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## ESTABLISHING INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS—UNEP IE/PAC EXPERIENCE

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### SUMMARY

This paper covers three issues related to building global partnerships and international networks for environmental protection and sustainable development. First, the rationale or need for such partnerships and networks is discussed. Second, some of UNEP IE/PAC's programs which are founded on broad-based partnerships are outlined. The paper closes with some observations on the goals of partnerships.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

It is an honor to represent the UNEP Industry and Environment Programme Activity Centre (IE/PAC) at this third International Conference on Environmental Enforcement. UNEP IE/PAC appreciated the opportunity to work with the other conference sponsors and organizers, the US EPA, WWF, SEDESOL and VROM and to participate in discussions of these timely and important subjects.

I also bring you best wishes for a successful conference from Mrs. Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel, Director of UNEP IE/PAC. She very much wanted to be with you today but was recently called to an important meeting by the UNEP Executive Director. Happily for me, this turn of events resulted in my good fortune in being able to travel to Mexico and attend your meeting. However, I promised Jacqueline a full report on your deliberations on my return.

I am very impressed by the theme of this session: Establishing International Networks. This theme reflects the important need to bring together the combined resources and expertise of all elements of society to effectively deal with some of the complex health, safety and environmental issues of the future. This concept of global partnerships and networks is clearly called for by Agenda 21 adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Just reading the titles of some of the sections of Agenda 21 sounds a roll call of the major groups with a stake in sustainable development:

“Global action for women towards sustainable and equitable development...

Children and youth in sustainable development...

Recognizing and strengthening the role of indigenous people and their communities...

Strengthening the role of NGOs...

Local authorities initiatives...

Strengthening the role of workers and their trade unions...

Strengthening the role of business and industry...

Scientific and technological community...

Strengthening the role of farmers...

Environmentally sound technology: transfer, cooperation and capacity-building...

National mechanisms and international cooperation for capacity-building in developing countries..."

This session gives us all the opportunity to review how we can respond to the mandates of Agenda 21 and forge effective partnerships with governments, other industries, international organizations, professional associations, academia, NGOs and others that will contribute to sustainable development.

In my presentation today I would like to cover three topics related to building global partnerships and networks for environmental protection and sustainable development. First, I would like to discuss the rationale or need for such partnerships and networks. Second, I would like to tell you about some of UNEP IE/PAC's programs which are founded on broad-based partnerships. And finally, I will close with some observations on the goals of partnerships. However, I hope that these observations, developed over my 20 years experience in the environmental field, stimulate thought and discussion.

## **2 THE NEED FOR PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS**

I believe that there are three interrelated reasons for the current, wide-spread interest in partnerships for environmental protection and sustainable development. The first is a growing recognition of the need to augment the conventional approaches to environmental protection that are based on end-of-pipe control technologies implemented through regulatory programs and enforcement. The second is the realization that we are all stakeholders in sustainable development and that it is essential to work together to attempt to reach consensus solutions that will meet both environmental and development goals. The third is that the potentially high cost of environmental programs makes it necessary to combine the scientific, technical and economic resources of all stakeholders. Let me elaborate a bit on these issues.

Over the past 20 years I have seen substantial progress in addressing many environmental problems. For the most part, this progress has been made primarily in those countries that have established environmental control programs based on environmental standards, regulations and enforcement. For example, extensive efforts in regulating discharges to surface waters and requiring the treatment of municipal and industrial waste waters, has improved significantly the water quality in many lakes, streams, rivers and estuaries. The air in many cities is cleaner today due to the application of emission controls on mobile and stationary sources. Effective regulatory programs for solid waste management have eliminated open dumping and put in place integrated systems of sanitary landfills, waste-to-energy facilities and recycling systems. Regulatory control programs for the management of hazardous waste have led to the implementation of modern waste treatment and disposal facilities. These advances have not come easy and should not be taken for granted. In general, environmental regulatory programs have resulted in the advancement and application of environmental controls and have made a difference.

However, many environmental problems still exist and we understand them to be more complex to manage than those that have been dealt with in the past. Consider the difficulty of dealing with environmental discharges from hundreds of thousands of small sources with substantial cumulative effects. How do you effectively control area wide on non-point sources such as run-off from agricultural lands or urban areas? We recognize that many environmental problems are international in nature including transboundary movement of pollutants and wastes. Others are global in scope, such as loss of biological diversity, stratospheric ozone depletion and the potential of global warming due to the greenhouse effect. Simple application of pollution control technologies will not be enough to deal with many of these complex problems that are systemic in nature.

Environmental problems in countries with developing economies pose a special set of problems. In some cases, there are no environmental standards and regulations, no administrative body responsible for enforcement and no obligation for industry to dispose of wastes properly. Often

financing is not available for the construction of pollution control facilities, and there is a lack of trained personnel to operate such systems. Broad-based efforts involving institution building, public education, technical assistance and technology transfer are important to making progress in these situations.

We also need to recognize the potentially high costs of environmental protection. I know that the U.S. is currently spending \$115 billion a year on environmental protection and this amount is expected to double by the end of this decade. By then, the United States will be spending 3 percent of their GNP for environmental protection. I have seen similar projections for expenditures in other countries as well. Clearly expenditures at these levels will affect all sectors of society. We must seek ways to reduce these costs and make the most efficient use of the combined technical and economic resources of all stakeholders.

In order to build awareness of the importance of partnerships, UNEP IE/PAC in cooperation with the Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum and the Center for Environmental Management, Tufts University have initiated the development of a comprehensive publication on international case studies that demonstrate the benefits and difficulties inherent in partnerships for sustainable development. The objective is to raise awareness of the effectiveness of partnerships and to show how stakeholders have joined forces to solve various kinds of environmental problems. The case studies will be drawn from a variety of industry sectors and countries and will illustrate the wide variety of partnerships in terms of the nature and number of partners, the purpose and structure of the partnership and its scope of action. It is hoped that this publication, to be completed in 1994, will summarize some of the key lessons of creating, operating, evaluating and replicating successful partnerships. Let me now tell you about some other IE/PAC efforts in this regard.

### **3 INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS AT UNEP IE/PAC**

The UNEP Industry and Environment Programme Activity Centre (IE/PAC) was established in 1975 to bring industry, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) together to work towards environmentally sound forms of industrial development. IE/PAC was active in UNCED's preparation and participated in the various industry fora. Following UNCED IE/PAC reviewed its strategy and with the help of an Advisory Group formed by its partners in industry, government and NGOs and reoriented its activities to better support the initiatives of Agenda 21. A summary of some major activities with an emphasis on international partnerships follows.

#### **3.1 Cleaner Production**

IE/PAC launched its Cleaner Production Programme in 1990, in partnership with many organizations including OECD, EU, UNIDO, and the World Bank. This concept has now entered the sustainable development lexicon and is strongly supported in Agenda 21. Our Cleaner Production Programme today includes: national cleaner production workshops held around the world, a publications series translated into several languages, ICPIIC the International Cleaner Production Clearinghouse, the establishment of Cleaner Production Centres in cooperation with UNIDO and a series of cleaner production demonstrations in China and Africa. The programme networks with organizations and experts world wide and transfers information to a broad set of audiences. In October 1994, in Poland, this broad program will be reviewed and discussed to assess progress made and suggest future directions.

#### **3.2 APELL**

The APELL Programme (Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level) which promotes the prevention of, and response to, industrial accidents was developed in 1988 and was also acknowledged in Agenda 21. This is a good example of an international partnership actively

developed by UNEP IE/PAC, the chemical industry (the International Council of Chemical Associations), and governments to prepare the APELL Handbook which is now available in 14 languages. Furthermore, APELL recommends national and local partnerships to prevent accidents and prepare for emergency response, and twenty APELL Seminars and Workshops have been held over the past five years reaching over 1000 local decision makers from industry, government, local authorities, and communities. Over 70 national governments now have APELL focal points which disseminate APELL information to appropriate industries and agencies on a nationwide basis and the APELL network links the members of this network.

### 3.3 OzonAction

UNEP IE/PAC is also responsible for the clearinghouse function envisaged in the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The OzonAction Information Clearinghouse transfers information on ozone-depleting substances including: policy and technical options, descriptions of alternative technologies, an international directory of experts, document abstracts and news bulletins. Workshops, conferences and training activities are held around the world and country programs have been established to provide practical assistance to industry and governments to help phase out ozone depleting substances. Regional networks of ozone offices are being established under the auspices of UNEP, enabling the sharing of information and experiences on the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

### 3.4 Tourism and transport

Agenda 21 cites the importance of tourism, one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries, in promoting sustainable development. The IE/PAC tourism programme, launched in 1991 involves partnerships with international organizations, particularly UNESCO and the World Tourism Organization, and has developed links with tourism industry associations. The program involves publications, training, technical assistance, networking and the preparation of guidelines on tourism and the environment. Transport is another area highlighted by UNCED and in 1993 IE/PAC devoted an issue of Industry and the Environment to this subject and is carrying out an evaluation of work in this field in order to develop future programs.

### 3.5 EnTA

In 1993, IE/PAC launched a new program on Environmental Technology Assessment (EnTA). The goal of EnTA is to encourage the use of technology assessment as a tool to support the development and application of environmentally sound technologies that are consistent with sustainable development. Two specific goals are to encourage cleaner production and to discourage the export and use of technologies that pose potential environmental hazards, especially in developing countries. To guide this effort, an international advisory group has been established, and the first issue of the EnTA Newsletter was issued. Future activities will include work on guidelines on the environmental information that technology importers can and should provide to importing countries. A study of the feasibility of such guidelines was called for by the UNEP Governing Council at its last meeting.

### 3.6 Sectoral activities and information transfer

IE/PAC sectoral activities provide comprehensive guidance to specific industry sectors to encourage improved environmental performance. Environmental management tools and technologies such as waste and energy audits are addressed. A series of technical guides have been prepared jointly with industry and over 15 industrial sectors have been covered to date. The response to these in other sectors show the need and demand for such technical guidance. The Industry and

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Environment Review is issued quarterly and is distributed to over 10,000 persons worldwide including government, industry and educational organizations. Each year IE/PAC responds to over 5,000 requests for information and documentation, and more than 500 researchers from academia, industry and government consult the IE/PAC library and database resources.

### 3.7 Consultation with industry, government and ngos

You can see from the descriptions above, IE/PAC has continuous consultation with its various partners in carrying out its programs and responsibilities pursuant to Agenda 21. In response to UNCED, in 1993 IE/PAC held specific consultations on two subjects: voluntary codes of conduct and sustainable consumption patterns. At a meeting with representatives of 30 international and national industry associations, voluntary environmental reporting was extensively discussed as a precondition for implementation of industry's voluntary codes of conduct on environment and sustainable development, such as the Business Charter for Sustainable Development formulated by the International Chamber of Commerce. More than 100 corporate reports on the environment, as well as some first guidelines on environmental reporting, were discussed. IE/PAC also began its contribution to implementing Agenda 21's Chapter on changing consumption patterns at another meeting with various stakeholders on this subject. There is a need for more understanding of the relationship between industry and consumers in determining the level and sustainability of consumption patterns and several organizations identified follow-up actions to further identify problems and solutions. IE/PAC will continue to strengthen its work on this important aspect of follow-up to UNCED, and continue to encourage industry codes of conduct that promote voluntary compliance with environmental policies.

## 4 SOME GOALS FOR PARTNERSHIPS

I would like to suggest a five important goals for partnerships. These are not intended to be all inclusive and I invite your suggestions for others or alternatives.

First, partnerships should enhance compliance with environmental laws and standards. They should be viewed as complimentary to environmental control and enforcement programs and not substitutes for them. Partnerships can furnish technical and managerial assistance, provide forums for consensus building and help develop institutions within government and industry to improve voluntary compliance with environmental standards. In order to assist governments build their institutional capability to carry out environmental programs, IE/PAC in 1992 published a report entitled "From Regulations to Industry Compliance: Building Institutional Capabilities." That is why IE/PAC is pleased to join with the environmental agencies of the Netherlands, Mexico and the U.S., and the World Wildlife Foundation to sponsor the Third International Conference on Environmental Enforcement in Oaxaca, Mexico.

Second, partnerships should encourage cleaner production and other preventive approaches as the strategies of choice for dealing with environmental problems. The traditional approach to environmental protection has been an end-of-pipe strategy that captures or removes pollutants after they are generated, or cleans up contamination after it has occurred. A cleaner production or preventive strategy is different, it means not creating pollution in the first place. This can be accomplished by substituting less toxic materials in product designs, recycling within industrial processes or increasing process efficiencies, and extending product lifetimes. Cleaner production usually entails cost savings in terms of reductions in waste treatment and disposal costs, reduced liability for environmental damages, lower raw material costs and process efficiencies.

Third, partnerships should support public information and environmental education. Partnerships can improve information flow to stakeholders and decision makers and educate the public on the nature of environmental problems and what can be done about them. Partnerships can

involve research into the social and economic aspects of environmental protection to better understand and design economic incentives and information and education programs.

Fourth, partnerships should encourage technology transfer and technical assistance both on a domestic and international basis. The results of environmental research and development must be transferred into the field as new and improved technological and management systems are developed. Outreach efforts to apply the results of research are essential. This is especially true on an international basis. Technology transfer to countries with developing economies is especially important.

Fifth, partnerships should provide for better integration of environmental policy with other policies. Other national and international policies can have as strong or stronger influence on environmental protection as can environmental policies. Consider the effect of energy policy on the types of fuels used, transportation policy on the vehicle mix and modes of transportation, and agricultural policy on fertilizer and pesticide use. The environmental effect of these policies need to be assessed in national and international forums. Approaches that reconcile environmental and other objectives need to be explored.

To deal with the increasingly complex environmental challenges of the future new tools and broader based strategies will be necessary. UNEP IE/PAC looks forward to new partnerships that recognize the needs and capacities of different groups and bring together the necessary resources for continuous improvement in environmental protection and sustainable development.