

**Administrative Committee
on Coordination**ACC/1997/12
7 January 1998

ENGLISH ONLY

REPORT OF THE TENTH MEETING OF THE INTER-AGENCY
COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(WHO Headquarters, Geneva, 17 to 18 September 1997)

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1	3
I. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION	2 - 39	3
A. Follow-up to the outcome of meetings of ACC and intergovernmental bodies	2 - 15	3
B. Follow-up to the 1997 special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of Agenda 21	16 - 33	6
1. Guidance for national action	18 - 19	6
2. Sustainable development workshops	20 - 21	7
3. Preparations for the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development	22 - 33	8
C. Coordination of the geoscience programmes of the United Nations system	34 - 37	11
D. Proposed agenda, dates and venue for the eleventh meeting of the Committee	38	12
E. Request for observer membership in IACSD	39	12
II. WORK OF IACSD	40 - 53	13
A. Proposed global initiative for the protection and promotion of health and environment in border areas	40	13

CONTENTS (continued)

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
B. Reports of subsidiary bodies reporting to IACSD: report on an ad hoc meeting of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas to review progress made in implementation of the work plan .	41 - 43	13
C. Other matters	44 - 53	13
1. Follow-up action on streamlining of reporting	44 - 45	13
2. Other issues	46 - 53	14
<u>Annexes</u>		
I. Agenda		16
II. List of Participants		17
III. List of documents		19
IV. Provisional agenda for the eleventh meeting of IACSD		20
V. Report on an informal meeting of IACSD on the outcome of the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly		21
VI. Tentative outline of documentation on industry and sustainable development		29
VII. Task managers for reports on small island developing States issues		31

INTRODUCTION

1. The Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) held its tenth meeting at World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters, from 17 to 19 September 1997. The agenda as adopted by the Committee is contained in annex I, the list of participants in annex II and the list of documents in annex III.

I. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION

A. Follow-up to the outcome of meetings of ACC and intergovernmental bodies

2. The Committee focused on the impact of United Nations reform proposals on its functioning, as well as on the question of the coordinated follow-up to recent United Nations global conferences, particularly on its role in future work in that area following the completion of work of ACC's three ad hoc task forces. The participants were briefed on the results of the meeting of the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) working group on coordinated follow-up to recent United Nations global conferences, which was held in New York on 11 and 12 September 1997.

3. The Chairman briefed the Committee on the main features of the United Nations Secretary-General's reform proposals. He indicated that the major implications for the work of IACSD would be created by the proposal to establish the United Nations Executive Committee on Development Cooperation, and the work of that group. He emphasized that it was crucially important for IACSD to orient its work to enable it to provide support for country-oriented activities and increase its impact at the national level, particularly in the light of the need to integrate more fully the United Nations conferences outcomes within the concept of sustainable development. That would require shifting the Committee's current focus from policy development to programme development for sustainable development.

4. Recognizing that that contribution could best be made at the country level through the technical experts of the relevant United Nations agencies and organizations working at the country level, the Chairman also stressed that the technical experts of United Nations agencies would need to be briefed on the importance of that integrative approach. He further stated that the establishment of the new Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat would also have some impact on the work of IACSD, particularly in the increased capacity that the substantive secretariat of the Committee would now have available to it for providing advisory services to member States, as well as a stronger analytical capability, particularly for undertaking medium and long-term trends analysis, which should facilitate improved interaction within the Committee in that area.

5. The Committee felt that since the concept of sustainable development, as underscored in ACC's statement to the 1997 special session of the General

/...

Assembly, provided an overarching framework for United Nations system-wide activities in the economic, social and environmental fields, it should also guide ongoing work aimed at achieving coordinated implementation of the outcomes of recent United Nations global conferences that had been held since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and had addressed the human dimensions of sustainable development. Similarly, at the national level sustainable development strategies should be seen as an important policy tool, providing an umbrella for integrated implementation of decisions and recommendations of various conferences, including cross-cutting areas. The Committee felt that the outcome of the work of ACC ad hoc task forces had provided a valuable input to its own ongoing work in the area of national sustainable development strategies.

6. The Committee emphasized that, in spite of the strong linkages between programmes for action adopted by various United Nations conferences and the need for better integration of policies aimed at their implementation, the follow-up to individual conferences should also retain their respective individual character, bearing in mind the need to preserve the high political visibility of the main long-term goals of such conferences, as well as the fact that they were supported by different constituencies.

7. The Committee noted that the prevailing framework of national institutions that were involved in the implementation of existing global programmes of actions was usually fragmented, and thus often did not provide for an integrated policy approach to the implementation of various economic, social and environmental objectives agreed at the international level. It was stressed, therefore, that under those circumstances it was necessary to move beyond the mere advocacy of the goals of sustainable development and call for more integrated policy approaches in order to expedite progress towards sustainable development and the implementation of Agenda 21 and the relevant outcomes of other recent United Nations global conferences held since UNCED.

8. The Committee considered that it was essential to elaborate common approaches within the United Nations system and foster activities aimed at the promotion of good practices and building adequate professional capacities for decision-making in order to translate effectively the results of policy development agreed within relevant intergovernmental processes into project formulation and implementation at the national level. That should include:

(a) Further measures to mainstream the concept of sustainable development in the programmatic work of international institutions;

(b) Elaboration of consistent guidelines that could be used by international organizations in their work related to the provision of policy advisory services to national Governments;

(c) Organizing workshops and training to exchange experiences and disseminate good practices among national professionals and decision makers.

9. Bearing in mind the broad scope of sustainable development work, it was felt that that work should start in a limited number of strategic areas where integrated approaches were particularly required and most feasible.

/...

10. The Committee felt that in general, a mechanism such as the ad hoc task forces - which were time-bound, had specific tasks, involved a limited number of organizations most directly involved in the field and reported to standing bodies of the ACC - provided an effective way of elaborating common approaches and fostering cooperation among international institutions. In addition to the ACC ad hoc task forces on conference follow-up, another example was the informal high-level Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests, which had been established in support of forest-related work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. A further promising mechanism was a network of institutions led by a task manager, similar to arrangements established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to follow up the World Food Summit.

11. Given the evolving central role of CCPOQ in facilitating the coordinated follow-up to recent United Nations conferences at the national level, members of the Committee considered that it was essential to ensure that an effective system of dialogue and interaction be established between IACSD and CCPOQ, and that a good division of labour be developed between the two ACC consultative committees.

12. The representatives of WHO, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also briefed the Committee on how the reform processes that were taking place within their own organizations would also probably affect the work of IACSD. In particular, the representative of WHO pointed out the links between the formulation of national strategies by Governments and United Nations system reform, thereby stressing the need for IACSD to assist in ensuring that sustainability issues be incorporated into national strategies on sustainable development. He considered that that would require cooperation between the specialized agencies and the Development Cooperation Group, particularly at the field level. The representative of UNEP briefed the Committee on the establishment of the high-level Committee of Ministers and Officials, which was scheduled to meet at Nairobi in November 1997 and would address the question of the further reform of UNEP in the context of United Nations reform.

13. While recognizing that the reform proposals relating to intergovernmental bodies could also affect the work of IACSD, the Committee recognized that the proposals were still being considered within the intergovernmental process, and as such it would be too early for IACSD to determine the true impact of those proposals on its work.

14. The Committee felt that agenda items 2(b) and 3 were closely interrelated; more specific decisions and recommendations on that issue are outlined in section I C below.

15. IACSD also noted the request of ACC for the Committee to undertake consultations with the Organizational Committee of ACC with a view to achieving a comprehensive assessment of the experience gained and lessons learned in recent years in peace-building in crisis situations, drawing on ongoing work both within and outside the United Nations system. IACSD recognized that the pursuit or restoration of sustainable development in countries in crisis situations was an integral component of the United Nations system's overall efforts at peace-building for the prevention and resolution of conflicts in such

/...

countries. The Committee, therefore, invited the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to secure from other partner organizations of the United Nations system relevant information on lessons learned from the perspective of sustainable development and report back to IACSD at its next meeting to enable the Committee to determine how best it could provide an appropriate development dimension to assist the system's country-level efforts for relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. The Committee also agreed that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would circulate to members for their comments the guidelines for action in post-conflict and peace-building situations that had already been prepared by the United Nations. It was stressed that care should be taken to avoid any duplication of effort being undertaken on the issue by other bodies, such as CCPOQ.

B. Follow-up to the 1997 special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of Agenda 21

16. The Committee based its deliberations on the results of the informal discussion held at Geneva on 9 July 1997, when a preliminary exchange of views regarding action needed to follow-up the special session of the General Assembly took place (the report of that meeting is contained in annex V to the present report). The Committee underscored the point that the main challenge for IACSD and its task managers in the period after the special session would be to ensure a stronger focus in inter-agency collaboration on practical implementation, particularly at the country level.

17. While generally supporting the overall thrust of the conclusions reached at the above-mentioned informal meeting, the Committee stressed the close interrelationship between the proposals related to further elaboration of common system-wide approaches, the preparation of sustainable development guidelines and the organization of sustainable development workshops, and the need to ensure complementarity among them. More specifically, the Committee agreed to undertake the practical actions set out below in the near future.

1. Guidance for national action

18. The Committee agreed on the need to elaborate - through broad-based efforts led by IACSD and its task managers - a system of guidelines or similar materials addressing main policy issues related to sustainable development, which could be made available, upon request, to national policy makers and institutions. Such guidelines should, inter alia, facilitate the translation of goals agreed at the international level into national policy-making and planning. Furthermore, they should facilitate the integration of social and environmental considerations in the development of plans and policies. At the outset, it would be important to undertake:

(a) A compilation and listing of existing material and an assessment of its relevance, adequacy and coherence;

(b) Identify specific country experiences that were capable of generalization and could be used as a model.

/...

19. Bearing in mind the scope of such an endeavour, the Committee considered that work should begin on a limited number of thematic areas, such as:

(a) Overall approach to the elaboration of national sustainable development strategies: for that purpose UNDP was invited to revive the work of the Committee's Task Force on Sustainable Development Strategies in order to undertake the tasks outlined in the paragraph above, as well as to consider ways and means of integrating in this work the relevant results of the work of ACC's ad hoc task forces that, inter alia, developed guidelines for national policy-makers related to the implementations of agreements in the areas that cut across the outcomes of recent United Nations global conferences, and that are highly relevant to the goals of sustainable development;

(b) Integrated approach to land and water management: the Committee considered that this work can be undertaken under the leadership of the ACC's Subcommittee on Water Resources;

(c) Integration of sustainability concerns in national fiscal instruments: that work would be led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs as the task manager for financial issues, and include the convening of a meeting and/or organizing a time-bound task force of United Nations agencies and international institutions which are involved in this field;

(d) Sustainable tourism: more specific suggestions on organizing work in this area will be submitted by UN/DSD/DESA for consideration at the eleventh meeting of IACSD, taking into account the outcome of the special session;

(e) Support for local sustainable development initiatives: more specific proposals could be elaborated by HABITAT for further consideration by the Committee.

2. Sustainable development workshops

20. The Committee agreed that it would be important to ensure that the various workshops organized or planned by the United Nations system with a view to exchanging good practices and providing policy advisory services to national decision makers and professionals contributed to the goals of sustainable development. The work launched in the context of the preparations for the tenth session of IACSD and aimed at compiling the lists of workshops that were currently under preparation or planned within the United Nations system had proved useful and should continue since it helped to promote synergies and avoid duplication. It was agreed that the following specific tasks would be undertaken:

(a) The identification of existing workshops that provided a vehicle for promoting the goals of integration of sectoral policies towards sustainable development;

(b) The focusing of new workshops (organized for the purpose of exchanges of national/regional experiences) on those thematic areas for which materials

/...

for guidance for national action were available or were envisaged (see para. 19 above);

(c) the development of methodology for future workshops (possibilities for the use of the Turin Centre would be explored);

(d) The full use of the potential of the United Nations regional commissions in this area.

21. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in consultation with other organizations, would initiate the process outlined above and present proposals at the next meeting of IACSD.

3. Preparations for the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

22. It was agreed that the nature of reports to the Commission on Sustainable Development in the forthcoming period should be reoriented in the light of the new requirements emanating from the new work programme of the Commission for the 1998-2002 period. More specifically, the reports, building upon conceptual frameworks agreed by the Commission in its previous work cycle, should focus on action needed by various actors to promote sustainable development in the areas under consideration, and should promote more integrated approaches and policies. The general new format of the reports for the Commission would be a report of the Secretary-General (up to 16 pages long), supplemented, as required, with more detailed background papers discussing specific aspects of the issue under consideration, as well as policy linkages with other issues. The Secretary-General's reports would be limited to:

(a) A brief "state of the art" section;

(b) References to background papers and other supplementary material and reports;

(c) Proposals for action.

23. The Committee noted that in accordance with the new programme of work of the Commission, each of the forthcoming sessions of the Commission would focus on different issues to be identified in advance, which would normally allow more time for the substantive preparations for Commission sessions. The Committee noted with interest an experience of FAO, which had already established issue-oriented secretariat task forces covering all issues relevant to FAO to be considered by the Commission during the period 1998-2001.

24. As to the 1998 session of the Commission, the Committee noted that the Bureau of the Commission would formulate proposals on the agenda of the 1998 meetings of the ad hoc inter-sessional working group(s) for consideration and approval of member States. Having considered various ongoing and planned activities in the items that were on the agenda of the Commission's sixth session, the Committee felt that it might be useful to suggest to the Bureau of the Commission that its ad hoc inter-sessional working group be devoted to the

/...

issue of industry. That could provide for a broad consideration of the role of industry in sustainable development and analyse linkages with the relevant chapters of Agenda 21, thus facilitating the consideration of the issue of industry within the Commission. Another issue that could be considered by the ad hoc inter-sessional working group could be the cluster of cross-sectoral issues, especially a discussion and elaboration of the Commission's work programme on education and sustainable development. The Committee felt that given the number of meetings that would address the issue of freshwater prior to the sixth session of the Commission, there should be no need for an ad hoc working inter-sessional group to consider that issue.

25. Regarding the specific issues on the agenda of the sixth session of the Commission, the following agreements were reached.

(a) Freshwater

26. The Secretary-General's report would be prepared under the lead of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources. The documentation should go beyond the conceptual discussion of the water issue to suggest a strategy and specific actions required to promote sustainable and integrated water management. Furthermore, it should focus on the financing of integrated water management; consider ways to clarify the respective roles of the numerous institutional capacities that existed at the global level, both within and outside the United Nations system; discuss linkages between policies in the fields of water and health; discuss the impact of policies related to water on poverty; promote best practices; and provide a link with the forthcoming discussion in the Commission of industry and sustainable development.

27. The Committee noted that water would be a subject for discussion in the forthcoming UNEP ministerial meeting in November 1997. Although that meeting would largely focus on the role of UNEP in this area, the Committee invited UNEP to coordinate the preparation of proposals for the meeting with members of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources with a view to ensuring the consistency of United Nations system-wide approaches presented for the consideration of Governments.

(b) Cross-sectoral theme: "Transfer of technology/capacity-building/education/science/awareness raising"

28. It was agreed that the above cross-sectoral theme would be addressed in one consolidated report of the Secretary-General, with relevant task managers (Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNDP, UNESCO) taking the lead in the preparation of its specific sections, and, if necessary, relevant supplementary background papers. The focus of thematic sections of the report would be as follows:

(a) On technology, it was agreed that the work of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and UNEP in this area, as well as the results of the feasibility study on publicly owned technology carried out by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNEP and Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with the support of the Government of the Republic of Korea, would form important parts of the report;

/...

(b) On capacity-building, it was agreed that the report should attempt to prioritize various capacity-building needs at the national level;

(c) On education, the report should suggest ways to further elaborate the Commission's work programme on education for sustainable development, as well as proposals for action to secure the commitment required for its implementation. Proposals should take into account the outcome of the International Conference on Environment and Society: Education and Public Awareness for Sustainability (Thessaloniki, Greece, 8-12 December 1997), co-organized by UNESCO and the Government of Greece, as well as outcomes of the meetings organized by UNEP, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Federation of Engineering Organizations that will address ways and means of integrating a sustainable development perspective in higher-level education;

(d) On science, the report would include: (i) a review of the different roles and set-up of existing international mechanisms providing scientific assessments and scientific advice relevant to sustainable development; (ii) proposals for enhanced support towards implementing the three global observation systems on oceans, land and climate; and (iii) proposals for enhanced support for scientific capacity-building in developing countries.

(c) Industry

29. The Committee was briefed on a suggestion to organize, during the sixth session of the Commission, an "industry segment" that would provide for an interactive dialogue between the representatives of industry (both the business community and trade unions), non-governmental organizations, Governments and international organizations. It would be particularly important to ensure that the perspectives of all the key actors in the industry sector be brought to the attention of such a segment.

30. Regarding the Secretary-General's report on industry for the Commission (or its ad hoc inter-sessional working group if it was devoted to that issue), the Committee considered a tentative outline of such a report prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (annex VI). While it was felt that the outline provided a good starting point for work on the report, a number of specific suggestions were made with a view to further refining it, including:

(a) The need to analyse the role of all types of industries, such as extracting, manufacturing, service and agro-industries;

(b) The need to consider the role and impact of both large-scale and small-scale enterprises;

(c) The need to give due consideration to the role of industry in technology transfer and development, including in the area of new technologies, as well as to identify linkages with capacity-building, science and education;

(d) The need to consider matters related to occupational health and safety in the workplace, as well as such areas as chemical safety and wastes management.

/...

31. Bearing in mind the different nature of preparations for the "economic sector" discussions in the Commission that should cut across the entire scope of Agenda 21 (and in a number of cases the relevant results of other conferences, such as the World Summit for Social Development), it was agreed that the process of preparation of documentation should go beyond the traditional task manager's approach. It was agreed that Department of Economic and Social Affairs would take the broad responsibility for initiating and coordinating preparation of the documentation, while individual organizations would take the lead in preparing, through inter-agency collaboration, specific parts of the document. It was also agreed that a new outline and proposal for the organization of work would be forwarded by the Department to all concerned shortly after the meeting.

32. The Committee noted that if it was decided to devote the ad hoc inter-sessional working group to the issue of industry, relevant documentation should be finalized by the end of December 1997.

(d) Small island developing States

33. The Committee agreed on the division of labour among the task managers and lead organizations for reports on issues, as contained in annex VII to the present report.

C. Coordination of the Geoscience programmes
of the United Nations system

34. In introducing the item, the representative of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) recalled the reasons that had led the Secretary-General of WMO to convene a meeting of eminent persons on the subject of the geosciences programmes of the United Nations system, and the decision of IACSD at its ninth session, following an initial consideration of the issue, that it would review the issue at its tenth session based on further information to be provided by WMO and prepare for ACC consideration of the matter.

35. WMO had organized a round-table meeting on the geosciences and their applications at Geneva at the end of August 1997, which had provided a forum for further discussion for enhancing the contribution of the geosciences and their application to sustainable development through the relevant organizations of the United Nations system. The meeting had focused on: recent developments relating to humanitarian activities, including natural disaster mitigation; the possible need for a new paradigm to address "planetary issues" more effectively; the desirability of better linkages through coordinated planning and joint activities, including a process for the division of labour and the coordination of the distributed responsibilities; and the need to obtain Governments' support for any enhancement initiatives.

36. During the round-table discussions, it was recommended that further efforts towards enhanced coordination of the geosciences programmes of the United Nations programmes of the United Nations system should be focused primarily on strengthening the relevant existing mechanisms for thematic coordination, such as the Inter-Agency Committee on the Climate Agenda, the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources, the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas and through

/...

the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. It was also suggested that IACSD serve as the forum for providing the appropriate overall policy setting framework and mechanism, including addressing cross-cutting issues relating to the geosciences and their application; submitting proposals for the decision of ACC, as well as to the Commission on Sustainable Development where government action or support was required. That would include addressing global issues, such as natural disaster mitigation, climate change, environmental issues and water resources management. IACSD also noted that in the programme of work of the Commission for 1998-2001, as adopted by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session, in June 1997, the sectoral themes of focus for each year were all related to the geosciences and their applications.

37. IACSD expressed appreciation to WMO for facilitating further consultations on the issue, and endorsed the recommendations emanating from the round-table discussions. However, with regard to new mechanisms the Committee proposed that in the light of the importance and complexity of the issues involved, ad hoc inter-sessional meetings of organizations most concerned could be held as and when required, without the need to resort to establishing formally an additional subcommittee of IACSD. The results of those ad hoc meetings could be reported to IACSD at subsequent sessions. The Committee also stressed the importance of forging links with the relevant parts of the scientific community not directly within the United Nations system in undertaking work in this area.

D. Proposed agenda, dates and venue for the
eleventh meeting of the Committee

38. It was agreed that IACSD would hold its next meeting at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 19 and 20 February 1998, immediately before the meeting of the ad hoc inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The provisional agenda for the above meeting is contained in annex IV.

E. Request for observer membership in IACSD

39. The Committee considered the request from the ITTO for observer membership in IACSD. The Committee recognized that the ITTO is involved in an important area of the substantive work covered by IACSD. However, bearing in mind that ITTO was not part of the United Nations system, the Committee decided to transfer this request for consideration by the Organizational Committee of ACC. Subject to the views of the Organizational Committee of ACC, ITTO will be invited to the next meeting of the Committee.

II. WORK OF IACSD

A. Proposed global initiative for the protection and promotion of health and environment in border areas

40. The representative of WHO briefed the Committee on the status of work being undertaken by his organization on the issue. He reported that a task force had been established within WHO under the Chairmanship of its Assistant Director-General for Health Systems. At one of its early meetings, the task force had decided to initiate its work by establishing a pilot project related to the Mexico/United States border. There already had been a first meeting of the United States/Mexico Border Health Association, which had adopted the Phoenix Global Declaration for Healthy and Safe Borders in the Twenty-first Century. He indicated that there were likely to be some other pilot projects, and considered that it would be preferable for IACSD to await the results of those pilot projects before attempting to define a more global initiative on the issue. He expressed the hope that other concerned organizations within the United Nations system would eventually participate in the process as the work progressed. It was indicated that the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees might be the organizations most likely to be associated with the initiative.

B. Reports of subsidiary bodies reporting to IACSD: report on an ad hoc meeting of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas to review progress made in implementation of the work plan

41. The report on the meeting, which was held at Stockholm from 6 to 8 August 1997, was before the Committee for information purposes only, since it had yet to be considered by the Subcommittee at a formal session.

42. The Committee welcomed the initiative to move towards a joint meeting of the subcommittees on water and on oceans and coastal areas, and looked forward to receiving proposals from both subcommittees.

43. The Committee also encouraged those agencies and organizations that had not yet received a mandate from their governing body to follow up on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action to take the necessary steps to secure such a mandate.

C. Other matters

1. Follow-up action on streamlining of reporting

44. IACSD was informed of progress made to date on the streamlining of national reporting, as contained in document ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.7 (see annex III). It was noted that the issue was difficult to address for a number of reasons, including the fact that relevant national reporting to various intergovernmental bodies and conferences of parties could be either voluntary or legally binding; that the periodicity varied considerably; and that the type of information

/...

requested might be both qualitative and quantitative. Following inter-agency discussions, it had been agreed, as a first step, to adopt a two-track approach. One track would be at the international level, using the United Nations System-wide Sustainable Development Web site as a means of making information collected through national reporting more accessible and transparent and thus easier to share. The other would be at the national level, to assist planning and coordination through the establishment of a three-year calendar of all relevant national reports requested. That calendar had been developed and posted on the Internet, and would also be made available to national Governments in printed format.

45. It was agreed that the next step that needed to be taken was to streamline requests for information that were made to national Governments, and that that should also be undertaken through the coordination efforts of IACSD. IACSD should also look into the possibility of making a contribution to the broader exercise of streamlining national reporting in the follow-up to all recent United Nations global conferences.

2. Other issues

(a) Presentation on methodologies for sustainable livelihoods

46. UNDP reported on its work in the area of sustainable livelihoods, which was noted by the Committee.

(b) Presentation of the Sustainable Development World Wide Web site

47. IACSD welcomed the United Nations System-wide Sustainable Development World Wide Web site, which was launched at the meeting. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in her introduction, explained that the Web site had been developed in response to decisions taken by the Commission at its third and fourth sessions and IACSD at its sixth and seventh meetings, and had been designed consistent with the parameters established during inter-agency consultations that had been held in January and September 1996. The Web site was organized primarily by country, indicator and issue, and was characterized by multiple links both to Web sites of organizations within the United Nations system and to official national Web sites. It was agreed by participants in the IACSD meeting that they would provide information on additional links that should be installed on the Web site. The Web site was accessible at:

www.unsystem.org/agenda21.

48. IACSD also noted that further work might need to be continued on efforts to agree on common core data sets within the United Nations system in order, inter alia, to avoid situations where links to conflicting data sets might exist.

/...

(c) Modalities for the energy process included in the programme for further implementation of Agenda 21

49. IACSD stressed the importance of the issue for achieving sustainable development, and considered that a strategic approach was needed. The programme for the further implementation of Agenda 21 had set out a process for the preparation of the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, in 2001, in the energy area.¹

50. A detailed proposal for the preparations for the 2001 process would be submitted to IACSD at its eleventh meeting, building upon the inter-agency consultative process that had already been initiated preceding the fifth session of the Commission. Consideration could also be given to a possible time-bound secretariat process, learning from the experience in the area of forests.

(d) Implementation programme of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests

51. The Committee took note of the implementation programme submitted by the Chairman of the Task Force, Dr. Harcharik of FAO. The Committee welcomed the positive and constructive experience of the Task Force, and encouraged continued cooperation in the framework of the implementation programme.

* * *

52. The Committee expressed appreciation to WHO for hosting the tenth session of the Committee.

53. The Committee noted that the tenth meeting would be the last to be attended by the Director of the Division for Sustainable Development, Ms. Joke Waller-Hunter, who was leaving the United Nations system for another important assignment. The Committee expressed its deep appreciation to Ms. Waller-Hunter for her continuous and dynamic leadership and active contribution to the work of IACSD, and to advancing sustainable development work in general.

Notes

¹ The Committee noted that the outcome of the Third Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Kyoto, Japan, will have an important impact on the discussion on energy.

Annex I

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda and timetable.
2. Follow-up to the outcome of meetings of:
 - (a) ACC;
 - (b) Intergovernmental bodies.
3. Follow-up to the 1997 special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of Agenda 21: preparation of the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, including matters relating to the sustainable development of small island developing States.
4. Coordination of the geoscience programme of the United Nations system.
5. Proposed global initiative for the protection and promotion of health and environment in border areas.
6. Reports of subsidiary bodies reporting to IACSD: report of the ad hoc meeting of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas to review progress made in implementation of the work plan.
7. Other matters:
 - (a) Follow-up action on streamlining of reporting;
 - (b) Dates, venue and provisional agenda for the eleventh session of IACSD;
 - (c) Other issues:
 - (i) Presentation on methodologies for sustainable livelihoods;
 - (ii) Presentation of the Sustainable Development World Wide Web site;
 - (iii) Modalities for the energy process included in the programme for further implementation of Agenda 21;
 - (iv) Implementation programme of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests.
8. Adoption of the report.

/...

Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairman: N. DESAI (United Nations)

Secretary: Christopher F. HACKETT (United Nations)

United Nations, its entities and programmes

United Nations	J. Waller-Hunter M. P. Silveira M. Zinovieff A. Vasilyev
Department of Humanitarian Affairs	
International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction	P. Boulle C. Rose
Economic Commission for Africa	P. Makinwa-Adebusoye
Economic Commission for Europe	D. Dreiblatt K. Barlund
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	J. D. Cuddy M. Plehn-Mejia D. P. Elliott S. Wotten
United Nations Development Programme	A. Wijkman K. Jorgensen
United Nations Environment Programme	A. Amin J. Aloisi de Larderel A. Dahl
United Nations Population Fund	H. Jemai
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements	L. Ludvigsen P. Garau
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Y. Kimura

Specialized agencies and related organizations

International Labour Organization	N. Watfa S. K. Miller
-----------------------------------	--------------------------

/...

Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

L. Fresco

United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

G. Glaser

World Health Organization

W. Kreisel
G. Otolins
R. Helmer

International Monetary Fund

G. B. Taplin

International Telecommunication Union

H. Teboubi

World Meteorological Organization

R. de Guzman
J. Breslin
S. Chacowry

United Nations Industrial Development
Organization

M. Rigola

* * *

International Atomic Energy Agency

M. S. Opelz

World Trade Organization

S. Shaw

* * *

International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO

P. Lindholm
R. de Viana

* * *

Secretariat of the Convention on
Biological Diversity

A. Gross

Secretariat of the United Nations
Convention to Combat Desertification

S. Briceno

Secretariat of the United Nations Framework
Convention on Climate Change

A. Taalab

* * *

Global Environment Facility

O. A. Avalle

/...

Annex III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.1	Annotated provisional agenda
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.2	Timetable
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.3	Follow-up to the 1997 special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of Agenda 21: report on an informal meeting of IACSD
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.4 and Annex	Follow-up to the 1997 Special Session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of Agenda 21: draft discussion note on a programme of sustainable development workshops
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.5	Coordination of the geoscience programme of the United Nations system: information note on the coordination of geosciences programmes of the United Nations system by the World Meteorological Organization
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.6	Reports of subsidiary bodies reporting to IACSD: report of an ad hoc meeting of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas to review progress made in implementation of the work plan
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.6/Add.1	Reports of subsidiary bodies reporting to IACSD: summary of the progress made in implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, submitted by the UNEP Water Branch
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.7	Other matters: follow-up action on streamlining of reporting, draft background note on streamlining of national reporting
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.8	Other issues: implementation programme of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forest, implementation plan entitled "Inter-agency partnership on forests: implementation of IFP Proposals for Action by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Forests"
ACC/IACSD/X/1997/CRP.9	Follow-up to the 1997 special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of Agenda 21: preparations for the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, background paper prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

/...

Annex IV

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF IACSD

1. Adoption of the agenda and timetable.
2. Follow-up to the outcome of meetings of:
 - (a) ACC;
 - (b) Intergovernmental bodies.
3. Guidance for national action.
4. Energy cooperation/preparations for energy discussion in 2001.
5. Preparations for the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.
6. Other matters.

Annex V

REPORT ON AN INFORMAL MEETING OF IACSD ON THE OUTCOME OF
THE NINETEENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(Geneva, 9 July 1997)

1. An informal meeting of IACSD was held in accordance with the agreement reached at its 9th meeting. The meeting was intended to serve as a "brainstorming" session aimed at assessing the results of the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly and at preparing for a discussion under item 2 on the provisional agenda of the 10th meeting of IACSD (WHO Headquarters, Geneva, 17 and 18 September 1997), entitled "Follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of Agenda 21".

2. The meeting was chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. The list of participants is contained in the appendix. The following main issues were discussed during the meeting:

(a) Assessment of the outcome of the special session;

(b) Focus of inter-agency cooperation after the special session: towards implementation strategies based on common approaches;

(c) Implications of the programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development for the 1998-2002 period for the work of IACSD and its task managers.

3. The discussions under items 2 and 3 were preliminary in nature. However, the participants agreed to carefully study within their organizations all of the proposals made during the meeting, and to come up with more specific ideas and suggestions in preparations for the tenth meeting of IACSD, so that concrete decisions could be taken at that meeting.

4. The following are the highlights of the main conclusions made during the informal meeting and of the main proposals made during its deliberations.

A. Assessment of the outcome of the special session

5. The participants felt that in spite of negative assessments of the results of the special session in the media, particularly that in Western Europe, as well as the fact that the political outcome of the special session did not meet fully the expectations of a number of developed and developing countries, as well as environmental groups, the overall outcome of the session, in particular the adoption of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, included a number of positive developments and decisions that advanced international agreement and promoted action in the area of sustainable development, including:

/...

(a) The honesty and transparency with which the special session carried out the assessment of progress achieved since UNCED;

(b) The participatory nature of the special session and of its preparatory process, including unprecedented involvement of non-governmental organizations and major groups;

(c) More positive approach taken by many developed countries, both in the debate in the plenary and in the course of negotiations, to the issue of official development assistance (ODA), including recognition by the majority of donors of the need to reverse the current declining trend in the ODA/gross national product (GNP) ratio;

(d) A greater emphasis on developmental and social aspects of sustainable development, which was reflected in the final document of the session;

(e) A large number of practical decisions that advanced international commitment to action and cooperation, particularly in such areas as freshwater, energy and forests;

(f) Adoption of a more focused programme of work for the Commission on Sustainable Development that provided for a more integrated treatment of economic, social and environmental components of sustainable development, and at the same time clarified specific roles of the Commission, and of other international processes and organizations, particularly of UNEP, in that area;

(g) Recognition of the fact that the United Nations system had approached the tasks emanating from UNCED and its follow-up in a well coordinated and collaborative way;

(h) Greater emphasis on the role of regional organizations and institutions in the implementation of Agenda 21 and in providing a forum for exchanges of national experiences and good practices;

(i) Better recognition of the role of science in the formulation of policies and decision-making.

6. It was agreed that the United Nations system should build upon those positive results and take them fully into account in further work in the area of sustainable development and the implementation of Agenda 21. In particular, it would be essential to translate the positive results of the special session into practical action at the national level.

B. Focus of inter-agency cooperation after the Special session:
towards implementation strategies based on common approaches

7. The participants agreed that the main challenge for IACSD and its task managers in the period after the special session would be to ensure a stronger focus in inter-agency collaboration on practical implementation, particularly at the country level. That, inter alia, would improve linkages between the results of policy discussions and agreements reached at the international level with

/...

national sustainable development activities. In particular, it would be essential to make the best use of the experience and knowledge available in the United Nations system, including that of the task managers and the delivery capacities of the UNDP at the national level. It would be particularly important to further develop common approaches that would guide future system-wide work in all key areas of sustainable development.

8. It was agreed that the following specific measures would be considered at the tenth meeting of the IACSD:

(a) Preparation through the task managers system of guidelines/manuals/methodologies or similar materials addressing main policy issues related to sustainable development which could be made available, upon request, to national policy-makers and institutions. Such guidelines, which could be used and disseminated at the country level by resident coordinators, should not be prescriptive in nature, but should rather suggest most promising policy options (based on decisions adopted by the CSD and other relevant international bodies, as well as on "good practices" and experiences) which countries may wish to consider in formulation of their policies;

(b) Organization of a series of sustainable development workshops. Such workshops could provide a good and cost-effective way of carrying out United Nations system functions related to the provision of policy advisory services to national decision makers and professionals. Those workshops could be focused either on generic issues (e.g., formulation of sustainable development strategies or use of economic instruments), or on more specific sectoral themes (e.g., integrated water management) and could be organized individually or jointly by the task managers, UNDP and the regional commissions. However, it would be important for IACSD to elaborate some sort of a strategic framework or consolidated programme of such workshops for the period of the next two or three years to ensure that they contributed to the implementation of United Nations goals in the area of sustainable development. The following specific modalities could be further considered:

- (i) Insertion of a sustainable perspective in workshops already under preparation or planned;
- (ii) Workshops for national-level personnel that could be organized either in countries or at headquarters. In the latter case, it was felt that it would be important to ensure participation in such workshops of several professionals from each country in order to build a "critical mass" of expertise and networks at the national level;
- (iii) Regional workshops for the purpose of exchanges of national experiences and good practices. That could include launching voluntary peer reviews within regions, as suggested in paragraph 133 (c) of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 adopted by the special session;
- (iv) It was agreed that all organizations of the United Nations system would bring to the tenth meeting of IACSD their specific proposals on

/...

that matter, including information on relevant workshops planned or considered for the coming years;

(c) Elaboration of a common approach to the implementation in the priority areas of freshwater (where an implementation strategy as part of a global plan of action would need to be elaborated) and energy (where a common approach as reference framework for the activities of the United Nations system at the national level should be operational by the year 2001). Based on the recent experiences in the area of forests (ITFF) and freshwater (Steering Committee for the Global Water Assessment), work in the areas of water and energy could be organized through the establishment of ad hoc task forces that were high-level, limited to most interested organizations, and provided for the involvement of relevant intergovernmental organizations from outside the ACC system, secretariats of relevant conventions and major groups/institutions. More specifically:

- (i) In the area of freshwater, the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources could consider specific modalities for organizing further work;
- (ii) In the area of energy, future arrangements could be based on the experience of the ad hoc task force established to prepare the recent report on coordination of energy-related activities in the United Nations system;

(d) A more systematic approach to the collection and dissemination of information. That work should include further work on improving common access to data and information launched by IACSD, further development of the system-wide sustainable development home page, broadening access of countries to UNDP's sustainable development network, and consideration of the feasibility of organizing "virtual conferences" on sustainable development issues.

9. The participants generally welcomed the initiative to organize by the end of 1997 a meeting of regional institutions to discuss their future role in the implementation of Agenda 21 in light of the outcome of the special session.

10. It was also felt that it would be important to establish a clear link between future arrangements for the implementation of Agenda 21 under the auspices of IACSD with the work of the task forces established to follow-up other global conferences, as well as with relevant work done by CCPOQ.

C. Implications of the programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development for the 1998-2002 period for the work of IACSD and its task managers

11. The participants welcomed the adoption of the new programme of work of the Commission, which provided for a much more focused consideration of key sustainable development issues, and at the same time a good opportunity for integrated consideration of sectoral themes with cross-cutting issues, including matters related to the means of implementation. It was felt to be important that the programme provide an opportunity for consideration of sustainable

/...

development issues in the context of important economic sectors, such as industry, agriculture, tourism, energy and transport.

12. It was felt that in principle, the task managers system established by IACSD after UNCED, including the allocation of responsibilities for various chapters of Agenda 21, should not be changed. However, to promote a more integrated approach it would be crucial to improve modalities for interaction among the task managers, particularly among those who dealt with natural resource/environmental issues and those responsible for cross-sectoral themes and means of implementation.

13. The new programme of work of the Commission required a change in the nature of reporting to the Commission. In a preliminary way, the following suggestions were discussed:

(a) The reports should pay more attention to reviewing promising policy developments and good practices (both at the regional/national/local level, and within international institutions) rather than being "conceptual" in nature, as was the case during the 1993-1996 period. Of course, that should not apply to those policy areas where further conceptual understanding and political consensus were needed at the international level;

(b) The format of the reporting could be as follows: one "strategic" report of the Secretary-General (up to 16 pages as required by United Nations regulations) for each of the "main" issues on the Commission's agenda in a given year, supplemented with more detailed background papers addressing, as appropriate, linkages with other areas. Such papers should as a rule be prepared for so-called "overriding issues" of poverty and changing production/consumption patterns; financing; transfer of technology; the role of major groups; and critical trends in the area under discussion;

(c) Greater prominence in reporting should be given to developmental and social aspects of the "environmental/natural resources" theme, in the focus of discussion in a given year (see left column of the work programme);

(d) It would be important to find effective modalities for involving the representatives of the economic sectors/major groups in the preparation of reports addressing themes identified in the right column of the programme of work.

(e) An event should be organized related to employment and sustainable development in the context of sixth session of the Commission.

14. It was agreed that the task managers would prepare for the next session of IACSD more specific proposals on the format and modalities for preparation of the reports (and background documents, as appropriate) dealing with issues under consideration by the Commission at its sixth session, in 1998.

* * *

15. It was agreed that the report of the meeting would serve as the background document for discussion/action under item 2 on the agenda of the tenth meeting

/...

of IACSD. Furthermore, it was agreed that in addition to consideration of specific issues outlined above, the tenth meeting of IACSD should consider the following:

(a) The participation of secretariats of the International Tropical Timber Organization and the Global Environment Facility in IACSD;

(b) Presentation by UNDP of methodologies for sustainable livelihoods;

(c) Presentation of the sustainable development home page;

(d) Modalities for the energy process included in the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21.

Appendix

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairman: N. DESAI (United Nations)

United Nations, its entities and programmes

United Nations	J. Waller-Hunter P. Najlis A. Vasilyev
International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction	P. Boulle
Economic Commission for Africa	P. Makinwa-Adebusoye
Economic Commission for Europe	K. Barlund D. Dreiblatt
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	R. Vossenaer G. Kell
United Nations Development Programme	A. Wijkman K. Jorgensen
United Nations Environment Programme	A. Dahl
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Y. Kimura F. Naylor

Specialized agencies and related institutions

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	A. Purcell D. Lawson
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	G. Glaser A. Szollosi-Nagy
World Health Organization	W. Kreisel G. Ozolins
International Monetary Fund	J. B. Zulu
International Telecommunication Union	H. Tebourbi
World Meteorological Organization	S. Chacowry

/...

United Nations Industrial Development
Organization

M. Rigola

* * *

International Atomic Energy Agency

M. S. Opelz

World Trade Organization

S. Shaw

* * *

International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO

P. Lindholm

* * *

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological
Diversity

C. Takase

Secretariat of the United Nations Convention
to Combat Desertification

S. Briceno

Secretariat of the United Nations Framework
Convention on Climate Change

M. Zammit Cutajar
A. Taalab

Secretariat of the Basel Convention for the
Control of Transboundary Movements of
Hazardous Wastes

A. J. Granados

Annex VI

TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF DOCUMENTATION ON INDUSTRY AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

I. INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- A. Role of industry in development strategies
- B. Policy challenges for Governments
 - 1. Policy reforms for sustainable growth
 - 2. Creating a climate for sustainable entrepreneurship
 - 3. Attracting foreign direct investment and technology transfer
 - 4. Major lessons from the experience of individual economies
- C. Policy challenges for the international community
 - 1. Harmonizing trade and environmental policies
 - 2. Multilateral agreements on investment

II. INDUSTRY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- A. Human development and economic growth
- B. Policy challenges for Governments
 - 1. Balancing enterprise profitability and human welfare
(Social security, including health insurance and pension contributions of enterprises, minimum wages, women, working conditions, workers' participation, etc.)
 - 2. Emerging Issues
(Social effects of downsizing, rights of immigrant workers, ageing of population and pension contribution of enterprises)
- C. Policy challenges for the international community
 - 1. Follow-up to the Copenhagen Summit on issues related to industry
 - 2. Emerging issues

III. INDUSTRY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

- A. Environmentally sustainable industrial development

/...

- B. Industrial waste emissions, environmental impacts and cleaner production
 - 1. Waste emissions
(Fossil fuel-related emissions, manufacturing emissions, mining emissions)
 - 2. Environmental impacts of waste emissions
(Global impacts, regional impacts, local impacts)
 - 3. Technological opportunities for reducing environmental damage
- C. Policy challenges for Governments
 - 1. National policy measures
 - (a) Integration of environmental and industrial policy
(Regulatory policies, economic incentives and disincentives)
 - (b) New approaches to fiscal policy and competitiveness
(Economic instruments, border tax adjustments, etc.)
 - (c) Tradable emission permits
- D. Policy challenges for the international community
 - 1. Harmonization of environmental policies
 - 2. Trade in hazardous wastes
 - 3. Counteracting the adverse impacts of eco-labelling requirements
(Internationally agreed-upon labels, mutual recognition, equivalency and transparency, technical assistance)
 - 4. Environmental management standards
EMAS, ISO 14000)

Note: The report of the Secretary-General will be a brief document of approximately 16 pages, with addenda (15 to 20 pages) on each of the three main issues I, II and III.

Annex VII

TASK MANAGERS FOR REPORTS ON SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING
STATES ISSUES

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Lead organization</u>	<u>Possible cooperating organizations/bodies</u>
1. Climate change and sea-level rise	UNEP	UNFCCC secretariat WMO GEF ETB ^a /DESA UNESCO/IOC WHO
2. Management of waste	UNEP	WHO World Bank UNIDO Habitat
3. Freshwater resources	NRMB ^b /DESA	ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources
4. Land resources	FAO	World Bank
5. Biodiversity resources	UNEP	Biodiversity Convention secretariat GEF Forest Panel secretariat/DESA FAO UNESCO
6. National institutions and administrative capacity	UNDP	DGPAF ^c /DESA World Bank
7. Regional institutions and technical cooperation	SIDS Unit/DESA	ECLAC (Trinidad) ESCAP (POC) ECA
8. Science and technology	UNESCO (Science) UNIDO (Technology)	World Bank SPFTB ^d /DESA

/...

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Lead organization</u>	<u>Possible cooperating organizations/bodies</u>
9. Human resources	SIDS Unit/DESA	UNDP ILO World Bank

^a ETB: Energy and Transport Branch.

^b NRMB: Natural Resources and Minerals Branch.

^c DGPAF: Division for Governance, Public Administration and Finance.

^d SPFTB: Socio-economic Policies, Finance and Technology Branch.
