
CONFERENCE PURPOSE AND GOALS

The purpose and goals of the Fifth Conference reflected the progress already made and new directions undertaken to meet needs of participants to improve environmental compliance and enforcement.

Help to Make Compliance and Enforcement Happen

The Fifth Conference focused on action: making enforcement and compliance happen. Past conferences focused on the building blocks for understanding environmental compliance and enforcement, developing a common framework, defining common principles and understanding driving forces and barriers. Benefiting from these past discussions, the Fifth Conference used the common frameworks to focus on how to put these principles into practice, how to harness the driving forces and how to evaluate and move beyond progress already achieved. Conference plenary presentations highlighted some of the best examples of how different nations from different regions of the world, economic and social settings have taken steps to “make it happen.” In addition, the conference organizers introduced the opportunity for participants to seek assistance on particular problems in “clinics” structured around specific requests.

Draw Together Those Influencing the Design of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Programs in Effective Partnerships

The target audience for the Conferences remained enforcement officials and environmental policy makers in government and NGOs active in environmental compliance and enforcement, those who are in a position to influence the design or enhancement of environmental enforcement programs. Within government the Conference sought representation from national, regional, and local governmental units responsible for both the legal and technical aspects of environmental enforcement at the mid- to senior-management levels. It also continued to involve selected non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and representatives of selected international industry organizations. The Fifth International Conference again drew attention to identify contacts within government from both environment ministries and/or sectoral ministries involved in environmental enforcement as well as traditional law enforcement personnel in order to foster new relationships to make enforcement work more smoothly within country and to facilitate cooperation among nations both on a global and regional basis to address transboundary compliance issues.

Offer Something for Everyone

The Conference program included topics and workshops to meet the needs of all participants. Participants came from countries with various approaches to compliance and enforcement as well as with enforcement programs at various stages of development within various economic settings including those from developing, rapidly industrializing, transitional and industrialized economies. In addition, participants themselves had many years of experience in enforcement or only a few. Some participants attended past conferences, while for others this was their first experience in this international forum. Workshops were structured to take these differences into account while promoting exchanges among participants with a wide range of experiences. The Conference began with a review of how lessons learned in past conferences have been put into practice in various settings. The program also opened by

providing all participants with common ground. An overview of the Principles of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement was targeted to those new to the conference or who wanted a refresher, followed by group exercises and open exchange on neutral case studies using the Principles of Environmental Enforcement workshops. This encouraged all participants to be open to new ideas and varying approaches of colleagues during the ensuing days of the conference.

The scope of the conference offered a wide range of perspectives, from global to regional to specific country or locality programs. It brought together the full range of disciplines and organizations needed to bring about compliance with environmental requirements, both within and outside of government. It encompassed both compliance and enforcement approaches, programs and the working relationships needed to support them, both incentives and disincentives. Finally, it extended from achieving compliance with domestic environmental requirements to domestic programs implementing international environmental agreements.

Articulate and Support Country, Regional and Global Capacity Building Agendas

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in June, 1992, produced an international agenda, Agenda 21, which firmly stated that effective environmental compliance and enforcement programs are a key element of environmental management and recognized the need to build institutional capacity for effective enforcement in each nation's environmental program. If the INECE partnership and the participants in the international network are to succeed in building capacity they must direct limited resources on areas with the most important and pressing needs. The Conference program provided the potential and opportunity for nations to establish their own priorities for capacity building and an aggregated view within and across regions of the world to facilitate access to international support. To articulate needs in a manner which can be supported and understood sufficiently well to garner commitment and support, the Executive Planning Committee initiated development of a country progress self assessment tool. Among other goals it was designed to help participants focus on what they want to get out of their participation both at the conference and from follow up activities to meet perceived capacity building needs for their own countries, region, and across the globe.

Encourage Ongoing International and Regional Networking

Past conferences have shown the importance of ongoing international and regional networking beyond the conference itself that encourages and facilitates program improvements and cooperation. The conferences have seen the evolution of a global network-INECE- as well as several regional networks - both nascent and mature. The program highlighted international networking resources designed to address global issues and to facilitate cooperation among regions. In addition, participants had an opportunity to meet within their regions to discuss common challenges and priorities and to develop ongoing or build upon existing mechanisms for regional collaboration and strategies for strengthening environmental compliance and enforcement.

Foster Exchange of Expertise and Learning through Active Participation

The Conference was structured to provide ample opportunity for participants to form professional networks and to learn through active participation. In addition to open discussion during plenary sessions and workshops of 15 to 25 participants on every day of the Conference there were informal opportunities for exchange around exhibits and related Conference events.

The Conference relied heavily on interactive workgroup sessions. Participants were expected and encouraged to participate actively in discussions and working sessions. Individuals should come to the Conference prepared to share experiences in environmental compliance and enforcement that will benefit others involved in similar activities. The Conference provided time for participants to reflect on their current enforcement activities and to identify new approaches that can be implemented in their respective countries.

