

HJR

85

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HJR 85

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: Legislative Affairs Agency
 Title: Relating to the United Nations BRU: _____
Conference on Environment & Development Component: _____
 Sponsor: House Resources Committee
 Requestor: House Resources COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

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EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE						
FUND SOURCE:						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: Rep. Cliff Davidson, Chairman Phone: 465-2487
 Division: House Resources Date: April 23, 1992
 Approved by Commissioner: Rep. Cliff Davidson, Chairman
 Agency: _____ Date: April 23, 1992

Amendment offered to CSHJR 85(RES) workdraft 7-LS2286G:

Page 1, line14:

Insert the following two whereas clauses:

Whereas the Alaska State Legislature endorses the goals and objectives of the multinational agreement establishing an Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, which has been signed by the eight northern countries of United States, the Soviet Union, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland on June 14, 1991.

Whereas the Alaska State Legislature supports the cooperative effort between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation on bilateral environmental agreements with the two nations which border Alaska: Russia and Canada.

PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

NAME: HELEN NIENHUESER
TITLE:
ADDRESS: 2561 LOVEJOY DRIVE
CITY: ANCHORAGE, ALASKA ZIP: 99508
PHONE: 277-9330
BILL NO: ~~HJR 85~~
SUBJECT: ENDORSING U.N. EARTH SUMMIT
MESSAGE: PLEASE SUPPORT HJR 85 REGARDING THE U.N. CONFERENCE ON ENVIROMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT. IT IS CRITICAL THAT THE U.S. PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN
ADDRESSING SERIOUS GOBAL ENVIROMENTAL PROBLEMS AND BALANCE THE ENVIROMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT.
HTH

POMID: 03091450
DATE: 92/04/17
TIME: 09:14:50
LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES

CARNEY
FINKELSTEIN
HUDSON
IVAN
LEMAN
LINCOLN
MOYER
ZAWACKI

PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

NAME: RAY BURGER

TITLE:

ADDRESS: PO BOX 672349

CITY: ANCHORAGE

ZIP: 99567

PHONE: 762-2582

BILL NO: ~~HJR~~ 85

SUBJECT: ENDORSING U.N. EARTH SUMMIT

MESSAGE: THE EARTH SUMMIT REPRESENTS THE BEST CHANCE OF THIS CENTURY TO IMPACT GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN A COOPERATIVE ATMOSPHERE. HJR 85 IS THE MINIMUM OF SUPPORT THAT WE SHOULD BE OFFERING. /JSM

POMID: 03101939

DATE: 92/04/17

TIME: 10:19:39

LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

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IVAN

LEMAN

LINCOLN

MOYER

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PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

NAME: MARY MARTIN
TITLE:
ADDRESS: 3339 STARLITE CIRCLE
CITY: ANCHORAGE ZIP: 99517
PHONE: 269-3233
BILL NO: ~~MM 85~~
SUBJECT: ENDORSING U.N. EARTH SUMMIT
MESSAGE: I ASK FOR FULL SUPPORT FOR THE RESOLUTION FROM THE LEGISLATURE. /JSM

POMID: 03103243
DATE: 92/04/17
TIME: 10:32:43
LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

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PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

NAME: ROGER HUDSON
TITLE:
ADDRESS: 3339 STARLITE
CITY: ANCHORAGE ZIP: 99517
PHONE: 271-4131
BILL NO: HJR 85
SUBJECT: ENDORSING U.N. EARTH SUMMIT
MESSAGE: I STRONGLY SUPPORT PASSAGE OF HJR 85. /JSM

POMID: 03092034
DATE: 92/04/20
TIME: 09:20:34
LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES

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IVAN
LEMAN
LINCOLN
MOYER
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PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

NAME: JOYCE RIVERS

TITLE:

ADDRESS: 2741 WEST 42ND PLACE

CITY: ANCHORAGE

ZIP: 99517

PHONE: 248-2909

BILL NO: ~~HJR 85~~ 85

SUBJECT: ENDORSING U.N. EARTH SUMMIT

MESSAGE: I URGE YOU TO ENDORSE THE UNITED NATIONS UPCOMING CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AND URGE PRESIDENT BUSH TO ATTEND. THIS CONFERENCE WILL JOIN ALL NATIONS COMMITTED TO THE WELFARE OF OUR EARTH AND ITS PEOPLE. AS A WORLD LEADER THE U.S. MUST BE AMONG THEM. PLEASE PASS HJR 85. /JSM

POMID: 03111350

DATE: 92/04/20

TIME: 11:13:50

LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES

CARNEY
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HUDSON
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LINCOLN
MOYER
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PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

NAME: SANDY SPENCER, TREASURER
TITLE: UNA/USA
ADDRESS: 3403 COPE, NO A
CITY: ANCHORAGE ZIP: 99503
PHONE: 563-2221
BILL NO: HJR 85
SUBJECT: ENDORSING U.N. EARTH SUMMIT
MESSAGE: I URGE THE PASSAGE OF HJR 85. THIS RESOLUTION, UPON PASSAGE, IS TO BE
FORWARDED TO THE PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH WITH A STRONG EMPHASIS THAT HE ATTEND
THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, ALONG WITH OTHER
WORLD LEADERS. /JSM

POMID: 03113908
DATE: 92/04/20
TIME: 11:39:08
LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES REPRESENTATIVES SENATORS

BAKER	BARNES	ADAMS
BOYER	BROWN	COLLINS
BRUCKMAN	CARNEY	COTTEN
CHOQUETTE	B.DAVIS	CRAFT
C.DAVIS	LONLEY	DUNCAN
ELLIS	FINKELSTEIN	ELIASON
FOSTER	GONZALES	FISCHER
GRUENBERG	GRUSSENOORF	FRANK
HANLEY	HUDSON	HALFORD
IVAN	JACKO	HOFFMAN
KOPONEN	KUBINA	JONES
LARSON	LEMAN	KERTTULA
LINCOLN	MACKIE	MENARD
MACLEAN	MARTIN	PEARCE
M.A.MILLER	M.W.MILLER	FOURCHOT
MOYER	NAVARRE	ROOEY
PARNELL	G.PHILLIPS	SHULTZ
R.PHILLIPS	SHARP	STURGULEWSKI
TAYLOR	ULMER	UEHLING
ZAWACKI		ZHAROFF

PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

NAME: ROSEMARY VAN DER LAAN, EDUCATIONAL DIR.
TITLE: AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
ADDRESS: 6405 COLGATE DRIVE
CITY: ANCHORAGE ZIP: 99504
PHONE: 337-5580

BILL NO: HJR 85

SUBJECT: ENDORSING U.N. EARTH SUMMIT

MESSAGE: AAUW SUPPORTS UNCED, THE MOST IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL MEETING THIS CENTURY, WHOSE IMPACT WILL AFFECT ALL FUTURE GENERATIONS. BALANCING ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMICS IS VITAL TO ALASKANS AND THE U.S.. THIS LEGISLATURE SHOULD MAKE A HISTORIC STATEMENT OF SUPPORTING UNCED CALLING UPON FULL PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION BY PRESIDENT BUSH. URGE SUPPORT HJR 85. /CMR

POMID: 03101821

DATE: 92/04/16

TIME: 10:18:21

LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES

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PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE DAVIDSON

NAME: EIVIN & MARY BRUDIE
TITLE:
ADDRESS: 14320 SABINE STREET
CITY: ANCHORAGE ZIP: 99516
PHONE: 345-0525
BILL NO: HJR 85
SUBJECT: ENDORSING U.N. EARTH SUMMIT
MESSAGE: WE STRONGLY SUPPORT HJR 85. /CMR

POMID: 03162049
DATE: 92/04/16
TIME: 16:20:49
LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES REPRESENTATIVES SENATORS

BAKER	BARNES	ADAMS
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BRUCKMAN	CARNEY	COTTEN
CHOQUETTE	B.DAVIS	CRAFT
C.DAVIS	DONLEY	DUNCAN
ELLIS	FINKELSTEIN	ELIASON
FOSTER	GONZALES	FISCHER
GRUENBERG	GRUSSENDORF	FRANK
HANLEY	HUDSON	HALFORD
IVAN	JACKO	HOFFMAN
KOPONEN	KUBINA	JONES
LARSON	LEMAN	KERTTULA
LINCOLN	MACKIE	MENARD
MACLEAN	MARTIN	PEARCE
M.A.MILLER	M.W.MILLER	POURCHOT
MOYER	NAVARRE	RODEY
PARNELL	G.PHILLIPS	SHULTZ
R.PHILLIPS	SHARP	STURGULEWSKI
TAYLOR	ULMER	UEHLING
ZAWACKI		ZHAROFF

The Washington Post

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1991

Ozone Study Predicts Increase In Cataract, Skin Cancer Risks

Ultraviolet Radiation Found to Affect Immune System

By Michael Weiskopf
Washington Post Staff Writer

Higher doses of ultraviolet radiation expected to leak through a badly frayed ozone layer by the turn of the century could cause 1.6 million new cases of cataracts and 300,000 new skin cancers a year worldwide, a panel of scientists reported yesterday.

The scientists also reported for the first time that ultraviolet radiation depresses human immune systems regardless of skin pigmentation or the use of some sunscreen lotions.

"This places all of the world's population at risk of the potential adverse effects of [ultraviolet radiation] on the immune system, including possible increases in the incidence or severity of infectious disease," said the panel convened by the United Nations Environment Program.

The report, an executive summary of which was released yesterday, updated previous projections of health and ecological damage in light of the latest findings that the ozone layer—which normally absorbs most of the ultraviolet radiation from the sun—is eroding at a faster rate and for longer periods of the year.

Along with the theoretical findings came a new piece of hard evidence. In the antarctic, where the ozone hole was discovered in 1985 and the intensity of springtime ultraviolet rays reaching the ground has more than doubled, researchers have found up to a 12 percent decline in the growth of phytoplankton, the tiny, single-cell plants that form the base of the marine food chain.

This decline diminishes the source of nutrition for other ocean organisms, and that effect eventually "could cascade through the food chain," C. Susan Weiler, an aquatic scientist at Whitman College told a Senate subcommittee hearing.

The findings were quickly seized on by proponents of a faster phaseout of the man-made chemicals, chiefly chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which deplete the ozone layer. An international agreement calls for elimination of CFCs in the year 2000, but several nations have planned earlier cutoffs.

"We are far beyond the stage where it is difficult to say that there are significant uncertainties about the fact that we are injecting the risk of catastrophic damage to the global climate system," said Sen. Albert Gore Jr. (D-Tenn.), chairman of the Science, Technology and Space subcommittee.

The projections for skin cancers and cataracts were the first for the world at large. Using an established formula for estimating the severity of the diseases as ultraviolet rays increased, the scientists assumed ozone levels

would follow the current trend and diminish by 10 percent in the mid-latitudes in the next decade. Already stratospheric ozone levels have dropped by 5 percent.

At that level, the annual cases of non-melanoma skin cancers would increase 26 percent and cataracts 6 to 8 percent worldwide. The scientists predicted more nearsightedness in the elderly and deformed lenses due to increased ultraviolet rays.

Recent studies have demonstrated the damage ultraviolet radiation can do to the human immune system, which is the body's defense against infectious disease and certain kinds of cancer. According to Margaret L. Kripke, a University of Texas immunologist and member of the U.N. panel, researchers have documented changes in the proportions of certain white blood cells, which are part of the immune system, in people exposed to ultraviolet radiation.

Another study showing that humans were subject to certain immunosuppression linked to skin cancer was repeated on different ethnic groups of varying skin pigmentation. Researchers were testing the theory that darker pigmentation protected against immune system damage, much as it does against skin cancer caused by ultraviolet rays.

Kripke said the results showed no differences in the immunosuppressive effects of ultraviolet rays in persons of white, black or brown skin.

"Thus the population at risk of immunological damage from [ultraviolet] radiation is much larger than that at risk of developing skin cancer," she told the subcommittee.

She stressed, however, that not enough is known to prove that immunological effects of ultraviolet radiation increase the rate or severity of infectious disease. "This is the most critical unanswered question in attempting to assess the impact of ozone depletion on human health," she said.

Kripke said recent studies on laboratory animals indicate that some commercial sunscreens that protect against sunburn, which is caused mainly by ultraviolet-A, do not block the immune system damage of ultraviolet radiation, which comes chiefly from ultraviolet-B. Some newer sunscreens do block uv-B.

The New York Times

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NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1991

OZONE DEPLETION HARMING SEA LIFE

Ultraviolet Rays' Damage in Waters of Antarctica Goes Deeper Than Thought

By KEITH SCHNEIDER
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 15 — A leading marine scientist said today that the thinning of the atmospheric ozone layer over Antarctica had allowed ultraviolet radiation to penetrate much deeper into the ocean than suspected, causing sizable reductions in the productivity of the single-cell organisms that form the base of the oceanic food chain.

Dr. C. Susan Weiler, a marine ecologist at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash., and executive director of the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography, also said that rising ultraviolet radiation in the Antarctic had caused increased genetic damage in the organisms, phytoplankton.

The new findings are among the first clear signals that the weakening of the atmospheric ozone shield, which scientists say is caused by chlorine and bromine-based industrial chemicals, is having a measurable effect on marine organisms. Since 1987, scientists in Antarctica have measured reductions in phytoplankton mass of 6 to 12 percent, depending on the depth of the water, Dr. Weiler said.

Dr. Weiler, a member of a United Nations scientific panel studying the depletion of the ozone layer, said the results of the research in Antarctica raised new concerns about the effect of increased ultraviolet radiation on the oceans, which supply most of the earth's oxygen and much of its food.

"Increasing ultraviolet radiation could change species abundance and

A vital part of the polar marine food chain is upset.

variety of phytoplankton and ripple through the food chain, having effects we really can't predict," she said.

Concerns About Cancer

Dr. Weiler joined nine other top scientists in discussing the ozone depletion problem today at a hearing held by Senator Al Gore, a Tennessee Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.

Mr. Gore, citing Dr. Weiler's report and several others predicting much higher rates of skin cancer deaths and blindness from cataracts because of ultraviolet radiation, called on the Bush Administration to speed up the removal of chemicals from commerce that deplete the ozone shield. "The evidence is clearer than ever," he said.

William K. Reilly, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, said later, "The United States will move faster than the treaty obligates us to," referring to the 1987 international agreement that set schedules for gradually eliminating ozone-depleting chemicals. "How much faster is something we have not worked out within the Administration yet, but it will be considerably faster. This latest data should provide a convincing reason for the rest of the world community to move with us."

Near the top layers of the earth's atmosphere is a belt of ozone that naturally screens harmful ultraviolet radiation and prevents much of it from reaching the earth's surface.

In the mid-1970's, scientists theorized that chlorofluorocarbons, nearly indestructible chlorine-based industrial chemicals used as refrigerants and solvents, were floating up into the top most layers of the atmosphere and through a multi-step chemical process was dissolving the ozone shield. Other compounds also have been found to be

destroying the ozone shield, including the insecticide methyl bromide; methyl chloroform, a chemical used in solvents and adhesives, and halons, which are used in fire extinguishers.

In the 1980's, scientists discovered a gap in the ozone shield over Antarctica, a finding that helped convince the major industrial nations to sign a treaty in Montreal in 1987 to cut in half production of the destructive chemicals by the year 2000. In 1990 the treaty was amended to require elimination of chlorofluorocarbons and halons by the year 2000, and methyl chloroform by 2005.

Congress Takes Action

Last year, as part of the Clean Air Act, Congress approved a provision requiring the President to speed the schedule for phasing out the chemicals causing ozone depletion if new evidence warranted it. In October, a United Nations scientific panel said the rate of ozone destruction was increasing and that the shield was weakening over the United States and other temperate zones in the winter and summer. Scientists had previously said that ozone depletion was occurring only over the poles and in middle latitudes in winter.

The scientists said today that the only region of the earth's ozone shield untouched so far was over the Equator.

Dr. Robert T. Watson, an upper atmosphere expert at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Washington, said even if all ozone-destroying chemicals were outlawed today, thinning would continue for decades because of all the chemicals that had already risen into the upper atmosphere.

A major worry is the effect more ultraviolet radiation would have on crops. Dr. Alan H. Teramura, a botanist at the University of Maryland, said research in laboratories had found decreases in yield from soybeans and rice exposed to rising levels of ultraviolet radiation.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

FOUNDED 1914

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

ISSUE 3,830

WASHINGTON DC

DECEMBER 26 1988

POSTCARD ANTARCTICA

UNBEARABLE WHITENESS

I'M TRYING TO remember what I thought about Antarctica before I came here. For the most part, I didn't think about it at all. It is just plain remote. From the other side of the world, in Christchurch, New Zealand, it is another eight hours due south by plane to the main U.S. base, McMurdo, and then another three hours from there to the South Pole.

I came to the coldest place on Earth to hunt for information about global warming, but I was unprepared for the continent itself. For example, I didn't know that the land area is half again as large as the entire United States. Or that 90 percent of all the ice in the world is here—which means, among other things, that there is really no comparison between this place and the Arctic. Antarctica is larger, more isolated, more important in the global ecosystem—and much colder.

You don't expect a continent at the "bottom" of the world to have an altitude three times higher than any other continent. When I stepped out of the ski plane at the Pole, my awareness was divided between the 56-degree-below-zero weather and the dizziness of being at almost 10,000 feet. The altitude of the enormous polar plateau is due primarily to ice that is almost two miles thick. Although its ice and snow contain 50 percent of all the fresh water on Earth, Antarctica gets so little precipitation that it is classified as the world's largest desert. And while the continent goes dark for six months in winter, it still receives more sunlight during its six-month-long summer day than the equatorial regions receive in an entire year. Yet all that light creates virtually no surface heat, because most of it is reflected right back up into space. For anyone caught in that crossfire of whiteness, sunglasses are a medical necessity.

The ice shelf expands in winter to seven times its summer maximum. The small population of human beings sent here by 22 nations expands in summer and contracts in winter by proportions almost precisely inverse to those of the ice.

WHILE MOST of Antarctica is the cleanest, most pristine area on Earth, the waters immediately adjacent to the American base are among the most polluted in the world. PCBs and "we don't know what else," dumped years ago, have killed every vestige of life in a small area of McMurdo Sound. The nuclear power plant that leaked in 1962 was dismantled and returned to the United States. But even today the base dumps "diluted" raw sewage directly into the sound and burns its solid waste in an open pit.

In the last few years, several other developments have brought new attention to Antarctica. In 1985 an emergency expedition confirmed the existence of a large and growing polar hole in the stratospheric ozone layer (which protects humans from deadly ultraviolet-B radiation). The same team found incontrovertible evidence

that man-made chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were responsible.

A new international agreement was signed this year to reduce CFC production a little, though not enough. Meanwhile, the world's fossil fuels are being burned at such a rapid rate that the resulting carbon dioxide, along with other "greenhouse gases," may have already triggered the long-predicted global warming. At least some scientists said this summer that they are finally convinced.

The air is clearer and crisper in Antarctica than anywhere I've ever been, and visibility is remarkable over great distances. But that can suddenly change, as I learned firsthand, during something known as a "whiteout." The winds of a sudden storm saturate the air so thoroughly with snow that first the horizon, then closer landmarks, and then even the hood of your vehicle can disappear in a shroud of whiteness. Travelers lose their orientation and perspective. Some tell stories of seeing a building in the distance only to find that it was a pack of cigarettes a few feet away. Having just lived through a general election campaign in which Willie Horton was a more prominent political landmark than the budget or trade deficit, I had the feeling I had gone from one whiteout to another.

I CAME HERE because Antarctica is now the frontier of the global ecological crisis. High in the Transantarctic Mountains, a badly sunburned scientist talked about the ice cores he and his team were pulling from a deep hole drilled into the glacier on which we stood. He interpreted the annual layers of ice and snow the way woodsmen read tree rings. "Here is where the U.S. Congress passed the Clean Air Act," he said, pointing to the beginning of the 1970s. Moving down the ice core, back to the early 1960s, he added, "And here is where the world stopped atmospheric nuclear testing." These and other ice cores contain highly accurate information about the makeup of the Earth's atmosphere year by year for tens of thousands of years. From such cores, we know, for example, that there were dramatically lower levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere at the peak of the last Ice Age, 20,000 years ago, when the island of Manhattan was under one kilometer of ice. By contrast, the ice and snow laid down in the 1980s show levels of carbon dioxide, methane, CFCs, nitrous oxide, and other gases responsible for the greenhouse effect higher than they have been in at least 160,000 years (as far back as the ice cores measure). CFCs are receiving particular attention because they cause not only 20 percent of the greenhouse effect but virtually all of the destruction of the ozone layer.

Something else is different about the ice layers from the 1980s—they *look* different to the naked eye because of thick, alternating layers of "hoar" ice, apparently caused by partial melting and recrystallization into larger granules. The scientists are as yet cautiously withholding judgment on whether this is the clear signal of Antarctic warming that many have anticipated.

When I say Antarctica is the frontier of the ecological crisis, I don't mean only that pollution can now be found at the remotest point on Earth. Antarctica is also the place

where both ozone destruction and global warming have their first and most dramatic impacts. It is also increasingly apparent that Antarctica plays a far more significant role than any other part of the Earth in the global climate system. For one thing, the cold waters surrounding the continent absorb more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere than all the rain forests, and create the nutrient-rich "bottom water" for most of the world ocean of which Antarctica is the epicenter. Also, aside from the sun and the rotation of the Earth, Antarctica is the single most powerful engine driving the world's weather, redistributing its massive coldness through the winds of the air and the currents of the sea. As greenhouse gases trap more heat in the Earth's atmosphere and temperatures climb, they are expected to climb fastest of all here in Antarctica, because any melting at the edge of the ice shelf is accompanied by a dramatic change in the albedo—reflectivity—of the surface exposed to sunlight. The increased absorption of the sun's rays by the ocean then magnifies the local warming trend, melting more ice at the margin and absorbing yet more radiation from the sun.

THERE ARE three potential catastrophes that scientists fear could eventually be caused by the warming of Antarctica. First, a dramatic rise in sea level. This would come not from the melting of sea ice, which is already floating in the ocean, but from a rapid breakup of the massive West Antarctic ice shelf, which scientists believe could then plop into the ocean, raising the sea level 15 to 20 feet, wiping out low-lying coastal cities and nations like Bangladesh. But this is further off than most greenhouse impacts, perhaps 200 years.

Second, something that some scientists worry could occur much sooner is a change in the ability of the Antarctic seas to absorb carbon dioxide as they get warmer. Partly because it is so cold, the southern ocean now absorbs between one-third and one-half of all carbon dioxide emissions from industrial nations. Since carbon dioxide is by far the most important greenhouse gas, we must concern ourselves not only with the rate at which our civilization produces it but also the rate at which the Earth absorbs it.

The Earth has two lungs—the forests and the southern ocean. Unfortunately, we are destroying our forests at the rate of one football field every second, an area the size of Tennessee every year. Since the oceans of the world contain 50 times as much carbon dioxide as the atmosphere, even small changes in the temperature-sensitive mechanisms by which carbon dioxide is transferred back and forth between the oceans and the air can have profound implications.

Third, scientists fear that if their predictions are correct, and temperatures at the poles increase far more rapidly than at the equator, then the very pattern of the world weather system might change. This is because the difference between temperatures at the equator and at the poles has been relatively constant for a long time. As a result, the

redistribution of heat from the equator to the poles and cold from the poles to the equator has been accomplished through an essentially constant pattern of wind and ocean

currents. If temperatures rise disproportionately in Antarctica, the equilibrium could change, creating new patterns that would redistribute less cold and more heat. Something like this once happened on a small scale in Greenland. The so-called "little ice age" beginning 500 years ago abruptly covered the southern and western agricultural areas that gave Greenland its name with the ice and snow that now make people wonder where the name came from.

Similar though larger and anthropogenic global weather changes now thought to be under way are expected to cause widespread droughts and heat waves within our children's lifetimes. Indeed, some argue they have already begun.

In spite of these enormous stakes and in spite of the central role played by Antarctica, an international scientific conference in Tasmania this fall concluded, "There is no established strategy either for early detection of climate change in Antarctica or understanding and prediction of the probable effect of climate warming on atmospheric and oceanic circulation, ice-sheet volume, and sea level."

Even at that, the scientists are further along than the politicians. Why are we waiting to act?

Perhaps partly because of the unprecedented nature of the crisis. It is simply beyond our experience and outside of what we call common sense. So we put it in the place in our minds where Antarctica exists and tag it with the same mental labels—remote, alien, hopelessly distorted by the maps of the world we inhabit, too hard to get to and too unforgiving for us to stay very long.

The real question is whether the world's political system can find a new equilibrium before the world's climate system loses its current one. Even now, the winds of change are approaching hurricane force. It took a million years for the population of the world to reach two billion. Now, in the course of a single human lifetime—mine—it is rocketing toward ten billion (and is already halfway there). Startling graphs showing the loss of forest land, topsoil, stratospheric ozone, and species all follow the same pattern of sudden, unprecedented acceleration in the latter half of the 20th century. And yet, so far, the pattern of our politics remains remarkably unchanged.

When it does come, the change will involve a new set of global goals, and a new way of thinking about ourselves, our children, and our whole world—even Antarctica.

AL GORE

Al Gore is U.S. senator from Tennessee.

The New York Times

Founded in 1851

ADOLPH S. OCHS, Publisher 1896-1935
ARTHUR HAYS SULZBERGER, Publisher 1935-1961
GYVEL B. DRYFOOS, Publisher 1961-1983

In the Nation

TOM WICKER

Time for Action

Despite strong environmental warnings and intense international pressures, the Bush Administration has continued to advocate more research rather than immediate action to counter such threats as ozone depletion and global warming. Two new developments put this business-as-usual approach in scary perspective:

- A United Nations scientific panel reported that new data had disclosed significant and previously undiscovered depletion of the ozone layer over the United States and Europe in summer, when the sun's ultraviolet rays pose the greatest hazard; therefore, the incidence of skin cancers and the damage to crops will be much greater than previously predicted.

- Richard Lindzen of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a respected scientific critic of global warming theories, told a group of scientists in Washington that he had "withdrawn" the complex hypothesis that was an important element of his skepticism.

Dr. Lindzen's views carried considerable weight in the political controversy about global warming, having been cited frequently by the Bush White House in support of its go-slow policy. Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee, who convened the scientific group, said that while Dr. Lindzen remained skeptical on general grounds, he had abandoned the specific theory he previously advanced.

Both the ominous new ozone data and Dr. Lindzen's changed position seem to justify a heightened urgency in responding to threatening atmospheric developments. Dr. Robert Watson, a NASA scientist who was co-chairman of the U.N. panel, termed the new findings of ozone loss "extremely serious."

In Washington, Senator Gore said he would re-introduce a resolution to accelerate the schedule for phasing out chlorofluorocarbons, or CFC's, the man-made chemical most damaging to the ozone layer. William K. Reilly, head of the Environmental Protection Agency, conceded that the ozone problem had been shown to be "more serious than we believed" and added, "The world community needs to reconsider the course that it's on."

In the past, the White House has not agreed. John Sununu, the chief of staff, has opposed what he considers premature action against global warming, he and President Bush argue that eliminating CFC's is sufficient for now. Mr. Reilly said the U.S. was ahead of the schedule by which

the industrial nations have agreed to eliminate CFC's by the year 2000.

But a U.N. environment official, Dr. Mostafa K. Tolba, said "the main emphasis should be on carbon dioxide," the primary cause of global warming. Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide have increased by 25 percent in the last century, and are increasing by about 0.5 percent a year.

President Bush has been reluctant to force cuts in carbon dioxide emissions — opposing, for example, an increase from 27.5 to 32.5 miles per

New fears about global warming.

gallon in automobile fuel efficiency, and more support for mass transit, both urged by a National Academy of Sciences report on global warming. Nor has the Administration pushed development of alternative energy sources, as the academy urged.

The new data made public at the U.N. demonstrate that CFC's, by destroying parts of the ozone layer, have a slight cooling effect, since the layer helps keep temperatures stable. Thus if CFC's are eliminated, as projected, the global warming trend — primarily the product of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere — would be strengthened. That appears to undercut the President's resistance to reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

The danger to humans in disappearing ozone is not in such dispute; for each 1 percent of depletion, a 1 percent increase in the incidence of fatal skin cancers (melanoma) and a 3 percent rise in nonfatal skin cancers are projected. About 4 to 5 percent of atmospheric ozone has been lost since measurement began in 1978, which means a total of perhaps 10 percent since about the end of World War II. Dr. Watson said the U.N. panel expected a further 3 percent loss by the end of the century.

The last previous predictions — 12 million ozone-related skin cancers resulting in 200,000 deaths in the next half-century — thus have been shown by the new data to be drastically understated. And the ozone crisis is here and now — as close at hand as your next trip to the beach, or bare-headed walk in the sun. □




Alaska State Legislature

HOUSE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

P.O. Box V
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-3715

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Members
House Resources Committee

FROM: Representative Cliff Davidson, Chairman 
House Resources Committee

DATE: April 9, 1992

SUBJECT: House Resources Committee legislation

Enclosed is a house joint resolution relating to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro this June. I have been requested to introduce this legislation on behalf of various members of the Alaska Legislature.

The resolution recognizes the goals and objectives of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and urges the attendance of President Bush and the active involvement of the United States in crafting international protocols regarding global climate change. Many other states have passed similar resolutions to encourage United States involvement in this important conference.

I will introduce this resolution Friday, March 10. Please feel free to contact my office at 465-2487 if you have any questions.

Thank you.



Geoff

Following please find a press release written by the Center just after the majority of state introductions took place. Since this release was written, the Berkeley City Council, the Oklahoma Senate, and the Massachusetts House of Representatives have adopted the resolution.

In most of the other eighteen states, the resolutions are being prepared for, or are sitting in committee. They have, however, gained significant support in many of these states which have not yet voted to adopt.

- Wisconsin's Joint Resolution 136 has the support of 27 representatives and 5 Senators
- Washington's Joint Memorial 4043 is co-sponsored by 11 representatives
- South Carolina's resolution, H.4613 has 19 co-sponsors
- New York's resolution has 47 co-sponsors

There are other specific resolution numbers which could be stated, but this gives a general idea of the support which this resolution is gathering throughout the nation.

We hope that Alaska will join with the twenty states working to make the UNCRD a meaningful conference. Please let me know if I can be of any other assistance to you. I would also like to stay informed of your progress with the resolution if possible.

Anna Danegger



Contact: Jeffrey Tryens
or Anna Danegger
202/ 387-6030

NEWS

March 25, 1992

State and Local Legislators Challenge Bush Environmental Posture

Over 150 state legislators from 20 states are co-sponsoring resolutions along with the Berkeley City Council urging the Bush Administration to reverse its weak international environmental position. The resolution asks that at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) convening in Rio de Janeiro in June of this year, the U.S. "reestablish its role as a leader in managing the planet's resources for present and future generations."

"This resolution is significant because states and local governments play an increasingly important role in formulating environmental policy. The federal government should be listening to what the citizens have to say," said Jeff Tryens, deputy director of the Center for Policy Alternatives and coordinator of the Initiative.

The states considering the UNCED resolution represent every section of the country and make up a very high percentage of those states still in session. States participating in the introduction at present are:

CALIFORNIA, CONNECTICUT, DELAWARE, FLORIDA, GEORGIA, HAWAII, ILLINOIS, IOWA, MASSACHUSETTS, MICHIGAN, MINNESOTA, MISSOURI, NEW HAMPSHIRE, NEW YORK, OHIO, OKLAHOMA, PENNSYLVANIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, WASHINGTON, WISCONSIN.

The resolutions are being introduced to send a strong message to the U.S. delegation to UNCED at the final preparatory meeting (PrepCom 4) and prior to the start of the June conference. The resolution targets specific goals for reduction of CO₂ emissions.

"I am proud to join in and endorse the goals of the Earth Summit," said Rep. Charles F. Flaherty, Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. "Nothing could be more important globally than protecting and nurturing the resources of the planet for future generations."

UNCED Resolution, page 2

The sponsoring lawmakers recognize the importance of UNCED as an unprecedented gathering of leaders and citizens from around the globe, one which must have more than mere symbolic meaning.

"We need co-operation between all levels of government in promoting the goals of UNCED and acknowledging that environmental protection need not be pitted against economic development," said Representative Tom Seery, author of Wisconsin's Joint Assembly Resolution #136. "We believe the two may successfully co-exist."

In acknowledging the importance of the conference in reducing the threat of global climate change, the legislators resolve that they "call upon the President of the United States to join his counterparts at the Earth Summit, and to instruct U.S. negotiators to work with other national delegations in crafting an international protocol on global climate change."

Attached is the draft resolution and the list of legislative leaders for the resolution.

#

**The Center for Policy Alternatives
is a non-profit, non-partisan organization promoting
progressive leadership and policies
in the states.**

acundpr36



State Legislative Leaders for Resolution Urging U.S. Action at UNCED

CALIFORNIA—Assemblyman Tom Hayden, (916) 445-1678

CONNECTICUT—Representative Elizabeth Brown, (203) 240-8585

DELAWARE—Senator Myrna Bair, (302) 577-3217

FLORIDA—Senator Jack Gordon, (904) 487-5112

GEORGIA—Representative Doug Toper, (404) 658-0329

HAWAII—Senator Andrew Levin, (808) 588-6760

ILLINOIS—Representative Bob Carle, (312) 643-5237

IOWA—Senator James Reardon, (515) 281-3371

MASSACHUSETTS—Speaker Charles Flaherty, (617) 722-2500

MICHIGAN—Senator Lana Pollack, (517) 373-7813

MINNESOTA—Representative Willard Munger, (612) 296-4282

MISSOURI—Representative Karen McCarthy, (314) 751-2420

NEW HAMPSHIRE—Senator Susan McLane, (603) 271-3098

NEW YORK—Assemblyman Maurice Hinchey, (518) 455-4436

OHIO—Representative Jane Campbell, (614) 468-5441

OKLAHOMA—Senator Enoch Kelly Haney, (405) 524-0128

PENNSYLVANIA—Representative Ivan Irtzn, (717) 787-1309

SOUTH CAROLINA—Representative Sarah Manly, (803) 734-2998

WASHINGTON—Representative Dick Nelson, (206) 786-7826

WISCONSIN—Representative Tom Seery, (608) 267-7990

3/25/92

a.unced.org

Source:
*An Introductory Guide to
 the Earth Summit*
 by - The U.S. Citizens
 Network for UNCED

The U.S. Government

In the U.S., the State Department's Office of Oceans and International Environmental & Scientific Affairs has taken the lead responsibility in preparations for UNCED. The head of the U.S. delegation is Buff Bohlen, Assistant Secretary of State. Assisting Secretary Bohlen in preparing for the Earth Summit is the newly created U.S. UNCED Coordination Center, which is directed by Ambassador Robert Ryan.

Secretary Bohlen was formerly a Senior Vice-President with the World Wildlife Fund-U.S. He has also served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks and also as a member of the Foreign Service. Bohlen's experience in international environmental negotiations includes the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES); U.S./U.S.S.R. Convention on the Protection of Migratory Birds and Their Environment; and the Circumpolar Agreement on the Conservation of Polar Bears.

Ambassador Ryan is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. He has served as the U.S. Ambassador to Mali, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs, and as Coordinator of Oceans Management, Bureau of Finance, Management Policy.

You can reach Secretary Bohlen at the following address:

E. U. Curtis (Buff) Bohlen
 Assistant Secretary of State
 Oceans and International Environmental & Scientific Affairs
 Department of State
 2201 C Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20520
 Tel: (202) 647-1554

To reach Ambassador Ryan or anyone else on the center's staff, contact:

USUNCED - Department of State
 722 Jackson Place, NW
 Washington, DC 20503
 Tel: (202) 395-3110
 Fax: (202) 395-3744

The agencies that have primary technical responsibility for UNCED are The Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ), which is coordinating the preparation of the national report while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been asked to play the leading role in providing background research in such areas as toxics, climate change, forests, technology transfer, environmental education, and oceans. In addition to CEQ and EPA, the Agency for International Development (AID), the Department of Energy (DOE), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) also have UNCED coordinators. Points of contact have been designated in 27 other federal agencies. Intra-agency coordination is facilitated by the UNCED Working Group of the Policy Coordinating Committee of the National Security Council.

Students hold model Earth Summit

Environmental Studies students at the University of Vermont will participate in a mock Earth Summit on April 24 and 25. Different regions of the world will present working papers highlighting key environmental and development issues, and then attempt to negotiate with each other to come up with innovative solutions.

The Summit is being organized for the "International Environmental Studies" class, required for all in the Environmental Studies Program. The Summit will help to educate students on the issues, the cultural differences, and other factors that make international negotiations and environmental problem solving so complex a process.

Students elsewhere may want to follow this model, and encourage the development of this kind of exercise on their own campuses. For more information, contact: Larry Nussbaum, SEAC (Student Environmental Action Coalition)-UVM, 802-656-4484.

continued from first page

forest ecosystem in the U.S. Pacific Northwest, the U.S. government's UNCED position has begun to incorporate protection of forest ecosystems as a principle. Now the government must be urged to incorporate into their forest position full participation of communities in decision making. Is this change a signal for other resource issues?

Please continue to write letters to your congressional representatives, senators, and the President, and let them know what you want them to support in Rio. Below are listed the congressional representatives and senators on the U.S. delegation to UNCED. If you find your representative or senator on this list, your letters will go a long way, so be sure to send them!

Congressional members of the U.S. Delegation to UNCED

Senators:

Al Gore, Jr., Chairperson (D-TN)
Max S. Baucus (D-MT)
John Chafee (R-RI)
Alan J. Dixon (D-IL)
Robert J. Dole (R-KS)
Pete V. Domenici (R-NM)
Jake Garn (R-UT)
Bob Graham (D-FL)
Mitch McConnell (R-KY)
George J. Mitchell (D-ME)
Steve Symms (R-WY)
Malcom Wallop (R-MT)
Paul D. Wellstone (D-MN)
Timothy Wirth (D-CO)

Representatives:

William S. Broomfield (R-MI)
Dante N. Fascell (D-FL)
John Porter (R-IL)
Stephen J. Solarz (D-NY)
Robert G. Torricelli (D-NJ)

Addresses:

Your Congressperson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Your Senator
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

President Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

UNCED Resolutions pass in House and in Senate Committee

The House of Representatives passed a sense-of-Congress resolution supporting positive action from the U.S. at UNCED on Tuesday, March 17, on a voice vote. The resolution calls for the 'personal participation of the President at UNCED, the negotiation of international agreements which will reduce the threat of climate change, support for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, support for new institutional arrangements to monitor international compliance with environmental agreements in force, and a number of other provisions.

This resolution originated in The House Foreign Affairs Committee, which approved H. Con. Res. 292, the Fascell-Torricelli-Yatron resolution, at a markup on Wednesday, March 11. After a week long postponement during which Committee staff met with the Global Climate Coalition, an industry group that opposes any U.S. commitment to control greenhouse gas emissions, Chairman Fascell (D-FL) stated that this is a resolution that everyone can agree to, including industry. The marked-up version reads that the U.S. "should negotiate international agreements that reduce the threat of global climate change and biodiversity loss."

On the Senate side, Sen. John Kerry's (D-MA) 'sense-of-Congress' resolution concerning UNCED (S. Con. Res. 89) was agreed to by the Foreign Relations Committee Wednesday, March 4. The date on which the Senate UNCED resolution will be brought to the floor for a vote is still uncertain. It is also likely to pass.

For more information, contact John Tallmadge, Environmental and Energy Study Institute, 202-628-1400; e-mail: cesi@igc.org

PEOPLES' FORUM

Grassroots are heard

On March 5-7, the Highlander Center and the Peoples' Alliance for the Earth Summit (formerly the Ad Hoc Committee) hosted the Grassroots Peoples' Forum in New York City.

The purpose of this three day conference was to bring grassroots activists from across

AN EARTH SUMMIT PUBLICATION: NUMBER TWO



**IN OUR HANDS
EARTH SUMMIT '92**

**A REFERENCE BOOKLET ABOUT THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT**

Venue of the Conference: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Dates: 1 June to 12 June 1992

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
160, route de Florissant
1231 Conches
Geneva (Switzerland)

Telephone: 41-22-789-1676
Fax: 41-22-789-3556



«The Earth Summit must establish a whole new basis for relations between rich and poor, North and South, including a concerted attack on poverty as a central priority for the 21st Century. This is now as imperative in terms of our environmental security as it is on moral and humanitarian grounds. We owe at least this much to future generations, from whom we have borrowed a fragile planet called Earth.»

MAURICE F. STRONG

Secretary-General

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

THE EARTH SUMMIT: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is the purpose of the Earth Summit?

The United Nations is organizing the Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) to fashion integrated strategies that would prevent further degradation of the global environment and foster sustainable development. These strategies would be designed to help re-shape the world's economy and re-vitalize development on an environmentally sound and sustainable basis. The Earth Summit is therefore about environment and development. The main task of the Rio Conference of 1992 will be to move environment and development issues into the center of economic policy and decision-making.

Why the Earth Summit now?

The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which was held in Stockholm in June 1972, put the environment issue on the international agenda. But despite significant progress on many fronts in dealing with environmental issues since then, it became evident that overall, the condition of the earth's environment was deteriorating and global risks becoming more acute. Accordingly, the UN General Assembly in 1983 established the World Commission on Environment and Development to examine the state of the environment and development in the perspective of the year 2000 and beyond. The report of the World Commission, *Our Common Future*, made it clear that the

human future is indeed at risk if we continue the current unsustainable modes of economic growth and development, and if these are replicated in developing countries. It made the case that a transition to sustainable development in both industrialized and developing countries is the only viable pathway to a secure and sustainable future for the human community.

The recommendations of the World Commission--which was chaired by Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland of Norway--led to a decision by the General Assembly in December 1989 to hold a Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil in June 1992, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the Stockholm Conference. Its purpose is to have the nations of the world, represented by their heads of state or government, take the decisions required to effect the transition to environmentally sound and sustainable development called for by the Brundtland Commission.

Who will attend the Earth Summit?

All member-states of the United Nations will be invited to the Rio Conference, represented--it is expected--by their heads-of-state-or-government. In addition, a large media corps, thousands of representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other groups from the independent sectors are expected to be present in Rio de Janeiro during the Earth Summit.

What, specifically, will the Rio Conference do?

Based on recommendations of its Preparatory Committee, the Earth Summit

is expected to act on the following principal matters:

- An Earth Charter or Declaration of basic principles for the conduct of nations and peoples in respect of environment and development to ensure the future viability and integrity of the Earth as a hospitable home for human and other forms of life;
- An agenda for action, called Agenda 21, establishing the agreed work program of the international community for the period beyond 1992 and into the 21st century in respect of the issues to be addressed by the Conference with priorities, targets, cost estimates, modalities and assignment of responsibilities.

Participants at the 1992 Rio Conference are expected to deal with the means to implement this agenda through:

- New and additional financial resources;
- Transfer of technology;
- Strengthening of institutional capacities and processes.

In addition, there is expectation that the Rio Conference will produce agreements on specific legal measures, such as conventions for the protection of the atmosphere, biological diversity and possibly on forests. These are to be negotiated prior to the Conference and signed or agreed to at the Earth Summit.

Within this agenda, governments will be called upon to act upon a series of concrete measures which would literally change the basis of our economic life, our relations with each other and our prospects for the future. These will provide the basis for a new set of priorities for the world community,

including:

- Revitalization of the economies of the developing countries;
- Reversing the outflow of resources from developing countries and ensuring their access to the new and additional resources and technologies they will require to incorporate the environmental dimension into their own development and participate fully in international environmental cooperation;
- Eradication of poverty, the principal source of the environmental problems of developing countries and a major threat to the achievement of global environmental security;
- Reversal of the destruction of renewable resources, soil, forests, biological and genetic resources;
- Ensuring availability of energy supplies, particularly to developing countries under conditions that will safe-guard the environment and contain risks of climate change;
- Ensuring availability and protection of water supplies;
- Ensuring food security;
- Ensuring equitable access to and use of the global commons by all nations under conditions that will provide for their protection;
- Changing the system of incentives and penalties which motivate economic behavior to ensure that they provide strong incentives to sustainability and changes in national accounts to reflect the real values of the environment and resources;
- Transition to patterns of production and consumption in the industrialized countries which will drastically reduce their disproportionate contribution to deterioration of the earth's environment and related global environmental risks.

THE SUMMIT: AN OVERVIEW

No individual or country can remain immune to the environmental consequences of economic development or the human consequences of lack of development. That is why the integration of economic development and environmental protection demands continuing attention and action on the part of the world community.

Much of the deterioration in the global environment is caused by patterns of production and consumption, especially in the industrialized countries. In many developing nations--which altogether contain almost 80 percent of the global population of 5.4 billion--poverty, population growth, and environmental damage are closely related. Protection of the local as well as global environment must be integral to the development process everywhere in an increasingly interdependent world.

To this end, the United Nations will host a Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992, on the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which was held in Stockholm in June 1972. The Rio Conference--widely known as the Earth Summit--will be the first global gathering of heads-of-state-and-government on the environment and development. It will also be largest meeting of world leaders, non-governmental organizations, business executives, educators, students, and grassroots workers.

The United Nations General Assembly

decided to hold the Rio Conference, and established its mandate and the basis for its preparatory work in Resolution GA 44/228 of 22 December 1989. This resolution, and the decisions of the Preparatory Committee set up by the General Assembly to oversee preparations for the Conference, provide the basis on which the preparatory work is proceeding. The success of the Earth Summit will depend on this work. The Preparatory Committee, consisting of all members of the General Assembly, is headed by Ambassador Tommy T. B. Koh of Singapore, together with a Bureau of 39 members. Much of its work is conducted through three Working Groups.

UNCED is a unique attempt on the part of nations to find a common basis for action to secure for all its inhabitants a more secure, sustainable and equitable future, and to protect the future of Planet Earth. The Earth Summit of 1992 will aim to put environment at the center of economic decision-making in government, industry, and the home.

The General Assembly made it clear that the linkages between development and environment must be tackled through a fresh international consensus on global issues--and in particular the re-vitalization of development in developing countries on an environmentally sound and sustainable basis. The specific issues to be addressed include protection of the atmosphere; protection and management of land resources; conservation of biological diversity; promotion of environmentally-sound use of bio-technology; protection of the oceans, seas and coastal areas, and of the quality and supply of freshwater resources; and environmentally-sound management of toxic chemicals.

Of particular importance will be agreement on the means of ensuring that developing countries will have access to the new and additional financial resources and technologies that they will require to integrate environment into their development, and to participate fully in international environmental cooperation.

In establishing UNCED, the United Nations has also underscored a number of other critical issues that the world community needs to address more fully: the importance of access to, and transfer of, environmentally-sound technology for developing countries; a concerted attack on poverty; economic instruments and institutional arrangements; and development patterns particularly in energy, agriculture, forestry, and manufacturing. The elimination of wasteful consumption practices and inefficiencies in energy usage could do much to preserve natural and financial resources that could be released for more rapid development.

The preparations for UNCED have been designed to enhance popular understanding of environmental and economic linkages. Questions concerning demographic pressures, consumption and production patterns and lifestyles, and sustainable use of natural resources--including energy--have formed part of the extensive cross-sectoral studies undertaken for the Rio Conference.

Although the decisions at the Rio Conference will be taken by leaders of Governments, they will be based on the contributions and participation of a broad cross-section of nongovernmental organizations representing all major sectors and constituencies of society. At the base of the Earth Summit, therefore, will be the

people, and their organizations on which its implementation will ultimately depend.

Most of the financial needs of the developing countries will be met by them through re-deployment and more effective use of their own resources. But they will also need to have access to substantially increased external resources over time through increased private investment, improved terms of trade, and debt relief--as well as concessional assistance. The current net outflow of resources from the poor to the rich nations must be reversed, and new and additional financial support provided to revitalize the developing country economies on an environmentally-sustainable basis. The industrialized countries must be the main source of these resources. Meeting these needs will also present economic opportunities for the industrial nations. Some of the most essential and most cost-effective investments in environmental protection and sustainable development will be in developing countries. Addressing the total environmental and development needs of the most impoverished countries will involve huge sums. But the costs of ignoring the deterioration of finite natural resources and the environment would be even higher.

In addition to the important contributions being made by organizations in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council, a number of organizations have been specially created to contribute to the Earth Summit and preparations for it. These include the International Facilitating Committee (IFC), ECOFUND '92, and the Business Council for Sustainable Development (BCSD).

What is emerging through these intensive preparations is an up-to-date body of work

about the central relationship between the environment and today's global economy-- and how that relationship can be strengthened and integrated into economic policy and decision-making in every sector of society.

Conference are designed to provide the basis for the establishment among the nations and peoples of North, South, East and West, a new global partnership based on mutual needs, common interests, and shared responsibilities to ensure our common future.

The comprehensive preparations for the Rio



IN OUR HANDS
EARTH SUMMIT '92

CONTACTS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE EARTH SUMMIT

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