
SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP: COLLABORATIVE TARGETING OF ENFORCEMENT ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE

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GOALS

The discussion was designed to address the following issues:

- The potential purpose(s) of targeting enforcement internationally on particular economic sectors, pollutants, geographic areas, or types of violations.
- The advantages and disadvantages of international targeting schemes.
- For what types of activities and violations such schemes might be useful and what is the expected impact.
- How such targeting schemes might be developed. Who should be involved; What information would be needed; How decisions might be made, consensus, presentation of analysis, etc.; How targeting can be communicated.
- What follow up activities should result from targeting and whether they should be tracked and communicated in some fashion.
- If this is a good idea, what forum should be used or developed to pilot the concept.

1 INTRODUCTION

Countries world-wide share concerns about ways in which to monitor the environmental behavior of multi-national companies. Questions exist concerning the capacity of countries to enforce, minimum standards to follow, companies setting their own standards, availability of data, and international cooperation. The discussion focused on the need for creating international networks to share information and collaborate on the resolution of mutual environmental problems.

2 PAPERS

A case study on the role of national and transnational corporations in the African mining sector and the environment was prepared by E.H. Shannon. The paper underscores the need for cooperative or bilateral efforts by both transnational companies and governments to minimize negative environmental impacts. In addition, a paper on compliance and enforcement of internationally agreed upon regulations in the international shipping industry was prepared by Henk G.H. Ten Hoopen. The document discusses ways to ensure the enforcement of existing regulations in the shipping industry on a worldwide scale.

3 DISCUSSION SUMMARY

3.1 Inconsistency in Applying Standards

While some multi-national companies have strong, consistent externally and internally imposed environmental standards, others do not. While some use the standards of their parent company, others use the standards of the host country where they are less stringent. Some ignore all standards. This situation poses problems for all nations in determining what minimum standards to apply to multi-national firms.

Suggestions to resolve this issue included requiring that the company obey the host country's law or that of the company's origin, whichever is more stringent; developing and maintaining primary contact with the parent company to seek mutual agreement on standards; and developing an international inspector network to share information about the performance of major multi-national firms from one country to another.

3.2 Transboundary Pollution Problems

The group shared examples of transboundary pollution problems. In Macedonia, radiation contaminated powdered milk was discovered at the country's border. Proper disposition of the material was complicated by questions as to whether the powdered milk should be considered a hazardous waste or a food product, as well as by questions as to who was the responsible party. In the Netherlands, many shipping problems revolve around the oil pollution of the sea, ports and harbors. Although various countries have introduced measures to control discharges into their own territorial waters, international measures are less clear.

The group also shared examples of successful solutions to transboundary pollution problems. In one case, waste had been sent to Mexico for recycling. Mexican and U.S. officials became suspicious that it might be hazardous waste. Together, they arranged for Mexican officials to bring it to the Border where U.S. officials took control of it and transferred it to a hazardous waste facility. In Malaysia, where forest fires are a problem, a task force was developed to create working plans for prevention, monitoring and surveillance, and fire fighting.

3.3 Opportunities for Collaboration

The group explored ways to maximize opportunities to collaborate on multi-national, regional and global issues of mutual concern. The discussion included ways to form cooperative networks both formally and informally. These included developing a "rapid response system" with colleagues in other countries; developing a variety of databases to share laws, regulations, and information on companies; and developing ways to encourage multi-national companies to share more information.

4 CONCLUSION

Many countries share concerns regarding the consistency of the operations of multi-national companies and problems associated with transboundary pollution. Collaboration is essential to address these issues. Solutions include working with multi-nationals to seek their cooperation in operating consistently around the world; asking these companies to

produce world wide reports on environmental efforts; linking international performance with incentive awards; developing a ranking guide on multi-national performance; providing company information over the internet; sharing each country's regulations over the internet; developing a database of inspectors; developing a list/registry of companies and how much pollution they produce; and incorporating environmental concerns into international investment agreements. Most important, is developing a "rapid response system," or informal person-to-person network to resolve problems. All agreed that this could be a primary role for INECE and for the Regional Networks and meetings of the future.

