain flexible and creative in our approach to them. She added that just because these processes are new, they are not necessarily better in all cases: "We should be more critically evaluative of what we are adopting and moving toward. We should be more willing to adopt a range of approaches." The process and range of tools used will depend on

Short-Term vs. Long-Term Considerations

If sustainable development is about considering the rights of future generations, have we done anything in recent years to change the capacity of our institutions to consider such rights?

No one on the panel was able to point to an example of how institutions have changed dramatically to accommodate these concerns. In fact, Maureen O'Neil argued that we are doing a poorer job of considering long-term interests. As governments cut back, they are no longer undertaking some of the longer-term strategic planning exercises that they once did, where they were forced to ask some of the broader questions about "where this is all going." O'Neil said that governments can't even consider the impact of a policy decision over a few years, let alone a generation.

Claude-André Lachance emphasized that it is too difficult to try to predict what future generations will need so we should not waste time trying to do so. Instead, we should be determining what the appropriate leverage points are that will help us to make changes to our own course (i.e., full cost accounting, life cycle management, etc.).

Rather than characterize it as a political or technical issue, François Bregha suggested that our lack of longer-term thinking is really a cultural issue. Some societies, he noted, are able to take a longer-term view. The way we make decisions and who we consider reflects our values. Bregha felt that the political dynamic might be changed by multistakeholder processes if they created a seat at the table for a stakeholder representing the interests of future generations.

Multistakeholder processes may or may not be a forum for improving the way we consider future interests, said Ann Hillyer. She argued that it comes back to how effectively we use these processes to involve more of the public affected by these decisions. "If we don't involve more of the affected public, then we are just changing the format in which the same people participate in decision making."

Short-term solutions have always been more attractive to decision makers since they are much easier to communicate. As Donna Tingley lamented, it has been difficult in Alberta to get politicians interested in advice they are being given on "long-term environmental actions," because it doesn't solve any political crises they are facing today. There was a clear consensus among the group that this problem will continue to challenge those working on sustainability issues for the foreseeable future.



Beatrice Olivastrì is a consultant who specializes in sustainable development mediation working with all sectors of society. Some of her recent clients have included the Centre for Our Common Future, Alcan, UNEP, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, Environment Canada, Industry Canada and the Organization of American States. She was one of the founders of the New Directions Group and is currently President of Friends of the Earth.

whose input is being sought and the issues being addressed.

Good communication on a variety of fronts was also highlighted as an important element of these processes. Stakeholders must be closely linked to their constituencies, sharing information and views with them on a regular basis. This is important to ensure that the best product is developed and, as Bob Keyes pointed out, that the product has wider support beyond the few participants who were intimately involved in its development. "Selling the compromise to, and ensuring it is understood by, the wider constituency can be difficult. It takes time to bring others on side, both during and after the process, but it is essential." According to Charles Brassard, too often participants rush into the next process without properly communicating the progress and results of the last one to the public, and without doing a proper evaluation. "In the rush to tackle the next issue, one of the most neglected aspects of multi-stakeholder processes is the provision of feedback to participants on how their input and advice was

used in making a decision," Brassard said. "Failure to design feedback mechanisms as an integral part of any consultation process not only undermines the credibility of the process at hand but also those that follow."

Consensus decisions are seen as a valuable output from a multi-stakeholder process where they have been sought and achieved. However, Donna Tingley cautioned, in some instances there can be more lost than gained from pushing too hard for consensus. While recommendations should be seen as part of a negotiated pack-



age and accepted as a whole in a consensus decision-making exercise, Tingley felt that often the reality is that decision makers select some recommendations while others are left aside. "Rather than give in on what you consider to be an important point, it is better in these instances to show where there is consensus and where there is not, and present this information to decision makers," she said.

A number of panelists agreed that if sustainable development requires working toward long-term solutions and goals, success must also be judged in the longer term. In many cases, while discrete achievements cannot easily be defined, there is an understanding that these processes have led to change in an indirect way. Hillyer

used the example of the now-defunct B.C. Round Table's reports. While they were not always immediately viewed as a great achievement in British Columbia, the reports have influenced a number of discussions and decisions both inside and outside the province about sustainability issues. Many of the ideas they developed are reflected in B.C.'s Commission on Resources and Environment, which is currently addressing the issue of province-wide land and resource use planning.

Panelists agreed that

- more must be done to involve a broader public in these processes either directly or through stakeholders;
- the broader decision-making context in which these processes fit



Sean Moore is Public Policy Advisor at Gowling, Strathy and Henderson in Ottawa.

He has many years experience as a policy consultant and government-relations advisor to public and private sector organizations. He has written extensively about government consultation exercises.

"I am increasingly surprised at the antagonistic view governments are taking toward interest groups. These groups are virtually the only institutions capable of articulating a point of view, of providing any cohesive thought on any of these issues.... At the same time, I think these groups should take more responsibility for finding those things that we hold in common in society rather than focussing so much on those things that make various elements of society so different."

and their relationship to it need to be better understood;

- these processes can have many different forms and serve different functions, but these must be clarified early in the process;
- results may not always be evident in the short term, but multistakeholder processes often contribute to a longer-term process of change; and
- interest groups are critical to the success of these processes, and as such the issue of interest group funding must be addressed.

The panel agreed that multistakeholder processes are an important new component of the public policy process in Canada, but many questions remain unanswered. Why, for example, Sean Moore asked, are governments using multistakeholder processes? Do they want to be seen to be consulting?



Maureen O'Neil is President of the North-South Institute in Ottawa.

She has been involved in a variety of multistakeholder processes, including preparations for the UN Women's Conference in 1985, the Government of Ontario's consultations on employment equity legislation, the Round Table on Canada's Foreign Policy in February 1994, and a variety of consultations with the Federal Human Rights Commission.

"Multistakeholder processes mask significant imbalances in power over resources and considerable degrees of difference in influence on government among the participants. Nonetheless they do give people a chance to say their piece."

Do they want to show the public how disparate the views are on these issues in order to justify their own choices? How do they really intend to use the outcome of these processes?

Do multistakeholder processes currently just involve the same elite groups in decision making that would have been involved in more traditional processes? Do they lead to more balanced/integrated decisions than other models of decision making? Do they help to distinguish real from perceived issues? Do they provide a means of moving from lots of information and data to useful information or intelligence for decision makers?

The panel encouraged others to take some time to review their own experiences with these processes and to share their views.

Sandy Scott is a Policy Advisor at the National Round Table.



Robert Keyes is Vice-President, Economic Affairs at the Mining Association of Canada.

He has been involved in a variety of multistakeholder processes, including the Whitehorse Mining Initiative, the Biodiversity Convention Advisory Group, and the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment's Contaminated Site Task Group.

"As an example of a multistakeholder exercise, the Whitehorse Mining Initiative showed the value of the process and the potential for a useful product. However, everyone now expects concrete action building on the consensus."

Fragmentation of Jurisdiction

Because sustainable development requires an integrated approach to decision making, rarely is there any one agency or body with the authority to make a decision. This fragmentation occurs between governments, but also within governments and even within departments. According to Maureen O'Neil, "success and failure are closely related in this case." As people's level of understanding of sustainable development and its complexities increases, there will be an expanding problem of fragmentation as agencies and groups realize that what they do is relevant to these issues whether directly or indirectly.

Do multistakeholder processes help alleviate this problem? In Ann Hillyer's view, just getting people from various agencies and sectors together in one room provides an important opportunity for information sharing and prioritizing issues that is difficult to do otherwise. Using the Fraser Basin as an example, Hillyer reported that multistakeholder meetings organized by the Fraser Basin Management Program bring people together who should be communicating but might not otherwise have an opportunity to meet. The power to convene a meeting, as Ronald Doering added, can be an extremely important function, particularly at the problem-definition stage, and later in overcoming turf wars.

Not only is it helpful for stakeholders to meet with their various counterparts involved in these issues, multistakeholder forums also serve to identify for the public, who the key players are in any of these issues. While this does not overcome the fragmentation, at least it provides citizens with a list of contacts of at the various levels of the decision-making process.

On the down side, Charles Brassard does caution that the creation of parallel forums involving non-government interests can create further fragmentation if these aren't closely coordinated with government processes.

As a single decision-making authority becomes more and more difficult to identify, accountability is reduced, and it becomes increasingly difficult to exercise democracy.

Sustainability Mediators: Forging More Effective Partnerships Through Individuals

Dana Silk

Much attention has been given over the last decade in Canada to multistakeholder initiatives involving different organizations, disciplines and sectors. Given the need for more integrated decision making in our efforts to reach sustainability, such progress is encouraging but may not suffice. Although considerable scope remains for improving multistakeholder processes themselves, other avenues could be explored to amplify the results of such dialogues.

One way would be to complement the existing approach of forging partnerships between institutions by enabling more effective partnerships through individuals or "sustainability mediators". By identifying and promoting the factors that predispose people to work together on sustainable development, we could change the way decisions are made across the board rather than in just a few places.

Such an approach recognizes that all organizations harbour people inclined to work through partnerships, pacts and covenants whereas many people working for institutions officially dedicated to sustainable development may not be very good at cooperating. In the same way that those who have spent their careers encouraging the consumption of electricity now have difficulty promoting its conservation, some people who have been "resolving" environmental problems by regulating, protecting or stopping things often find it difficult to focus their considerable talents on integrating, empowering or starting things.

Another reason for paying more attention to sustainability mediators is the increasing fragility of many institutions that were established years ago when the world was a much different place. It hardly makes sense to invest time and energy in forging partnerships with organizations whose relevancy, if not existence, is increasingly questioned. In this perspective, government downsizing, corporate mergers and NGO reorientations could play important roles in transitions to sustainability if the result

is more integrated decision making within and between these players. Such decision making could be facilitated by individuals rather than constrained by institutions.

After such a paradigm shift, federal government employees would no longer be motivated to protect the narrow interests of specialized departments as both would tend to disappear. On the contrary, they would be freer to defend the broader interests of the country by working

through more integrated departments and programs. Empowering individuals from all levels of government, businesses and NGOs to work together through national task forces, commissions or agencies would take the concept of partnerships to heart, if not the limit.

If some individuals are predisposed to assuming the role of sustainability mediators, how would we identify them? It might make sense to look for them in communities or professions that have al-

ways strived to get people working together. The purpose of identifying such people, however, is not to give them more power but to help foster the conditions for them and others to act. The goal, after all, is to change the way decisions are made, not just to change the guard. An appropriate approach would thus be to identify and then promote those characteristics, attitudes and traits that make some people better cooperators.

A modest dose of self-confidence is perhaps one of the most important attributes of a sustainability mediator. Real partnerships result from a combining of forces, which is difficult to achieve between people who feel that they have little to contribute and those who feel they need no help at all. People who are compelled to exercise control, because of a lack of confidence in their persuasive powers, a sense of insecurity or a fear of reprisals, may be just as poor partners as those who allow themselves to be manipulated.

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“By identifying and promoting the factors that predispose people to work together on sustainable development, we could change the way decisions are made.”

Will Governments Stay on the Public Consultation Path?

Peter Gillespie

Peter Gillespie argues that governments should be committed to public consultation. However, they aren't doing a very good job of it and improvements aren't likely in the short term. Here's why.

For several years after 1867, voters in British Columbia tended to select people to represent them in Parliament from among the educated minority; they sent them across the country on horses with canoes on their backs, and then held them to account when they returned four years later. While perhaps exaggerated, this does illustrate how this country started with little public involvement in government decision making.

In today's world, the reasons for not involving citizens no longer hold up. People are far better educated than they were back then, so they can contribute well to the development of government decisions. Information is quickly available through various media and communications occur instantaneously, so knowledgeable people can now be involved on a timely basis. Issues are far more complex and intertwined than they were in the 1800s, so governments can no longer figure out in isolation the trade-offs and choices that are available. The contemporary reality is that through consultation, governments today can make more insightful decisions that are better supported by their publics, and are therefore more likely to work when they are implemented. In short, in today's world good use of stakeholder consultation is good government and, incidentally, good politics when done right.

But there are circumstances in which consultations are not warranted. Obvious examples are crises in which there is no time to consult, or in which the issue is so trivial that nothing will be gained by involving people outside government. The challenge for government on any issue is to know whether to consult, with whom and how.

Governments Are Not Consulting Well

Governments have acquired a reputation for consulting poorly. The evidence surrounds us. Few people have good things to say about Lucien Bouchard's Green Plan consultation exercise. While parliamentary committee tours across the country may satisfy the Prime Minister's desire to engage back benchers in decision making, they are a crude and costly instrument to gauge public views on issues, are not an effective means of building a workable consensus. Royal commissions have an equally dismal record, as do many other consultation efforts conducted by all levels of government. From these experiences people have become cynical about government consultations. They don't feel "listened to". They are tired from the number of times they are asked to be involved. They are angry at the cost to taxpayers. Paradoxically, on matters of close interest to them, many still cry out for deeper involvement in government decisions.

How has this mess developed? In part the answer lies in inexperience. Public consultation and consensus building the way we know it today are fairly recent phenomena, with limited track records from which to draw an understanding of when and how to consult. The result is that there are still few people who know how to design or conduct a good consultation strategy.

Another part of the problem lies in the attitudes of many politicians and senior bureaucrats toward public consultations. They know what is expected of them, they make powerful speeches about their commitment to public consultations, but they don't really mean what they say.

cont. on pg. 18

“Politicians and bureaucrats often go through the motions of consulting without the commitment of time and effort needed to make it a truly worthwhile process.”

Public Consultation Path cont. from pg. 17

Asking people's views and, even further, building consensus with them, involves sharing power; this makes some powerful people uncomfortable. It also involves losing some control over their agendas, taking risks due to the uncertainties of the process and outcomes, and putting up with delays in coming to decisions — hardly palatable to people who have had little experience in the benefits of consulting. The result is that politicians and bureaucrats often go through the motions of consulting without the commitment of time and effort needed to make it a truly worthwhile process. It should come as no surprise that when that happens, the public becomes disillusioned.

There Is Hope for the Future

One reason for hope is simply that as politicians and their senior officials gain experience with both the process and benefits of good consultations, they will be more willing to give it a try. Another reason is that it is in fact possible for governments to build the knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviour to conduct a successful consultation. There are a number of ways to do this, but in essence it boils down to developing and committing to a strategy that incorporates the following ingredients: consistent role modelling at the top; learning from experiences to find what works and what doesn't under various circumstances; training; use of employee appraisals and other

incentives to encourage best practices; and reinforcement through repeated communications promoting good consultation behaviour.

To get this under way governments could choose to establish "action learning" teams of influential senior departmental (and possibly minister's office) officials to capture what has already been learned from consultation experiences, to devise ways to spread that knowledge, to develop an overall program to instill good consultation practices in their governments, and to themselves become champions for the change.

But no matter how desirable these improvements might be, in most parts of the country the time to push for this is probably not now. The current climate of severe cut-backs in and reorientation of government programs leaves little energy left to mount "action learning" consultation exercises. However, these conditions will change.

In the meantime we can rely on a continuing public demand for more and better government consultation. Governments will want to respond, and no doubt they will when they have the energy to do so. Our job, whether we be in or outside government, is to keep them on the right path.

Peter Gillespie, formerly with the federal and Yukon public services, is now actively associated with the Institute on Governance and involved in a range of public consultation exercises at all levels of government.

Sustainability Mediators cont. from pg. 16

An ability to communicate effectively and to empathize with a variety of people and personalities is a basic interpersonal skill of a good sustainability mediator. This means being able not only to speak well and to articulate different ideas, but also to listen well and to understand other points of view. An outgoing personality and a good sense of humour can certainly help facilitate the formation of partnerships, but individuals with less obvious communication skills may have the upper hand when it comes to maintaining relationships.

A degree of ambiguity may be another strength of sustainability mediators. People who can move between grass-roots, horizontal structures and traditional top-down hierarchical systems, acting like sustainable development proponents one day while functioning as part of the establishment another, have important roles to play during the transition to sustainability. Being accountable to both constituencies requires considerable management skills, especially with people who are prepared to sabotage changes that clearly threaten their interests.

People who have chosen to be educated in or to work in different disciplines and communities as well as those who have taken the risk of changing jobs or professions might also make excellent sustainability mediators. They

must also benefit from some degree of credibility, trustworthiness and respect, characteristics that go hand-in-hand with tolerance, patience, honesty and the ability to accept criticism and to admit mistakes.

By changing the rules of the game and facilitating the emergence of a new corps of sustainability mediators, more cooperative and efficient processes could eventually supplant, if not replace, wasteful competition, secrecy and jurisdictional disputes. More attention would have to be given to remuneration and promotion systems, going beyond financial rewards, recognizing that conditions more conducive to sustainability mediators might also convince others to accept pre-retirement packages or to reconsider their priorities and attitudes.

Finally, it should be noted that although transitions to sustainability can be facilitated by individual mediators, strong leadership will be needed to provide the necessary conditions for new partnerships to replace old antagonisms. Governments, corporations and NGOs should use multistakeholder initiatives, whether based on institutions or individuals, not as an excuse to abdicate their leadership responsibilities, but rather as an opportunity to reinvent governance.

Dana Silk is a policy advisor at the National Round Table working on the *Projet de société*.

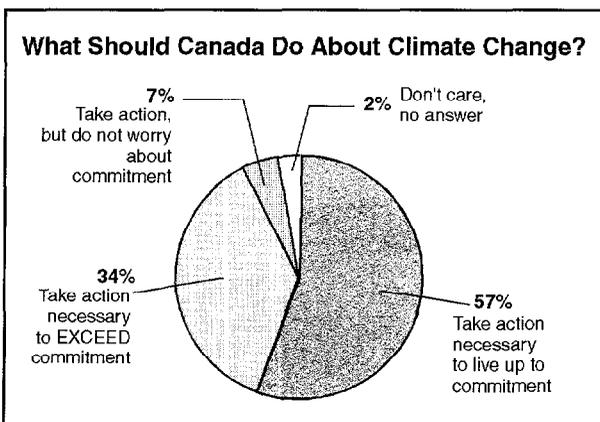
Decision Time on Climate Change

If ordinary Canadians were sitting at the table with their Environment and Energy ministers when they met February 20 in Toronto, they would have made sure strong actions were taken on climate change to ensure Canada lives up to its international commitments.

When Canada and other nations met at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, they decided that the prudent course was to work to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions at 1990 levels by the turn of the century. When federal and provincial ministers of Environment and Energy sat down to decide on Canada's climate action plan, they were far from agreement even on this goal, let alone on the means of achieving the required results.

Climate change is one of a number of environmental mega-issues we are facing in these latter days of the 20th century. It has all the attributes: big stakes, warring interests, scientific uncertainty, and impacts well beyond the lifespan of those making the decisions.

Stepping up to such daunting decision making requires the courage to look beyond the narrow sectoral and regional interests of the day, to grapple with the basic question that Canadians are increasingly asking: what action is necessary to live up to our generation's responsibility not to impose undue risks or hardship on future generations?



The position of some provincial politicians not to take Canada's Rio commitment seriously is sharply at odds with that of the people they represent. Environics' recent Environmental Monitor survey of 1,500 adult Canadians* reveals near-unanimous support across the country for taking the necessary steps to achieve stabilization by the year 2000.

Even after being told that some other countries were not going to live up to their climate change commit-

ments, 90% of respondents thought Canada should meet the target anyway, including one-third of these who wanted Canada to exceed this goal. Only 7% said that we should take action but not worry about meeting the stabilization goal.

These findings support many others from the Environmental Monitor's research that show the public is committed to the idea of Canada showing environmental leadership in the world. Canadians are particularly concerned about global atmospheric changes and their impact on future generations.

At the same time, the research reveals a significant lack of understanding of climate change on the part of Canadians, especially related to its causes and links to energy use.

Hence, there is a significant public-education challenge for governments related to their climate change initiatives. As with so many issues, the logic of the action must be communicated, not just the action.

A good example of the importance of communication relates to the most controversial aspect of the climate change debate: the carbon tax. Proponents say such a tax is necessary to provide the financial incentive for energy conservation initiatives to reduce CO₂ emissions.

The Environmental Monitor research shows an energy tax, properly explained, would be supported by majorities in all regions of the country if all resulting revenue was used to reduce air pollution. If Canadians saw a carbon tax as nothing more than a glorified gasoline tax going into general revenue, they would strongly oppose it.

The major message from all this research is that Canadians want environmental leadership from their political leaders, not foot dragging. And in deciding on action steps, Canadians want us to err on the side of environmental caution, not compromise.

Indeed, if Canada's Environment and Energy ministers were as enlightened as the people they represent, we could be assured that their climate change decisions would live up to Canadians' advanced sense of responsibility toward future generations.

* This Environmental Monitor survey was conducted between August 12 and September 10, 1994. Telephone interviews were conducted by Environics Research Group Ltd. with a national sample of 1,500 adult Canadians. Results are accurate within plus or minus 2.5%, 19 times out of 20.

Doug Miller is President of Synergistics Consulting in Toronto. Together with Environics Research Group Ltd., he conducts twice-yearly Environmental Monitor surveys of Canadian public opinion on environmental and resource issues.

National Round Table News

October 1994 Plenary Includes Meetings With Ministers

National Round Table members met for a two-day plenary session in Ottawa last October to review current NRTEE programs and initiatives. They also endorsed a set of recommendations to the Prime Minister on two issues: advancing sustainable development issues at the upcoming "Summit of the Americas" and the tax treatment of ecologically sensitive lands.

During the plenary, members met Deputy Prime Minister and Environment Minister Sheila Copps. She asked the National Round Table to assist government departments in implementing sustainable development plans for the new Commissioner of Sustainable Development. Members also held a reception on Parliament Hill. In attendance was Art Eggleton, President of the Treasury Board, who

welcomed the 120 guests on behalf of the federal government.

New Brunswick's Minister of the Environment, Marcelle Marcereau, addressed the plenary as Chair of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME). She updated members on CCME's current efforts and indicated that the Council intends to continue working closely with the National Round Table.

Workshop on ENGOS

In response to numerous requests, the National Round Table hosted a one-day workshop on February 24 in Ottawa to examine the present and future options for and challenges facing Canada's environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS). The workshop was also a follow-up to some of the ideas and opinions expressed in the Spring 1993 edition of the *NRT Review* (theme: "Environmental NGOs in the 1990s").

Those in attendance included key individuals from a cross-section of ENGOS, Environment Canada officials, representatives of foundations, environmental consultants, and members of the national and Ontario round tables.

Presentations, panel discussions and break-out groups tackled various issues including the current decline in support for ENGOS, what ENGOS need to do to be successful, the relationship between ENGOS and the federal government, innovative funding approaches and future options for capacity-building.

Plenary Meeting, March 9-10, 1995

The next plenary of the National Round Table will take place in Victoria, B.C. A colloquium with representatives from government, industry and NGOs will be held in conjunction with the plenary on the subject of the Georgia Basin and visions for the future of the region.

Task Force Updates



Students from Millwood, Sackville, C.P. Allen and Sir John A. Macdonald high schools join National Round Table and Health Canada staff in a sustainable development action planning focus group for Rescue Mission held in Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia.

Education

Media Focus Group

In February, members of the Education Task Force met with a group of key print and broadcast media professionals in Toronto to explore ways the National Round Table and the media could work together to increase awareness of sustainable development issues among journalists and the general public, as well as to give the media a better understanding of the role and expertise of the National Round Table.

Workshop for Municipal Decision Makers

The Task Force is cosponsoring a workshop for municipal decision makers

on introducing community-based social marketing to waste-reduction programs. The event, which is also sponsored by the Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Energy, will take place on March 8, 1995 in Toronto.

University Presidents Workshop

On March 13, 1995, the Education Task Force will host a one-day workshop to be attended by more than 20 presidents and vice-presidents of Canadian universities. Its purpose is to discuss and stimulate thinking around interdisciplinary teaching and research within the framework of sustainable development and institutional change. Jim MacNeill, a former member of the Bruntland Commission, will be the keynote speaker.

SustainABILITY

The SustainABILITY program, developed jointly by the National Round Table and ParticipACTION, presented a formal proposal to the federal government in December. It contained concrete recommendations for a comprehensive sustainable development social marketing program that was developed through meetings of a technical advisory committee as well as regional input sessions with a broad range of stakeholders. The SustainABILITY team is now developing sample themes and messages to demonstrate what an actual campaign would look like.

The Task Force will also be meeting with the Environmental Centre for New Canadians in Toronto to explore possible partnerships.

For more information contact Carla Doucet: (613) 947-0668.

Rescue Mission Planet Earth



Rescue Mission Planet Earth: A Youth Edition of Agenda 21 is a unique publication written and illustrated by young people of the world who describe in simple terms and beautiful artwork what governments agreed to in Agenda 21. The publication was coordinated by Peace Child International in cooperation with various UN agencies.

To facilitate distribution of this unique new educational tool, more than 60 organizations have come together to form the Canadian Consortium for Rescue Mission. This multistakeholder partnership includes the National Round Table, the Canadian Global Change Program, the Canadian Teachers Federation, the Centre for Traditional Knowledge, the *Centrale de l'enseignement du Québec*, various federal government departments, the Canadian Association of Principals, the Ontario Secondary School Students Association, SchoolNet, UNICEF Canada and many others.

To date, the Consortium has raised enough money to purchase 17,000 copies of *Rescue Mission* for distribution to every school in Canada and to produce a French-language edition. Contributors included Environment Canada, CIDA, Industry Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, Fisheries and Oceans, IDRC, Tesco Inc. and Arm and Hammer Co.

To accompany *Rescue Mission*, the Consortium has also developed a *Canadian Action Guide*. It was produced by young people across Canada through a series of focus groups during which they put forward their ideas and advice on the content and

A Youth Edition of Agenda 21

format. They were assisted by ERE Éducation, Health Canada, Learning for a Sustainable Future and the National Round Table. The action guide will encourage young people, their parents and educators to voice their views on Agenda 21. It offers a way to take stock of current problems, look for solutions, take action in their own communities and effect the kinds of changes needed to contribute to a sustainable future for all of us.

The Consortium plans to launch the Canadian edition of *Rescue Mission* on Earth Day, April 22, 1995 in cooperation with provincial and local organizations and individual schools. For example, students from Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive High School in Manitoba have been collecting water samples to determine bacteria levels. They hope to release their results on Earth Day as part of special water awareness activities. Students in Lower Sackville, N.S. plan to hold a fashion show of clothes made from waste and other waste-reduction activities. Other initiatives will be occurring in schools across the country to raise awareness about *Rescue Mission*.

SchoolNet will make the *Canadian Action Guide* available electronically to the more than 4,000 schools that are connected to SchoolNet. Schools that are not on-line may be able to access the guide through their local libraries.

For more information contact Ted Cooke, Canadian Commission for UNESCO. Tel: (613) 566-4330 / Fax: (613) 566-4405.

Foreign Policy and Sustainability

Summit of the Americas

As reported in the last issue of the *NRT Review*, the Task Force on Foreign Policy and Sustainability held a final workshop in Mexico City in October, 1994 to prepare advice to the Prime Minister on advancing sustainable development at the Miami Summit of the Americas. The workshop brought together stakeholders from North, Central and South America to discuss opportunities and establish priorities.

Following approval from members at the October plenary meeting, the National Round Table forwarded its advice to the Prime Minister in early November. The recommendations covered a variety of issues related to sustainable development including trade, biodiversity and conservation, energy and climate change, multi-stakeholder forums, and indigenous peoples.

While not all of the National Round Table's recommendations were adopted, several important achievements were realized. Initially, the trade agenda for the summit contained no environmental component and the federal government was focused almost entirely on the human aspects of sustainable development while ignoring the environmental considerations.

The National Round Table's advice alerted Ottawa to the environmental issues at stake, some of which were eventually reflected in both the government's position and the Summit's final communiqué. The National Round Table's contribution helped ensure that future free trade in the hemisphere will proceed through NAFTA and its crucial environment and labour side agreements.

Influencing Foreign Policy Review

The Task Force also played a role in influencing the federal government's foreign policy review. The Task Force

submitted a position paper recommending that the government incorporate sustainable development principles into Canada's foreign policy. The final report of the Parliamentary Special Joint Committee contained an entire chapter on sustainable development and generously endorsed some key passages of the National Round Table paper (available as NRTEE Working Paper 25: *Sustainable Development as a Focus for Canada's Foreign Policy*).

G-7 Summit: Putting Sustainable Development on the Agenda

The Task Force has now turned its attention to promoting sustainable development as a core agenda item at the upcoming G-7 summit of leaders from the major industrialized countries, scheduled for this summer in Halifax.

A workshop was held on February 27 in Montréal that brought together representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Environment Canada, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, various UN agencies and G-7 governments as well as business and NGO representatives and academics. They discussed different perspectives on the Halifax summit, sustainable development and the reform of international financial institutions and considered a series of draft recommendations to be sent to the Prime Minister.

The Task Force's advice to the Prime Minister will be considered for approval at the March plenary meeting of the National Round Table.

For more information contact Sarah Richardson: (613) 943-0399.

Projet de société

The *Projet's* fourth National Stakeholders Assembly took place on November 3-4, 1994 in Ottawa. More than 120 participants from across the country attended representing the broad cross-section of government, aborigi-

nal, business and voluntary organizations that make up the *Projet*.

The purpose was to review the progress of the *Projet* since its previous meeting in December 1993, determine future directions, and provide stakeholders with an opportunity to share information and discuss the challenges Canada faces in its transition to sustainability. Workshops covered such topics as municipal sustainability strategies, sectoral sustainability strategies, provincial strategies, aboriginal peoples and sustainable development, and applying economic instruments.

Stakeholders also devoted considerable time to reviewing a draft National Sustainable Development Strategy prepared by the *Projet's* Working Group. A variety of concerns were expressed about the document, called *Canadian Choices for Transitions to Sustainability*. There was agreement, however, on the need to redefine its "choicework" section, which lays out options and specific actions to be undertaken in various sectors to make sustainability a reality in Canada, and to give the strategy more focus and a clearer, national orientation.

The National Round Table is currently sponsoring a series of regional meetings to present the strategy to various constituencies involved in the *Projet* as well as those not yet represented in order to test its validity and solicit new input. A fifth National Stakeholders Assembly is also planned for later this year.

To oversee the continued work of the *Projet*, a new Working Group has been convened. Its first meeting took place February 10-11, 1995, hosted by the University of New Brunswick's Environment and Sustainable Development Research Centre in Fredericton.

For more information contact Dana Silk: (613) 943-0396 or Sandy Scott: (613) 943-0394.

Rural Renewal

The NRTEE's Rural Renewal Task Force is continuing to pursue a variety of projects related to economic and ecological renewal in rural Canada.

The National Round Table is cooperating with the federal Interdepartmental Committee on Rural and Remote Canada to ensure a broad mix of stakeholder groups is present at the numerous conferences on rural renewal being held around the country.

As reported in the last issue of the *NRT Review*, the Task Force has been working with a variety of partners to establish an Internet discussion group to link rural institutions, groups and individuals via their personal computers. This new service, called RURCAN-L, went on-line from the University of Alberta in late 1994.

The National Round Table also helped produce a new resource kit on community sustainable development. Called *Stepping Forward: Discovering Community Potential, Acting on Challenges*, the kit is published by Mount Allison University's Rural and Small Towns Programme. (For a fuller description, see Publications section.) Copies can be obtained by calling (506) 364-2386.

The Task Force is also assisting farm groups in five provinces to develop farm environmental management handbooks tailored to the needs of specific regions.

For more information contact Steve Thompson: (613) 995-7519.

Pulp and Paper Round Table

The final meeting of the Pulp and Paper Round Table, which comprises 25 national stakeholder groups, was held in Ottawa on January 11, 1995. At that time, all representatives at the table agreed to a set of draft principles on the sustainable production of paper and paper products.

The draft principles, which cover such issues as anthropogenic organic chemicals, closed-loop technologies, the precautionary principle, employment, the three Rs, and codes of practice, will soon be published as part of the National Round Table's working paper series. Several of the participating groups are now assembling action plans in support of the principles and it is expected that these will be incorporated into a final report to be published next fall.

For more information contact Steve Thompson: (613) 995-7519.

Consensus Decision Making

The Task Force on Consensus Decision Making is in the final editorial stages of a book of case studies in decision making. The book, which will be published by the summer of 1995, expands upon the principles set out in *Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future: Guiding Principles*, an existing publication produced by the National Round Table in cooperation with the provincial round tables.

The *Guiding Principles* booklet has been one of the National Round Table's most successful to date, with more than 20,000 copies distributed in English and French since it first appeared in 1993.

For more information contact Steve Thompson: (613) 995-7519.

Reporting on Sustainable Development

The Task Force on Reporting is issuing a new book to encourage action on charting progress toward sustainability and to demonstrate that such assessment is feasible.

Called *Pathways to Sustainability: Assessing Our Progress*, it comprises three elements: *Toward Reporting on Progress on Sustainable Development in Canada*, a reprint of the National Round Table's December 1993 report to the Prime Minister; three background papers (followed by expert commentary) prepared for the Task Force's colloquium on sustainable development reporting held in November 1993; and a ground-breaking case study of a practical framework for assessing progress toward sustainability in the Great Lakes basin. The book will be available for distribution from the National Round Table in March, 1995.

The Task Force is also sponsoring a second colloquium on assessing human well-being within the context of sustainability. It will take place March 24-25, 1995 in London, Ontario and is being organized in partnership with the Westminster Institute for Ethics and Human Values. Discussions will

Not To Be Missed: An Evening With Paul Hawken

The National Round Table is organizing an evening with American sustainability advocate, business owner and writer Paul Hawken on March 21, 1995 in Ottawa. Author of *The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability*, *The Next Economy*, and *Growing a Business*, Hawken advocates that a profound rethinking of existing economic values and a re-making of current business practices is critical both to achieving sustainability and ensuring business survival.

Mr. Hawken's visit to Ottawa is hosted by the National Round Table. During his stay, he will also be meeting with various government officials.

For more information, please call the National Round Table at (613) 992-7189.

address three categories of human well-being indicators: economic, health and welfare, and psychological and spiritual. Its purpose is to assist federal government officials involved in sustainability reporting to develop methods of assessing human well-being. Representatives of the federal departments of Environment, Foreign Affairs and Health as well as Statistics Canada and the Auditor General are expected to attend. A public session is also planned on March 23.

For more information contact Jane Inch: (613) 995-3681.

Transportation and Climate Change

At its plenary meeting in July 1994, the National Round Table established a new Task Force on Transportation and Climate Change. Since then, the Task Force has worked with the Ontario Round Table to organize a multistakeholder collaborative on this issue (see page 26).

In addition, the Task Force is proposing to extend the work of both the collaborative's study of full cost pricing and the recently released report of the federal Task Force on Barriers and Disincentives to Sound Environmental Practices by producing a study on federal subsidies in the energy and transportation sectors.

For more information contact Jane Inch: (613) 995-3681.

Federal Government Green Procurement

National Round Table members agreed at their October 1994 plenary to launch a new program to promote green procurement within the federal government. A task force was established which held its first meeting in mid-January in Ottawa and identified four major initiatives to be undertaken.

The first is a national forum and trade show targeted at managers and those making purchasing decisions in the federal government as well as firms supplying goods and services. Its objective would be to increase the awareness and skills of government procurement officers in "buying green". The forum could also include a government/industry conference to address the management challenges and market opportunities associated with the "greening of government." November 1995 or June 1996 are being considered as potential dates for this event, which would be jointly organized with various federal departments.

The Task Force is also collaborating with Environment Canada and the Treasury Board in studying the definition and implementation of a green procurement reporting framework. Other priorities that will be pursued include a best practices casebook and newsletter as well as a green procurement guide.

In addition, the NRTEE is co-sponsor of the first national conference of the Canadian Environmental Industry Association which will take place in Ottawa in late March. (See "Upcoming events" for details.)

For more information contact Gene Nyberg: (613) 995-7581.

Environmental Technologies

At the October 1994 plenary meeting, National Round Table members approved creation of a task force on Environmental Technologies. The Task Force held its first meeting in early February to establish a dialogue process for the dual purpose of encouraging selected sectors within the Canadian environmental industry to move to sustainability and catalyzing the development and use of the environmental technology required to do so.

A complementary objective of the dialogue will be to strengthen the com-

petitive position of the Canadian environmental industry by engaging it in the dialogue and the arrangements that will be concluded to develop and apply green technologies.

For more information contact Gene Nyberg: (613) 995-7581.

Sustainable Coastal Communities and Marine Ecosystems

As reported in the last issue of the *NRT Review*, an examination of the collapse of the East Coast cod fishery and its lessons for the future was one of the new priorities agreed upon by National Round Table members at the July 1994 plenary meeting.

As a result, the National Round Table has launched a "Partnership for Sustainable Coastal Communities and Marine Ecosystems," a joint initiative with the Newfoundland & Labrador Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. The purpose of the Partnership is four-fold:

- to establish a dialogue with fishery-dependent coastal communities in Newfoundland and Labrador on the future sustainability of these communities;
- to identify why these communities were sustainable in the past, what made them unsustainable and how they can become sustainable again;
- to provide a unique opportunity for the people directly affected to make their views known on the future of the fishery and their own communities; and
- to develop recommendations to avoid a similar fisheries collapse in other regions of Canada.

A committee, comprising National and Newfoundland Round Table members as well as community representatives, has been working in the province during February and March. Through a series of formal and informal meetings in various fishing com-

munities, they have been soliciting the opinions, experiences and ideas of a broad mix of local residents. Additional meetings will be held in the spring followed by a final wrap-up session in St. John's on June 8, 1995 to coincide with World Oceans Day.

At the end of this process, the Partnership will submit advice to the Prime Minister and the Premier of Newfoundland on the future sustainability of Newfoundland's fishing communities that reflects grass-roots perceptions and opinions in these communities. It will also issue a final report summarizing these community perspectives, identifying the historic causes of unsustainability, and outlining existing barriers to sustainable development, current strengths and recommendations to foster future sustainability.

In addition, the Partnership hopes to foster and promote community action for sustainable development through possible measures such as creating local round tables on sustainable development, developing community vision statements for sustainability, and improving networking and information sharing and access to national resources among coastal communities.

For more information contact Steve Thompson: (613) 995-7519.

LEAD Canada: Entering Our Second Year

The Costa Rica Classroom

LEAD International's first international session was held on October 11-22, 1994 in Costa Rica with six Canadian Associates participating: Mark Bekkering, Jim Houston, Suzie Lemyre, Susan Lett, David McKeown and Jacinthe Séguin. They were joined for part of the session by Ronald Doering, LEAD Canada's national program director.

All Associates volunteered their time and covered their own expenses to join associates from six other LEAD countries: Brazil, China, India, Indone-



Canadian LEAD associates meet the President of Costa Rica. Left to right: Jim Houston, Suzie Lemyre, David McKeown, President José María Figueres, Jacinthe Séguin, Mark Bekkering, Susan Lett.

sia, Nigeria and the Community of Independent States.

The six Canadians heard presentations on Costa Rica's natural resources, economy, energy, agriculture, economic and environmental debt, tourism and socio-political history. They trekked to banana and coffee plantations, hiked through humid rain forests and visited a fishermen's cooperative. Near the session's close, Costa Rican President José María Figueres also met with the LEAD Canadians. On the final day, participants conducted a role-playing exercise on trade and sustainable development using the example of the Costa Rican banana industry as a case study.

LEAD's next international session is planned for September 1995 in Thailand.

Assignments in Canada

This winter, associates have been carrying out a vast array of sustainable development projects from their respective workplaces. The list of research topics ranges from developing a sustainable development course for senior federal public servants to the North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation to changing the decision-making process in the

Ontario municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth.

The scope and timeliness of all of the projects are worth noting given that most Associates had not been exposed to the principles or practices of sustainable development *before* entering the program.

Looking for New Candidates

Applications for the 1995 program are now being accepted with final selection scheduled for May. The first residential session will take place in Ottawa, July 16-28. The 1994 associates who are now entering their second year will team up with the new participants for one week, during which they will spend several days carrying out an ecoregion study in Ontario's Prince Edward County.

For more information contact Steve Thompson: (613) 995-7519.

Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) is a program jointly sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation and Canada's International Development Research Centre. The program is offered in Canada through the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy.

Transportation and Climate Change Collaborative

Over the course of the winter, the National Round Table has been working with the Ontario Round Table on Environment and Economy (ORTEE) to establish a multistakeholder Collaborative on Transportation and Climate Change. Its goal is to develop a voluntary, implementable strategy to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in Ontario's transportation sector.

The Collaborative is being created in the context of Canada's efforts to fulfill its obligations under the international Convention on Climate Change. The federal government has already committed Canada to stabilizing its greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2000 while many other groups have been pushing for an actual 20% reduction in emissions (from 1988 levels) by 2005.

Environment Canada data indicates that the transportation sector produces almost 30% of

Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions. The Collaborative is focussing on carbon dioxide because it represents about 94% of the global warming potential in the transportation sector. With its heavy urbanization and large transportation industry, Ontario is the single largest producer of carbon dioxide and thus could act as a leader for other provinces in establishing a voluntary program.

To date, a broad cross section of players have agreed to participate in the Collaborative (see below). deputy ministers from key Ontario government ministries including Transportation, Environment and Energy, Housing and Municipal Affairs will also take part as observers.

Six working committees have been created to examine specific issues and options in the following areas: full cost pricing, sustainability indicators, the

automotive sector, urban planning, economic instruments, and transportation technologies.

The National Round Table, Environment Canada, the Royal Society of Canada and Canadian National have already agreed to sponsor an initial study to identify existing "state-of-the-art" transportation initiatives that could be adopted in Ontario and to define options for reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

The Collaborative intends to issue a final report to serve as an action plan for the Ontario transportation sector and an information source for other jurisdictions.

For more information contact Jane Inch at the National Round Table: (613) 995-3681, or Ken Ogilvie at the Ontario Round Table: (416) 327-2032.

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John Wallace
President & CEO,
Ontario Northland Railway

Upcoming Events

6th Global Warming International Conference & Expo

April 3-6, 1995, San Francisco, California, USA.

This conference will focus on the scientific and policy implications of global warming and other transnational environmental problems. Symposia will cover various global warming issues including climate change, energy and natural resource management, international law and policy making, global warming and public health, and remote sensing. A special workshop will be offered to executives on the use of industrial technologies to control greenhouse gas emissions.

For more information call Global Warming International Centre: (708) 910-1551.

Renewable Energy Trade Show and Markets Conference

April 10-12, 1995, Ottawa, Ontario

This is the first-ever national showcase for renewable energy technology including bioenergy, solar, wind, geothermal and cogeneration. Dozens of companies will display their products and there will be information sessions on the economic and environmental opportunities associated with renewable energy procurement.

For more information call: (613) 566-7005.

International Earth Day — 25th Anniversary

April 22, 1995

April 22 1995 is the 25th anniversary of Earth Day and special events and in-

itiatives are being planned in dozens of communities across Canada. During April, Earth Day Canada will provide "EarthWorks", a special 24-hour hotline with event information. It has also produced special kits to assist groups to organize Earth Day events and environmental projects. Posters are also for sale.

For more information call Earth Day Canada: (416) 599-1991.

Québec Forum on Composting

April 26-27, 1995, Sainte-Foy, Québec

This event is a sequel to the first forum held in 1991 and is sponsored by the *Association québécoise des industriels du compostage (AQIC)*. Its purpose is to analyze the recent rapid growth of Québec's composting industry as well as set future directions. A panel of experts will consider issues such as the future of the industry, standards and regulations, potential markets and new uses.

For more information call: (418) 683-6262.

Workshop on Environmental Life-Cycle Management

April 27, 1995, Ottawa, Ontario

This is a one-day event sponsored by Environment Canada to provide information on life-cycle management topics including domestic and international initiatives, standards, public policy applications and implications for competitiveness.

For more information call Marbek Resource Consultants: (613) 523-0784.

Environmental Education: Partnerships for Sustainability

May 4-6, 1995, Lumsden, Saskatchewan

Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Outdoor & Environmental Education Association, this event will include workshops, keynote addresses, field trips, simulations and interactive sessions on a wide range of current issues in environmental education.

For more information call: (306) 789-3356.

EECOM National Meeting

May 4-7, 1995, Dorset, Ontario

This is the first national meeting of EECOM, the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communications. Workshop topics will include environmental education for adults, a guide to the Internet for environmental educators, and outdoor education programming. A resource fair is planned as well as post-conference field trips in Algonquin Park.

For more information call: (709) 737-8155.

"Striking A Balance": Edmonton as a Sustainable Community

June 9-11, 1995, Edmonton, Alberta

The purpose of this community conference is to further creation of a sustainable urban community in Edmonton. Thematic sessions will deal with urban design, transportation and communications, economics, citizen participation, the Edmonton bioregion, healthy and safe communities, and visioning. There will also be

various public events including tours and boat trips as well as displays by local businesses and groups contributing to sustainability.

For more information call EcoCity Society: (403) 429-3659 or City of Edmonton: (403) 496-5993.

"Preparing For Now!"

June 15-17, 1995,
Vancouver, British Columbia

This conference, which is being organized by the Simon Fraser University Community Economic Development Centre, aims to assist local communities to develop sustainable economies and healthy living environ-

ments. The different tools for promoting local economic development as well as means for accomplishing social goals that are linked with the economic ambitions of a community will be considered.

For more information call: (604) 291-5473 / E-mail: cedc@sfu.ca

Institute for Environmental Values Education

July 9-16, 1995,
Victoria, British Columbia

This eight-day seminar is offered by the Harmony Foundation to progres-

sive educators from Canada and around the world. Interactive sessions will examine the relationship amongst values, issues and actions and develop innovative approaches to environmental and global education.

For more information call the Harmony Foundation: (604) 380-3001.

Sustainable Development on the Great Plains

August 8-10, 1995,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

This conference will identify the issues involved in and potential for sustainable agriculture, act as a forum for exchanging information, and develop

OCEANS DAY

June 8, 1995

Oceans Day celebrates our oceans, the source of life on our blue planet. First declared on June 8, 1992, during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Oceans Day inspires and challenges us to become caretakers of our ocean environment.

The Importance of Our Oceans

The Earth Summit created a greater awareness of our ecology and the environment. We must extend that awareness to marine life and our oceans. Regardless of where you live, the oceans work for you. What happens in the marine environment affects us all. And what we do affects the marine environment.

The ocean is the biological pump that keeps us going and the regulator of our climate. The sea nourishes and heals. Marine fishing supplies the world's people with more animal protein than any other source. The sea has given us anti-leukemia drugs from sea sponges, bone graft materials from corals and diagnostic chemicals from red algae.

The sea is an economic lifeline for many coastal communities, fish workers and those who travel on and in its waters.

There may be "Seven Seas" but there is only one ocean, a single global organism connected by great currents flowing from hemisphere to hemisphere. The value of understanding these interconnected systems is that we

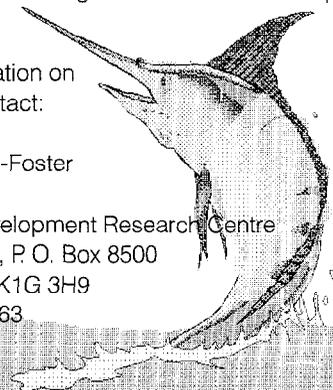
may provide a means of protecting them — and ourselves.

Coastal zone management, land-based sources of ocean pollution and sustainable fishing are some important issues. Activities that take place hundreds of kilometres inland have a direct impact on coastal waters and bays. Nearly 80% of marine pollution originates from the land.

What Can You Do?

One person can make a difference. You can help by learning about our marine environment. Awareness is the first step on the path to action and solution. Help organize or participate in activities focussing on the oceans, such as beach sweeps, ecoregattas, youth projects, exhibits, concerts, picnics, round table discussions or even the building of a sand-castle. Be a part of the blue wave!

For more information on Oceans Day contact:
Zeinab Adan or
Theodora Carroll-Foster
Agenda 21 Unit
International Development Research Centre
250 Albert Street, P. O. Box 8500
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3H9
Tel: (613) 236-6163



shared resources and programs in support of sustainable agriculture on the Great Plains. Seminar topics will include land and water use, biodiversity, energy, full cost accounting, transportation and government policies. Site visits around southern Manitoba are also planned.

For more information call: (204) 944-9593.

World Environmental Congress

*September 17-22, 1995,
London, Ontario*

"Promoting Environmental Science, Technology and Business" will be the theme. The congress targets scientists, engineers, business, investment professionals and policy makers involved in the development, application and marketing of environmental technologies. Seminar topics will include environmental science and technology policy, public and private sector investment, and technology transfer. There is also a call for papers.

For more information call: (519) 858-5055.

"The Power of Participation"

*September 23-27, 1995,
Whistler, British Columbia*

The Power of Participation is the theme of the fourth annual international conference of the International Association of Public Participation Practitioners (IAP3). A series of workshops and innovative "open space" sessions will explore the power of process, research, technology, the public, the media, and the client. Workshops on skills development as well as public consultation issues and indigenous peoples will also be offered.

For more information call: 1-800-644-4273.

New Resources for Sustainable Development

Sustainable Communities Resource Package

The Ontario Round Table on Environment and Economy (ORTEE) is about to publish *Sustainable Communities Resource Package*, a new tool to support existing community-based sustainability initiatives and encourage new ones. It contains ideas and practical information on undertaking sustainability initiatives that can be tailored to a specific community.

The resource package is divided into four sections. "The Concept of Sustainable Communities" includes a set of model principles for community sustainability and a literature review. "Profiling the Community" outlines environmental, economic, social and health criteria to be considered when creating a community profile. "Taking Action" covers all aspects of moving from "thinking" to "doing" including group organization, creating a vision, developing projects, communications, and evaluation. An inventory of initiatives currently under way in Ontario, sample by-laws, information on incorporation, and a bibliography are also included.

Available Spring 1995. For more information contact the Ontario Round Table on Environment and Economy, 1 Dundas St. W., Suite 2502, Toronto, Ontario, M5G 1Z3. Tel: (416) 327-2032 / Fax: (416) 327-2197 / E-mail: ortee2@web.apc.org

Stepping Forward: Discovering Community Potential, Acting on Challenges

This new planning tool is designed for community leaders and community development practitioners who want to take an active role in the planning process for a sustainable community. It has been produced by the Rural and Small Towns Programme of Mount Allison University with assistance from the National Round Table.

Stepping Forward consists of six guidebooks covering topics, such as collecting data, community strategic planning, effective meetings and decision making, and education and awareness. Also included is Info-Quest, a diskette containing easy-to-use software for conducting a community survey, as well as a slide show. Each item can be purchased individually or as a kit.

To order or for more information contact Jennifer Rowe, Rural and Small Towns Program. Tel: (506) 364-2386 / Fax: (506) 364-2601.

Discovering Your Community: A Cooperative Process for Planning Sustainability

This new publication from the Harmony Foundation is a guide to conducting community research for sustainable development plans. It is designed to guide the user through all phases of community assessment and examine the ecological, economic, social, health and governing elements and institutions of community and how they are interconnected. Available in both English and French. Cost: \$16.05 (includes GST, shipping and handling).

To order or for more information contact the Harmony Foundation, 202A-145 Spruce St., Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 6P1. Tel: (613) 238-6145 / Fax: (613) 238-6470

Round Table Publications

Round Table Best Sellers

Demand for the National Round Table's publications continues to grow. In 1994, we distributed more than 29,000 copies of our publications, a new record. And these requests came from every region of Canada and all five continents, perhaps a sign that the concepts and practices of sustainability are beginning to take root around the globe. The National Round Table's current list of "best sellers" includes:

Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future: Guiding Principles

More than 20,000 copies of this booklet have been distributed, making it the National Round Table's most successful publication to date. Requests have come from sources as varied as federal, provincial and local government departments, universities, professional institutes, native groups, corporations and individuals from across Canada as well as the US, Mexico, various European countries, Australia, South Africa and Nigeria.

Toward Sustainable Communities

Author Mark Roseland's prescription for greener towns and cities remains in high demand with more than 12,000 copies already in circulation and a third printing in the offing. Copies have been requested by groups that include the city councils of Halifax and Houston, municipal and regional planners and planning bodies throughout North America, transit services, citizens groups, the Foundation for Sustainable Development (Manila, Philippines), the Global Cities Project (San Francisco) and the National League of Cities (Washington).

Covering the Environment: A Handbook for Environmental Journalism

This handbook by Michael Keating has also attracted a large and varied readership including the Canadian University Press, Radio-Canada, the Canadian Science Writers Association and journalists, educators and others interested in environmental reporting in Brazil, Cuba, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Forthcoming Publications

Pathways to Sustainability: Assessing Our Progress

Edited by Tony Hodge, Susan Holtz, Cameron Smith and Kelly Hawke Baxter. This book is the work of the NRTEE Task Force on Sustainability Reporting. It is divided into three parts: a reprint of *Toward Reporting on Progress on Sustainable Development in Canada*, the National Round Table's December 1993 report to the Prime Minister; three background papers (plus expert commentary) prepared

for the Task Force's colloquium on sustainable development reporting held in November 1993; and a ground-breaking case study of a practical framework for assessing progress toward sustainability in the Great Lakes basin. Available mid-March.

A Practical Introduction to Environmental Management on Canadian Campuses

By Dixon Thompson and Serena van Bakel. This book aims to assist universities and colleges to respond practically and effectively to the challenge of reducing both their impacts on the environment and the associated costs. It focuses on how to start or improve on the many environmental management initiatives already undertaken on campuses across the country. Produced in partnership with The University of Calgary, the Canadian Association of University Business Officers and Marriott Corporation. Available mid-March.

Recent Publications

Working Paper #27: Exploring Barriers To Sound Environmental Practices, by J. Anthony Cassils. Looks beyond tax disincentives to explore underlying fiscal and other barriers to sound environmental practices.

Working Paper #28: Environmental Taxation, Revenues and Effectiveness: The Need for Principled Guidance, by Robert J.P. Gale. Reviews salient points in the current debate over environmental taxation and suggests certain principles that could be used to guide the setting of green taxes.

Sustainable Development Book Series

Sustainable Development: A Manager's Handbook

Helps managers and their organizations assess and improve their environmental and economic performance.



The National Waste Reduction Handbook

Explores options for solid waste reduction at the municipal level and provides waste reduction success stories.



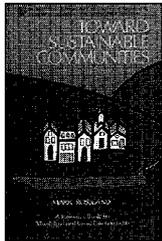
Decision Making Practices for Sustainable Development

Explains how sustainable development can be integrated into the decision-making practices of Canadian institutions.



Toward Sustainable Communities: A Resource Book for Municipal and Local Governments

A reference book for local government officials and citizens who want to apply the concept of sustainable development to their own communities. Contains useful case studies and contacts.



Trade, Environment and Competitiveness

A collection of papers by major Canadian and international stakeholders identifying the links between the environment and trade.

Green Guide: A User's Guide to Sustainable Development for Canadian Colleges

Contains a series of case studies from Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) member institutions that have attempted to green their campuses.



Sustainable Development: Getting There From Here

A handbook for union environment committees and joint labour-management environment committees. Highlights the sustainable development experiences of Canadian unions at the local, regional and national levels.



Covering the Environment: A Handbook for Environmental Journalism

A useful source book for reporters on environmental issues and environmental journalism. Includes contact list.



Working Paper Series

#1 Prosperity and Sustainable Development for Canada: Advice to the Prime Minister with an Introduction on Sustainability and Competitiveness by Ronald Doering and David Runnalls. Presents a series of 14 recommendations and conclusions on prosperity and sustainable development.

#2 The Financial Services Industry and Sustainable Development: Managing Change, Information and Risk by J. Anthony Cassils. Discusses the importance of sustainable development for the financial services industry in Canada.

#3 Lender Liability for Contaminated Sites: Issues for Lenders and Investors by Ernst & Young. Discusses issues that affect lenders and investors in contaminated sites including which sites should be cleaned up, what standards should be applied, and who should pay for clean-up.

#4 Market Correction: Economic Incentives for Sustainable Development by Mike Kelly. Introduces market-based policy instruments and presents arguments for and against their implementation.

#5 Environmental Regulations and the Pulp and Paper Industry: An Examination of the Porter Strategy by Ronald Doering, François Bregha, Don Roberts, Steve Thompson and Dave Wilson. Tests the hypothesis of Michael Porter that stricter environmental regulation enhances competitiveness.

#6 Environmentally Perverse Government Incentives by Philippe Clément. Looks at the impact of government incentives on the environment. Uses the agricultural sector as an example.

#7 Environmental Impact Assessment and Competitiveness by Nancy Morgan, Martin Palleson and A.R. Thompson. Evaluates how environmental impact assessment affects Canadian competitiveness and provides specific recommendations on controlling complexity, proliferation and overlap of measures.

#8 Emerging Trends and Issues in Canada's Environmental Industry by Anne Fouillard. Defines the environmental industry sector, discusses government funding of research and development in this area and makes recommendations for improving this sector's global performance.

#10 Trade, Competitiveness and the Environment by David Runnalls and Murray Smith. A report commissioned by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. Considers environmental standards and competitive advantage, the impact of environmental policies on trade and the impact of trade agreements on the environment.

#11 Sustainability and Prosperity: The Role of Infrastructure by Daryl Fields and Jack Ruitenbeek. Identifies key issues in the planning of physical and information infrastructure for an economically prosperous and sustainable society.

#12 Measuring Sustainable Development: Energy Production and Use in Canada by Western Environmental Trends Inc. Presents a family of national indicators for measuring Canada's progress towards sustainable energy production and use.

#13 Exploring Incentives: An Introduction to Incentives and Economic Instruments for Sustainable Development by J. Anthony Cassils. Provides an overview of a range of economic instruments and identifies specific opportunities for implementing them.

#14 Canadian Round Tables on the Environment and the Economy: Their History, Form and Function by Ronald Doering. Describes the genesis of the round table movement in Canada. Provides examples of how they work.

#15 Reporting on Sustainable Development in Support of National Decision Makers by François Bregha, John Moffet and Vic Nishi. Contrasts the information available to governments in making decisions against the ideal needed to gauge progress toward more sustainable forms of development.

#16 Reporting on Sustainable Development: The Municipal and Household Level by Trevor Hancock. Discusses the need of municipalities and households to assess their own activities and impacts as they relate to sustainable development.

#17 Corporate Sustainable Development Reporting in Canada by David Nitkin and David Powell. Investigates the state of sustainable development reporting among Canadian corporations, private business establishments and other associations.

#18 Aperçu nationale sur la planification stratégique du développement durable dans les provinces et les territoires du Canada by Philippe Clément. Summarizes the response of Canada's provinces and territories to the sustainable development challenge including strategies and actions.

#19 Canada's Agricultural and Trade Policies: Implications for Rural Renewal and Biodiversity by Robert Sopuck. Argues that redirecting some of Canada's agricultural support programs into areas that are not countervailable could improve rural conditions and sustain rural life. Recommends redirecting subsidies toward ecological services.

#20 Sustainable Development: Assessing the Law of Unfair Trade and North American Disputes by Sarah Richardson. An examination of Chapter 19 subsidies disputes under the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement and their impact on the environment.

#21 A Renewed Framework for Government Accountability in the Area of Sustainable Development: Potential Role for a Canadian Parliamentary Auditor/Commissioner for the Environment by François Bregha and Philippe Clément. Provides four options for the mandate of a new parliamentary officer.

#22 Media, Fish and Sustainability: A Paper on Sustainable Development and the Canadian News Media by Michael Keating. Looks at how the disappearance of the northern cod was handled by the media, and how it might have been handled from a sustainable development perspective.

#23 Harvesting Methods in Canada's Forests edited by Steve Thompson. A summary of discussions on harvesting methods by members of the Forest Round Table.

#24 Municipal Reporting on Sustainable Development: A Status Review by Douglas Burch. Presents a "snap-shot" of sustainable development reporting at the community and municipal levels and offers insight into its evolution.

#25 Sustainable Development as a Focus for Canada's Foreign Policy by John Kirton. A research paper for the Task Force on Foreign Policy which made up part of the National Round Table's submission to the federal government's Foreign Policy Review.

#26 Sustainable Development and Academic Institutions: Issues in Interdisciplinary Learning. Summarizes discussions from two academic workshops for sustainable development research institutes and teaching programs in Canada.

Other Reports and Products

Building Consensus for a Sustainable Future: Guiding Principles. An joint initiative of the national and provincial round tables. A detailed "how to" on consensus decision making based on 10 principles.

Toward Reporting Progress on Sustainable Development in Canada: Report to the Prime Minister. Report of the Task Force on Reporting. Includes 10 recommendations to government for establishing the information systems needed to assess our progress toward sustainable development.

Achieving Atmospheric Quality Objectives Through the Use of Economic Instruments: A Final Report of the Economic Instruments Collaborative. Examines the potential for using economic instruments to address Canada's air quality challenges. Report divided in three sections: acid deposition, ground-level ozone and greenhouse gases. Suggests potential case studies.

Forest Round Table on Sustainable Development: Final Report. A consensus document that includes 26 principles for the sustainable management of Canada's forests and stakeholder action plans.

The North American Free Trade Agreement and the North American Commission on the Environment. Report of a December 1992 workshop held in Ottawa, Ontario.

Shaping Consensus: The North American Commission on the Environment and NAFTA. Report of an April 1993 workshop held in Washington, DC.

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The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, mandated by the Parliament of Canada and reporting to the Prime Minister, plays the role of catalyst in identifying, explaining and promoting in all sectors of Canadian society and in all regions of Canada, the principles and practices of sustainable development.

Aussi disponible en français.

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Printed on Guardian Opaque,
Canadian Environmental
Choice, recycled paper, using
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ISSN 1188-0945



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