



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

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1991



1992

ANNUAL REVIEW

NATIONAL

ROUND TABLE

ON THE ENVIRONMENT

AND THE ECONOMY

DR. GEORGE CONNELL
Chair, National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

R.C. (REG) BASKEN
President, Energy and Chemical Workers Union

FRANCOISE BERTRAND
Présidente-directrice générale société de radio-télévision Du Québec

THE HONOURABLE CAROL CARSON
Minister of the Environment, Government of Saskatchewan

THE HONOURABLE JEAN CHAREST
Minister of Environment, Government of Canada

THE HONOURABLE J. GLEN CUMMINGS
Minister of Environment, Government of Manitoba

PAT DELBRIDGE
President, Pat Delbridge Associates Inc.

THE HONOURABLE JAKE EPP
Minister of Energy, Mines, and Resources, Government of Canada

JOSEFINA GONZALEZ
Research Scientist, Fortitek Canada Corp.

DIANE GRIFFIN
Executive Director, Island Nature Trust P.E.I.

DR. LESLIE HARRIS
Memorial University, Newfoundland

TONY HODGE
School of Planning, McGill University

SUSAN HOLTZ
Senior Researcher, Ecology Action Centre

JOHN E. HOUGHTON
Chairman, Québec and Ontario Paper Company Ltd.

PIERRE-MARC JOHNSON
Directeur Centre de médecine, d'éthique et de droit de l'Université McGill

DAVID L. JOHNSTON
Principal and Vice-Chancellor, McGill University

DR. GERALDINE A. KENNEY-WALLACE
President and Vice-chancellor, McMaster University

MARGARET G. KERR
Vice-President Environment, Health and Safety, Northern Telecom Limited

LESTER LAFOND
President, Lafond Enterprises Ltd.

THE HONOURABLE JOHN LEEFE
Chair, Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME)

JACK M. MACLEOD
President and Chief Executive Officer, Shell Canada Ltd.

JIM MACNEILL
Senior Fellow, Sustainable Development Program, Institute for Research on Public Policy

THE HONOURABLE DONALD MAZANKOWSKI
Minister of Finance, Government of Canada

DAVID MORTON
Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Alcan Aluminium

LISE OUELLETTE
Coordonnatrice de la fédération des agriculteurs et des agricultrices francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick

DR. BOB PAGE
Faculty of Environmental Design, University of Calgary

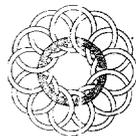
LEONE PIPPARD
President and Executive Director, Canadian Ecology Advocates

JUDGE BARRY D. STUART
Territorial Court of Yukon

THE HONOURABLE MICHAEL WILSON
Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade, Government of Canada

*“We must be
the change we wish to see
in the world.”*

Mahatma Gandhi



This is the third annual report of the National Round Table. I hope that it will convey to you an impression that the Round Table has grown rapidly toward maturity - that it has defined and engaged some of the major issues of sustainable development in Canada and abroad, and that progress on several fronts is now palpable.

Our foremost commitment throughout the year was preparation for the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development - the "earth summit" - which culminated in the meeting of heads of state in Rio de Janeiro in June.

The Round Table's Committee on Foreign Policy anticipated the importance of UNCED over three years ago. The conference was expected to be a major opportunity for advancement of sustainable development around the globe. This interest and concern was first signalled to you in our inaugural annual report of June 1990.

The Round Table tendered formal advice to you in March 1992, addressing issues of strategy as well as substance. At your suggestion we had useful dialogue with the Minister of External Affairs, the Minister of the Environment, and senior officials who were engaged in UNCED preparations. Two of our members, Pierre Marc Johnson and Jim MacNeill, joined the Canadian delegation to UNCED, and were active participants in Rio.

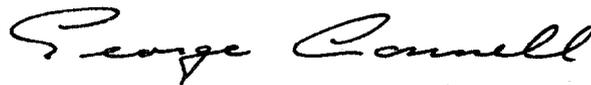
In the aftermath it is clear that the Canadian delegation, with your strong leadership, had a major and positive impact on the outcome. Your initiative as the first signatory of the Convention on Biodiversity was noticed around the world, and may have been a crucial step in the recruitment of other signatories. For this, as well as many other significant interventions, you and your support team are to be congratulated.

It is too early yet for an appraisal of UNCED. Many who hoped for global unanimity and funding on a scale commensurate with the problems are disappointed. Realists will recognize, however, that commitment to revolutionary change which must ultimately embrace all nations cannot be achieved overnight.

The successes and failures of UNCED will become fully apparent in the months and years to come. While some important parts of the framework for a sustainable global ecology and economy have been conceived, no doubt much ingenuity, effort and expense will be required to consummate the achievements and provide remedies for the failures.

For Canadians the most important outcome may be the widespread realization that we have a remarkable opportunity to influence decisively the course of events on a global scale, to make the Brundtland vision a reality. The momentum generated at the Earth Summit must be sustained. We must not become complacent, but must work to implement the goals and agreements reached at the Summit. The Round Table will launch its own initiatives in this regard and will be responsive to your suggestions.

This report sets other important achievements of the Round Table and the issues which are currently engaging our attention and effort. I hope that you will share my conviction that we are continuing to meet the expectations for advancement of sustainable development that you adopted four years ago and which have continued to guide your actions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George Connell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DR. GEORGE CONNELL

t h e c h a l l e n g e

...e have entered the world's fourth, great revolution. The first three - the agricultural, industrial, and information revolutions - were different. They reorganized society to produce more effectively. The fourth great social upheaval, the ecological revolution, will, we hope, reorganize society to produce without destructiveness. But it will do so only if we steer the gathering momentum away from its current destructive path.

If we are not successful, if we fail to establish a sustainable society, a deepening shadow will be thrown across all life on this planet. Our choice is not whether we wish this revolution to take place. There is no stopping it. Our only choice, is in how we shape it.

We know the power for ruin of the changes in motion: the defacement of our world, the disinheritance of peoples, the elimination of species, the proliferation of poverty. We are only beginning to grasp the power to create reciprocating, planetary well-being that can spring from a vision of balance, harmony, and interdependence; an emphasis on sharing and cooperation; a heightened sense of economic inter-reliance; and an accelerating determination to find and preserve an equilibrium.

We know that in the time it will take today's children to become grandparents we will have to construct an entire duplicate world to accommodate a doubling of population. If all peoples have the economic ability to participate, if sustainable development is achieved, it could present the most magnificent opportunity humankind has ever had. There is a potential for everyone to benefit; for repatriating to the disadvantaged a decent quality of living; for stimulating economic well-being in all parts of the world; for guaranteeing the continuance of species.

The destructive trends which we are seeing have their origins in the industrial revolution. The means of diverting them, of achieving sustainable development, will come from the information revolution — from our ability to gather, process, and disseminate information, from empowering people with knowledge and responsibility, and from developing skills to innovate and mobilize response.

As with all revolutions, however, institutions that once worked so well, so often now are stiff and stilted, ill-suited to the challenge of change. In large part our major institutions acquired their present contours in the industrial age. In historical terms, the information revolution came upon us so quickly that we have not yet had time to fully adapt. And now a new revolution is forcing upon us still different demands.





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The round table movement is unique to Canada. It tries to reach across all institutional lines, be they governmental, business, occupational, social, political, environmental, or regional, in order to encourage the flexibility of response necessary for the transition to a sustainable society. In particular, it seeks to identify more clearly the economic pathways to sustainable development.

The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy is just one round table. There is also a round table for every province and territory and at the municipal level there are more than a hundred round tables with additional ones being formed each year.

To quote pending federal legislation, the National Round Table "is to play the role of catalyst in identifying, explaining and promoting, in all sectors of Canadian society and in all regions of Canada, principles and practices of sustainable development...." The act defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The fundamental difficulty with so many of our institutions is that they reflect mindsets rooted in industrial society that channelled everything: information, action, status, and authority. Ecological impacts, however, overflow channels. Once an institution has made a decision the ecological impacts spread out, inundating areas far removed from the original decision. Each decision is like a stone thrown into a pool creating widening circles of consequences which multiply, interact and reinforce change. Tracking, assessing, and dealing with those ripples is not something that our institutions have been well equipped to do, especially when it takes them into the jurisdiction of some other institution or into an area where they lack expertise.

Those mindsets resulted in immense industrial and social advances. Standardization as a goal in everything from education to production lines resulted in efficiency, predictability, and the ability to control quality. However, to cope with the ecological revolution we also need the ability to enhance diversity.

Vertical categories for government ministries, the sciences, corporate departments, professional specialties, and just about everything else, mark our society. Yet to deal with the ripple effect of ecological impacts we need to be sensitive to horizontal relationships.

Hierarchical structures for authority are characteristic of our institutions, yet we know that we need broadly-based empowerment if we are going to respond successfully to current needs. Time and again the United Nations' World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Report) stressed the need for establishing a much wider responsibility.

The concept of sovereignty has been sacrosanct since the settling of North America. In Canada it carries over in modified form from the federal level into the provincial. But exclusivity works against the interdependence that is so much a part of ecological realities.

We use the adversarial system in parliament, in the courts, and in labour-management relations to resolve differences. But whatever the outcome it still leaves both sides as adversaries. What the ecology needs is not adversaries but benefactors; consensus decision making which enlist supporters, not adversarial struggles which create winners and losers.

Competition is invaluable as an incentive to improve and to develop efficiencies. But sometimes it overshadows the requisite co-operation so desperately needed in the ecology.



Central authority in government and business allows for consistency in action, a comprehensible profile to outsiders which can instill confidence, and a coherent role for subordinates. But central authorities have difficulty dealing with the multiplicity and complexity of ecological issues. They are too far away from the specifics.

Decentralization takes decision making much closer to the problems . . . and to possible solutions.

Since the time of Thomas Hobbes, promotion of individual rights has been the touchstone of progressive thinking.

However the touchstone in the ecological revolution will be collective rights. For instance the enhancement of diversity, by definition, involves collective rights because it deals with producing benefits not for specific individuals but for all people.

Looked at another way, under the system of common law in English Canada, what is not prohibited is permitted. Consequently, all regulation aimed at ecological sustainability restricts what otherwise would be permitted and immediately is, again by definition, an infringement of private rights — rights to property or to freedom of action of individuals or companies.

Tension between individual and collective rights will not end. But sustainability will be slowed unless there are clearly enunciated mutual targets.

Conflict is often seen as an essential dynamic of society. In fact a recent publication dealing with sustainable development credited it with raising issues, forming new constituencies, and effecting social change. However, what the ecology urgently needs is not more conflict, but harmony.

In the past, regulation has been one of the principal instruments in resolving conflict. It has simply set down what must, or must not, be done. However it will be counterproductive to rely too much on regulation. The ecological revolution will be teeming with potential conflict and if regulation is the fundamental means of dealing with it, there will be such a glut of laws, directives, guidelines, and assessments that the nation will tie itself in knots trying to wend its way through them all — to say nothing of the morass of litigation that would accompany them.

It will be far preferable to establish common goals, common attitudes, a common understanding. In other words, far better to emphasize harmony through education by identifying the economic advantages of sustainability and the benefits of a less destructive existence.

Finally, the main measure of economic progress over the past two centuries has been the measurement of quantity of which gross domestic product is now the prime example. The main measure of progress in the ecological revolution will be much more difficult to quantify; it will be the ability of the economy to sustain the quality of life in all its forms.



The National Round Table was created in 1988. If institutions are organs within the body politic, then it is the interstitial spaces that are the focus of the round table movement. Those are the spaces across which lie the connections, so often constricted, to and from the institutions. It is because connections are constricted that the body politic has reacted sluggishly over the past thirty years to ecological warnings. The task of the round tables is to help strengthen the connections, to help vitalize the body, because it will need to improve its reflexes significantly if it is to cope at all well with the ecological revolution.

The techniques used by the National Round Table are straightforward: to draw its membership from across the full spectrum of Canadian life so that it can bring diversity, horizontal relationships, and wide-ranging expertise to any issue and to any relationship; to act as a catalyst and co-ordinator among people and institutions for those very same reasons, but also to encourage commitment to sustainable development, empowerment among those anxious to participate, and decentralization of decision making; and to conduct its operations by consensus so as to enlist support, foster co-operation and promote harmony.

Its members include corporate executives, community activists, federal and provincial government ministers, scientists, labour leaders, economists, private environmentalists, academics, the former secretary general of the Brundtland commission, farm and fisheries representatives, and aboriginal peoples.

In the past year it has participated in studies covering a broad range of issues; launched two very large education programs, one aimed at formal and the other at informal education; co-operated in what can broadly be described as forums for learning through workshops, conferences internships and training programs; organized dialogues among interested parties in forestry and tourism; capped two years of debate and analysis with a report to the Prime Minister recommending positions for Canada to take at the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development held in June at Rio de Janeiro; engaged with others in publishing a variety of handbooks and reports; and developed a strategic plan, an integral part of which involved what has been called a "roundtabling exercise," a series of regional consultations across Canada that invited broad and diverse groups of people to discuss what should be the direction and priorities of the National Round Table.

Above all it was a year that emphasized that people everywhere in Canada are eager to participate in furthering sustainable development. And that they are knowledgeable about the challenges we face. All they need is direction and opportunity.





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s t r a t e g i c i m p e r a t i v e s

As a first step after its inception, the National Round Table set objectives which would promote sustainable development. It declared that fundamental to them is an awareness that: "The natural world and its component life forms and the ability of that world to regenerate itself through its own evolution has basic value. Within and among human societies, fairness, equality, diversity, and self-reliance are pervasive characteristics of development that is sustainable."

THE OBJECTIVES ARE TO ESTABLISH:

• *Stewardship*

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

• *Shared Responsibility*

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

• *Prevention and Resilience*

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

• *Conservation*

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

• *Energy and Resource Management*

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

• *Waste Management*

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

• *Rehabilitation and Reclamation*

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

• *Scientific and Technological Innovation*

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

• *International Responsibility*

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

• *Global Development Consistent With All Other Objectives*

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



Last year, following a series of "round-tableing" consultations across Canada, the National Round Table adopted the following strategic imperatives as priorities for guiding its activities:

1. *Acknowledging the need for growth sufficient to meet human needs and aspirations,*
but also:
2. *Rapidly reducing the energy and resource content of growth;*
3. *Increasing equity within nations and between developed and developing nations;*
4. *Reducing high rates of population growth;*
5. *Reducing certain forms of consumption;*
6. *Conserving and enhancing the resource base;*
7. *Establishing more open information systems;*
8. *Encouraging high rates of investment to restore capital which has been lost;*
9. *Changing institutions in ways that will ensure environmental and economic issues are integrated during decision making.*

The National Round Table also identified the kinds of activities that it will undertake.

It will focus on:

- *tools for measuring and promoting sustainable development;*
- *sectoral issues; and*
- *cross-sectoral issues.*

Under "Tools" it will concentrate on four areas:

- *accountability;*
- *indicators of sustainable development;*
- *economic incentives; and*
- *consensus decision making.*

Under "Sectoral Issues" it considers energy and resource management to be most critical for Canada and consequently it will deal with:

- *sustainable forests;*
- *sustainable energy use;*
- *sustainable agriculture;*
- *fresh water.*

Under "Cross-sectoral Issues" it adopts an ecosystemic approach to planning by concentrating on subjects that pass, as a common thread, through various sectors. For instance biodiversity, global warming, poverty, and acid rain are cross-sectoral issues. And so were the three issues on which the National Round Table focused its advice to the Prime Minister concerning Canada's position at the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro because each was common to the majority of the agenda items placed before the conference.

Through its first two-and-a-half years, the National Round Table maintained committees which were responsible for developing initiatives, presenting them to Plenary for approval, and then implementing them. Last year the National Round Table changed the system. Now the Plenary develops initiatives and assigns them to a task force for implementation. Currently there are task forces on Consensus Decision Making, Economic Instruments, Sustainability and Prosperity, Biodiversity, and Education. In addition, there are a number of initiatives undertaken jointly with other organizations..



i n i t i a t i v e s

The National Round Table has declared that it will be an agent of change for sustainable development — by being a catalyst, partner, advisor, promoter, interpreter, contributor, researcher, and clearinghouse for information. In short, by being and doing everything it can as a multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional, and multi-interest body that has but one mandate: to reconcile divergent interests to the primacy of sustainable development. To that end it engaged in the following initiatives last year.

REPORTING TO THE PRIME MINISTER

The National Round Table presented to the Prime Minister a "Memorandum of Advice" on what Canada's role could be at the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. The NRT's Task Force on Foreign Policy commissioned several research papers and dedicated almost two years of its thinking to developing the memorandum which was based on the premise that, "Progress toward sustainable development is truly meaningful only if it is conceived and practised on a global scale."

Recommendations centred on only three issues - namely reform of international institutions, technological co-operation, and financial resources - because they were the ones upon which the success of all agenda items depended and because "Significant progress on these issues would facilitate agreements in other areas and would create durable infrastructure, relationships and resources for the long

term." It offered a number of suggestions which, if implemented, would:

- improve the ability of international institutions to integrate ecological issues with political, social, and economic issues;
- provide new approaches to technological co-operation between the industrialized and the less developed nations; and
- for the foreseeable future place the direct cost of progress on a global scale upon the industrialized nations and commit Canada to a leadership role in mobilizing financial resources to achieve sustainable development at home and abroad.

The Prime Minister responded by letter saying, "...it is clear that the Round Table has produced a high calibre and thought-provoking set of recommendations. They will be of tremendous assistance...."





**“PROPER INCENTIVES WILL ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY
THAT IS CLEAN, EFFICIENT, AND COMPETITIVE AND
AT THE SAME TIME WILL ENCOURAGE INNOVATION AND
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT,
AND IMPROVE CANADA’S OVERALL COMPETITIVE POSITION.”**

COLLABORATING IN SECTOR DIALOGUES

Forest Round Table

The National Round Table acted as a catalyst to establish a forest round table with the broadest collection of interests ever assembled. There are three objectives: to develop a vision and principles for sustainable development in Canada's forests; to have each participant develop an action plan for its contribution to sustainable development; and to make recommendations to governments and other jurisdictions. There are 25 participants including representatives from industry, unions, the Aboriginal Forestry Association, the NRT, and the Sierra Club. So far there is agreement on 26 principles and some participants have developed individual plans or codes of practice.

Tourism Round Table

The Tourism Industry Association of Canada agreed to take a lead role with the National Round Table in setting up a dialogue on sustainable development in the sector and, together with the Round Tables of P.E.I. and Saskatchewan, formed a Steering Committee to inaugurate the first meeting of 21 Stakeholders in Halifax in early 1991, including groups such as provincial ministries, the Canadian Automobile Association, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, a representative of First Nations groups, Heritage Canada and the Canadian Parks Service. As part of phase one, the goal of the group was to hammer out a set of *guidelines and codes of practice* for sustainable development which could be adopted by all Stakeholders in the Tourism sector.

In a report prepared by Lou D'Amour, retained to co-ordinate the Dialogue, these Principles and Practices were initially applied to specific sectors within the Tourism industry such as: Accommodation, Foodservice, Tour Operators and Ministries of Tourism. These Codes and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism were enthusiastically accepted at the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Annual meeting in February, 1992.

With Provincial Round Tables in Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, and Alberta endorsing this initiative, discussions are now underway to implement the Codes and Guidelines as Phase II of this Dialogue process. It is hoped that Phase II will be funded in part by the Environmental Partnership Fund under the Green Plan, for which a proposal is currently being prepared.



PROMOTING EDUCATION

Integrating Sustainable Development into Formal Education

Sustainable development applies to all disciplines and should be taught in elementary and secondary schools not as a separate field of study but as part of most academic subjects. At the instigation of the National Round Table a Sustainable Development Education Program was launched to develop programs for educators and student teachers, and to evolve guidelines for integrating sustainable development concepts and principles into curricula. A board of 23 directors was established, funds were raised, the program was affiliated with the Conference Board of Canada for managerial and administrative purposes, an executive director was hired, the philosophy of the program was defined, a plan of action was developed, and consultation and research is underway.

Educating the General Public about Sustainable Development

As a result of a collaborative effort among the National Round Table, ParticipACTION, and the Department of the Environment, the development of a social marketing strategy was proposed that aims at fostering responsible citizenship as a means of furthering sustainable development. The proposal is a direct response to recommendations of the Brundtland Commission and Canada's National Task Force on the Environment and the Economy, and to the newly revised World Conservation Strategy. They call for expansive campaigns of public education, debate, and public participation. The proposal recommends 20 different

initiatives to solicit individual and community involvement and, at the same time, to reinforce existing programs and initiatives across Canada. ParticipACTION would carry responsibility for implementation. The program would include year-round public service messages, television programs, educational and motivational materials for community leaders, multi-stakeholder coalitions, and community participatory events. Through its Education Task Force, the NRT is seeking to involve provincial and territorial round table colleagues.

Soliciting Advice

The National Round Table's Task Force on Education solicited advice on what it should be doing by inviting interested parties to present their views at hearings in Winnipeg and Ottawa. Twenty-six participants who were predominantly educators and environmentalists accepted the invitation in addition to representatives from the Sustainable Development Education Program, the Canadian Council of Ministers, and provincial round tables in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland. Their advice was extremely helpful to the task force as it prepared its action plan.

The Shad Valley Sustainable Development Educational Module

The Shad Valley Program at the University of British Columbia is a summer course in technology and entrepreneurship for interested senior high school students. The National Round Table introduced into the program a sustainable development module that offers critical analysis of scientific and technological practices. The goal is twofold: to encourage students to practise a more sustainable entrepreneurship in science, technology, and commerce; and to develop a working model for teaching sustainable development that can be useful to other educational programs.



DEVELOPING TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The decision was taken to publish a book on tools for sustainability which will be an introduction to techniques for implementing sustainable development. It will concentrate on the four focal areas for the tools established under the National Round Table's strategic imperatives, namely: accountability, consensus decision making, economic instruments, and indicators of sustainable development. To develop its thinking and to prepare material, the National Round Table undertook the following initiatives.

Consensus Decision Making

As a preparatory step, the National Round Table conducted several project planning and skill developing workshops. It then established a task force whose primary objective is to promote sustainable development through the use of consensus decision making (CDM) in Canada. To achieve this, the Task Force is bringing together all Round Tables in Canada to collectively develop a practical and concise handbook that will outline principles, criteria and guidelines. A second initiative of the Task Force is the development of a larger book which will describe theories and practical applications in greater detail. The Task Force will also contribute a chapter on CDM to the book on tools for sustainability.

Economic Instruments

The National Round Table is convinced that proper incentives will encourage economic activity that is clean, efficient, and competitive and at the same time will encourage innovation and product development, promote sustainable development, and improve Canada's overall competitive position. In preparing its recommendations, it will focus on air, water, and earth.

Air

The NRT began work with a coalition of partners from industry, government, and the environmental movement and is concentrating on climate change, acid rain, urban smog, and stratospheric ozone. In addition to recommendations, the coalition will produce a report to Canadians.

Water

The NRT began negotiations with prospective partners to establish a coalition that will examine the impact of full cost accounting and pricing of water use, cost effective technological innovation, and business opportunities.

Earth

Exploration of options began with the focus on rural renewal, sustainable agriculture, ecological integrity in rural landscapes, and biological diversity. An inventory paper will be prepared on the issues and on the economic instruments that could be used.

Indicators of Sustainable Development

The objective of the National Round Table is to develop a framework within which social health, and economic indicators can best be integrated to measure progress toward sustainable development. To this end it commissioned background papers, conducted a workshop, and published a report discussing performance indicators concerning the production and use of energy. Investigation is continuing.

Accountability

The National Round Table will bring forward suggestions for a renewed framework of decision making in the public sector that will hold decision makers more closely to account for the impact of their decisions on the environment.





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IF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS ACHIEVED, IT COULD PRESENT THE MOST
MAGNIFICENT OPPORTUNITY HUMANKIND HAS EVER HAD.”

PARTICIPATING IN STUDIES AND REPORTS

The Canadian Wetlands Conservation Task Force

In 1990 the National Round Table and other participants convened the Sustaining Wetland Forum which produced a report often described as a comprehensive background for sustaining wetlands. More than 6,000 copies of the report were distributed. Since then, the Canadian Wetlands Conservation Task Force has monitored implementation of the report's 73 recommendations, reviewed action on wetlands conservation, provided advice concerning the report, and is preparing additional reports recommending follow-up actions. Participants in the Task Force are the National Round Table, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, the Canadian Wildlife Service, the Canadian Institute of Planners, Ducks Unlimited, and Wildlife Habitat Canada.

Task Force on Biodiversity

A task force on biodiversity was established and charged with two responsibilities: the first is to maintain an overarching capacity to address biodiversity issues in any of the other initiatives undertaken by the National Round Table; the second is to examine the work being done by other agencies, and the inventory of information that already exists, to determine whether there is a unique role for the National Round Table to play that will further the cause of biodiversity in Canada.

Waste Management Report

A study on the "Impacts on Waste Management Practices of Federal Policies, Programs, and Legislation" was undertaken, and has been referred to Environment Canada for consideration and implementation.

Rural Renewal

The National Round Table is examining opportunities and barriers to an economic and ecological renewal in rural Canada. The intention is to assemble information from which recommendations for further action can be developed. The National Round Table sees an intriguing potential for linking sustainable agriculture, sustainable communities, landscape ecology, and biodiversity into a gradual revitalization of rural Canada. The examination was precipitated by the growing urgency for alternative economic development in rural areas, a strong sense of resource and landscape stewardship among producers, pending international trade agreements, and an accelerating concern for the competitiveness of the agri-food sector.

Office of the Auditor General of Canada: Joint Study

After the National Round Table initiated formal discussions with representatives of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada, a principal from that office was seconded to the National Round Table to assist in the drafting of an issue paper on accountability and reporting on sustainable development in the public service.



Sustainability and Prosperity

In November the National Round Table and the Institute for Research on Public Policy established a Senior Advisory Committee to oversee research on links between sustainable development, competitiveness, and human well-being; and to generate a deeper awareness of sustainable development as a contributor to Canadian competitiveness in the global marketplace and in the overall quality of life. This initiative will culminate in a symposium in the Fall of 1992 on the theme "Sustainability: the Key to Competitiveness in the 21st Century". In preparation are the following:

A Report on Sustainability and the Financial Services Industry

The report will identify the information required by industry to assist in the management of risk. It will recommend guidelines for management to improve its assessment of risk.

A Report on Lender Liability

Current uncertainty over the potential liability of investors and lenders makes it difficult for some worthwhile projects to attract capital. Consequently the report will examine liability in the context of contaminated sites and, through a multi-stakeholder task force, recommend measures to improve the investment and competitive climate.

An Examination of Environmental Regulation and Competitiveness

A study group drawn from diverse interests was formed to examine recent assertions that environmental regulations can create competitive advantage. The group is focusing on the pulp and paper industry in an effort to gain a better understanding of the relationship between environmental protection and competitiveness. It will conduct case studies of the industry in the United States, Finland, Sweden, Japan, and Canada.

A Paper on Economic Instruments

The paper will outline specific competitive situations where effective economic instruments will promote sustainability and efficiency.

A Study on Infrastructure, Sustainability, and Prosperity

The primary purpose of the study is to identify key issues and tensions that permeate infrastructure planning so that they can be addressed in the search for an economically prosperous and sustainable society.

A Report on Government Incentives and Sustainable Development

The report will highlight the relationships between Government incentives and sustainable development. Agriculture, which is widely perceived as a sector where incentives impede progress toward sustainable economic practices, serves as a case study.

A Report on Jobs, Training, and Sustainable Development

The report will explore the links among jobs, sustainability, and competitiveness and the issues which stem from these interrelationships.

A Report on Environmental Industries

In order to emphasize business opportunities for enterprises involved in end-of-pipe abatement equipment and the design of new processes and technologies for environmental protection, the report provides an overview of trends emerging in the environmental industry in Canada. The report offers a discussion of Canada's role as a potential competitor in the environmental industry with a view to enhancing how it may achieve these goals.

A Report on Sustainable Development, Trade, and Competitiveness

The report will examine the impact on competitiveness of lower environmental standards in other jurisdictions. Concern over this issue has heightened as a result of negotiations for a North American Free Trade Agreement.

An Examination of Environmental Assessment and Competitiveness

An examination of the proliferation of environmental assessment processes in Canada is being conducted to determine their impact on Canada's international competitiveness. One objective is to identify opportunities for rationalization and jurisdictional harmonization. Included in the examination will be a review of such processes in other countries.



CREATING FORUMS FOR LEARNING

Workshops for Small and Medium-sized Businesses

The National Round Table and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce undertook to sponsor environmental management workshops for small and medium-sized business operators. Learning and teaching materials were developed and four pilot workshops were held. In the forthcoming year five to ten workshops will be offered. The existence of about 900,000 small businesses in Canada underlines the importance of this initiative.

Canadian Centre for Management Development

At the invitation of the Canadian Centre for Management Development, a National Round Table representative sits as a member of the centre's advisory committee that deals with retraining programs in the area of sustainable development. The centre is the federal organization responsible for training senior civil service managers up to the level of deputy minister.

Department of Industry, Science and Technology

At the request of the Department of Industry, Science and Technology, the National Round Table is helping to design a training program that will sensitize the department's 700 commerce officers to environmental management issues. An NRT representative also sits as an advisor on the department's steering committee on environmental protection. The committee offers guidance for implementing the memorandum of understanding between Industry, Science and Technology and the federal Department of the Environment.

Conference on Trade, Environment, and Competitiveness

In partnership with Environment Canada, the Department of Industry, Science and Technology, and the International Institute for Sustainable Development, the National Round Table held a conference on "Trade, the Environment and Competitiveness". Discussion centred on the links between trade and ecology and the incorporation of ecological concerns into such trade-governing associations as the the European Community, the OECD, GATT, and free trade between Canada and the United States and possibly with Mexico. It also considered the influence on producers of rising ecological consciousness among purchasers. A book about the conference will be published with an update of the situation as it currently stands.

Sustainable Development Awards at the Canada-Wide Science Fair

The Youth Science Foundation and the National Round Table sponsored five awards worth a total of \$2,500 at the Canada-Wide Science Fair. The awards are for the projects that best exemplify sustainable development practices. Last year the awards winners were:

1. **Sandy Geddes**
Booth Memorial Junior Secondary (B.C.)
2. **Anthony Howe**
Sea View Junior Secondary (B.C.)
3. **Laura Ralph**
James A. Magee Community School (Ont.)
4. **Erika Manders**
North Island Secondary School (B.C.)
5. **Mark Kirchof**
Barrie Central Collegiate (Ont.)

Canadian Association of Round Tables

CARTS is an affiliation of Round Table Secretariats with representation from the National, Provincial, and Territorial Round Tables. CARTS holds a formal meeting each year to discuss trends in sustainable development. The 1991 CARTS meeting was held in November in Vancouver, British Columbia. Among the sessions were workshops on Economic Instruments and Sustainable Communities. There was also a special session on UNCED which resulted in a joint communique being drafted and passed on to the Prime Minister.

Additional meetings are held throughout the year to allow Round Tables to keep abreast of each others work.





“...A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROGRAM WAS LAUNCHED TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENT TEACHERS, AND TO EVOLVE GUIDELINES FOR INTEGRATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES INTO CURRICULA.”

PUBLISHING BOOKS, GUIDES, NEWSLETTERS, AND VIDEOS

Sustainable Development Series

The NRT's Communications Department published 10,000 boxed sets of five handbooks on sustainable development and distributed them to a targeted audience. Each set contained:

The National Waste Reduction Handbook - which identifies new waste management strategies for Canadian municipalities. It was sponsored by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and Browning-Ferris Industries Ltd.

Discussions on Decision Making Practices for Sustainable Development - which is a practical guide illustrating approaches to difficult environmental decisions affecting companies, unions, governments, non-governmental organizations, and professional organizations. It was sponsored by Procter & Gamble Inc. and includes material donated by the Manitoba Round Table and the British Columbia Round Table.

Sustainable Development: A Manager's Handbook - which is designed to assist managers in grading the performance of their organizations in relation to sustainable development, and to guide them in undertaking a "do-it-yourself" environmental audit. It was sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada.

On the Road to Brazil: The Earth Summit - which assists Canadians in understanding the issues before the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro. It is a collection of papers on the summit produced by the United Nations Association in Canada combined with edited versions of two research papers commissioned by the NRT to assist it in developing recommendations for the Prime Minister.

Preserving Our World: A Consumer's Guide to the Brundtland Report - which is aimed at helping Canadians understand the nature of sustainable development. It is a republication of Warner Troyer's handbook which first appeared in 1990 and was included in the boxed set with sponsorship from Canadian Pacific Hotels and Resorts.

Resource Book for Municipal and Local Governments

In partnership with author Mark Roseland, the National Round Table published "Towards Sustainable Communities: A Resource Book for Municipal and Local Governments" which will be distributed across Canada in August 1992. It will have a strong focus on tools to address such issues as atmospheric change, air quality, the greening of cities, procurement policies, and community development.



*Trade, Environment and Competitiveness:
Sustaining Canada's Prosperity*

This book, edited by John Kirton and Sarah Richardson, provides a timely overview of the issues and perspectives involved in pursuing trade agreements that respect the precepts of sustainable development. This volume, due to be released in the fall, is based on the edited version of twenty-one major presentations made at the Toronto Conference on "Trade, Competitiveness, and the Environment" (November 4, 1991) hosted by the National Round Table Foreign Policy Committee. This conference brought together the leading Canadian and International stakeholders from the government, business, environmental, and academic communities to exchange views on the multifaceted linkages between trade and the environment.

*A Book for Labour on Sustainable
Development*

With the assistance of the Canadian Labour Congress as a co-sponsor, the National Round Table neared completion of a book designed to help workers better understand the issues surrounding sustainable development, especially as they apply in the workplace.

*Educational Kit: Model Round Table for
Youth*

The National Round Table published a kit that shows young people how to simulate a round table using a local ecological issue and adopting the roles of interested parties such as company officials, unionists, ecologists, government officials, and citizen advocates. The kit can be used by teachers in classrooms or by young people in clubs or informal groups. It can engage participants in communication and negotiation skills not necessarily taught in formal education systems — such as debate, consensus decision making, and conflict resolution.

*Youth Action Guide for Sustainable
Development*

The National Round Table is preparing for publication a "Youth Action Guide for Sustainable Development" to provide young people with a simple straightforward overview of global issues and their interdependence. The guide will examine the issues and suggest possible approaches and solutions aimed at achieving sustainability. It will offer widely diverse views of youths from around the world and will be a followup to the AIESEC Global Seminar Series and World Theme Conference (AIESEC - Association internationale des étudiants en sciences, économiques et commerciales)

Quarterly Newsletter

The National Round Table Review, a national newsletter that ran to 28 pages in its Spring issue, is published quarterly and distributed free of charge to more than 12,000 businesses, environmental groups, academic institutions, government agencies, municipalities, media, provincial and municipal round tables, and individuals. Its purpose is to provide a national audience with news and analysis concerning sustainable development.

Music Video

In its continuing effort to promote awareness of sustainable development among Canadian youth, the National Round Table is preparing a music video for release in the fall of 1992 featuring Juno Award winner the Infidels and other special guests performing lyrics and music specially commissioned by the NRT to highlight pressing ecological concerns.

Animated, Interactive Computer Diskette

The National Round Table produced a computer diskette that uses a combination of graphics and text to help explain the round table process. The interactive features allow a viewer to choose what to see and what questions to have answered.

Public Service Announcements

Throughout the year four, 30-second messages about sustainable development were aired in both English and French over Radio Québec, CFCF 12 Montréal, TVA Rivière-du-loup, NTV Newfoundland, and STV in both Regina and Saskatoon.



THE FOREST SECTOR DIALOGUE:

No one thought we'd get that far

Forestry is the biggest industry in Canada but it is also the largest battlefield. So when John Houghton began calling around to invite stakeholders to participate in a Forest Round Table on Sustainable Development the response was wary. People would give it a try — hell, relations between the industry and environmentalists were at such an impasse they'd give almost anything a try — but few held out much hope.

The Canadian Pulp and Paper Association agreed to send a representative. So did the Sierra Club of Canada, the Paperworkers Union and the IWA Canada, forest industry associations, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, the National ABORIGINAL FORESTRY Association, the Task Force on Churches and Corporate Responsibility, the Canadian Forestry Association, the Fur Institute of Canada, Wildlife Habitat Canada, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness

Society, and various other environmental groups, companies, and associations. There were twenty-five in all and they posed as great a challenge to operating by consensus as anyone might conceive.

Yet, a year and six meetings later, the Forest Round Table has agreed to twenty-six "Principles for Sustainable Development"; participants are completing individual action plans to implement those principles; and a seventh meeting has been scheduled to discuss harvesting practices and clearcutting. Most significantly of all, it has developed a remarkable esprit de corps.

"I got a lot of pride out of all this," says Houghton and that feeling seems to be widespread.

Houghton is chairman of Quebec and Ontario Paper

Company Ltd., the past president of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, and a member of the National Round Table.

He is himself is an example of what the National Round Table is trying to achieve as it seeks to overcome institutional barriers to sustainable development - as he is the first to admit during a conversation in his St. Catharines office

"I HAVE A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE OF CANADA'S FORESTS THAN I HAD BEFORE."

He has changed both "professionally and personally," he says.

Like many executives in the forestry industry, Houghton





area while the chief executive for management, whose primary responsibility is to keep the company solvent and competitive, is focusing fiercely on achieving maximum cost efficiency in unit operations."

"When I joined the National Round Table a year and a half ago I began being exposed to a whole new set of values," Houghton says. "Whether or not I agreed with them, I had to accept that they were real." And after a year on the Forest Round Table "I have a different perspective of Canada's forests than I had before."

He also sees that participants with non-business backgrounds on the Forest 'Round Table "are coming to accept that there is an 'economic side" to Canada's forests that is desperately important to the country and extremely difficult to balance in the face of global competition.

"I'm sure that's true," says Elizabeth May, national representative of the Sierra Club of Canada and the person who is credited with almost single handedly stopping the spraying of pesticides in Nova Scotia. "We were aware of the economic side before," she says, "but the sustained interaction with industry representatives has helped develop a broader appreciation of economic intricacies".

"It used to be," says Houghton, "that we'd look at timber and our only thought was how would we get that tree from the forest to the mill as efficiently as possible." Now he says we're concerned to a much greater extent than ever before with protecting topsoil and the various species that grow in an area, guarding against runoff and erosion, ensuring regeneration, maintaining wildlife, and considering recreational and aesthetic issues.

**"...WE'RE CONCERNED
TO A MUCH GREATER EXTENT
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PROTECTING TOPSOIL AND
THE VARIOUS SPECIES THAT
GROW IN AN AREA...."**

He calls these "values" and as he talks it becomes apparent that they are more than professional considerations. They've also become increasingly central to his personal life - "partly," he says, "because I've learned a lot and partly because I've discovered these values have more importance than I've been willing to give them before." Houghton asked only one thing of the people he invited to join the Forest Round Table. They had to accept that there was a relationship between the economy and the environment.

worked his way up through small company towns where he says there were few community 'challenges to his convictions. If you consider one large pulp and paper company - the fifth largest in Canada - as an institution in microcosm, then it is apparent how, in at least one way, institutions can become resistant to outside influence. People who followed the route that he did could be somewhat removed from the firing line of

public opinion and could develop an instinctive reaction to criticism that depicted outside critics as ill informed. "They just don't understand," was the standard reaction, Houghton says.

"By the same token", he adds, "environmentalists often don't appreciate the discomfort (to put it mildly) of sitting at a boardroom table trying to justify the extra expense of diverting a logging road around a sensitive





If Hinton provided the glue, the next meeting did the bonding. It took place in the towering old growth forest of the Carmanah Valley on the west coast of Vancouver Island. It was very emotional for everyone, says Houghton. Mutual respect had been growing; as had individual credibility. Carmanah supplied inspiration. Now people were finding themselves committed to succeeding - and they did.

By the time they completed their sixth meeting in Timmins, Ontario, they had their twenty-six principles. "They discovered that they could agree on seventy-five to eighty per cent of the things where they thought they'd never get agreement," Houghton says. "The other twenty-five per cent they may never agree on. But the fact that they could agree on so much so readily made them realize that when it came down to deciding, they had come to positions they didn't know they had arrived at and hadn't even recognized."

"It was a bonding experience," says May, "and we ended up with a good set of principles. No one thought we'd get that far. It's been one, of the best multi-stakeholder experiences I've ever had."

Claire Dansereau, forest and environment planner for the IWA, has a similar assessment. "We started off being very general and (became) very specific and hard-nosed, and

One of the first things the group did was form a steering committee and one of the first things the committee did was invite Professor Hamish Kimmins, of the Department of Forest Ecology at the University of British Columbia, to act as moderator for meetings.

The first meeting was held in June 1991 and its main achievement, according to Houghton, is that "it didn't blow up." Instead of immediately confronting tough issues such as clearcutting, pesticide use, and biodiversity, participants decided to try and establish a set of principles to guide their actions.

It was the third meeting at Hinton, Alberta, about 30

Company, and 'the discussion led to a knock-down drag-out fight on herbicides, probably the best exchange of views on that subject that I have seen. Everyone took off their gloves. Everyone took turns talking and everyone took turns listening. No one moved for an hour, right there in the woods, just bearing down on that subject. But at the end of this discussion you could see both sides budging just a little bit. I

decided to stick with the group after that."

"I think that was the meeting that furnished the glue that brought the group together," says Houghton.

kilometres from the entrance to Jasper National Park that the group began to click. "We were in the woods," says Joe O'Neill, vice-president of woodlands for the Miramichi Pulp and Paper

"EVERYONE TOOK OFF THEIR GLOVES. EVERYONE TOOK TURNS TALKING AND EVERYONE TOOK TURNS LISTENING. NO ONE MOVED FOR AN HOUR..."



that was a result of the trust developed in the room. I spent a lot of time wondering why that trust was there, and it's real trust, it's not, put on for the time we are together. I think that where the trust came from was the fact that we had to have an Action Plan. Action plans allowed the process to focus and become effective much more quickly."

pants asked for comment from a member of the National Round Table secretariat who was serving as staff to the Forest Round Table.

"You are the actors," he said. "No matter to whom you make your recommendations, you are the ones who'll have to implement them. You are it."

As well as preparing recommendations, they decided to hold a seventh meeting in the fall of 1992 at Miramichi, New Brunswick, and to take on a heavy issue - clearcutting. This will be where, as Houghton likes to say, the rubber will hit the road. The object, he says, will not be to declare

clearcutting either good or bad. it will be to try and establish a process by which decisions can be made on how to log a site.

"In some cases clearcutting will be okay. In some cases it won't be. HOW do you rate things, including aesthetics and all the other values I've been talking about, to make sure you're making the right decision?"

He won't comment on their chances of success. But he will say that the process so far "reinforces my belief that if you get honest and dedicated people together, you can make things happen."

As for the forest Round Table, "There may be other ways of getting agreement. But this is sure proving to be a good way. You can reach consensus. It's a compromise, but it's a helluva lot better than where we started from. And for a company it's much more efficient than a confrontational approach."

"...WE ALL NOW KNOW THAT WE HAD SOMETHING TO LEARN. MOST PEOPLE HAVE REALIZED THAT YOU HAVE TO LEARN TO LISTEN, BUT NOW WE HAVE TO LEARN TO LEARN AS WELL."

"(We all) went to the table thinking that we had something to teach. I think we all now know that we had something to learn. Most people have realized that you have to learn to listen, but now we have to learn to learn as well. We can't just hope to change people's minds. We have to allow our minds to be changed by the process we're in,"

But Timmins wasn't the end of the road. The question facing everyone was, "What's next?" The suggestion was made that they should compile recommendations and one of the partici-

MEMBERSHIP IN THE FOREST ROUND TABLE

Moderator, Hamish Kimmins

Canadian Federation of Professional Forestry Associations,* Chris Lee

Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners, Peter DeMarsh

Canadian Forestry Association, Glen Blouin

Canadian Nature Federation, Paul Griss

Canadian paperworkers Union, Keith Newman

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society/Diana Keith

Canadian Pulp and Paper Association,+ David Barron

Canadian Silverculture Association, Dirk Brinkman

Canadian Wildlife Federation, Gary Blundell

Canadian Wildlife Service, Gerry Lee

Council of Forest Industries of British Columbia, Tony Shebbeare

Forest Caucus Canadian Environmental Network, Lois Corbett

Forest Products Branch, ISTC, Bruce Gouriy

Forestry Canada,* Tom Lee

Fur Institute of Canada, Gerry Wilde

IWA Canada*Claire, Dansereau

Miramichi Pulp and Paper Inc., Joe O'Neil

National Aboriginal Forestry Association, Harry Bombay

Ontario Forest Industries Association, Marie Rauter

Sierra Club of Canada, Elizabeth May

Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility, Peter Chapman

University Forestry Schools, Rod Carrow

Weldwood of Canada Ltd., Don Laishley

Wildlife Habitat Canada,* David Neave

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy,* John Houghton

NRTEE Secretariat, Steve Thompson

A Steering Committee (*) was drawn from leaders of stakeholder groups listed above, and the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy.



PARTICIPANTS

Many Volunteers Contribute to our Efforts

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All Provincial and Territorial Round Tables
Provincial and Territorial Governments
Alberta Environmental Law Centre
Alberta Tourism
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
Banff Centre for Management
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Browning-Ferris Industries Ltd.
Canada Trust
Canadian Bankers Association
Canadian Center for Management Development
Canadian Chamber of Commerce
Canadian Council of Ministers on the Environment (CCME)
Canadian Ecology Advocates
Canadian Employment and Immigration Advisory Council
Canadian Energy Research Institute
Canadian Environmental Network
Canadian Federation of Agriculture
Canadian Institute of Planners
Canadian Labour Congress
Canadian Nature Federation
Canadian Pacific Hotels and Resorts
Canadian Petroleum Association (CPA)
Canadian Petroleum Products Institute
Canadian Pulp and Paper Association
Canadian Wildlife Service
Center for International Studies, Univ. of Toronto
Coitron • Temple Design
Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources
Department of Industry, Science and Technology
Ducks Unlimited Canada
École Nationale d'Administration Publique (ENAP)
Energy Probe
Environment Canada
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Environmental Resource Centre
Ernst & Young
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Forintek Canada Corp.
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Ontario Energy/ Environment Caucus
Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation
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University of B.C. - Faculty of Law
University of Washington (Gerry Cormick)
University of Waterloo, Sustainable Society Project
University of Western Ontario
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Western Economic Diversification
Western Environmental & Social Trends (WEST)
Wildlife Habitat Canada
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World Wildlife Fund, Canada
York International, York University
Yukon Tourism

NRT RESOURCE PEOPLE

Brian Kohler,
Health, Safety and Industrial Relations Training Fund

Dr. Eva Rosinger,
Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME)

Toby Price, *Environment Canada*

Len Good, *Environment Canada*

Bob Sapuck,
Manitoba Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

Charles Hayles, *Pat Delbridge Associates Inc.*

Barry Bowater, *Energy, Mines and Resources*

Peter Fisher, *Energy, Mines and Resources*

Kathleen Pomeroy, *Pomeroy & Neil Consulting Inc.*

Paul Griss, *Canadian Nature Federation*

Mike Robinson, *University of Calgary*

François Bregha,
The Rawson Academy of Aquatic Sciences

Annick Boisset, *McGill University*

André Beauvieu, *McGill University*

Dr. John G. Drake, *McMaster University*

Brian Kelly, *Northern Telecom Inc.*

George Lafond

Sharon Andrews, *Finance Canada*

Ron Edwards, *Finance Canada*

John E. Cox, *John E. Cox Associates*

Cameron Smith

Mark Wedge, *Yukon Indian Development Corporation*

Jim Ramsay, *Industry, Science and Technology*

Michael Jenkins, *Industry, Science and Technology*

Dr. John S. MacDonald, *MacDonald & Dettwiler*

John Kirton, *Trinity University*

André Saumier, *Saumier Frères Conseil*

Tim Egan

W.C. (Charlie) Ferguson, *Inco Limited*

D'Arcy Delamere, *Royal Bank of Canada*

Jeff Gibbs, *Environmental Youth Alliance*

Bob Westbury, *TransAlta Utilities*

Norman Lockington, *Dofasco Inc.*

Fraser Wilson, *Ernst and Young Consulting*

Jane Hawkrigg, *Jane Hawkrigg Enterprises Ltd.*

David Baker, *Privy Council Office*

Summer students and part time staff

Dominica Babicki
Carla Doucet
Katherine Beavis
Chad Nelson
Edwin Smith
Allison Webb
Desiree McGraw

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NRTEE

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 Leone Pippard, *Member*
 Ann Dale, *Secretariat*
 Cameron Smith, *Resource Person/NRTEE*

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 Dr. David Suzuki
 Common Heritage Program

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Participants

Ontario Tax Commission
 Husky Oil
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 Industry, Science and Technology
 Pat Delbridge Associates Inc.
 Shell Canada Ltd.
 Ron Edwards (Environment, Energy and Resource Policy)
 Trans/Alta Utilities Corporation
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 Mike Kelly (Socio-Economic Impact)
 Sue Kirby (Climate Change Task Force)
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 Imperial Oil
 B.C. Dept. of Environment
 LaFarge Canada Inc.
 Petro-Canada
 Environmental Resource Centre
 Energy Mines and Resources

TRADE, ENVIRONMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS CONFERENCE

Speakers

Dr. John MacDonald
 Dr. George Connell
 Dr. Arthur Hanson
 Jim MacNeill
 Thomas d'Aquino
 David Estrin
 Adam Zimmerman
 Rosemarie Kuptana
 Michelle Swenarczuk
 Harry Rogers
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 Dr. Murray Smith
 Dr. Juanjai Ajanant
 Prof. Makitaro Hotta
 Alan Dean
 Candice Stevens
 Dr. Pirkka Sorsa
 Peter Manson
 Dr. Nurul Islam

INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS

Peter Jacobs
 Yvon Charbonneau
 Michel Desbiens
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 Michel Provost
 Jean Pasquero
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ronald L. Doering

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Denise Murphy

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Ann Dale

SENIOR SECRETARY

Hélène Massic

POLICY ADVISOR PUBLICATIONS/COMMUNICATIONS

Dan Donovan

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Sam McLean

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Patricia Larkin
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Mae Clifford

SECRETARIES

Julie Martinat
 Louise Coulombe
 Sara Shadforth

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*For additional information on
The National Round Table*

*Tel:(613)992-7189
Fax:(613)992-7385*

*The National Round Table Secretariat
is located at:
1 Nicolas Street,
Suite 1500
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 7B7*



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