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**CIDA AND THE ENVIRONMENT:  
AN EVALUATION OF THE AGENCY'S COMMITMENT  
TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

by

Tracey Bentein

A Thesis  
submitted to the  
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research  
through the  
Department of Political Science  
in Partial Fulfilment  
of the requirements for the  
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at the  
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## Abstract

Mounting global and domestic environmental awareness has proved to be an impetus for change within various Canadian governmental agencies. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is no exception. In response to the changing international and domestic environmental climate, CIDA attempted to develop a comprehensive environmental policy. In 1987, CIDA released its first policy initiative, Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA, and in 1992, the Agency re-articulated its commitment to the environment in CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability. As well, CIDA's commitment to the environment and sustainable development was affirmed in various other documents on CIDA's general policy. The second component of CIDA's Official Development Assistance Charter is of particular significance. The Charter is mentioned in two CIDA documents, To Benefit A better World and Sharing Our Future, and it states:

Canadian ODA should work to strengthen the human and institutional capacity of developing countries to solve their own problems in harmony with the natural environment.

This paper examines CIDA's environmental policy initiatives and the various commitments made by the Agency found within these documents. In addition to the policy documents, three cases are examined to ascertain CIDA's level of commitment to sustainable development. This paper argues that although an evolution has occurred in the Agency's commitment to sustainable development, several flaws remain. CIDA must more clearly articulate its

polices and renew its commitment to the achievement of their environmental objectives. The Agency currently has several programmes which contradict its stated commitment to sustainable development. Policies and programmes such as; structural adjustment, large scale infrastructural projects, non-emergency food aid, export of food irradiation technology and agricultural subsidies further environmental degradation and must be modified or abandoned. CIDA has also failed to adequately emphasize two essential components of sustainable development, environmental education and decentralization. Finally, the Agency has not taken advantage of the resources and information made available by various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

These policies and programmes must be re-evaluated, and environmental concerns must be incorporated into all aspects of CIDA's development assistance for the Agency's policies and programmes to be truly environmentally sustainable.

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### VII. CONCLUSION

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## Chapter I - Introduction

### International Context

The latter part of this century has witnessed a dramatic alteration of views on the prevailing world order. The most dramatic change has been the expansion of the concept of international security. With the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, theories and discourse on international relations have shifted. No longer do scholars and politicians emphasize the military threat as a foremost consideration in questions of international security. Economic and environmental issues have moved into the forefront of the security dialogue. Environmental concerns are now becoming recognized as legitimate national and international security issues. More significantly, the interdependent relationship between economic decisions and environmental degradation has been emphasized.

The traditional notion of security has been replaced with a new, more expansive concept that includes problems of sustainable development, the need to combat underdevelopment, the unequal distribution of wealth, the degradation of the environment, and the depletion of natural resources. A renewed emphasis has been placed on the need for global cooperation to enhance common security. According to the Brundtland Commission's Report, Our Common Future,

we are now faced with two alternative approaches to our future security:

Our future can balance the environment and the economy, while providing the opportunity to reduce economic disparity and sustain healthy life on earth. Or we can teeter-totter precariously from economic stagnation to deterioration of the environmental necessities of life, to a decline in the world standard of living.<sup>1</sup>

Since the intensification of international environmental awareness in 1972, with the Stockholm Conference on The Human Environment, concerns about the environment have evolved from pollution and conservation issues to a broad and diverse spectrum of environmentally linked areas. The change was sparked by the flood of information the international community now possesses on how we have damaged our environment.

In "The Global Environment: A Southern Perspective", Alvaro Soto estimates that exploitation of land, forests, water and other natural resources constitutes the basic means of survival for 60% of the Third World population. In Africa, 29 trees are cut down for every one that is planted. In our lifetime, one-quarter of all the different kinds of plants, animals and microorganisms are likely to become extinct.<sup>2</sup> Deserts are growing at a rate of 60,000 square kilometres a year, and 24 billion tonnes of soil are lost per year. Three hundred and twenty five to three hundred and

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<sup>1</sup> UN World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Alvaro Soto, "The Global Environment: A Southern Perspective", International Journal. XLVII (Autumn 1992), pp. 684-685.

seventy-five tonnes of hazardous waste is created annually, the majority from industrialized nations.<sup>3</sup> These statistics highlight just some of the mounting problems that the world faces today. However, industrialized and developing countries alike are continuing to exploit the ecosystem and its natural resources on a daily basis. The magnitude of the degradation is shocking.

The interdependence of all aspects of life continues to broaden the number of issues related to the environment. Physical environmental problems include deforestation, climate change, desertification, soil erosion, ozone disintegration, resource depletion, species loss, water degradation, and pollution. Environmental degradation has been tied to a host of factors, including overpopulation, poverty and industrialization. As a result of these problems, many countries are now faced with an influx of environmental refugees who can no longer survive in areas plagued by environmental degradation and natural disasters. The scope and intricacies of these problems have sparked various countries and organizations to realize the necessity of a global responsibility for action.

According to Maurice Strong, the Secretary-General of both the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment and the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development:

The technological revolution which has produced unprecedented levels of economic growth and prosperity for the industrialized world has

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Keating, Towards a Common Future: A Report on Sustainable Development and Its Implications For Canada (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1989), pp. 14, 18.

also produced immense and growing costs in terms of degradation of the environmental resource base of our planet and risks to its life support systems and to human health and well-being. We have been literally living off the Earth's capital and that capital is being seriously depleted.<sup>4</sup>

Yet policies of industrialization similar to those in developed nations have been promoted as the road to development in the Third World.<sup>5</sup> Only now is the world realizing that we cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the industrialized nations in the Third World. No longer can industrialized nations impose their own culturally and economically biased views of development on the impoverished developing nations.

Recently, there has been a call for the adoption of sustainable development in order to combat further ecological decay. Development has been defined as the process by which societies change so that they are able to meet the basic needs of their populations.<sup>6</sup> There are three purposes of development: to develop human potential, to promote social change and improve living standards, and to stimulate economic growth and

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<sup>4</sup> Maurice Strong, "Ending Hunger Through Sustainable Development", Development (1989:2/3), pp. 43-44.

<sup>5</sup>The terms "Third World", "less developed countries (LDCs)", "the South", and "developing countries" will be used interchangeably to denote countries that are not considered to be industrialized. These words will be used due to lack of more specific terminology and inconsistent usage within the sources used for this study.

<sup>6</sup>CIDA, Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1986), p. 5.

productivity.<sup>7</sup> Development occurs when societies have the financial material and human means, the institutional capacity and the incentives to increase their productivity more rapidly than consumption.<sup>8</sup> Sustainable development calls for a redefinition of the traditional notions of development.

In the Brundtland Commission's report Our Common Future, sustainable development was defined as "the process of meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same."<sup>9</sup> Since this definition was first conceived, many efforts have been made to expand and clarify it. Several authors have attempted to establish principles for achieving sustainable development. These include: viewing development from a long term perspective, integrating several issues at the same time, being resilient to change and maximizing the use of all available resources, especially human resources.<sup>10</sup> The concept of sustainable development continues to evolve, incorporating a myriad of different concerns.

At the 1992 Rio Conference on The Environment and Development,

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<sup>7</sup>CIDA, CIDA: To Benefit A Better World (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1987), p. 18.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>9</sup>UN World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 8-9.

<sup>10</sup>R.E. Munn, "Towards Sustainable Development -An Environmental Perspective" Development 1989: 2/3, p. 75.

Steven Arnold, "Sustainable Development - A Solution to The Development Puzzle?", Development (1989:2/3), p. 22.

all of these multifaceted issues were addressed. The Rio Conference also moved to link environmental and developmental concerns, which were formerly believed to be in direct opposition to each other. Protection of the environment had previously been viewed as a constraint to economic growth. The Rio Conference on The Environment and Development identified the environment as an essential component to achieving sustained economic growth. Only now are we realizing the magnitude of the failure of past development practices.

Today, 880 million people live in absolute poverty and these numbers continue to increase.<sup>11</sup> Absolute poverty has been defined as the inability to obtain adequate food, shelter and clothing from one day to the next.<sup>12</sup> Recently governments, NGOs and development agencies have recognized that the poor are the key to alleviating environmental degradation. In a 1987 Report By The Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade (SCEAIT) on Canadian development assistance, For Whose Benefit?, the issue of poverty and burgeoning population growth in the Third World was addressed.<sup>13</sup> The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which distributes 75% of Canadian Official Development Assistance (ODA), has worked to incorporate these insights into its policy.

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<sup>11</sup> William C. Winegard, For Whose Benefit? Report of The Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on Canada's Official Development Assistance Policies and Programs (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, May 1987), p. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Alvaro Soto, "The Global Environment: A Southern Perspective", p. 695.

<sup>13</sup> William C. Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 10.



Meeting the needs of the poorest people in the poorest states has become an integral focus of CIDA's new policy. In conjunction with CIDA's recognition of poverty issues, it also began to recognize the significance of working simultaneously on the environment and development.

### CIDA As An International Actor

With the growing realization of global interdependence, international and domestic pressures have mounted for development agencies to broaden the focus of their policies and programs. In Canada, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has attempted to grapple with these new challenges. CIDA has come under fire for its lack of commitment to the environment. In the last decade, CIDA has assessed and modified its goals, policies and programs.

Official development assistance (ODA), or foreign aid, has been defined as the "voluntary transfer of resources from one country to another for the stated purpose of benefitting the recipient."<sup>14</sup> Canadian assistance to the Third World began in the early 1950s, and was originally conceived as a short term solution to rebuild the countries ravaged by the Second World War. By the late 1960s, the increasing magnitude of aid disbursements and the

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<sup>14</sup>Paul Fromm and James P. Hull, Down The Drain - A Critical Re-Examination of Canadian Foreign Aid (Toronto: Griffin House, 1981), p. vii.

growing complexity of aid led to the creation of the Canadian International Development Agency. In 1968, CIDA was created from what was previously known as the External Aid Office. The magnitude and complexity of ODA continued to increase throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. In 1980, the government of Canada clearly articulated the purposes of CIDA:

To support the efforts of developing countries in fostering their economic growth and the evolution of their social systems in a way that will produce a wide distribution of the benefits of development among the populations of these countries, enhance the quality of life and improve the capacity of their population to participate in national development efforts.<sup>15</sup>

CIDA's official policy states that development assistance has three objectives: humanitarian, which expresses the Canadian desire to alleviate human suffering and promote social justice; political, which provides a means to increase stability and improve the chances for peace in the world; and economic, which aims at supporting the economic growth of developing countries, thereby stimulating international trade and Canada's own long term economic prospects.<sup>16</sup> These three objectives are the driving force behind CIDA's policies and programs. More recently, however, CIDA has attempted to incorporate concern for the environment within the framework of its policies and programs to work in conjunction with

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<sup>15</sup>The Group of 78, Canada and The World: National Interest and Global Responsibility (Ottawa: The Group of 78, 1985), p. 31.

<sup>16</sup>William C. Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 7.

its primary goals.

CIDA has prepared two separate documented policies that are intended to complement each other. Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA was released in 1987, and CIDA's Policy For Environmental Sustainability was released in 1992. Both of these papers outline CIDA's specific commitment to environmental concerns. CIDA's commitment to the environment is reaffirmed in the following CIDA documents: To Benefit A Better World, Sharing Our Future, and Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective.

In Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA, the specific aspects of CIDA's new policy initiative are indicated. The central thrust of the policy is threefold:

- 1) CIDA will conduct environmental impact assessments on all projects financed by CIDA
- 2) CIDA will place more emphasis on projects that enhance the environment
- 3) CIDA will make greater efforts in institution building, data gathering and public awareness<sup>17</sup>

The various elements of the new policy are also explained and a strategy for their implementation is included. The policy also highlights environmentally responsible projects that were previously initiated by CIDA, for example the Environmental Management Development in Indonesia (EMDI) (which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five). The emphasis of this policy was placed on bilateral aid programs. There is also, however, a stated intent to accommodate these guidelines into the other forms

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<sup>17</sup>CIDA, Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA (Hull: Public Affairs Branch, 1987), p. 3.

of assistance.

CIDA's Policy For Environmental Sustainability was intended to expand upon, and work in conjunction with the 1987 policy. The stated central objective of this initiative was "to integrate environmental considerations into its decision making and activities, and to work with its partners and developing countries at improving their capacity to promote environmentally sustainable development."<sup>18</sup> CIDA's report identified five interrelated aspects of the concept of sustainability; economic, social, cultural, political and environmental. For CIDA, environmental sustainability entails managing and protecting ecosystems to maintain both their economically productivity and their ecological functions, maintaining the diversity of life in both human-managed and natural systems, and protecting the environment from pollution to maintain the quality of land, air and water.<sup>19</sup> Several operational objectives, as well as implementation strategies specific to the individual branches of CIDA are included in this document. The documents, discussed above, provide the basic framework of CIDA's environmental policies.

#### Is CIDA's Response Adequate?

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<sup>18</sup>CIDA, CIDA's Policy For Environmental Sustainability (Hull: Minister of Supply and Services, January 1992), p. 2.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

Although many scholars contend that CIDA's environmental policies contain admirable initiatives<sup>20</sup>, these same scholars have identified inadequacies in CIDA's environmental policies as well as inconsistencies between CIDA's other programs and policies and its environmental policies. It has been argued that CIDA's food and agricultural policies, structural adjustment and capital intensive projects contradict the premises upon which the environmental policies are based. CIDA has received substantial criticism on the clarity, as well as on its commitment to its policies. Finally, CIDA has been criticized for its lack of emphasis on environmental education and decentralization.

These various criticisms of CIDA's environmental policies will be addressed in greater detail in a later chapter, but it may be helpful to elaborate briefly on them here before going on to discuss the focus, significance and methodology.

Many of CIDA's critics argue that its policies contradict its effort to incorporate environmental concerns. CIDA's food and agricultural policies, for example, have been widely criticized. It has been argued that CIDA's policies on non-emergency food aid, agricultural subsidies and food irradiation technology have furthered environmental degradation in the Third World. Food aid can have various adverse effects on the recipient country. In

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<sup>20</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox, and David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development (Halifax: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1989).

June Hall and Arthur Hanson, A New Kind of Sharing: Why We Can't Ignore Global Environmental Change (Ottawa: IDRC, 1992).

"Ending Hunger Through Sustainable Development", Maurice Strong argued that food aid is a means of disposing of surpluses that can ultimately lead to ecological damage. CIDA and Sustainable Development point out that agricultural subsidies are also ecologically perverse because they encourage farmers to occupy marginal lands and to clear forests and woodlands essential for soil and water conservation, and induce farmers to overuse pesticides and fertilizers and waste underground and surface waters for irrigation.<sup>21</sup> Non-emergency food aid and agricultural subsidies reduce the pressure for much needed agricultural reform in the Third World.

CIDA has also been involved in the export of technology to the Third World. Certain forms of technology exported to the Third World are contentious issues. Probe International, an environmental NGO which monitors international affairs in Canada and abroad, insists that CIDA should stop exporting food irradiation technology to the Third World. That process involves exposing foods to radiation emitted by radioactive Cobalt-60, and Probe International argues that there are not sufficient regulatory mechanisms in recipient countries to ensure the safe use of this technology.<sup>22</sup>

CIDA's support of structural adjustment policies is also

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<sup>21</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox and David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development (Halifax: Institute for research on Public Policy, 1989), p. 18.

<sup>22</sup>McIntosh, Andrew, "Stop selling irradiation projects, Canada asked", The Globe and Mail, Friday, March 14, 1988, p. A 8.

perceived as ecologically perverse. Structural adjustment programs require that in order to be eligible for loan rescheduling and certain types of aid, countries must restructure their economies in a manner that opens them up to world markets. In "Canada, The Environment and UNCED", Iain Wallace argues that CIDA's alignment of bilateral assistance with structural adjustment measures indicates the high level of rhetoric surrounding its environmentally sustainable policies and programs often outweighs the reality.<sup>23</sup> Structural adjustment policies and programs often cause a decline in the standard of living, and many of these initiatives have adverse effects for the poorest people in developing nations. The OECD's Environmental Management in Developing Countries<sup>24</sup>, and Robert Clarke's "Overseas Development Assistance", explain the dangers of structural adjustment and stress that this commitment contradicts many of CIDA's goals and objectives.<sup>25</sup>

CIDA's continued involvement with capital intensive and infrastructural projects has also been criticized as contradicting its environmental policies. Although CIDA has moved away from these types of projects in recent years, the environmental legacy of previous and continuing projects continues to haunt the

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<sup>23</sup>Iain Wallace, "Canada, The Environment and UNCED", Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1991), p.142.

<sup>24</sup>Denizhan Erocal (ed.), Environmental Management In Developing Countries (Paris: OECD, 1991), p. 37.

<sup>25</sup>Robert Clarke, "Overseas Development Assistance: The neo-Conservative Challenge", Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990), p. 202.

organization.

In For Whose Benefit?, SCEAIT stressed that CIDA should pay more attention to the social and environmental impacts of these projects and institute procedures for their public review.<sup>26</sup> Brian Walker in "The African Environment and The Aid Process",<sup>27</sup> and Nasir Islam in "For Whose Benefit? Smoke and Mirrors: Canada's Development Assistance Program in The 1980's", also criticize CIDA's emphasis on capital intensive infrastructural projects. They suggest that CIDA does not assess their long term ecological impacts and often CIDA has left by the time problems arise.

CIDA's environmental policies have also been criticized for their lack of clarity and precision and the slowness of implementation. Several explanations have been suggested as the cause of these problems. CIDA's continual reorganization, highly centralized authority structure, and recent budget cuts to ODA have been cited as possible impediments to progress on its environmental policies. Prior to the development of CIDA's environmental policies, CIDA was criticized for not formulating a clearly articulated environmental policy. Seven years after the release of its first environmental policy, CIDA is still plagued by similar criticisms.

CIDA has also been slighted for having a highly centralized organization structure. In CIDA and Sustainable Development, the

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<sup>26</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 63.

<sup>27</sup>Brian Walker, "The African Environment and The Aid Process", International Journal XLI (Autumn 1986), p. 742.



authors argue that CIDA's development models have been largely based on its own centralized planning structure.<sup>28</sup> Martin Rudner also suggests that too much of the decision making power of CIDA is concentrated at the organization's headquarters.<sup>29</sup> One of the recommendations to come out of the SCEAIT report was that CIDA should increase the number of field workers and expand its decision making power base. In To Benefit A Better World and Sharing Our Future, CIDA committed itself to this decentralization. This process began in 1988 and several CIDA workers were dispatched to the field. Due to budgetary constraints, however, efforts at decentralization were largely curtailed.<sup>30</sup>

### Focus and Significance

This paper will examine the various forces, both domestic and international, which worked to shape CIDA's policies. As well, the successes and failures of the policies and their implementation will be reviewed. Four central questions related to CIDA's environmental policy will be addressed:

- 1) What is CIDA's policy regarding the environment?

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<sup>28</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox, and David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development, p. 45.

<sup>29</sup>Martin Rudner, "Canada's New Official Development Assistance Strategy: Process, Goals and Priorities", p. 17.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

- 2) What are the factors, both domestic and international involved in the evolution of these environmental policies?
- 3) Are CIDA's environmental policies comprehensive and effective?
- 4) How can CIDA's environmental policies be improved?

The significance of the present study becomes apparent when viewed both from the domestic and the international context. As an agency of the Canadian government's Department of Foreign Affairs, CIDA is accountable to the scrutiny of the Canadian public and that public has expressed its concern over environmental issues and has been committed to a strong foreign aid policy. Canadian public opinion polls taken in the past decade indicate the Canadian public's concern for the state of the global environment and for the plights of the people in less developed regions of the world.<sup>31</sup> The realization that environmental degradation in other countries is directly linked to the environmental well-being of Canada has increased the concern of the Canadian public. Thus, the Canadian public is interested in CIDA's policies and practices and would like assurances that they are environmentally sustainable. As a relatively new policy initiative, CIDA's environmental policy warrants assessment to ensure that it is comprehensive and efficient.

Internationally, Canada has attempted to take a leading role

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<sup>31</sup>CIDA, Report to CIDA: Public Attitudes Toward International Development Assistance (Hull: Minister of Supply and Services, 1988), p. 3.

on environmental issues. Many prominent actors in international environmental forums are Canadians, for example Maurice Strong and Jim MacNeill. Thus, Canada has an international reputation as an environmentally conscious nation. This is a reputation that Canada wishes to maintain. If Canadian official development policies are not environmentally responsible it will yield a poor reflection on Canada as a whole.

Finally, the significance of the intertwining of the environment and development makes it mandatory for any responsible development agency to incorporate environmental objectives into its policy framework to ensure long term growth and development in the recipient countries. If the purpose of CIDA's policies is to assist development in the recipient countries, a thorough environmental assessment of projects is necessary.

### Methodology

The analysis is augmented by case studies of three CIDA-financed projects and by interviews with personnel at CIDA and at IDRC. The case studies are significant for highlighting the successes and failures of CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. As well, they are important for an examination of CIDA's policies in action. The interviews were insightful in gauging the different perceptions of the players within CIDA and IDRC of CIDA's environmental policies.

The selection of the cases was based on perception of success

or failure by CIDA and its critics. The first project, the Environmental Management and Development Institute in Indonesia (EMDI), is considered one of CIDA's success stories. The project is sponsored jointly by CIDA and Dalhousie University's School of Resource and Environmental Studies and the Ministry of State for Population and Environment of the government of Indonesia and began in 1983. The project has developed in three phases, and has received positive reviews for its contribution to environmentally sustainable development in Indonesia.

The second project examined in this study is the twelve million dollar CIDA financed feasibility study for the Three Gorges Dam in China. This project has been heralded as an environmental nightmare. According to Anne McIlroy of the Ottawa Citizen, the dam would displace more than a million people and flood farmland and parts of ten cities.<sup>32</sup> CIDA, however, endorsed the project as environmentally sound.

The final project, a forestry management project in the Ivory Coast's Duekoue forest, has had mixed success. The initial project established by the World Bank has been found to be ecologically unsound. CIDA, the World Bank and the Ivory Coast are currently in negotiations to develop a more sustainable project. Thus, the project provides evidence of past failures, as well as, promise for future success. These three projects are illustrative of several contradictions underlying CIDA's policies and its commitment to

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<sup>32</sup>Anne McIlroy, "International Aid, Environmental Disaster" The Ottawa Citizen Saturday, March 31, 1990, p. B5

sustainability.

The research process developed in the preparation of this paper provided extensive information on CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. The literature review was comprehensive and informative regarding the policy itself, the influences and constraints involved in framing the policy, the difficulties involved within CIDA's environmental policies and possible modifications which will lead to improvements within CIDA's environmental policies. The case studies indicate the level of ambivalence surrounding CIDA's environmental policies and programs and raise the question of the magnitude of CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. Finally, the interviews provide a personal perspective on CIDA's policies and on CIDA's commitment to sustainable development.

The second chapter presents an historical review of the increasing international awareness and explains the external motivations and constraints on Canadian inclusion of an environmental component into its aid strategy. Chapter Three highlights the domestic influences on Canadian foreign aid policy and explains the response of the Canadian government to increasing environmental concern.

Chapter Four addresses CIDA's policy response and the implementation of that policy. Certain critiques of CIDA's policy will be included. Chapter Five surveys the three cases and measure the level of success or failure based on environmental sustainability. Chapter Six provides an overall critique of

CIDA's environmental policy and proposals for the future of CIDA's environmental programs. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the information derived from this research, and assesses the overall argument for its validity.

## Chapter II - The International Environmental Arena

As discussed in Chapter One, the evolution of a new body of knowledge on environmental issues has transformed international politics. In the past twenty-five years, the environment has moved from an obscure issue into the mainstream of international dialogue. Preserving Nature's environment has become a growing concern for most countries. Increasing international awareness has elevated the environment to an important security issue for all countries.

For Canadian policy makers, international politics has proved to be both an impetus for change as well as an impediment for true environmental cooperation. On the one hand, international events and commissions have called into question the efficacy of Canadian environmental policies and have led to alterations in Canadian decision making. On the other hand, however, the structure of the international political and economic system, as well as the actors within this system, have stalled progress on many environmental issues. The interests of alliances, multinational corporations (MNCs) and the recipient countries themselves have often come before environmental initiatives. Thus, the international political spectrum has had a significant impact, both positively and negatively, on Canadian decision making on environmental policy.

### Evolving International Awareness

Rhetoric and action on environmental problems have changed substantially over the years. Initially, concern centred on pollution and cleaning up the effects of pollution on our ecosystem. In the past, for example, in many countries, the sole responsibility of environmental departments was to monitor pollution and to clean up its effects. Today, environmental problems encompass a much broader range of issues. Today's concerns include: atmospheric damage; including the ozone hole and the greenhouse effect, land degradation, deforestation, species and habitat loss, exploitation of water resources, as well as the effects of pollution. Environmental concerns are now considered concerns over life and death for our planet and humankind. In the past, "we have assumed that the capacities of the biosphere on this planet are so vast that we could depend upon the biological resilience of those systems; we believed that we could exploit them to any extent and somehow or other life would persist."<sup>33</sup> Only recently has the conflict between human activity and environmental constraints been realized. Policy makers finally comprehend that the Earth's natural systems have finite capabilities to support human production and consumption and that the continuation of

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<sup>33</sup>Statement made by Zee Charnoe, Researcher at Domain Biodynamics Research in Harmony Foundation of Canada, Our Common Future: A Canadian Response to the Challenge of Sustainable Development (Ottawa: Harmony Foundation of Canada, 1989), p. 19.



existing economic policies risks irreversible damage to the natural systems on which all life depends. It is the growing global consensus that everyone has a stake in protecting the environment. In 1990 the UN reported that concern for the environment was at its highest levels ever.<sup>34</sup> Interdependence within the world system means that environmental degradation in one state can have far-reaching consequences for several other states, as well as the global system as a whole.

Environmental concerns are now recognized as legitimate national and international security issues. This has called into question the conventional military-security policies. The evolution of global environmental issues has occurred due to a series of conferences and publications. The most important of these events include: the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, The Brundtland Commission's Report Our Common Future, and the 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development. These events have brought us to the current global environmental dialogue.

The 1972 Stockholm Conference on The Human Environment was the first time that the environment took centre stage at an international conference. The intent of the Conference was to bring First and Third World nations together to discuss environmental problems common to all nations. The Conference was attended by representatives of 114 states, all of which approved a

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<sup>34</sup>Jim MacNeill, Peter Winsemius and Taizo Yakushiji, Beyond Interdependence: The Meshing of the World's Economy and The World's Ecology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 110.

declaration containing 26 broad principles on the management of the global environment.<sup>35</sup> Part of this declaration stated that:

to defend and improve the human environment for present and future generation has become an important goal for mankind - a goal to be pursued together with, and in harmony with, the established and fundamental goals of peace and worldwide economic and social development."<sup>36</sup>

The two central themes of the conference were pollution and conservation.

During the conference, the differences between developed and industrialized countries were accentuated. Developing countries viewed environmental concerns as a luxury of the rich and a global conference on the environment as a threat to the development process. At Stockholm, the developing countries rejected the Club of Rome's "limits to growth" thesis. This thesis argued that runaway industrial expansion could result in the squandering of physical resources that might bankrupt the planet, which at the same time, would be choking on the effects of pollution. The Third World rejected this theory as an attempt to permanently consign them to underdevelopment and neo-colonialism.<sup>37</sup> First World nations, on the other hand, were learning from experience the destruction that rapid industrialization could cause to the

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<sup>35</sup>Gareth Porter and Janet Welsh Brown, Global Environmental Politics (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 28.

<sup>36</sup>The Group of 78, Canada and The World: National Interests and Global Responsibility (Ottawa: The Group of 78, 1985), p. 55.

<sup>37</sup>Alistair Taylor and Angus Taylor, Poles Apart: Winners and Losers in the History of Human Development (Ottawa: IDRC, 1992), p. 65.

environment.

In 1972, the far reaching consequences of environmental degradation were still not fully realized. For Third World nations, development and industrialization were the primary goals. In the First World, domestic environmental concern was increasing, but it had not yet extended to concern for other nations. The First World viewed many environmental problems as a consequence of the poverty of the Third World. A common assumption perpetuated at Stockholm was that "poverty is the worst form of pollution."<sup>38</sup> The industrialized nations blamed the less developed countries (LDCs) for increasing pollution while at the same time they continued to export hazardous substances and to exploit the natural resources of the Third World. The LDCs wanted the same opportunity to exploit the environment as the First World had during its period of industrialization. The LDCs felt that moving the environmental concerns into the global arena was another way for the First World countries to maintain their dominance in the international political economy. Despite the polarization of views, most countries involved in the Stockholm Conference took initiatives to involve an environmental component into domestic policy making.

In the years following Stockholm, many countries established environmental departments. However, after Stockholm, the environment was still viewed as an add-on issue. The environmental implications for other policy areas were not acknowledged and

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<sup>38</sup>The Group of 78, Canada and The World: National Interest and Global Responsibility, p. 56.

economic and political decisions were made which inadvertently caused damage to the environment. Environmental destruction continued. In fact, the Stockholm Conference took place at the beginning of a decade-long enthusiasm for megaprojects and unprecedented levels of resource consumption.<sup>39</sup> A major failing of the Stockholm Conference was its inability to equate development and environmental problems.

The 1980s saw a distinct shift in thinking on the environment. In 1980, the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) was released. This included three important shifts in emphasis from Stockholm; WCS brought together objectives of environmental protection and those of social and economic development, WCS place more emphasis on self-reliance of all states and WCS shifted the emphasis of environmental discourse from pollution control to resource management.<sup>40</sup> The main objective of the World Conservation Strategy was to ensure the sustainable use of species and ecosystems. WCS also pinpointed that the attitude which viewed development and conservation as separate issues was one of the prime obstacles to protecting the environment.<sup>41</sup> This strategy was launched in thirty national capitals in March of 1980 and set the

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<sup>39</sup>June Hall and Arthur Hanson, A New Kind of Sharing: Why We Can't Ignore Global Environmental Change (Ottawa: IDRC, 1992), p. 8.

<sup>40</sup>Roger Ehrhardt, Arthur Hanson, Clyde Sanger and Bernard Wood, Canadian Aid and The Environment (Ottawa: The North-South Institute, 1981), pp. 22-24.

<sup>41</sup>Clyde Sanger, "Environment and Development", Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), p. 156.

groundwork for a more intensive examination of global environmental problems.

The United Nations Commission on Environment and Development, better known as the Brundtland Commission, after its Chairwoman Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, released its report, Our Common Future, in 1987. The Commission was an independent body set up by the UN, but outside the control of governments and the UN itself. The Brundtland report attempted to upgrade the place of environmental politics in international dialogue. Our Common Future presented a challenge to all countries. It declared that we were faced with two options and that the future of the world was in our hands.

Our future can balance the environment and the economy, while providing the opportunity to reduce economic disparity and sustain health life on earth. Or we can teeter-totter precariously from economic stagnation to the deterioration of the environmental necessities of life - to a decline in the world standard of living."<sup>42</sup>

The threats of environmental degradation were elevated to the status of an international security issue; environmental damage may threaten the viability of certain states in the future. "The deepening and widening environmental crisis presents a threat to national security - and even survival - that may be greater than well-armed, ill-disposed neighbours and unfriendly alliances."<sup>43</sup> This document altered the manner in which environmental issues were

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<sup>42</sup>Harmony Foundation of Canada, Our Common Future: A Canadian Response to The Challenge of Sustainable Development, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup>UN World Commission on The Environment and Development, Our Common Future (Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 6-7.

viewed. Our Common Future moved to integrate environmental concerns into all facets of life; political, social and economic. In essence, it brought ecological concerns from the background to the centre stage of international dialogue.

When the Brundtland Commission was established in 1983, its mandate had three objectives:

- 1) to reexamine critical environmental and development issues and to formulate realistic proposals for dealing with them
- 2) to propose new forms of international cooperation on these issues that will influence policies and events in the direction of needed change
- 3) to raise levels of understanding and commitment to action of individuals, voluntary organizations, businesses, institutions and governments<sup>44</sup>

The Commission was successful in achieving these three objectives. Most significantly, Our Common Future showed that the growing interdependence of the world created ecological linkages that had global implications. As well, this report established a set of environmental norms capable of determining harmful behaviour to the land, sea, atmosphere, space and human activity that states must heed for the protection of the international community.

Our Common Future also popularized the concept of sustainable development. As discussed in Chapter One, the Commission defined sustainable development as "meeting the needs of those alive today without compromising the ability of those in the future to meet their needs."<sup>45</sup> Further, Our Common Future stated that:

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 3-4.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, pp. 8-9.

the concept of sustainable development does not imply limits - not absolute limits, but limitations imposed by the present state of technology and social organizations on environmental resources and by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities."<sup>46</sup>

The concept of sustainable development has since been redefined and clarified by several scholars.

Our Common Future proposed seven strategic imperatives for achieving sustainable development. These included:

- 1) reviving growth
- 2) finding patterns of growth which are less energy intensive
- 3) meeting the needs of the expanding population of the developing world
- 4) achieving sustained and stabilized world population levels
- 5) conserving and enhancing the resource base
- 6) reorienting technology to meet the challenges of increased consumption and lowered use of resources
- 7) merging environmental and economic concerns in decision making at all levels<sup>47</sup>

Our Common Future took an optimistic view of the prospects for sustainable development. It stated that:

Our report is not a prediction of ever increasing environmental decay, poverty and hardships in an ever more polluted world among ever decreasing resources. We see instead the possibility of a new era of economic growth, one that must be based on policies that sustain and expand the

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<sup>46</sup>Maurice Strong, "Ending Hunger Through Sustainable Development", Development (1989: 2/3), p. 44.

<sup>47</sup>Gro Harlem Brundtland, "Sustainable development: An Overview" Development (1989:2/3), p. 14.

environmental resource base."<sup>48</sup>

This optimism suggested that environmental damage can be altered and it allows Our Common Future to make recommendations for the future. Since the release of Our Common Future, most countries have worked to incorporate sustainable development and the various proposals of the report into their decision making process.

After the Brundtland Report was released, the UN General Assembly recommended a conference on the environment and development. The Secretary-General Maurice Strong convinced the UN to make the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) a Summit, which he believed would elevate the Conference to a higher level and spark increased media attention. The Conference, better known as the Earth Summit, was held in June of 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, and was attended by one hundred and five Heads of State, eight thousand journalists and fifteen thousand people involved in non-governmental organization (NGO) activity.<sup>49</sup> These delegates attempted to formulate action that:

- 1) began to counter obvious signs of degradation and loss of biodiversity which are the prime concerns of the industrialized world
- 2) responded decisively to the barriers of economic development facing most developing nations
- 3) created institutions and allocated financial resources that would ensure that the two primary

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<sup>48</sup>UN World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future, p. 1.

<sup>49</sup>David Runnalls, "The Road From Rio", Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), p. 139.



thrusts are integrated and implemented<sup>50</sup>

The Conference produced a document entitled Agenda 21, which included the twenty-one separate issues dealt with at the Summit. Agenda 21 lacked a central theme and all of the 130 programs proposed in the document were given equal importance. As well, Agenda 21 was not legally binding for the parties involved. This lack of clarity and the non-binding nature leaves room for interpretation by each individual country. States can isolate the issues which they believe are significant and ignore those that are not without fear of reprisal.

The purpose of the Conference was to show how environmental and developmental issues were intertwined. Similar to what occurred at the Stockholm Conference, the industrialized and the developing countries had very different objectives concerning the themes of the Conference. Developing countries had four objectives going into the Rio Conference. These were:

- 1) that developed countries insure the transfer of technology and resources to the South
- 2) that the North reduce consumption of natural resources to allow the South to catch up, referred to as 'environmental space'
- 3) that no trade restrictions could be imposed on environmental violators
- 4) that overseas development assistance be maintained through new mechanisms that would give Third World

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<sup>50</sup>Iain Wallace, "Canada, The Environment, and UNCED", Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1992), pp. 131-132.

countries an equal voice in how aid was distributed.<sup>51</sup>

Many of these demands ran contrary to the intentions of the developed countries. Industrialized states, for the most part, wanted to avoid any new financial or technological commitments to the Third World. Thus, industrialized countries, especially the United States attempted to stonewall a majority of these issues. The set up of the Conference gave veto power to the states with the most financial resources, which frustrated the entire process. The Conference, rather than bringing North-South issues together, therefore, effectively created a North-South division. The South lost once again.

The Conference, however, was successful in increasing international awareness and in proving that true development could not occur without incorporating environmental issues into development policy. As well, the Conference accentuated the problems with past development practices and illustrated that the Third World is plagued by the unintended effects of these past practices.

The proposals of these conferences and commissions had a significant impact on international and domestic environmental decision making. Many countries, Canada included, worked to implement sustainable development in both domestic and foreign policies. Continued exploitation of the environment was considered an unnecessary evil in the new structure of the international

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<sup>51</sup>Gareth Porter, Lecture on "The Environment and World Politics: An Analysis of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit", University of Windsor, March 15, 1994.

system. Countries strived to implement sustainable development practices to avoid scorn in the international arena.

### International Constraints

Although the international arena sparked alterations in the environmental regime, characteristics of this same arena also prevented full implementation of environmentally sustainable strategies. Characteristics of LDCs themselves, the international economic order, alliances and MNCs work against the international appeal for protection of the global environment.

The foremost constraint on Canadian implementation of environmentally sustainable policies in the Third World is the less developed country itself. Both the perceptions of the environment in Third World countries and the political economic structure of Third World society must first be combatted. Most Third World people still view environmental degradation as an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of their struggle for survival. As well, political, economic and institutional realities make environmentally sound policies difficult to implement in the Third World. According to the Framework For Discussion on the Environment, "one of the greatest challenges to achieving sustainable development on a global scale will be to reconcile the legitimate economic demands of developing countries with the need

to protect our global environmental resources."<sup>52</sup>

The key difference in environmental perception is that in the industrialized world major environmental problems stem from the careless and excessive use of certain technologies and resources. In the developing world problems differ in kind and degree. They concern not only the threat to human health, but also the threat to the natural resource base.<sup>53</sup> First and Third World nations view environmentally damaging behaviour differently. Often in developing countries, environmental degradation is a matter of survival. People who are poor and starving cannot afford to be as concerned about the ecological damage that they cause.

In the poorest countries, economic problems are frequently both a symptom and a cause of environmental degradation. Economic necessity leads to overgrazing and deforestation, reducing the productivity of land and soil, increasing the frequency of floods and droughts, causing greater poverty and greater despair.<sup>54</sup>

The use and the pollution of the Earth's resources is necessary for the existence of many Third World inhabitants. Alvaro Soto estimates that the "exploitation of land, forests, water resources and other natural resources constitutes the basic means of survival

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<sup>52</sup>Ministry of the Environment, Framework For Discussion on the Environment (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1990), p. 12.

<sup>53</sup>Foreword By Geoffrey Bruce, Vice-President of the Business Cooperation Program in Canadian International Development Agency, Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1986), p. 3.

<sup>54</sup>Ministry of the Environment, A Framework for Discussion on the Environment, p. 4.

for 60% of the population of the Third World."<sup>55</sup> First World states that attempt to alleviate stress on the environment in the Third World often fail to recognize the sense of necessity involved in Third World environmental degradation. Attempts to impose Northern standards of environmental protection are often futile and in some cases, ridiculous. For example, many development agencies promoted technological advances in the Third World to assist in the monitoring of industrial pollution. In many cases, industrial pollution was not one of the most damaging effects on the environment.

At various international forums, Third World nations have highlighted these differences in perception. The issues that are significant for industrialized countries are often not the same in developing countries. At Rio, for the North, the so-called global change issues of ozone depletion, global warming and tropical deforestation were at the top of the agenda. Discussions on environmentally sustainable development by the South, on the other hand, concentrated on more localized issues, such as soil degradation and the availability of fresh water.<sup>56</sup> Thus, one of the greatest difficulties for Canadian environmental assistance will be to bridge the gap between Northern and Southern interests and perceptions.

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<sup>55</sup>Alvaro Soto, "The Global Environment: A Southern Perspective", International Journal XLVII (Autumn 1992), p. 684.

<sup>56</sup>Maureen O'Neill and Andrew Clark, "Canada and International Developments: New Agendas", Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), p. 227.

The economic structure of the international system and the place of the LDCs within it, has made attempts at environmental policy increasingly vulnerable. LDCs' role in the international economic order has been traditionally as an exporter of primary products and non-renewable resources. Many LDCs' economic viability depends on the revenues generated from the export of these resources to the industrialized countries. The subordinant role that most LDCs have occupied creates suspicion towards new initiatives promoted by the developed states. LDCs still feel somewhat threatened by global environmental concerns. The recommendations of industrialized nations that developing countries adopt environmental protection policies are often regarded as a means to discourage Third World nations from pursuing economic development.<sup>57</sup> They insist that the developed countries share in the cost of environmental protection, which was evident in their demands at Rio for increased development assistance for improving their environments. Developing countries have expressed fears that higher environmental standards in the industrialized nations will raise the prices of industrial and capital goods, contributing to unfavourable terms of trade. They often view environmental protection and development as competitors for limited international assistance funds. They also worry that aid donors will divert some grant aid and loans to specifically environmental projects,

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<sup>57</sup>Bharat Desai, "Destroying the Global Environment," International Perspectives (November/December 1986), p. 27.

reducing the amount available to stimulate growth.<sup>58</sup> For most leaders, the desire to feed their populations and maintain or spur on economic growth will remain stronger than environmental concerns.

Politics in many Third World nations are also detrimental to establishing policies of environmental protection. The potential for instability and corruption is much higher in Third World regimes.<sup>59</sup> Coup d'etats and other violent political uprisings are common occurrences in many Third World states. Corrupt and unstable governments have approved various projects which are environmentally destructive and extractive from the natural resource base, in order to legitimate the power of the regime. Conditions of poverty and civil unrest still result in widespread environmental decline. Population problems further complicate the Third World decision maker's concern for the environment. The population explosion in many developing countries puts additional stress on an environment already reeling under the blows of careless economic growth. A central goal of most development assistance programs is to help the poorest people in developing countries. Often, however, development assistance does not trickle down to the poorest people in these countries, making it exceptionally difficult to foster environmental regard in these

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<sup>58</sup>Gareth Porter and Janet Welsh Brown, Global Environmental Politics (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), p. 127.

<sup>59</sup>Jack A. Goldstone, Ted Robert Gurr and Farrokh Moshiri, Revolutions of the Late Twentieth Century (Colorado: Westview Press, 1991), p. 38.

individuals.<sup>60</sup>

In developing countries, the politics of the environment still have a long way to go before they can displace traditional concerns over economic development. Politicians in the Third World have little incentive to preserve species and forests unless they can see an economic value in it. Environmental issues are still trivialized or treated as extraneous issues although they may well be the greatest cause for political instability in the future.

Another constraint in promoting environmental programs and policies in the Third World is the lack of an institutional framework. The technology, personnel and financial resources are lacking in the majority of developing states. Few states have established environmental departments. In countries where a Ministry of the Environment has been established, government officials still find it difficult to deal with problems that have their roots in land ownership or involve special privileges.<sup>61</sup> The education necessary to increase environmental awareness lacks Third World educators. As well, any environmental programs set up lack the technicians to sustain the program. Many of the same problems that cause environmental degradation also work to impede progress on environmental concerns. Thus, it is exceedingly difficult for the Canadian government to achieve its objectives in promoting sustainable development around the world.

Other international constraints on Canadian decision making

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<sup>60</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 11.

<sup>61</sup>June Hall and Arthur Hanson, A New Kind of Sharing, p. 47.



include alliances and MNCs. Traditionally, Canadian decision making has been strongly linked to decisions made by the United States and the Commonwealth countries. CIDA's aid originally concentrated mainly on countries who were members of the Commonwealth. Canada's close partnership with the US based on geography, history, military and similar cultures and values as well as the shared historical heritage with the Commonwealth nations have limited the scope of Canadian policy making. Traditionally, CIDA has avoided supplying aid to countries who had antagonized the US or other members of the Commonwealth. Very few Canadian foreign policy initiatives have been in opposition to these countries. Environmental issues have tended to reflect this trend. However, at the Rio Conference, Canada attempted to separate itself from the dominant United States' position on several points in Agenda 21.

Recently, Canada's leading environmental role has been tarnished. Canada had traditionally enjoyed a highly regarded environmental reputation due to various Canadian initiatives and prominent Canadian actors involved in environmental issues. According to David Runnalls, this role changed. He stated that:

In Europe, we are viewed as the country that slaughtered baby seals and kills fur bearing animals in cruel traps. We are the country that cuts down the last of the temperate rain forest to make 2 X 4s for Japan. We are the country that threatens to flood the ancestral homelands of our native peoples to make electricity to sell to the US. True or not, these perceptions will hamstring the ability of any future governments to make international environmental

policy.<sup>62</sup>

This alteration in international perceptions might be an important impetus for moving away from traditional foreign policy alignments.

Canadian economic instruments in the Third World also complicate Canadian international environmental initiatives. Canadian multinational corporations in developing countries often profit from the exploitation of Third World natural resources. The purpose of the MNC is to extract wealth and resources often in exchange for a supply of jobs to local labour forces. Canadian MNCs also take advantage of lower environmental standards found in LDCs. An example of this would be asbestos exports to LDCs.<sup>63</sup> The interests of these MNCs are often in direct opposition to the global environmental regime and the stated policies of the Canadian government. As well, the Canadian reputation for tying aid to Canadian economic gain further impedes the responsiveness of Canadian development assistance to environmental concerns in the Third World.

The global system works as both a facilitator and an obstacle to the implementation of international environmental policy. The Canadian government altered its international environmental policy as a consequence of growing international consciousness. The various conferences and commissions have proved to be an impetus in Canadian environmental policy. International constraints such as

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<sup>62</sup>David Runnalls, "Having your Cake, - Or Sustainable Development?", p. 75.

<sup>63</sup>Margaret Barber, International Aid or Environmental Disaster (Toronto: Probe International, November 1991), p. 2

the LDCs, alliances and MNCs, however, have prevented the Canadian environmental policy framework from flourishing.

### Chapter III - The Canadian Domestic Environment

In response to growing international environmental concern, the Canadian government took several initiatives to incorporate environmental issues into domestic and foreign policy decision making. After the release of Our Common Future, numerous consultations were undertaken and several documents were produced by the Canadian government in an attempt to ascertain the significance of that report for Canadian decision making. One of these documents was an assessment of CIDA's performance, For Whose Benefit? Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on Canada's Official Development Assistance Policies and Programs. This document was an assessment of CIDA's overall performance. Included within this document was a criticism of CIDA's commitment to the environment and references to various principles espoused by the Brundtland Commission. These initiatives taken by the Canadian government sparked a growing realization for the need for change in Canadian policy making and increased the environmental awareness of the Canadian public. The combination of international and domestic pressure forced CIDA to adopt a more precise policy on the environment.

Although the Canadian domestic environment emphasized a need for greater responsibility regarding ecological concerns, this same environment also sent an ambiguous message to CIDA. Varying

degrees of environmental sentiment and mixed motives by the Canadian public and the Canadian governing elite concerning Canadian development assistance generally led to confusion among CIDA's policy makers. Many of the objectives of the Department of Foreign Affairs contradicted the objectives of both international and Canadian NGOs and the Canadian public. The Department of Foreign Affairs is subject to many political and economic constraints that the Canadian public and NGOs can avoid. CIDA attempted to be responsive to the considerations of all these parties. These contradictory messages have often created a response lag in the development of environmental policy as well as in the implementation of that policy.

#### Canadian Responses To Growing International Environmental Concern

Immediately following the release of Our Common Future, a series of Canadian publications and planned initiatives were released. The Canadian government wished to uphold the Canadian reputation of environmental responsibility, and moved quickly to display its support of the principles set out by Our Common Future. The Canadian government and various Canadian public interest groups produced plans for the implementation of environmental sustainability into Canada's foreign and domestic policies.

In Our Common Future: A Canadian Response to The Challenge of

Sustainable Development, various individuals examined the significance of the Brundtland Commission's report for Canadian policy making. Senator Brenda Robertson summarized the necessity of this exercise:

It is critical to recognize that we do not exist independently of the earth. We are dependent on it for absolutely everything . Consequently, our personal health stems from the health of our planet... the two are virtually synonymous. However, existing institutional structures of government and industry, nationally and internationally, can perpetuate the dichotomy between environmental and economic decision making and result in short sighted policy.<sup>64</sup>

Senator Robertson went on to challenge the Canadian government to eradicate this dichotomy. This report highlighted six key environmental issues that were stressed by the Brundtland Commission as being significant for the Canadian population. These include:

- 1) the warming effect of greenhouse gases
- 2) the ozone depletion and increased exposure to UVB radiation
- 3) the impact of acid rain
- 4) the pollution of oceans
- 5) the overall danger to human life and health due to environmental degradation
- 6) the continued mass generation of waste<sup>65</sup>

This document goes on to propose that Canada develop a consistent

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<sup>64</sup>Harmony Foundation, Our Common Future: A Canadian Response To The Challenge of Sustainable Development (Ottawa: Harmony Foundation of Canada, 1989), p. 2.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

foreign policy with respect to the environment, the economy and sustainable development. As well, it emphasizes the need to reorient aid and trade policies to reflect sustainable development practices.<sup>66</sup>

In A Framework for Discussion on The Environment, a document that preceded the release of The Green Plan, possible solutions were set out for ensuring that the activities of businesses, individuals, communities, and government were consistent with the concept of sustainable development. It stressed that The Green Plan would "inform Canadians about the most serious environmental problems they face in the coming years and will describe some of the programs, laws and other actions the government will implement in order to address those problems."<sup>67</sup> This document also emphasized the critical environmental concerns worldwide and the unique environmental problems of the Third World.<sup>68</sup> This discussion paper proposed that the government strengthen its support of international efforts on the environment to meet the challenges of Third World problems. Greater funding to support activities of international environmental institutions and funding and technology transfers to help developing countries overcome environmental problems were also suggested. As well, the Ministry of the Environment stressed that action on the environment should focus on

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<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 51

<sup>67</sup>Ministry of The Environment, A Framework For The Discussion Of The Environment (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1990), p. 1.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid, p. 4.

three considerations:

- 1) improved decision making - better science, environmental information, education, regulation and use of environmental incentives
- 2) reformed decision making processes and institutions
- 3) new and stronger partnerships<sup>69</sup>

For Canadian organizations, these recommendations implied that a clearer framework for environmental policy be articulated. As well, the development of an environmental department which would work in conjunction with NGOs, business and universities and colleges would make the Canadian response to environmental concerns more effective.

The Green Plan, which was released in late 1990, reflected the above propositions. A commitment to sustainable development was emphasized throughout the plan. In the introduction to The Green Plan, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney wrote:

The challenge we now face is to build upon our economic strengths in harmony with our environment, the basis of our health and prosperity. Every Canadian has a role to play in achieving this goal of sustainable development.<sup>70</sup>

The Green Plan was offered as a framework for environmental initiatives for other countries at the Rio Summit. Among the other initiatives set up by the Canadian government were National Roundtables on The Environment. These Roundtables assimilated the views of the Canadian public, environmental researchers, business

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid, p. 12

<sup>70</sup>Charles Caccia, "Implementing Sustainable Development", Policy Options, (November 1991), p. 27.



and government on key environmental issues.

Specifically in regard to CIDA's performance, the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade (SCEAIT), released a report in May of 1987. SCEAIT began its research in 1984 as a review of Canadian foreign policy. The report, entitled For Whose Benefit?, examined the role of Canada's Official Development Assistance and its success in developing countries. Although the report recognized a growing tension between CIDA's desire to maintain developmental integrity and the pressures to manipulate ODA to fulfil other foreign and domestic policy goals, For Whose Benefit? offered criticism of CIDA on several issues. The report made one hundred and fifteen separate recommendations for the improvement of CIDA's development assistance. The report used aspects of Our Common Future in its recommendations for CIDA. Like Our Common Future, For Whose Benefit? emphasized "the need for policy dialogue in order to deal simultaneously with economic and ecological aspects in ways that allow the world economy to stimulate the growth of developing countries while giving greater weight to environmental concerns."<sup>71</sup> CIDA must find ways and means to make environmental and economic decision making compatible without jeopardizing the potential for economic development or environmental sustainability.

The report stressed that CIDA ensure that its own programs

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<sup>71</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit? Report of The Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on Canada's Official Development Assistance Policies and Programs (Ottawa: Supply and Services, May 1987), p. 46.

were both economically and environmentally sustainable. Specifically, the Committee recommended that CIDA evaluate long term economic and environmental sustainability of existing capital projects and either reorient or phase out, those that were unlikely to contribute to self-reliant development in harmony with the natural environment.<sup>72</sup> Also, the report proposed that CIDA incorporate a Development Assistance Charter which included a commitment to the environment.

Other criticisms of CIDA's development policy and programs in For Whose Benefit? included the Agency's lack of commitment to the poorest people in the poorest regions, their lack of interaction with Canadian NGOs and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and the high level of centralization within CIDA. The report stressed that eradicating mass poverty should be the central goal of development assistance. The report indicated that past CIDA development assistance had not trickled down to the poorest people in the poorest countries:

The mushrooming of population in many developing countries is putting additional stress on a global environment already reeling under the blows of rapid and careless economic growth in many parts of the world. Environmental recovery thus depends critically on meeting the needs of the poorest people in the poorest countries.<sup>73</sup>

Canadian foreign aid was criticized for its support of higher income LDCs that could afford to purchase Canadian goods and

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

services through the tying of aid. The tying of aid entails an insistence by aid agencies that the money they grant or lend bilaterally be spent on products and services from the donor country. For Whose Benefit? emphasized that environmental degradation in the Third World is often a result of extreme poverty. Thus, people suffering from extreme poverty should be the primary focus of development assistance if CIDA's policies are to be environmentally sustainable.

The Standing Committee on External Affairs and Trade supports greater interaction between CIDA and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and NGOs on environmental issues.<sup>74</sup> IDRC is an Ottawa-based research institute that aims at helping communities in the Third World find solutions to pressing social, economic and environmental problems. Research and personnel from these bodies were believed to be better equipped to deal with the environmental problems specific to developing countries. The input of these bodies could contribute greatly to CIDA's store of environmental knowledge.

The final recommendation of the Winegard Commission that related to the environment was that CIDA increase the number of field workers in the Third World. An increased number of field workers can better explain the demands of developing countries to the decision makers of CIDA. Greater feedback from developing countries is necessary in order for CIDA to become more responsive to the needs of the Third World people. As well, increased numbers

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 19 and p. 64.

of CIDA personnel in the field would make CIDA more aware of potential and actual environmental disasters.

Many of the criticisms found in For Whose Benefit? were derived from evaluations of CIDA's policies by the International Institute for Environment and Development and the North-South Institute. In 1978, the International Institute for Environment and Development mounted a six country study of aid agencies in relation to their environmental accountability. CIDA's policies and programs were criticized on various counts. These criticisms will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Four. The North-South Institute's evaluation of CIDA's environmental policy echoed the report of the International Institute for Environment and Development.

CIDA began deliberations over the development of an environmental policy in 1978. Between 1978 and 1987, CIDA only produced a stated intent to protect the environment. This critique preceded the development of CIDA's first environmental policy, Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA. Domestic initiatives and the various criticisms of CIDA's commitment to the environment caused CIDA to reassess its policies in relation to the environment. CIDA worked to establish and implement a coherent environmental policy. In the development of this policy and in its implementation, however, CIDA was constrained by the conflicting messages from the domestic arena.

### Conflicting Interests

In order to fully comprehend the conflicting factors that influence CIDA's decision making process, it is important to understand how CIDA evolved and the various objectives of this institution.

Canada began a program of technical and economic assistance to LDCs as one of the founding members of the Colombo Plan in 1950. The Colombo Plan was a cooperative economic development effort for South East Asia in conjunction with Britain, Australia, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), New Zealand, India and Pakistan.<sup>75</sup> Originally, aid disbursements were perceived by the Canadian government as a short term solution. Original aid disbursements were administered by the Department of Commerce and Industry. In 1958, Canadian foreign assistance was extended to Commonwealth Africa. In 1960, foreign aid was transferred to the Department of External Affairs and the External Aid Office was created. In 1964, the Canadian government expanded its financial help to include Latin America, and in 1968 the External Aid Office was expanded and renamed the Canadian International Development Agency.<sup>76</sup> In 1968, various operating divisions responsible for the capital assistance program, dispatching Canadians abroad and training of foreign students in Canada were consolidated within a single operations branch.

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<sup>75</sup>Robert Carty and Virginia Smith, Perpetuating Poverty: The Political Economy of Canadian Foreign Aid (Toronto: Between The Lines, 1981), p. 28.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

Canada's first permanent aid field workers were posted overseas.<sup>77</sup> The approximate budget of CIDA at this time was \$253 million.<sup>78</sup>

Since the creation of CIDA, the size of the organization and its finances have increased dramatically. Over the years, CIDA has undergone a continual process of reorganization and restructuring which often slows down the development and implementation of new policies.<sup>79</sup> Today, CIDA falls under the control of the Department of Foreign Affairs for its bilateral assistance programs and policies. The Department of Foreign Affairs is also responsible for contributions to UN Aid Agencies and for the administration costs of development field officers. The Department of Finance oversees Canada's contribution to the World Bank. CIDA's approximate budget for 1994 is over three billion dollars.<sup>80</sup>

CIDA has received a very assertive message from the Department of Foreign Affairs over the years regarding the fundamental objectives of Canadian foreign aid policy. Foreign aid was not intended to have an agenda of its own, rather, it was to be used to exercise influence to obtain other foreign policy goals.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>78</sup>Roger Ehrhardt, Arthur Hanson, Clyde Sanger and Bernard Wood, Canadian Aid And The Environment (Ottawa: The North-South Institute, 1981), p. 45.

<sup>79</sup>Brian Johnson and Robert Blake, The Environment and Bilateral Development Aid, p. 8.

<sup>80</sup>Ali Jama, "Development Assistance - Profile - CIDA", World Business (February 1994), p. 17.

<sup>81</sup>Kim Richard Nossal, "Mixed Motives Revisited: Canada's Interest in Development Assistance", Canadian Journal of Political Science XXX:1 (March 1988), p. 37.

Political parties also send conflicting messages to CIDA concerning its policy objectives. The Conservative government of Brian Mulroney initiated a review of development assistance during its first term in office. The subsequent report, For Whose Benefit? espoused various humanitarian ideals and concern for the environment. The recommendations, however, were largely ignored and in its second term in office the Conservative government's commitment to a strong ODA programme waned in favour of budget cuts.<sup>82</sup> In its 1993 election campaign, the Liberal party proposed a return to humanitarian ideals and has since initiated a foreign policy review similar to that initiated by the Conservative party in 1984. It is difficult for CIDA's decision-makers to ascertain the changing policies of different governing parties.

Canadian official development assistance has traditionally set out to accomplish Canadian humanitarian, political and economic objectives. Although the foremost objective of foreign assistance is assumed to be philanthropic - aiding those people in the Third World who need it most - this goal is often subsumed within the other two dominant objectives: Canadian political and economic interests.

Canadian humanitarian objectives are based on the Canadian public's desire, as well as some members of CIDA's desire for social justice. Social justice dictates that every person has an equal opportunity to obtain the basic means for survival in order

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<sup>82</sup>Cranford Pratt, "Canada's Development Assistance: Some Lessons From The Last Review", International Journal XLIX (Winter 1993-1994), p. 103.

to continue their existence. In order for this to occur the more affluent countries of the North must to share their wealth in order to provide for the impoverished South. The stated intent of most development assistance programs is thus to create a more equitable world order and to alleviate human suffering. Humanitarian objectives express the Canadian government's desire for social justice and a more equitable distribution of resources. For the most part, environmental responsibility works in conjunction with and reinforces this humanitarian principle. In the long run, environmental protection will prevent further human anguish.

According to the SCEAIT report, For Whose Benefit?, "there is a continuing tension between the desire to maintain developmental integrity and the pressures to subsume ODA within other foreign policy goals and to make it more responsive to domestic interests within the aid programme as a whole."<sup>83</sup> ODA was created as a component of Canadian foreign policy and it is expected to support Canadian foreign policy goals without contradiction. The rhetoric of Canadian political objectives for aid to the Third World is that it is a means for increasing international stability and improving the prospects for peace in the world. Canadian aid, however, is also used to increase Canadian political influence abroad.

Canadian foreign policy makers have often used foreign aid to persuade Third World countries to adopt policies favourable to Canadian interests. According to Cranford Pratt, "the humane internationalist component of Canadian policy has been seriously

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<sup>83</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 3.



constrained because of the Canadian government's persistent use of its aid programme to pursue geopolitical, commercial and economic objectives."<sup>84</sup> The tying of aid to procurement of Canadian goods and services can be used as an example. As well, the state's contemporary interest in prestige, organizational maintenance and limiting real expenditures also constrain the real political objectives of Canadian assistance abroad.

The traditional political objectives of Canadian foreign assistance would indeed support CIDA's environmental policy. Increasing international stability creates a global imperative for protecting the world's environment. Environmental destruction may be the security dilemma of the approaching century. The culmination of the various political interests involved in the aid process, however, complicate CIDA's attempt at an environmental policy. Not only does the environmental policy have to show its validity as a component of improving international peace and stability, but also this policy must prove that it can garner support for the other political aims of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The most daunting task for CIDA's attempt at environmental sustainability in its policies and programs is competition with Canadian economic objectives that are deeply intertwined with Canadian foreign aid policies. Eighty percent of Canadian aid is

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<sup>84</sup>Cranford Pratt, "Towards A Neo-Conservative Transformation of CIDA: The SECOR Report on CIDA", International Journal XLVII (Summer 1992), pp.597-598.

tied to the purchase of Canadian goods and services.<sup>85</sup> Canada's policy of emphasizing economic gains for Canadians through development assistance policies has been frequently criticized. David Gillies, for example, argues "that the new aid/trade devices are an unwarranted commercialization of the aid programme and that they compromise the development mandate of the Canadian International Development Agency."<sup>86</sup> The Canadian government's emphasis on economic benefits creates a confusion of purpose within the ranks of CIDA, especially in terms of environmental protection policies and programs:

Employed as both a carrot and a stick, western foreign aid programmes have indeed succeeded in helping protect Northern capitalist interests by promulgating Western values and consumption cultures, establishing new friendships, lubricating international commerce and securing access for the West to Third World raw materials, markets and investment opportunities.<sup>87</sup>

These motivations conflict with concern for the poorest people in the poorest countries. In most cases, these policies insure that development assistance does not reach those who need it the most. As noted earlier, CIDA's environmental policy stresses the alleviation of extreme poverty as a key principle necessary for achieving environmental sustainability. This policy, however, must work within the confines of the broader motivations behind CIDA's

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<sup>85</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 22.

<sup>86</sup>David Gillies, "Commerce Over Conscience? Export Promotion in Canada's Aid Programme", International Journal (Winter 1988-1989), p. 103.

<sup>87</sup>Robert Carty and Virginia Smith, Perpetuating Poverty: The Political Economy of Canadian Foreign Aid, p. 172.

policy. Insuring economic gains for Canadian business and political gains for Canadian elite are underlying motivations which compete with the desire to alleviate poverty. As well, financial assistance for environmental projects is more difficult to tie to Canadian commercial interests. Cleaning up environmental degradation or protecting rainforests does not generate the same amount of capital and jobs for Canadian business as a major hydro dam project, like The Three Gorges project in China.

As pressure on all areas of federal spending has increased, the demand for concrete short term results has also intensified. Thus, this has increased demands for economic returns from Canada's aid program. These conflicting demands are also in opposition to the environmental concerns of the Canadian public, Canadian NGOs, and the IDRC.

Growing global awareness of the state of the environment has spilled over to increase the concern for nature among the Canadian populace. A UN poll in 1990 found that worldwide public awareness and concern about the environment were at the highest levels ever recorded.<sup>88</sup> A comparable trend can be found in Canadian public opinion polls. Traditionally the average Canadian citizen has been more responsive to the humanitarian aspects of aid.<sup>89</sup> During the 1970s and 1980s, environmental awareness increased and many

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<sup>88</sup>Jim MacNeill, Peter Winsemius and Taizo Yakushiji, Beyond Interdependence: The Meshing of the World's Economy and The World's Ecology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 110.

<sup>89</sup>Cranford Pratt, "Canada's Development Assistance: Some Lessons From The Last Review", p. 97.

environmental groups sprung up throughout Canada. The Canadian public made its concern felt through lobbying, consumer boycotts and demands for information on practices that affect the environment. Pressures mounted for Canadian foreign policy makers to incorporate environmentally responsible practices due to the entrenched interdependence of the world's ecosystem. Development practices that were not accountable to the natural environment are believed to be against this humanitarian ideal. This contradiction translated into an assertion from Canadian citizens that the development practices of CIDA should be more environmentally sustainable. In a 1987 Decima poll on Canadian attitudes towards development assistance, both poverty and the environment were among the list of the world's most important problems.<sup>90</sup>

At this time, NGO pressure also caused CIDA to reevaluate its commitment to the environment. NGOs are organizations that are independent from government and private business, for example, Probe International, OXFAM and World Wildlife Fund. Domestic NGOs use various tactics to influence their governments to adopt what they perceive to be appropriate policies. Massive letter writing campaigns, consumer boycotts, lobbying and education are the fundamental tactics of Canadian and international NGOs. As well, there are many "Think Tank" NGOs that participate in environmental research, publish their findings and bring lawsuits against

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<sup>90</sup>CIDA, Report to CIDA: Public Attitudes Toward International Development Assistance (Hull: Minister of Supply and Services, 1988), p. 3.

environmental violators. Various church groups also function as NGOs. For example, the Canadian Council of Churches has been openly critical of CIDA for not placing enough emphasis on combatting poverty in its programming.<sup>91</sup> As the perception of global interdependence increases, NGOs gain more influence in both domestic and international arenas.

NGO influence is particularly vital for CIDA. NGOs are one of CIDA's three partners along with Canadian universities and colleges and Canadian business. CIDA works in conjunction with its three partners on many projects. Often, the partners propose projects and CIDA finances them. For projects where CIDA acts alone, the partners often provide consultation. As well, NGOs are responsible for 75% of long term CIDA supported technical personnel abroad.<sup>92</sup>

The NGO division is housed within CIDA's Special Program Branch. Thus, through their direct involvement within CIDA's organization, Canadian NGOs attempt to influence CIDA on various issues including the environment. Similar to the Canadian public, NGOs stress a need for Canadian development practices to be environmentally responsible.

Another organization that is closely linked to CIDA and has an impact on decision making regarding the environment is the International Development Research Centre. The IDRC, as mentioned previously, is a public corporation that was created in 1970 by

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<sup>91</sup>Douglas Roche, A Bargain For Humanity: Global Security in The Year 2000, (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1993), p. 64.

<sup>92</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 94.

Parliament to provide financial support to scientific research in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and in Canada. The primary aim of the IDRC is to help communities in the developing world find solutions to social, economic, and environmental problems.<sup>93</sup> Over the years, there has been increasing interaction between CIDA and the IDRC on the multitude of problems which face the developing world. The IDRC has provided CIDA with environmental personnel and information in order to combat the progressive environmental decay in the poorest countries of the world.

Domestic pressure, in conjunction with increasing international awareness, forced CIDA to adopt its environmental policy in 1986. The implementation and further development of this policy, however, has been constrained by the opposing messages found within the Canadian domestic environment. Although Canadian rhetoric supports an increasing commitment to sustainable development, domestic pressures often impede CIDA's progress towards this goal.

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<sup>93</sup>Ali Jama, World Business, p. 23

#### Chapter IV - CIDA's Response

Growing international and Canadian awareness of environmental concerns, combined with various criticisms directed at CIDA's lack of commitment to the environment, prompted CIDA to develop an environmental policy in 1987. Initiatives around the world, and in Canada itself, proved to be an impetus for change within CIDA. When creating its environmental policies, CIDA considered a wide range of criticisms and proposals for change. In 1992, CIDA reformulated a new environmental policy, hoping to clarify its objectives and renew its commitment to sustainable development.

Two criticisms were particularly influential when CIDA was formulating its first environmental policy. Many of the criticisms found in For Whose Benefit? were derived from evaluations of CIDA's policies by the International Institute for Environment and Development and the North-South Institute. As discussed previously, in 1978, the International Institute for Environment and Development mounted a six country study of aid agencies in relation to their environmental accountability. The countries included in the study were: Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United States. This study highlighted six functions that should be performed by environmentally responsible aid agencies:

- 1) to identify environmentally sensitive projects
- 2) to secure adequate technical and policy guidelines for

officers assessing projects

- 3) to encourage initiation of in house environmental training programs
- 4) to maintain liaison with other bilateral and multilateral development agencies
- 5) to ensure that environmental experts are brought into project preparation process
- 6) to arrange the giving of a maximum amount of help to the developing country's environmental management institutions so as to improve their capability to protect and enhance the environment<sup>94</sup>

The report, The Environment and Bilateral Development Aid, stated that CIDA's programs and policies did not adequately perform any of the above criteria. It also suggested that CIDA suffered from problems associated with rapid expansion. Specifically, CIDA was criticized for having a high rate of personnel turnover, lack of continuity in management of projects and a relatively poor institutional memory, all of which had implications for its environmental performance.<sup>95</sup> CIDA was also slighted for not taking full advantage of the IDRC, being highly centralized, and for a concentrating heavily on infrastructural projects. Finally, the report stated that CIDA's commitment to the environment was more rhetoric than actuality. It was strongly recommended by this report that CIDA formalize a coherent environmental policy.

The North-South Institute's 1986 evaluation of CIDA's

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<sup>94</sup>Brian Johnson and Robert Blake, The Environment and Bilateral Development Aid (Washington: International Institute for Environment and Development, 1980), p. 44.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., p. 8.



environmental policy was similar to the report of the International Institute for Environment and Development. In Environment and Development: A Critical Stocktaking, the North-South Institute stated that:

despite Canada's prominence in the Stockholm Conference and some pioneering research by the Ottawa-based IDRC, CIDA has been one of the slowest of the bilateral aid agencies to act. It has not produced a serious environmental policy, and is only now establishing enforceable minimum environmental procedures which must be applied to each CIDA project."<sup>96</sup>

These critiques made CIDA painfully aware that it was falling behind other development assistance agencies on its commitment to the environment.

CIDA's environmental policies developed through an open process of consultations involving CIDA's three partners: Canadian business, NGOs, and colleges and universities. The current process of policy development follows this sequence of events. First, an inter-branch working group is created and coordinated by CIDA's Policy Branch. A review and analysis of the issue is undertaken. Included within this analysis is an examination of the work of other aid donors, a review of domestic policy and background studies into the issue. A discussion paper is then formulated and assessed by CIDA and its partners, both domestic and international. Then, a first draft of the policy is prepared and sent to the Branch Management Committee, which is CIDA's upper management

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<sup>96</sup>North-South Institute, Environment and Development: A Critical Stocktaking (Ottawa: North-South Institute, September 1986), p. 3.

level. Additional consultations then occur and the policy is reviewed and revised. Finally, the new policy must be approved by the Executive Committee of CIDA and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.<sup>97</sup> For CIDA's environmental policy, this process took an exceptionally long time.

In 1975, CIDA began a cooperative project with Environment Canada to study the linkages between environment and development. Four workshops were held between 1975 and 1978. The first workshop explored global environmental considerations affecting international cooperation. Asian Pacific Rim countries were used as cases in point. It was decided at this workshop that a better understanding of the interrelationship between environment and development should be achieved prior to setting goals for CIDA's role in environmental cooperation.<sup>98</sup>

Phase Two examined the interrelationship between environment and development and concluded that there have been too many incorrect approaches to development. The second workshop asserted that:

One should begin by trying to modify existing projects or those in preparation, by sensitizing those in charge of them to the different dimensions of economic development, in particular, the potential roles of resources specific to each ecosystem, the choice of appropriate technology, the change in research priorities, the importance of participatory planning, the necessity for planning a multiplicity

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<sup>97</sup>Interview with Senior Policy Analyst of the Environment Policy and Development Division, CIDA, Hull, Quebec, June 23, 1994.

<sup>98</sup>Dr. George Francis, Environment and Development -Phase III (Ottawa: CIDA, 1978), p. 1.

of grassroots activities rather than falling prey to the "big is beautiful" philosophy.<sup>99</sup>

Phase Three was directed at institutions and the process of change. Five recommendations were derived from this phase:

- 1) CIDA should adapt its policies, programs and activities to the principles of ecodevelopment.
- 2) CIDA, IDRC, and the Department of the Environment (DOE) should enter into discussion in 1978 to identify the gap between CIDA and IDRC in the field of international development research programs and project implementation.
- 3) Projects in the planning stage should be reviewed in order to include an ecodevelopment component.
- 4) CIDA and DOE should prepare a consultation process with interested parties in Canada, developing countries and multilateral institutions.
- 5) IDRC and CIDA should see to improve the flow of information in three areas: scientific and technical research, experiences in the application of technology and experiences of grassroots programs.<sup>100</sup>

Phase Four examined various public management strategies. The strategies, however, were all First World strategies which were not applicable to most countries in the Third World.<sup>101</sup> After 1978, these consultations ceased. Apparently, between 1978 and 1986, CIDA neglected its concern for the environment. Although some of the recommendations and insights of CIDA's 1987 policy were

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<sup>99</sup>Ignacy Sachs, Environment and Development - A new Rationale for Domestic Policy Formulation and International Cooperation Strategies (Ottawa: CIDA and Environment Canada, 1977), p. 29.

<sup>100</sup>Dr. George Francis, Environment and Development - Phase III, pp. 8-9.

<sup>101</sup>Michael Chevalier and Thomas Burns, A Public Management Strategy for Environment and Development (Ottawa: CIDA and Environment Canada, 1978), p. 2.

available in 1978, they were not examined again until 1986.

In 1986, CIDA produced a document, Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective, which set out guidelines for CIDA's policy which was released the following year. Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective stated that:

Clearly, lessons have to be drawn and new paths need to be explored if development is to succeed. This is precisely what CIDA's submission attempts to do: it looks back to draw lessons needed to make assistance more efficient in the present; it looks ahead to set up desirable policies and strategies.<sup>102</sup>

This document emphasized a focus on cause and prevention of environmental problems rather than on reactive cures. The perspective also accentuated the linkages between poverty and environmental degradation. The report stated that "poverty is a self-sustaining , self-generating process that compels people to live in a way which destroys valuable soils, water resources and forests."<sup>103</sup> It also recognized that the development process was inefficient and the benefits short-lived in the absence of environmental considerations. Environmental damage eventually took its toll on the accomplishments of development and growth began to slow in some regions. For example, in many regions where the Green Revolution had increased crop yield dramatically, the effects of soil and water degradation began to slow crop yields and threaten the viability of future yields.

The 1986 paper highlighted three themes which had emerged

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<sup>102</sup>CIDA, Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1986), p. 3.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

among donor states in regard to the environment:

- 1) an awareness that development assistance should not cause environmental degradation
- 2) a wish to maintain and expand natural resource productivity
- 3) a recognition of need for projects that protect and aid the environment<sup>104</sup>

These themes were thought by CIDA policy makers to be a necessary starting point for CIDA's policy framework.

The paper also pointed out that CIDA had already established programs with an environmental component. As an example, the creation of the Environmental Management and Development Institute in Indonesia (EMDI) was mentioned. The EMDI project, which is a joint effort of CIDA, Dalhousie University School of Resource and Environmental Studies and the Ministry of State for Population and Environment of the Government of Indonesia, began in 1983. This project will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Five. Although CIDA's environmental progress was acknowledged, it also concluded that there was a lot of room for improvement.

In 1987, CIDA released its new environmental policy statement. In the Minister of External Relations' 1987 Address, CIDA's commitment to sustainable development was emphasized. The Minister of External Relations, Monique Landry, stated that:

Sustainable development must be our goal- development that doesn't assume resources are cost-free and endless... development that doesn't force the poor to destroy tomorrow's resources just to stay alive

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

today.<sup>105</sup>

In order to ensure that sustainable development was achieved the 1987 strategy had two thrusts:

- 1) it sought to ensure that CIDA projects did not inadvertently damage the environment
- 2) it ensured that CIDA would fund more environmentally beneficial projects<sup>106</sup>

These two thrusts emphasized both reactive and preventative measures for sustainable development. CIDA's environmental policy also possessed specific five components:

- 1) the establishment of mandatory procedures for assessing environmental impacts of CIDA projects
- 2) establishment of environmentally enhancing programs and projects
- 3) promotion of environmental awareness both within Canada and the recipient countries
- 4) institution building and support
- 5) data collection<sup>107</sup>

As of July 1, 1986 all new bilateral assistance projects were screened for environmental effects. A commitment was proposed to establish these procedures for all forms of CIDA assistance, not just bilateral. Projects similar to EMDI, mentioned earlier, were promoted by CIDA. As well, programs were set up in Canada and abroad, for CIDA and its partners on sustainable development to

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<sup>105</sup>CIDA, Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA (Hull: Public Affairs Branch, 1987), p. 3.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

increase environmental awareness. Within CIDA itself and in the Third World countries, environmental specialists and field workers established environmental guidelines and sought more environmental knowledge to combat this growing problem.

The policy stressed such global issues as: land degradation, deforestation, extinction of species, mismanagement of water resources, climactic changes and population growth. The policy also pointed out that the sound implementation of CIDA's projects and policies depended on the commitment of Third World governments to environmental management and the institutional capability to ensure long term monitoring and control. CIDA also recognized that several other key elements were necessary for the success of its environmental policy; the need to elevate environmental concern in the Third World, the need to train personnel to deal with the environment and a reliable set of environmental figures and data are all recognized as paramount to CIDA's success. The 1987 policy was established for bilateral assistance programs only, however, within the policy itself there is a stated commitment to apply these standard to all aspects of assistance.

CIDA's commitment to environmental sustainability was reaffirmed in two other CIDA publications on general policy, To Benefit A Better World (1987) and Sharing Our Future (1988). To Benefit A Better World was a direct response to recommendations made in the Winegard report. The CIDA response stated that "development occurs when societies have the financial material and human means, the institutional capacity and the incentive to

increase their productivity more rapidly than their consumption."<sup>108</sup>

The report discussed the major challenges facing the developing world and place a heavy emphasis on the need to combat poverty. As one of CIDA's goals for Canadian development assistance, CIDA placed emphasis on the need "to increase the capacity of people in developing countries to achieve growth, to develop technology, and to manage the process of economic and social change in a sustainable and increasingly self-reliant manner for the benefit of all."<sup>109</sup>

CIDA adopted a Development Charter as per the recommendations made by the Winegard report. The following are the four components of CIDA's Official Development Assistance Charter:

- 1) The primary purpose of ODA is to help the poorest people in the poorest countries.
- 2) Canadian ODA should work to strengthen the human and institutional capacity of developing countries to solve their own problems in harmony with the natural environment.
- 3) Development priorities should always prevail in setting objectives for the ODA program. Where development objectives would not be compromised, complementarity should be sought between the objectives of the aid program and other important foreign policy goals.
- 4) Development assistance should strengthen the links between Canadian citizens and institutions and those in the Third World. The Government will therefore endeavour to foster a partnership between the people of Canada and the people of the Third World.<sup>110</sup>

This Charter was viewed as an excellent improvement for the

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<sup>108</sup>Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., p. 41.



clarification of CIDA's objectives. The fact that it was not legislated, however, made critics question how committed CIDA was to this new policy and whether other influences would be able to sway CIDA from its goals.

CIDA also accepted the recommendations that all projects be subject to environmental assessment. In addition to this, CIDA promised that projects in the implementation stage approved before 1986, would also be subject to periodic evaluations to ensure that they conformed to the environmental policy of CIDA.<sup>111</sup> CIDA also accepted the recommendation that it confer with NGOs, environmental groups and the IDRC on environmental policy questions. As well, it agreed to begin the process of decentralization by increasing the number of field workers in the recipient countries.

Sharing Our Future, which was the actual policy put forward by CIDA after the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade (SCEAIT) report, reaffirmed many of the above mentioned commitments. According to Sharing Our Future, "the government has created a fresh development policy well-matched to the altered state of the world in the late 1980's... a policy clear-eyed and far sighted enough to guide Canada's efforts in the years leading to a new century."<sup>112</sup> The government has been guided by several insights:

- 1) a new awareness that the burden on the biosphere grows

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<sup>111</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>112</sup>CIDA, Sharing Our Future (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1988), p. 16.

heavier as each year passes

- 2) a recognition that many of our development partners have gained valuable experience and have grown stronger in their development skills
- 3) the certain knowledge that needs for development assistance will far exceed resources available to meet them, and Canada's program will always be under pressure to take on new challenges in the Third World as well as to serve many different Canadian interests.<sup>113</sup>

These insights accentuate the necessity of greater international cooperation to insure a more equitable world order. The importance of CIDA's partners becomes even more significant under this new policy framework. Sharing Our Future recognized that without proper respect for the environment, no development strategy could lead to long lasting sustainable development. CIDA believed that its new general policy fully incorporated environmental considerations.

In 1992, CIDA released its policy for environmental sustainability. In its guidelines for this policy, CIDA identified five interrelated aspects of the concept of sustainability: economic, social, cultural, political and environmental. According to CIDA, environmental sustainability required managing and protecting ecosystems to maintain both their economically productive and their ecological functions, maintaining the diversity of life in both human managed and natural systems, and protecting the environment from pollution to maintain the quality

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<sup>113</sup>Ibid.

of land, air and water.<sup>114</sup> CIDA outlined six operational objectives for achieving environmental sustainability:

- 1) To ensure that environmental considerations, including opportunities for enhancing environmental sustainability are integrated into sector and cross-sector programs, program assistance, and project planning and implementation, taking into account views of beneficiaries and local communities
- 2) To promote and support environmental and broader socio-economic policy dialogue, program assistance and projects that directly address environmental issues
- 3) To implement design measures that minimize negative environmental impacts and enhance environmental benefits of projects, or identify alternatives
- 4) To encourage and support Canadian, international and developing country partner organizations to develop policies, programs and projects that further the objectives of environmental sustainability
- 5) To contribute to the development of knowledge and experience in Canada and in developing countries on undertaking environmentally sustainable forms of development
- 6) To promote education and awareness among governments and the public in Canada and in developing countries of the importance on environmentally sustainable approaches to development.<sup>115</sup>

These operational objectives work to clarify CIDA's goals for the environment. CIDA outlined specific commitments and programmes for the implementation of its policy and designated various roles to the different branches within CIDA. These objectives, however,

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<sup>114</sup>CIDA, CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability (Hull: Minister of Supply and Services, January 1992), p. 5.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., p. 5-6.

lack a clear methodology for how CIDA will achieve the above six operatives.

The primary goal of CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability was "to integrate environmental considerations into its decision making and activities and to work with its partners and developing countries at improving their capacity to promote environmentally sustainable development."<sup>116</sup> This document also stressed the shared responsibility in protecting the environment for both industrialized and developing countries. CIDA contended that "each play its fair role, based on the principle of mutual benefit and obligation, and according to its relative technical and financial capacities."<sup>117</sup> All countries have a stake in sustainable development. Based on each country's comparative advantage, each country has something worthwhile to contribute to the promotion of sustainable development. The policy framework also stressed that a better understanding of the ecological basis for development, the economic value of the environment and the relationship among poverty, population dynamics, natural resource consumption and environmental degradation was necessary for CIDA's new policy to be effective. The interrelationships between these factors are still not fully understood. CIDA proposes to work toward a more complete understanding.

A Senior Policy Analyst in the Environment and Development Section, which is housed within CIDA's Corporate Policy Development

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<sup>116</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

Division, (See Appendix 1), speaks highly of CIDA's 1992 Policy on Environmental Sustainability. She contends that the 1992 policy goes beyond planning to the implementation and monitoring stage. As well, she believes that the emphasis placed on capacity development, developing the capacity of the Third World people to help themselves, is an essential component of sustainable development. Finally, she states that the 1992 policy is a more integrated approach into all aspects of policy making. She claims that this is evidence that the environment is no longer viewed as an add-on issue at CIDA.<sup>118</sup>

Since the release of the 1992 policy, CIDA has produced two subsequent documents relating to the environment. Following the Rio Conference, CIDA produced CIDA's Friendly Guide To Agenda 21. CIDA stated that this document was intended "to shake the dust off the covers of Agenda 21, internalize it within CIDA and make it functional."<sup>119</sup> CIDA envisioned the Guide as a starting point for discussions about how CIDA can move forward on the environment and development. CIDA breaks down Agenda 21 into 14 themes: poverty, population, health, urban and human settlements, climate change, forests, land degradation/desertification, food security, biological diversity, marine resources, freshwater resources, women and sustainable development, technology transfer and capacity development. Prior to an analysis of the various themes, CIDA

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<sup>118</sup>Interview with Senior Environmental Policy Analyst, CIDA.

<sup>119</sup>CIDA, CIDA's Friendly Guide To Agenda 21 (Hull: Environmental Policy and Assessment Division, 1992), p. 1.

provides a quick reference chart explaining what it is currently working on in relation to these themes. In its analysis, CIDA provides a general assessment of the UNCED process on the theme, key conclusions of Agenda 21 and their policy and programming implications.

The most recent publication by CIDA was released in October of 1993. The 1992-1993 Progress Report on the Implementation of CIDA's Policy for Environmental Sustainability recognized CIDA's progress as well as the difficulties CIDA encountered in the implementation of its 1992 policy. CIDA insists that progress was made in five areas:

- 1) CIDA employees have an increased understanding of the relevance of environmental issues in international development
- 2) CIDA has improved and increased its consultations with partners on environment related issues
- 3) CIDA has initiated the development of guidelines and tools for policy implementation and environmental assessment
- 4) All program branches have increased the emphasis given to environmental sustainability in their programming, despite budgetary constraints
- 5) CIDA has adopted an action plan for workplace environmental stewardship

CIDA also recognized difficulties in three areas:

- 1) In developing Agency-wide and branch implementation strategies
- 2) In systematically applying environmental assessment within CIDA
- 3) In systematizing management procedures to support

the implementation of the policy<sup>120</sup>

Although CIDA has increased environmental programming and has worked to expand environmental knowledge through environmental education, more needs to be accomplished to implement its policy fully into all areas of planning. CIDA is having difficulty developing consistent environmental assessment procedures and implementation strategies due to the vast differences in the environments and the institutional capacities in different regions of the Third World. Thus, each regional branch is formulating its own environmental plan.

The report questioned the efficacy of preparing an overall implementation strategy due to the changing internal, national and international context. The report also included an assessment of CIDA's work on each of the stated commitments within CIDA's Policy for Environmental Sustainability. As well, programming for each of the geographic regions in CIDA on environmental sustainability are included.

International and domestic pressures culminated in the development of an environmental framework for CIDA. The above information provides a summary of the policy initiatives made by CIDA on achieving environmental sustainability in its programmes. CIDA continues to emphasize its strong commitment to sustainable

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<sup>120</sup>CIDA, Implementation of CIDA's Policy for Environmental Sustainability - 1992-1993 Progress Report (Hull: CIDA, October, 1993), p. i.

development throughout all of its policy documents.<sup>121</sup>

Beyond policy documents, CIDA has established various programs and projects which include an environmental component or are specifically environmental in nature. These program initiatives and specific CIDA projects will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

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<sup>121</sup>Canadian International Development Agency. CIDA: To Benefit A Better World. (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1987).

Canadian International Development Agency. CIDA's Policy On Environmental Sustainability. (Hull: Minister of Supply and Services, January 1992)

Canadian International Development Agency. Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective. (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1986).

Canadian International Development Agency. Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA (Hull: Public Affairs Branch, 1987).

Canadian International Development Agency. "Implementation of CIDA's Policy For Environmental Sustainability". 1992-1993 Progress Report. (Hull: CIDA, October 1993).

Canadian International Development Agency. Sharing Our Future. (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1987.)



## Chapter V - Case Studies

The following case studies are intended to reflect the diverse and often contradictory intentions and outcomes of CIDA's policies and programs. The case studies are illustrative of many of the criticisms against CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. These cases are also indicative of CIDA's attempts to incorporate environmental concerns and initiatives into its decision making. Each case measures different levels of CIDA's success in achieving those goals. None of the following initiatives by CIDA are beyond reproach, however, they also indicate that in some ways CIDA is heading in the right direction towards environmental sustainability. The first case, "Environmental Management Development in Indonesia", is highly regarded as a CIDA environmental success story, while the second case examined in this study, the "Three Gorges Dam" feasibility study financed by CIDA is often viewed as one of CIDA's worst environmental failures. The final case examined, a forestry project in the Ivory Coast, illustrates an evolution in CIDA's environmental initiatives.

### Environmental Management Development in Indonesia

CIDA's Environmental Management Development in Indonesia

(EMDI) project is often heralded as one of CIDA's environmental success stories. EMDI is considered a success because it was one of CIDA's first projects aimed at sustainable development. EMDI also combines two elements crucial to sustainable development: environmental management and environmental education. The project, which commenced in 1983, is co-sponsored by the Ministry of State for Population and Environment (KLH) of the Government of Indonesia, and Dalhousie University's School of Resource and Environmental Studies. The project has developed in three phases and is currently in the final stages of its Third Phase. It is expected to be completed in mid-1995 and a possible EMDI Phase 4 is currently under consideration.<sup>122</sup>

Indonesia was one of the first developing countries to seek international assistance in its attempt to implement comprehensive resource and environmental management as a part of the nation's overall planning. The Indonesian economy relies heavily on non-renewable resources for export earnings. Between 1970 and 1982, the Indonesian economic performance was extremely high, averaging a GDP growth rate of 7.2 % annually.<sup>123</sup> Exports of oil and other non-renewables such as liquified natural gas, metals, minerals, and timber provided the principal engines of growth. After 1982, declining oil prices forced the Indonesian government to

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<sup>122</sup>Shirley Conover, "Environmental Management Development in Indonesia", Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies Newsletter Volume 2, No. 3 (December 1993), p. 6.

<sup>123</sup>Erik Thorbecke, Adjustment and Equity in Indonesia, (Paris: OECD, 1992), p. 15.

restructure the economy. More emphasis was placed on renewable goods and services in order to make Indonesian growth more sustainable.<sup>124</sup>

There were several reasons why the Indonesian government turned to the Canadian government for this form of assistance. These reasons include the following:

- 1) Canada has a long history of concern with environmental matters.
- 2) Canada has actively engaged in the environmental personnel effort in Indonesia since the late 1970s.
- 3) Canada is involved in a wide range of project activities in Indonesia.<sup>125</sup>

From the Canadian viewpoint, CIDA's involvement in Indonesia is based on shared concerns and interests. Both Indonesia and Canada are interested in Third World development and regional stability and share common ground as producers and exporters of natural resources.<sup>126</sup> At the Indonesia-Canada Environment Conference, CIDA's Indonesian Country Program Manager Peter Morgan offered a more lengthy explanation concerning the significance of the Indonesian-Canadian partnership:

Indonesia is a very special case. Development opportunities arise there - in urbanization, industrialization and in joint ventures - that do not readily arise in other countries with which CIDA is involved. We have found Indonesia to be most unusual. Indonesia is a development

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<sup>124</sup>Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>126</sup>Canadian International Development Agency. Indonesia: Partnership In Development (Hull: CIDA, 1987).

partner. It is a fully developing country with growth rates in the 1970s of eight or nine percent per year.<sup>127</sup>

He goes on to state that there are three objectives for CIDA's aid program in Indonesia:

- 1) to assist Indonesia in certain key areas and to overcome development constraints
- 2) to create networks and relationships between Canadians and Indonesians
- 3) to promote the export of competitive Canadian goods and services which also support Indonesian development.<sup>128</sup>

Phase One of the EMDI project between 1983 and 1986 was actually called "Environmental Manpower Development in Indonesia". This phase concentrated on human resource development and institution strengthening in the system of Environmental Study Centres in Indonesia. The functions of the system of Environmental Study Centres are graduate education and training, applied research into local environmental problems and issues, and outreach to communities, provincial government institutions, local NGOs and public education. These centres also work to identify local and regional environmental and resource management problems and to bring these concerns to the attention of local and central governments.<sup>129</sup>

Indonesian moves towards sustainability were discussed at the

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<sup>127</sup>Geoffery Hainsworth, Environmental Linkages: Summary Proceedings Indonesia-Canada Conference, (Mont-Ste. Marie: Environment Management Development in Indonesia, 1984), p. 65.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., pp. 65-66.

<sup>129</sup>Shirley Conover, "Environmental Management Development in Indonesia, p. 6.

Indonesia-Canada Environmental Conference (1984), which was an essential component of Phase One of the EMDI project:

Indonesia must take full account of environmental factors to achieve sustainable development and to move in the direction of economic development. Many efforts and support facilities will be needed, including new laws, regulations, and judicial arrangements; improved education, training and manpower development; appropriate institutional arrangements; an extensive information network and active public participation.<sup>130</sup>

By 1984, CIDA was attempting to institute an environmental component into its programming. The international environmental debate was heating up and CIDA was re-evaluating its obligations to environmental protection. The Indonesia-Canada Environmental Conference held in Mont-Ste. Claire, Quebec was one of the initial components of Phase One. The Conference was designed to provide an opportunity for leading Indonesian decision makers and practitioners in environmental management to meet with a selected group of Canadian counterparts from government, industry, universities and NGOs concerned with environmental issues.

Phase Two of the EMDI (1986 - 1989) concentrated more on the Ministry of State for Population and Environment. As a relatively new, weak and understaffed Ministry that wished to become more effective, it requested CIDA's assistance in the form of advisors, graduate fellowships, technical missions, training courses and workshops and specific aspects of technical training and supporting equipment. Specific areas of assistance included hazardous

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<sup>130</sup>Geoffery Hainsworth, Environmental Linkages: Summary Proceedings Indonesia-Canada Conference, p. 5.

substance management, regional spatial planning, environmental quality standards, environmental assessment, environmental information systems and environmental law. These areas were selected on the basis of Indonesian priorities and Canadian comparative advantage. The Indonesian government developed a list of essential elements for environmental management. CIDA attempted to fulfil these elements based on Canadian expertise. The above-mentioned areas reflected Canadian abilities. This phase also produced a seven volume "Ecology of Indonesia" series published in both English and Bahasa Indonesian.<sup>131</sup>

The third stage (1989-1995) focused heavily on KLH once again. Assistance areas for Phase Three include spatial planning, global climate change, biodiversity, environmental quality standards, environmental assessment, pollution control, environmental information systems, environmental law, marine and coastal management, and population - environment interactions. During this phase, KLH developed an Agency for Environmental Impact Management in which the EMDI played a strong supporting role. A final program of significance that evolved from Phase Three provides opportunities for Dalhousie University graduate students to carry out field studies and research in Indonesia.<sup>132</sup>

Despite the work of CIDA and Dalhousie University on the EMDI Project, the efficacy of Indonesia's environmental agency and CIDA's role in Southeast Asia has been questioned of late. On

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<sup>131</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., p. 6, 8.

Indonesia's environmental agency, John Stackhouse commented:

To cope with its own rapid industrialization, Indonesia, with Canadian aid, created its own version of an environmental protection agency. With only 100 poorly paid staff and a small budget, however, enforcement is wanting.<sup>133</sup>

Although Indonesia's environmental agency possesses the necessary tools and information for environmental protection, the lack of workers and money impedes its progress. It is unable to effectively move beyond the policy stage. With more assistance obviously necessary in Indonesia, there is evidence that CIDA might be retracting itself from involvement in the region. "CIDA is in chaos. They are not sure what they are doing here", commented Diane Blanchford, project leader of the EMDI.<sup>134</sup>

CIDA has begun winding down its presence in the area by reducing aid disbursements. As CIDA retracts its presence in Southeast Asia, critics suggest that in the future the Agency needs to play a more active role in its projects. CIDA needs to become aware of the real consequences associated with its funding. Often there are unintended effects of development projects that CIDA fails to account for.

The renewal of the EMDI project beyond 1995 could silence some of CIDA's critics. A continued effort to strengthen the enforcement capabilities of the Indonesian environmental agency should be a focal point of the Agency's assistance. The EMDI

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<sup>133</sup>John Stackhouse, "Asian Giants Are Up Against Limits of Economic Growth", The Globe and Mail June 6, 1994, p. .

<sup>134</sup>John Stackhouse, "CIDA A Rudderless Ship in Asia, Critics Say", The Globe and Mail, May 26, 1994, p. A21.

project provides an excellent example of CIDA's evolution towards sustainable development. The project, however, would benefit from a redefinition of policy objectives, with more emphasis placed on enforcement. A more hands-on approach initiated by CIDA would also alleviate the discrepancies between the purpose and the functioning of Indonesia's environmental protection.

### The Three Gorges Dam

In 1986, CIDA gave China fourteen million dollars in aid to hire Hydro-Quebec, SNG-Lavalin, BC Hydro International and Acres International to pay for a feasibility study for the Three Gorges Dam on China's Yangtze River.<sup>135</sup> The Three Gorges Project is a multi-purpose resource management project that would partly regulate the run-off from the watershed of the Yangtze River. It is estimated that it would generate 76.2 Thousand Watts per Hour of hydroelectric power annually.<sup>136</sup> The proposed project, the largest multipurpose dam in the world, has sparked intense controversy due to the potential ecological damage it could cause. In Canada, for example, Probe International has led the crusade against further

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<sup>135</sup>Margaret Barber, Canadian International Development Agency -International Aid or Environmental Disaster (Toronto: Probe International, November 1992), p. 1.

<sup>136</sup>Canadian International Development Agency, Three Gorges Project Feasibility Report (Hull: CIDA Policy Branch), p. 16-2.



development of this project. CIDA, for its part, has announced that it will not provide any more money for the dam, but it still publicly supports the study and its findings. After the two year feasibility study, the Canadian engineers recommended that the dam's construction begin at an early date, and that the impacts on the natural environment would be of minor significance. The proposed fourteen billion dollar project would build a dam one hundred and eighty five meters high and two kilometres wide across the Yangtze River. It would create a lake almost twice the size of Lake Ontario.<sup>137</sup> The Chinese and the Canadian engineers claim that not only would the dam provide electricity, but it would also control flooding and improve navigation along the Yangtze. The report suggests that the environmental protection measures required would only account for two percent of the total cost of the project. The researchers concluded that:

The Review of the available information on the impacts of the Three Gorges Project on the natural environment indicates that, the project is environmentally feasible, providing that a mitigation and monitoring program is implemented according to the recommendations of the report.<sup>138</sup>

These recommendations include that environmental planning continue and that:

- 1) Additional survey work be initiated to fill discrete gaps in the data base.
- 2) An ongoing environmental mitigation and monitoring program be implemented.

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<sup>137</sup>Tom Spears, "Dam Backed By Canada Would Ruin The Yangtze, Environmentalists Say", Toronto Star, December 12, 1988.

<sup>138</sup>CIDA, Three Gorges Project Feasibility Report, pp. 16-19.

- 3) An overall environmental protection plan be prepared to integrate the planning, implementation and coordination of the ongoing studies. The plan should be comprehensive and should be designed and implemented with a regional development perspective, and coordinated with resettlement plans and other projects on the Yangtze.
- 4) The full support of the local, regional and national governments should be provided, as well as the support of the Three Gorges proponent organization, in the design and implementation of the environmental protection plan.
- 5) A Project Environmental Department should be established within the Three Gorges executing organization responsible for the development, implementation, and monitoring of the plan. The department should be supported by an Environmental Advisory Panel.
- 6) In addition to the environmental protection plan a long term enhancement and compensation program focusing on resource management should be instituted.<sup>139</sup>

Although the report concludes that the environmental impact is minor, it does discuss various negative environmental aspects of the project. The environmental review process covered endangered species and habitats, health and disease, aesthetics, downstream effects, cultural heritage and the environmental impact of resettlement. It estimated that the reservoir will flood about 460 square kilometres of land, 40% of which are agricultural and it will displace 727,000 people.<sup>140</sup> The report concluded that the alternatives to the dam created the danger of:

- the continued threat of disastrous floods and their effects to over 10 million people;
- the continued sub-optimization of land use in the middle reach threatened by floods;
- the environmental consequences of coal fired thermal

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<sup>139</sup>Ibid.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid., p. 16-2.

generation, particularly from acid rain;

- the sub optimization of water based transportation and the incremental pressure to develop more land based transportation.

Whereas the Three Gorges Project would:

- alleviate the threat of floods;
- facilitate the optimization of the land in the middle reach;
- reduce the acid rain;
- facilitate water based transportation;
- encourage development of the region with resettlement funds;
- provide the opportunity to develop an integrated environmental management plan for the Yangtze valley.<sup>141</sup>

Possible environmental problems highlighted by the feasibility study included the possibility of earthquakes, species extinction, health problems and resettlement problems. The study admitted that the "initial filling of the reservoir may slightly increase seismic activity near the dam where two fault lines cross the reservoir."

<sup>142</sup> The possibility of an earthquake, however, is considered remote.

The study also examined various endangered species in the region, for example: the Golden Monkey, Chinese alligator, Siberian crane, Giant Salamander, Yangtze sturgeon, Chinese sturgeon, and Chinese dolphin. The researchers suggested that in some cases the construction of the dam will prevent extinction due to decreased flooding, while in other cases, the future of the species was

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<sup>141</sup>Ibid., p. 16-8.

<sup>142</sup>Ibid., p. 16-10.

already tenuous and extinction would be inevitable.<sup>143</sup> The initial stages of construction on the dam could cause an increase in such diseases as: malaria, encephalitis B, leptospirosis, and haemorrhagic fever due to increased mosquito and rat concentrations. If measures were taken the incidence of the diseases, however, could be reduced.<sup>144</sup>

The final environmental dilemma is the resettlement of 727,000 people. According to this study, "resettlement involves the relocation and construction of residential, commercial and industrial buildings, and associated infrastructure and the reestablishment of livelihoods for 350,000 people."<sup>145</sup> It does not address what happens to the other 375,000 people. These environmental constraints are not viewed by the researchers as significant enough to stop the construction of the dam.

Critics of the Three Gorges Dam cite these environmental stresses and other concerns as reasons why the project should not get out of the planning stage. Probe International challenges the arguments that the study presents for going ahead with the project. According to Grainne Ryder of Probe International, "hydro dams are notoriously inefficient at controlling floods because they don't have a great capacity to stop unusually large amounts of water."<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>143</sup>Ibid., p. 16-11.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid., p. 16-13.

<sup>145</sup>Ibid., p. 16-13.

<sup>146</sup>Tom Spears, "Dam Backed By Canada Would Ruin The Yangtze, Environmentalists Say".

As for hydro electricity, many argue that it will only work to serve the elite of China:

Some of those who oppose the dam are saying that a lot of the energy produced is not going to go to the poorer people or farmers, but is going to the large cities like Shanghai to be used for air conditioners and refrigerators and freezers and stoves, and that the people who are displaced are the one who will bear enormous social costs and they will get very little benefit.<sup>147</sup>

Finally, the claim that the dam will improve navigation is also debatable. "The silt accumulation along with the eighteen year construction period would ruin navigation on the world's third largest river", according to Grainne Ryder.<sup>148</sup> Probe International claims that: "the dam would displace over a million people and speed up soil erosion, desertification and elimination of rare species. As well, up to seventy-five million people who live by fishing or who farm areas flooded by the river each year could lose their livelihoods."<sup>149</sup> These criticisms have worked to stall construction on the dam.

High capital costs and unprecedented domestic and international opposition to the project is based on a variety of environmental, engineering and economic considerations that have repeatedly delayed the start of the Three Gorges Project, and it is simply impossible to know if construction will actually commence

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<sup>147</sup>Ellie Kirzner, "Selling China on Yangtze Gamble", Now (July 21-27, 1988) p. 2 of 2.

<sup>148</sup>Tom Spears, Ibid.

<sup>149</sup>Fred Pearce, "The New Walls of China", The Guardian (November 2, 1990).

during the 1990s.<sup>150</sup>

CIDA's involvement in this report raises several questions. In one respect, CIDA's financing of this environmental feasibility study shows CIDA's concern for the environment. CIDA's promotion of the findings in this report despite their controversial environmental implications, however, appears to bring CIDA's commitment to sustainable development into question. CIDA's endorsement of a project that will displace thousands of people, threaten endangered species, increase the possibility of earthquakes and increase the incidence of health problems is contrary to the Agency's stated commitment to sustainable development. Traditionally, CIDA has tended to support large scale infrastructural projects, similar to Three Gorges. Recently, the disastrous environmental impacts of such projects has been recognized worldwide. Although CIDA has decreased its level of assistance to these types of projects, the Agency should also move away from its endorsement of large projects, such as Three Gorges, which pose risks to the natural environment.

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<sup>150</sup>Vaclav Smil, China's Environmental Crisis: An Inquiry into the Limits of National Development (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), pp. 114-115.

### Forestry Management in The Ivory Coast

The case study of the Ivory Coast illustrates a different aspect of CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. It provides evidence of an evolution in CIDA's policy on sustainable development.

Similar to that of Indonesia, the Ivory Coast's development was export led. Unlike Indonesia, however, the Ivory Coast's exports were mainly primary products such as coffee, cocoa, cotton timber and other export crops from the forest region (rubber, oil palm, pineapple, etc.).<sup>151</sup> The Ivory Coast is the largest producer of undressed timber in Africa. Forests cover almost one quarter of the country.<sup>152</sup> However, the harvestable forest cover has been shrinking dramatically. Between 1966 and 1982, harvestable acreage dropped from ten million to three million.<sup>153</sup> In 1980, the Ivory Coast was leading Sub-Saharan African countries with the highest per capita GDP of one thousand one hundred and fifty US dollars, but, by 1987 GDP per capita had shrunk to seven hundred and forty US dollars.<sup>154</sup> The International Monetary Fund

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<sup>151</sup>Harmut Schneider, Adjustment and Equity in Cote d'Ivoire. (Paris, OECD, 1992), p. 20.

<sup>152</sup>CIDA, Country Profile: Ivory Coast (Hull: CIDA, July 1987), p. 6.

<sup>153</sup>Ibid.

<sup>154</sup>Harmut Schneider, Adjustment and Equity in Cote d'Ivoire, p. 19.

(IMF) and the World Bank moved in and began an economic stabilization and structural adjustment program.

CIDA's involvement in the Ivory Coast began in the early 1960s. The assistance has been divided into three main phases. In the initial phase (1961-1968), Canada supplied various resources reflecting Canadian expertise and skills to help the Ivory Coast take control of its own development. The second phase (1968-1975), focused primarily on education assistance. The final stage (1975-present), involves cooperation on projects that benefits both countries without neglecting the satisfaction of basic human needs and the improvement of living conditions of the poorest members of Ivorian society.<sup>155</sup> Under the third phase of interaction with the Ivory Coast, CIDA provided assistance to improve the harvesting of its forests in order to increase export earnings in compliance with measures set up by the IMF and the World Bank. In 1990, however, CIDA approved a project to help the Ivory Coast better manage its forty thousand hectare Duekoue forest reserve. CIDA committed five million dollars over a five year period for this project.<sup>156</sup> The project was developed by the World Bank and is part of the Ivory Coast's long term forest plan (1990-2015), focusing on the implementation of soil and watershed conservation measures, and including a biological inventory, the definition of boundaries and

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<sup>155</sup>Canadian International Development Agency, Country Profile: Ivory Coast, p. 3.

<sup>156</sup>Canadian International Development Agency, Cote d'Ivoire Forestry Project Summary (Hull: CIDA Policy Branch, 1990), p. 1



protection of the forest. Canada was providing both technical assistance and training to Ivory Coast technicians and professionals.<sup>157</sup> The project entailed the development of a management scheme for the forest and various reforestation activities. CIDA assisted the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forests (MINAGREF) and the Society For The Development of Forestry Plantations (SODEFOR) to delimit the area of intervention in the forest and to identify protected areas. As part of the initial program, two national parks were supposed to be created.<sup>158</sup>

By 1992, however, CIDA realized that it was too difficult to carry on with the implementation of the project. Soon after it commenced, CIDA realized its actual role in the project was much different than its originally intended role. The Agency's role in the World Bank initiated project was to find ways to resettle the populations in the forests. Due to the political and sociological ramifications of resettlement, CIDA discontinued its efforts in the project and called for a re-evaluation.

CIDA's re-evaluation of the Ivory Coast's forestry project includes a realization that the people in the forest cannot be removed and that a continuation of the project must deal with this issue. This new approach involves harmonizing the interactions of the population and the resource. In effect, this means moving

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<sup>157</sup>Canadian International Development Agency, "Implementation of CIDA's Policy For Environmental Sustainability", 1992-1993 Progress Report (Hull: CIDA, October 1993), p. 18

<sup>158</sup>Canadian International Development Agency, Cote d'Ivoire Forestry Project Corporate Summary, p. 2.

towards a socio-ecological orientation that includes an ecological inventory, a socio-economic study of the people within the forest and a communication and training program. CIDA has hired an independent firm, CONSOR, to work in conjunction with SODEFOR to develop an environmentally sound plan to employ the population in the development of the forestry resource. A crucial component of this new approach is an interaction with the people in the forests to create this new development plan.<sup>159</sup>

Currently, this re-evaluation of the Duekoue Forestry Management Project is being negotiated with the Ivory Coast. The project has been extended indefinitely, and the final report on the project is expected in early 1996. CIDA's withdrawal from the project sparked a move by the World Bank to move the rest of the project in a similar direction as CIDA. As well, the government of the Ivory Coast has hired a Canadian firm to provide aerial coverage for all of its forests in anticipation of the development of other forestry management projects.<sup>160</sup>

The alteration of CIDA's policies in the Ivory Coast is an environmentally sound initiative. The original intent of the project (to develop the Duekoue forest to increase export earnings for structural adjustment in the Ivory Coast), did not promote environmentally sustainable practices. Often structural adjustment

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<sup>159</sup>The above information is based on telephone interviews with Mr. Letourniau and Mr. Robert Archambault of CIDA on August 30, 1994. Due to the fact that this project is in the renegotiation stage, CIDA was unable to send any documented information.

<sup>160</sup>The above paragraph is based on information from an August 30, 1994 telephone interview with Mr. Letourniau.

programs lead to the depletion of resources and the resettlement of people in the Third World. Although CIDA continues to support structural adjustment programs, the re-evaluation of this program indicates that the Agency recognizes the environmental consequences of these initiatives and is looking for new ways to avoid these negative effects. The Duekoue forestry management project's environmental success, however, is difficult to measure due to the ongoing negotiations. It would appear, however, that this project indicates CIDA's renewed commitment to sustainable development as the reorientation of this project occurred in the same year that CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability was released.

The three case studies: EMDI, the Three Gorges Project, and the Duekoue Forestry Management Project provide evidence that CIDA's commitment to sustainable development is evolving. EMDI exemplifies CIDA's initiatives towards environmental education and environmental management. The Three Gorges Project shows CIDA's commitment to environmental assessment, while the Duekoue forestry management project reflects a growing awareness of the significance of resource management and better integrated approach with the Third World. These case studies, however, also provide evidence for many of the criticisms against CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. EMDI indicates that CIDA's projects lack follow through and that objectives need to be more clearly identified for its projects to be successful at the policy and enforcement level. The Three Gorges case shows that CIDA continues to endorse large

scale infrastructural projects despite the recognition of adverse environmental effects. Finally, the Duekoue project provides evidence of CIDA's support of structural adjustment programs. As well, it shows how CIDA commits itself to projects without being fully aware of the environmental consequences.

Chapter VI - Critique of CIDA's Commitment to Sustainable  
Development

Spurred on by international and domestic pressure, the Canadian International Development Agency has made considerable progress towards the incorporation of environmental aspects into programming and policy making.

Despite the concentration on CIDA's negative attributes concerning sustainable development in this study, some positive aspects must also be recognized. CIDA has advanced considerably on sustainable development in the past decade. Its new policy, CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability works to redefine the Agency's commitment to sustainable development. Under the directives of this policy, each branch is working to incorporate the environment into its decision-making. CIDA has made efforts to move away from its concentration on large scale infrastructural projects to focus more on capacity development in the Third World. CIDA's decision to not commit any more funds to the Three Gorges Project is a step in the right direction. As well, the EMDI project indicates CIDA's commitment to environmental management and environmental education, two essential components of sustainable development. Finally, CIDA's re-evaluation of the forestry management project in the Duekoue forest suggests several positive changes in CIDA's policy. CIDA now appears to be questioning the environmental efficacy of some structural adjustment projects. As well, the renewed effort places emphasis on meeting the needs of

the people in the forest. The restructuring of this project offers hope that the humanitarian ideal upon which sustainable development is largely based, still remains within the ranks of CIDA.

CIDA's policies and programs, however, remain deficient in several areas that have direct significance for the environment. This chapter will examine various criticisms of CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. Critiques from various scholars will be incorporated to substantiate the arguments of this thesis. In addition to the problems discussed, several proposals for the improvement of CIDA's commitment to sustainable development will be included.

In total, seven criticisms will be made in reference to CIDA's environmental policy. These deficiencies include: first, a lack of commitment to stated policy objectives; second, deficiencies within environmental policy; third, food and agricultural policies, specifically non-emergency food aid, agricultural subsidies, and food irradiation technology which contradict environmental policies; fourth, a concentration on large infrastructural projects that cause environmental destruction; fifth, a commitment to structural adjustment that often leads to environmental exploitation; sixth, a failure to continue the process of decentralization; and seventh, a failure to place enough emphasis on environmental education. CIDA must address these criticisms in order to make its policies more sustainable.

### CIDA's Lack of Commitment

CIDA faces several critics who suggest that generally, its actions do not correspond with its stated policy commitments. There are numerous reasons why this contradiction occurs. Most importantly, bilateral assistance is only one part of a large and complex set of foreign, trade and economic relations between Canada and developing nations. According to Nasir Islam, "foreign aid is a policy arena where a myriad of diverse interests converge and compete for favourable outcomes."<sup>161</sup> The Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade (SCEAIT) also recognizes this:

The aid program has developed in the shadow of foreign policy as a whole, without much of an agenda to call its own. Within the aid program as a whole, there is a continuing tension between the desire to maintain developmental integrity and the pressures to subsume ODA within other foreign policy goals and to make it more responsive to domestic interests.<sup>162</sup>

CIDA's policies are shaped by various objectives: political, economic and humanitarian. Often the desire to achieve one of these objectives leads to a contradiction with CIDA's other goals.

Others argue that the conflicting interests shaping the actions of CIDA's decision makers leads to a confusion of purpose

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<sup>161</sup>Nasir Islam, "For Whose Benefit? Smoke and Mirrors: Canada's Development Assistance Program in the 1980s", How Ottawa Spends (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988), p. 145.

<sup>162</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit? Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade on Canada's Official Development Assistance Policies and Programs (Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, May 1987), p. 2.

within CIDA's policies:

The Agency's planners have been forced to include a whole range of commercial and political objectives that are not formally acknowledged and are frequently in conflict with the announced objectives of the Agency, the government and Parliament.<sup>163</sup>

This confusion of purpose is particularly evident in CIDA's environmental policies.

From the outset, CIDA was comparatively slow among bilateral aid agencies to make environmental considerations an integral part of ODA.

Despite Canada's prominence in the Stockholm Conference and some pioneering research by the Ottawa based International Development Research Centre (IDRC), CIDA has been one of the slowest of the bilateral agencies to act. It has not produced a serious environmental policy, and is only now establishing enforceable minimum environmental procedures which must be applied to each CIDA project.<sup>164</sup>

Since the inclusion of its first environmental policy in 1987, CIDA has been widely criticized for the ambiguity within its policies and its lack of commitment to stated policy objectives. Generally, environmental policy has been viewed as a limited policy field and is typically treated as an add-on issue to other policy fields. Within CIDA, environmental concerns seem to be subordinated to jobs and commercial concerns.<sup>165</sup> For example, although increasing the

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<sup>163</sup>North South Institute, In The Canadian Interest? Third world Development in the 1980s (Ottawa: North South Institute, 1980), p. 61.

<sup>164</sup>North South Institute, Environment and Development: A Critical Stocktaking (Ottawa: North South Institute, 1986), p. 3.

<sup>165</sup>Andrew Fenton Cooper and Stefan Fritz, "Bringing the NGOs in: UNCED and Canada's International Environmental Policy",



number of field workers is thought to be environmentally beneficial, CIDA has curtailed this due to budgetary constraints. This point will be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter.

CIDA's lack of commitment to its environmental policies is partially due to the decreasing ODA budget in the five years following the release of its first environmental policy. Decreasing budgets, and the increasing demands for aid to Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union, as well as, increased funds necessary to implement environmental protection and to reduce the debt of the Third World have taken their toll on the implementation of CIDA's policies. Partially as a result of these constraints, CIDA's new environmental policy has fallen short of expectations.

In periods of government staff cutbacks and restraints, a successful aid official bureaucrat is someone who moves money through the pipeline as quickly as possible. Woe to him or her who introduces a lengthy delay and costly consulting process for an unwanted environmental assessment."<sup>166</sup>

### Policy Deficiencies

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International Journal XLVII, Autumn 1992, p. 804.

<sup>166</sup>North-South Institute, Environment and Development: A Critical Stocktaking, p. 5.

CIDA's environmental policies are lacking some essential components of sustainable development. According to Maureen O'Neill and Andrew Clark:

while CIDA's approach has received relatively good marks at the project level, at the policy level it is wanting. CIDA needs a more proactive general policy stance on the environment rather than the largely reactive policy it now has."<sup>167</sup>

An Environmental Policy Analyst at the IDRC states that there still remains too much confusion over what constitutes CIDA's environmental policy. A clearer set of objectives, as well as clearer standards for environmental feasibility need to be mandated by CIDA. According to this analyst, each CIDA project moves in a different direction concerning the environment. A clearer policy articulation could alleviate some of these problems.<sup>168</sup>

Little information has been made available on the long term results or impact in terms of development, growth and poverty eradication. There has been a weak commitment by CIDA to publicize environmental assessments public and many groups still have trouble accessing these reports. Probe International attests that nothing has changed with respect to the accessibility of CIDA documents. The public still has to use the Access to Information Act to get environmental assessments for CIDA projects.<sup>169</sup> Current policies

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<sup>167</sup>Maureen O'Neill and Andrew Clark, "Canada and International Developments: New Agendas" in Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), p. 226.

<sup>168</sup>Interview with Environmental Analyst, IDRC, Ottawa, Ontario, June 14, 1994.

<sup>169</sup>In Margaret Barber, CIDA: International Aid or Environmental Disaster (Toronto: Probe International, 1992), p. 4, Margaret

only focus on project assessments and there is no commitment to an environmental review of all policies.<sup>170</sup> As well, the implementation of CIDA's environmental policies raises several questions concerning the purpose and scope of assessments: which models will be employed, the nature and role of public participation and whether or not assessments will be released automatically.<sup>171</sup>

CIDA lacks a coherent format for classifying environmental projects. CIDA contends that it has increased the number of its environmental projects. CIDA estimates that 20-25% of its projects can be considered environmental projects. Many critics, however, question these figures. Clyde Sanger is one of those critics. He observes that, "it does not seem likely that a 10 year project on a highway between Cameroon's two main cities; Douala and Yaounde, is in any strict sense environmental."<sup>172</sup>

Finally, CIDA's environmental policy does not account for or make allowances for environmental destruction caused by past CIDA

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Barber describes her request for an environmental assessment of the Bangladesh Flood Action Plan financed by CIDA. This request was denied. She concludes that nothing has changed with CIDA's new policy and that the public still must use the Access to Information Act to learn about CIDA's projects.

<sup>170</sup>Canadian Environmental Advisory Council, Canada and Sustainable Development (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1987), p. 58.

<sup>171</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox, and David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development (Halifax: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1989), p. 52.

<sup>172</sup>Clyde Sanger, "Environment and Development" in Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), p. 162.

policies. The loss of forestry resources and people's natural environment in the Ivory Coast forestry project provides an excellent example of the unintended effect of some development projects. Many ongoing programs have the potential for creating environmental decay. CIDA has not yet produced a mechanism for dealing with these problems.<sup>173</sup> Neither policy statement, Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA or CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability mentions methods for accounting for past destruction to the environment due to improperly conceived development projects.

#### Food and Agricultural Policies

There are a number of areas under CIDA's food and agricultural programs that do not coincide with its stated environmental policy objectives. As will be discussed below, non-emergency food aid, agricultural subsidies, and food irradiation technology pose potential environmental threats in Third World countries. These threats need to be recognized and dealt with by CIDA policy makers.

Although annual global harvests are sufficient to adequately feed everyone in the world twice over, between thirteen and eighteen million people die each year of hunger-related causes.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>173</sup>CIDA, Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective, p. 9.

<sup>174</sup>CIDA, Sharing Our Future, (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1987), p. 24.

Thus, according to officials at CIDA, food aid is a crucial component of Canada's response to global hunger and poverty.<sup>175</sup> After rejecting the Winegard Commission's recommendation to limit non-emergency food aid to ten percent of its ODA budget, CIDA explained why food aid was an effective instrument for development:

Food aid provides a needed commodity without expenditure of scarce foreign exchange. When sold in local markets, it provides local currency resources which can be used for new agricultural and social investment. It supports the costs and reduces the risks of policy reform and structural adjustment. It can be used to expand rural infrastructure through food-for-work programs. It can become part of national food reserves, reducing the need for costly imports in times of shortage. It can provide needed food to nutritionally vulnerable groups as part of poverty alleviation programs. It can be used to help adjust or stabilize food price levels. Food is therefore a valuable and flexible tool for economic and development management.<sup>176</sup>

Critics of CIDA's non-emergency food aid policy suggest that these programs have a long term negative impact on the environment and on the poorest people in the country. Non-emergency food aid allows unsustainable agricultural practices to continue, as there is little incentive for agricultural reform. The OECD stresses that the dangers of food aid include: reduced food prices that hurt low income producers, reduced prices that discourage investment, research or other steps to increase domestic productivity, and these imports create preferences for new, more expensive food

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<sup>175</sup>CIDA, Food Aid: What Canada Supplies and Why, (Hull: Minister of Supply and Services, 1988), p. 1.

<sup>176</sup>CIDA, CIDA: To Benefit A Better World (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1987), pp. 32-33.

items.<sup>177</sup> This form of food aid depresses prices of domestic goods and often hurts the poorest farmers in developing countries.

Non-emergency food aid also reduces the incentives for much needed agricultural reform in the Third World. As a means of general economic assistance, it can present an inherent threat to building a viable agricultural sector in developing countries. Guaranteed aid can also diminish the enthusiasm of local governments for setting up research facilities for extension services.<sup>178</sup> In several instances, poor farmers hurt by the effects of food aid turn to the production of cash crops and stop producing for local markets, which compounds the original problem.

Agricultural subsidies create problems similar to that of non-emergency food aid. Agricultural subsidies usually encourage farmers to concentrate on cash crops to increase export earnings. According to the authors of CIDA and Sustainable Development,

Agricultural subsidies are ecologically perverse. They encourage farmers to occupy marginal lands and to clear forests and woodlands essential for soil and water conservation. Also, they induce farmers to overuse pesticides and fertilizers and to waste underground and surface waters for irrigation.<sup>179</sup>

Food subsidies work to reduce farm income, increase demands on

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<sup>177</sup>OECD, The Impact of Development Projects on Poverty (Paris: OECD, 1989), p. 16.

<sup>178</sup>Paul Fromm and James P. Hull, Down the Drain - A Critical Re-examination of Canadian Foreign Aid (Toronto: Griffin House, 1981) p. 13.

<sup>179</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox, David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development, p. 21.

soils, waters and wood and increase rural migration.<sup>180</sup> Maurice Strong also is critical of agricultural subsidies:

Food surpluses which result from subsidies are a burden on the economies of the surplus countries, they are a source of distortion in world trade and a disincentive to production in areas which cannot afford and therefore meet the competition. Such subsidies are on balance, an impediment to the ultimate achievement of sustainable development.<sup>181</sup>

The disruption of watersheds through destruction of forests and soil erosion in various parts of the world has already seriously impaired large areas of agricultural land in Africa, Asia and Latin America.<sup>182</sup> The continuation of these subsidies threatens to further this damage.

The Environmental Policy Analyst at the IDRC suggested that CIDA does not always supply appropriate technology to developing countries.<sup>183</sup> As an example, he discussed food irradiation technology. The debate over food irradiation technology is of a different nature. Food irradiation involves putting food in a chamber with radioactive Cobalt 60 whose gamma rays then kill bacteria in the food.<sup>184</sup> The radioactive substance is produced in Candu reactors and increases the shelf life of food without making

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<sup>180</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>181</sup>Maurice Strong, "Ending Hunger Through Sustainable Development", Development (1989:2/3), p. 49.

<sup>182</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>183</sup>Interview with Environmental Policy Analyst, IDRC.

<sup>184</sup>Margaret Barber, CIDA - International Aid or Environmental Disaster (Toronto: Probe International, November 1992), p. 2

it radioactive. This technology remains illegal in Canada. In the 1980s, CIDA began feasibility studies to supply food irradiation technology and expertise to Thailand, Chile, Jamaica, Mexico and The Ivory Coast.<sup>185</sup> In 1987, CIDA financed a five million dollar project for the construction of a reactor and for efficacy tests on irradiated food in Thailand. CIDA's stated reason for financing the project was to help out an industrializing country by financing expensive technology and expanding potential export markets in the Third World.<sup>186</sup>

Several concerns have been raised about this technology. Irradiated food has not been proven safe for human consumption. As well, the radiation of Cobalt 60 poses potential risks for workers and the general public who might be exposed to it, and a nuclear accident could cause unprecedented environmental damage in Thailand.<sup>187</sup> In an open letter to the Premier of Thailand, various Canadian groups criticized CIDA's role in the project.

The fact that Canada's foreign aid agency, CIDA, is financing this questionable scheme is a disgrace to the institution of foreign aid. An agency whose mandate is to help improve the quality of life for the world's poor should not be financing the export of a hazardous technology, least of all without a proper environmental and public health assessment. Neither should they be proceeding without the informed consent of the Thai people who will have to live with this technology in their midst and who

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<sup>185</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>186</sup>Ann Danaya Usher, "Food irradiation: The hot potato", The Globe and Mail, September 13, 1989.

<sup>187</sup>Probe International, "Open Letter to The Premier," The Nation, September 13, 1988.



along with Canadians, will consume this food.<sup>188</sup>

Among the various individuals and groups that have pleaded with Canada to stop the export of this technology is the Asia Pacific director of the International Organization of Consumer Unions (IOCU), Anwar Fazal. He urged CIDA to adhere to the IOCU's appeal for a worldwide moratorium on irradiation technology until consumers' safety concerns have been met.<sup>189</sup>

All three of these facets of CIDA's food and agricultural policy have potential adverse effects for the environment. In To Benefit A Better World and in CIDA and Sustainable Development, it is recommended that CIDA reduce non-emergency food aid, reform its policy on food production and reexamine subsidies which could encourage unsustainable practices. In addition to these measures, the export of food irradiation technology should be abandoned completely. Nuclear accidents pose the largest environmental threat to nature and humanity. The export of this technology places the people of the Third World in an unnecessary risk situation. In order to achieve sustainable development, CIDA should abandon or modify its policies on non-emergency food aid, agricultural subsidies, and food irradiation technology.

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<sup>188</sup>Probe International, "Open Letter to Premier".

<sup>189</sup>Andrew McIntosh, "Stop Selling Irradiation Projects, Canada Asked", The Globe and Mail, March 14, 1988, p. A8.

### Large Scale Infrastructural Projects

CIDA's commitment to combatting poverty is also highly questionable. Canadian development projects have typically focused on large scale capital and infrastructure projects that often displace the poorest people. They also do not make use of the Third World's most precious resources, its people. This helps to perpetuate the cycle of poverty in LDCs. Also, only 5% of Canada's ODA reached sectors that specifically concern the poorest people in developing countries, for example, primary health care and basic education.<sup>190</sup>

As has been noted, CIDA has been criticized by various scholars for funnelling large amounts of its bilateral assistance into large scale infrastructural projects. Although the Agency has begun to move away from these types of projects, their environmental legacy still remains. Much of the emphasis placed on physical infrastructure in the form of transportation, energy, industry and agriculture has not only failed to serve the needs of the poorest people in developing countries, but also has created unintended environmental damage.

In CIDA and Sustainable Development, Jim MacNeill and his coauthors strongly criticize CIDA's involvement in these types of ventures:

Traditionally, CIDA has tended to support large

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<sup>190</sup>Maureen O'Neill and Andrew Clark, "Canada and International Developments: New Agendas", Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), p. 225.

industrial developments offering commercial possibilities, suggesting that economic opportunism is the motive force for most Canadian foreign aid. CIDA's emissaries who tour the country talking to the business community emphasize this point. Some argue that it is the only realistic political agenda, because international altruism lacks a supportable basis. The argument is specious, linked to an outmoded view of the world as comprising functionally of separate nations. The strongest reason today for foreign aid, for the rich helping the poor, is because all sink or swim together in this increasingly interdependent, overpopulated, industrialized, deteriorating world.<sup>191</sup>

They recognize that there are powerful incentives for CIDA's involvement in these ventures. These projects insure the efficient dispersal of ODA funds. They reduce the number of projects to be administered and the growth pressures of both aid and recipient country bureaucracies. As well, project officers are encouraged to obtain the maximum dollar value for their assistance projects.<sup>192</sup>

An added incentive for development agencies to participate in these projects derives from the fact that these are the types of projects that the developing countries want.<sup>193</sup> The South appears inclined to duplicate the North's historical and unplanned drive towards industrialization and urbanization, with all the ecological consequences that this entails:

This drive, however, has produced unprecedented levels of economic growth and prosperity for the industrialized world, has also produced immense

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<sup>191</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox and David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development, p. 65.

<sup>192</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>193</sup>Alistair Taylor and Angus Taylor, Poles Apart: Winners and Losers in the History of Human Development (Ottawa: IDRC, 1992), p. 66.

and growing costs in terms of degradation of the environmental resource base of our planet and risks to its life support systems and to human health and well being."<sup>194</sup>

Many development projects, including roads, agricultural and irrigation projects, have worsened already bad situations. The clearing of prime agricultural land, forests and damage caused by flooding, are common problems associated with these types of projects. An excellent example of a potentially ecologically damaging project is the proposed Three Gorges Dam project in China, which would displace over a million people, destroy the livelihoods of millions more, and threaten extinction of at least three endangered species.<sup>195</sup>

In addition to the ecological havoc that energy intensive projects create, few if any serve the needs of the poorest in the LDC. Consumers of energy intensive products are predominantly in the upper half of the income scale.<sup>196</sup> For example, a CIDA supported one million eight hundred thousand dollar electricity network development in Port-au-Prince has proven to serve the needs of the affluent while providing no benefit for the poor.<sup>197</sup>

Jim MacNeill, John Cox and David Runnalls contend that CIDA must stop participating in these ventures to achieve its goal of

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<sup>194</sup>Maurice Strong, "Ending Hunger Through Sustainable Development", Development (1989:2/3), pp. 43-44.

<sup>195</sup>Margaret Barber, International Aid or Environmental Disaster, pp. 1-2.

<sup>196</sup>Nasir Islam, "For Whose Benefit? Smoke and Mirrors: Canada's Development Assistance Program In the 1980's", p. 214

<sup>197</sup>Ibid., p. 213.

sustainable development.<sup>198</sup> At the very least, CIDA should pay closer attention to the social and environmental impact assessments during the planning process as suggested by the Winegard Commission. That Commission also recommended that in the case of large scale energy and forestry projects, procedures for public review should be added.<sup>199</sup> A closer examination of these projects and a continuing withdrawal from these ventures will reduce this contradiction within CIDA's policy framework.

### Structural Adjustment

In CIDA and Sustainable Development, the authors stress the need to reexamine CIDA's policies that are harmful to the environment:

It is important to reform public policies that actively if unintentionally encourage deforestation, desertification, destruction of habitat or species, decline of air and water quality. These policies and the enormous budgets they command, are much more powerful than any conceivable measures to protect environments or to restore and rehabilitate those already damaged.<sup>200</sup>

In the development of its environmental policies, CIDA has emphasized the close link between environmental problems and the pressures of extreme poverty. "Poverty ... is a self-sustaining,

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<sup>198</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox, and David Runnalls, pp. 65-66.

<sup>199</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 63.

<sup>200</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox and David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development, p. 10.

self-generating process that compels people to live in a way which destroys valuable soils, water resources and forests."<sup>201</sup> The Agency went on to assert that the main goal of its new environmental policy was "to support the efforts of Third World countries to achieve long term sustainable economic and social progress so that all their people can improve their lives and take part in their country's development."<sup>202</sup> The effects of structural adjustment policies have proven to be in direct opposition to the objectives set forth in CIDA's environmental policies. The case of the Ivory Coast provides an excellent example. CIDA's support of this program instituted to assist the World Bank's structural adjustment program led to environmental exploitation.

Structural adjustment policies create a multitude of responses throughout a developing country. Often these policies accentuate the differences between the affluent and the poor. In fact, structural adjustment policies are usually hardest felt by the poorest of the poor, those same people that CIDA has repeatedly promised to protect. Yet CIDA continues to support these measures as a worthwhile form of development in the Third World. According to Iain Wallace, CIDA's enthusiastic alignment of bilateral assistance in support of structural adjustment measures indicates how far the rhetoric surrounding its sustainable development policy

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<sup>201</sup>CIDA, Environment and Development: A CIDA Perspective, p. 3.

<sup>202</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

pillar has been outrunning the reality.<sup>203</sup>

Structural adjustment programs require that to be eligible for loan rescheduling and some kinds of aid, developing countries have to restructure their economies in accordance with requirements set out by international financial institutions. These measures usually require countries to adopt a package of policy changes that involve across the board economic liberalization: the enhancement of market forces, reduction in the role of the state and an increased openness to external trade, capital flows and other economic inputs. In many cases these policies lead to capital flight, recession, capital concentration and disengagement from local economic activity aimed at the local market.<sup>204</sup> Hence, structural adjustment can create additional stress on countries already struggling with the pressures of population, poverty, urbanization and environmental decline.

Pressures to generate foreign exchange can lead to a substitution of export crops for food crops and an overexploitation of the natural resource base to increase export earnings. The most severe effects of these initiatives are felt by the poorest who must draw on nature's capital at increasing rates to increase long term economic profits. In addition, structural adjustment policies pay little heed to restoring and restructuring the natural

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<sup>203</sup>Iain Wallace, "Canada, The Environment and UNCED", in Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1992), p. 142.

<sup>204</sup>Robert Clarke, "Overseas Development Assistance: The Neo-Conservative Challenge" in Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1990), p. 201.

infrastructure (soil, water supply, forests, etc.) and the industries that control them.<sup>205</sup>

In mid-1987, CIDA's Anglophone Africa Branch approached the North-South Institute to prepare case studies to assess the effects of structural adjustment programs. Case studies in Ghana and Zambia were evaluated to determine the appropriateness of Canadian aid resources within a structural adjustment program.<sup>206</sup> The report outlined several reservations the North-South Institute had with structural adjustment. The Institute concluded that the human costs of adjustment were not adequately accounted for under CIDA's programs.<sup>207</sup> As well, the report identified the poorest people in developing countries as the group most harmed by structural adjustment.<sup>208</sup>

CIDA, however, continues to support structural adjustment mechanisms which often hurt the people who are most poverty stricken. This causes these people to turn to further exploitation of the environment for some measure of relief. For example, in a measure to reduce Ghana's balance of payments deficit, the International Monetary Fund encouraged the government of Ghana to increase forest production in order to augment its export earnings.

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<sup>205</sup>Denizhan Ercal, Environmental Management in Developing Countries (Paris: OECD, 1991), p. 37.

<sup>206</sup>North-South Institute, Structural Adjustment in Africa: External Financing for Development (Ottawa: North-South Institute and CIDA, February 1988), p. iv.

<sup>207</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>208</sup>Ibid.



CIDA donated the forestry equipment necessary to exploit this precious natural resource.<sup>209</sup> This type of resource exploitation is common in countries attempting structural adjustment. Finally, the group argued that the outcomes of structural adjustment have been oversold while the resource needs of the people have been underestimated.<sup>210</sup> In the Duekoue forest, the initial forestry management program did not account for the effects of the people in the forest, but rather concentrate mainly on increasing forestry export earnings.

Despite the deficiencies evidenced by the above-mentioned case studies, CIDA remains committed to its support of structural adjustment. In 1991, CIDA's President, Marcel Masse, reaffirmed this commitment. Masse stated that "Structural adjustment figures among the priorities for Canadian ODA."<sup>211</sup> After this statement was released, CIDA strengthened the linkages of its lines of credit, balance of payments support and food aid to the conditionalities of structural adjustment programs.<sup>212</sup> It is difficult to comprehend how CIDA can support policies that directly oppose two of its mandates, as found in its ODA Charter:

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<sup>209</sup> Patricia Adams, Odious Debts: Loose Lending, Corruption and The Third World's Environmental Legacy (Toronto: Earthscan, 1991), p. 44.

<sup>210</sup>North-South Institute, Structural Adjustment in Africa., p. 3.

<sup>211</sup>Robert Clarke, "Overseas Development Assistance", p. 203.

<sup>212</sup>Maureen O'Neill and Andrew Clark, "Canada and International Developments: New Agendas", p. 224.

- 1) The primary purpose of Canada's ODA is to help the poorest countries and people in the world.
- 2) Canadian ODA should work always to strengthen the human and institutional capacity of developing countries to solve their own problems in harmony with the natural environment.<sup>213</sup>

This blatant confusion of purpose must be reexamined if CIDA's policies and programs are to make a serious effort towards achieving sustainable development.

Decentralization of development agencies and environmental education are of paramount importance for the achievement of sustainable development. Both of these initiatives have been addressed by CIDA; however, a closer examination of these two options is necessary for CIDA's environmental policies to become more environmentally sustainable.

### Decentralization

Increasing the number of field workers in the Third World, is important because it would allow CIDA to become more aware of and responsive to the needs of Third World peoples. At present, problems that assistance projects focus on are based upon the perceptions of the aid granting agency. Without a hands-on approach in the recipient country, it is impossible for CIDA to offer assistance in dealing with environmental problems that are the most serious for the people of the recipient country.

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<sup>213</sup>CIDA, CIDA: To Benefit A Better World, p. 41.

Currently, aid is taking the wrong form for developing countries. Projects primarily benefit the modern sector and those working in it, whose incomes are usually above the national average. A new context for international assistance is required, one that is based on relationships of equity, and that includes a clear articulation from the South of its priorities. People at the village and community level have to be mobilized and that requires that they participate in designing the aid programme that is going to determine their lives.<sup>214</sup> No longer can international assistance be defined by Northern standards and the perceptions of Northern policy makers. A move in the right direction is the current re-evaluation of the Duekoue forestry management project which seeks to incorporate the concerns of the people living in the forest.

Despite this basic need for local knowledge and management in aid programs, the development models adopted in developing countries have been largely based on centralized planning and management concepts. Decentralization puts the power back into the hands of the people in the Third World. While participation in global management schemes reduces many states to a sense of helplessness, decentralization restores the possibility of local and regional self-management through smaller scale administration.<sup>215</sup> Decentralization allows all people who are

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<sup>214</sup>Brian Walker, "The African Environment and The Aid Process", International Journal XLI (Autumn 1986), p. 742.

<sup>215</sup>Maxwell Cohen, "International Law and The Global Environment", International Perspectives (September/October 1986), p. 5.

affected by decision-making to participate. The involvement of the people themselves in the planning and management of their own natural resource base is one of the main keys to sustainable development.<sup>216</sup>

A high degree on centralized decision making has been a characteristic trait of Canadian ODA. In Canadian Foreign Aid in The 1970's: An Organizational Audit, Peter Wyse suggests that:

the number of aid officials in recipient countries was purposely kept to a minimum in order to ensure that major decisions on aid administration were made in Ottawa; centralized decision making offered opportunities to control the aid program for purposes of influence."<sup>217</sup>

CIDA's personnel resources have not grown in correspondence with its increased funding. Many critics believe that the insufficient number of field workers and these workers' lack of decision-making power thwarts the development process. An increased number of CIDA field workers involved in the initial stages of the Duekoue forestry management scheme may have been able to identify the environmental and social problems which were caused by the project.

In For Whose Benefit?, SCEAIT recommended that CIDA seriously examine decentralization:

... aid delivery could be improved by increasing the number and the authority of CIDA field representatives in the recipient country. Often overwhelmed with administrative detail and visiting consultants, these field staff should

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<sup>216</sup>Denizhan Erocak, Environmental Management in Developing Countries., p. 38.

<sup>217</sup>Peter Wyse, Canadian Foreign Aid in The 1970's: An Organizational Audit (Montreal: Centre for Developing Area Studies, 1983), p. 18.

have the most intimate knowledge of the recipient country and CIDA activities there.<sup>218</sup>

The authors of CIDA and Sustainable Development also recommended that CIDA begin the decentralization process:

CIDA should increase the number of workers in the field and actively promote staff training programs to ensure that officers involved in development have some understanding of ecological principles. Technical support to developing countries to help with resource inventories, environmental profiles, and data bases should also become an important part of CIDA's programs.<sup>219</sup>

CIDA agreed with the criticisms that too much of its staff, decision-making authority and information resources were concentrated at its headquarters. In response to these recommendations, the Agency began increasing the number of field workers in developing countries after 1987. Budget cuts, however, caused a complete re-evaluation of the process of decentralization. By late 1989, mounting costs and other difficulties compelled the financially constrained agency to embark on a further review of decentralization.<sup>220</sup> The process of decentralization was then slowed and many workers recalled from the field.

CIDA should reexamine the process of decentralization and return to its initial goals. That process would allow workers to

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<sup>218</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 83.

<sup>219</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox, and David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development, p. 181.

<sup>220</sup>Martin Rudner, "Canada's New Official Development Assistance Strategy: Process, Goals and Priorities", Canadian Journal of Political Science, Volume XII, No.1 (1991), p. 18.

become more sensitive to local conditions and to better comprehend the intimate linkages between environment and development that are unique to each individual region. Thus, it is necessary that CIDA increase the number of aid workers in the Third World. These workers must encourage people at the community level in these developing countries to participate in designing the aid programme in a manner that satisfies their needs and yet does not disrupt the harmony of nature.

#### Environmental Education

In both of its environmental policy statements, CIDA commits itself to furthering environmental education. In the 1987 policy, one of the five basic elements of CIDA's strategy includes the promotion of increased environmental awareness and training among decision makers and government.<sup>221</sup> The 1992 Policy on Environmental Sustainability also includes environmental education among its operational objectives, in order to contribute to the development of knowledge and experience in Canada and in developing countries, on undertaking sustainable forms of development.<sup>222</sup>

Environmental education has been defined as a permanent process in which individuals gain awareness of their environment and acquire the knowledge, values, skills, experience and also the

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<sup>221</sup>CIDA, Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA (Hull: Public Affairs Branch, 1987), p. 13.

<sup>222</sup>CIDA, CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability (Hull: Minister of Supply and Services, January 1992), p. 13.

determination that will enable them to act individually and collectively to solve present and future environmental problems.<sup>223</sup> The role of environmental education is to transmit knowledge and values that stimulate more environmentally friendly behaviour. Environmental education should address people at all levels: the general public, consumers, producers, government decision makers and opinion leaders.<sup>224</sup>

The crucial role of environmental education has been recognized internationally as an essential component for sustainable development. The Brundtland Commission's report, Our Common Future, identifies both formal and informal environmental education as tools for achieving sustainable development:

Environmental education should be included in and should run throughout the other disciplines of the formal education curriculum at all levels to foster a sense of responsibility for the state of the environment and to teach students how to monitor, protect and improve it.<sup>225</sup>

The OECD stresses that,

Much of environmental education lies outside the realm of formal education and that it must take into account the livelihood of the people whom it aims to educate and whose behaviour it seeks to influence.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>223</sup>Denizhan Ercal, Environmental Management in Developing Countries, p. 405.

<sup>224</sup>Denizhan Ercal, Environmental Management in Developing Countries, pp. 403-405.

<sup>225</sup>United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, Our Common Future (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 127.

<sup>226</sup>OECD, Environmental Education: An Approach to Sustainable Development (Paris: OECD, 1993), p. 7.

The OECD also suggests that environmental education can be just as important as other policy instruments, (for example, pollution taxes, emission standards, monitoring, etc.), in influencing behaviour in the Third World. When people are educated about the significance of environmental protection in the context of their own lives, they will be more likely to become environmentally responsible. The potential impact of environmental education cannot be emphasized enough. At CIDA, this impact is not emphasized enough.

CIDA has implemented some environmental education and awareness projects. The Environmental Management Development in Indonesia project offers an excellent example where CIDA has integrated environmental education into its programming. An alternate example is a course on sustainable development that CIDA offers to all of its employees and partners. Environmental education, however, is such a crucial aspect of sustainable development that it needs to be integrated fully into every aspect of CIDA's decision making. Training and education at the local level in developing countries can be seen to be the key to sustainable development in less developed countries.

In "Environmental Management As A Third World Problem", John Montgomery emphasized that in LDCs the behavioral changes required to conserve the environment will require a major social effort. This is necessary because there are many actors involved and for



most countries the innovations required will be costly.<sup>227</sup>

The first step for this major effort is to educate the people and the decision makers of these countries. The next step is to promote contacts between members of different institutions involved in the complex system dealing directly or indirectly with environmental problems and to foster the building of networks and coalitions among those active in environmental education. The OECD also suggests that in building up awareness at all levels, NGOs can help to build the constituency necessary in introducing or strengthening environmental education and play a major role in its implementation.<sup>228</sup> To make CIDA's policies and programs more environmentally responsive, the above mentioned components of environmental education must be fully integrated into decision making.

#### Proposals For Change

Several other significant recommendations have been made in the literature for CIDA to augment its commitment to sustainable development. Three proposals are particularly significant. The

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<sup>227</sup>John Montgomery, "Environmental Management As A Third World Problem", Policy Science (Netherlands: Huwer Academic Publishers, May 1990), p. 166.

<sup>228</sup>OECD, Environmental Education: An Approach To Sustainable Development, p. 29.

first suggestion is for CIDA to pressure and work with the Canadian government to develop a "foreign policy for the environment." In Canada 21: Common Security in The Twenty-First Century, the authors stress that "in the search for environmental security, the divide between domestic and foreign policy disappears."<sup>229</sup> The book goes on to propose that Canada develop its own version of UNCED's Agenda 21. In the 1986 Simard-Hockin report, it was asserted that the government's aid activities should be better assimilated into Canadian foreign policy.

As well, the Centre for International Studies' report suggested that international development should become "a Canadian vocation."<sup>230</sup> If Canadian foreign policy objectives were better defined and a foreign policy for the environment was established, this assimilation could enhance CIDA's environmental policies. They also propose that this new foreign policy area stress must draw on domestic experience. They stress that the environment is a major factor pervading all foreign policy preoccupations, from development, security, multilateral and bilateral relations, to trade policy and international finance. Global Agenda: Canada's Foreign Policy and The Environment outlines four essential priorities for a foreign policy for the environment:

- 1) strengthening international organizations
- 2) pursuing sectoral priorities - international agreements
- 3) expanding bilateral environmental relations

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<sup>229</sup>Centre For International Studies, Canada 21: Canada and Common Security in The 21st Century (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1994), p. 26.

<sup>230</sup>Robert Clarke, "Overseas Development Assistance", p. 193.

4) implementing conventions.<sup>231</sup>

CIDA should pressure the Canadian government in the direction of this policy framework to allow for a clearer definition of the Agency's role in environmental issues.

The second frequent recommendation for CIDA is to better integrate and employ both domestic and international NGOs. Environmental NGOs have important functions in achieving virtually all of the key elements of sustainable development: they work for the maintenance of ecological integrity and the conservation of the resource base, they pursue equity, they think globally while acting locally, and they aim at increasing social self-determination.<sup>232</sup> NGOs have performed very well in mobilizing support for environmental issues and appear to be more responsive to environmental sensitivities specific to the various regions of the world. As well, NGOs have access to various channels of information and can play a large role in environmental education.

Although CIDA does work in conjunction with various NGOs, it has been recommended that the role of NGOs in CIDA projects be intensified. In CIDA's case, it should take the risk and fund local NGOs directly to design and execute projects that could be

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<sup>231</sup>External Affairs and International Trade Canada, "Environmental Issues in Canadian Foreign Policy", Global Agenda: Canada's Foreign Policy and The Environment (Ottawa: External Affairs Canada, Spring 1993).

<sup>232</sup>Julia Gardner, "Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations and Sustainable Development", Environmental Stewardship: Studies in Active Earthkeeping (Waterloo: Department of Geography, 1993), p. 11.

part of a sustainable development strategy.<sup>233</sup> The Winegard Commission also argued that CIDA should increase the role of NGOs. It recommended that CIDA, as part of the implementation of its new policy on the environment and development, consult closely with NGOs and environmental groups in insuring that appropriate procedures of social and environmental impact assessment are carried out.<sup>234</sup> NGOs have vital knowledge and experience that could aid CIDA on its road to sustainable development.

The final proposal for an improved commitment to sustainable development at CIDA involves closer interaction with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Again, since the release of the Winegard Commission's report For Whose Benefit?, interaction with the IDRC has increased. For Whose Benefit? stresses that the IDRC was highly beneficial because it concentrated on strengthening Third World science and technology. The Winegard Commission urged greater collaboration between the two agencies and advocated staff exchange programs.<sup>235</sup> CIDA and Sustainable Development also promoted greater cooperation with the IDRC:

CIDA, in cooperation with the IDRC and selected Canadian universities, independent institutions and foundations should determine ways and means for strengthening the sustainable development capacity and potential of recipient country education systems and institutions - including

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<sup>233</sup>Denizhan Erocak, Environmental Management in Developing Countries, p. 39.

<sup>234</sup>William Winegard, For Whose Benefit?, p. 64.

<sup>235</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-20.

the promotion of independent research institutes which work to strengthen research capacity at local and national levels.<sup>236</sup>

Internationally, the IDRC's successes are highly regarded. Commenting on Rio, Maurice Strong stated that saving IDRC from the budget axe "could well turn out to be the most cost effective initiative launched by Canada in Rio."<sup>237</sup> Similar to NGOs, CIDA can gain much expertise from greater collaboration with the IDRC.

### Conclusion

Despite certain positive attributes of its environmental policy, CIDA needs to evaluate the domestic and international criticisms of that policy and to implement the specific recommendations that have been made for the improvement of CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. The seven criticisms discussed in this chapter should be incorporated into CIDA's policy making and programming. Policies and projects, such as structural adjustment, large scale infrastructural projects, the export of food irradiation technology, non-emergency food aid and agricultural subsidies that cause environmental decay, should be re-evaluated, and in many instances, they should be abandoned. CIDA's policy commitment to sustainable development must be clarified and renewed, with an increased emphasis on

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<sup>236</sup>Jim MacNeill, John Cox, and David Runnalls, CIDA and Sustainable Development, p. 36.

<sup>237</sup>David Runnalls, "The Road From Rio", Canada Among Nations (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), p. 147.

increased emphasis on decentralization and environmental education. These modifications to CIDA's policies and programs will indicate a true commitment to sustainable development.

## Chapter VII - Conclusion

The objective of this paper was an examination and an evaluation of CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. In order to conclude, it is useful to return to the four initial questions this study addressed.

- 1) What is CIDA's policy regarding the environment?
- 2) What are the factors, both domestic and international, involved in the evolution of CIDA's policies on the environment?
- 3) Are CIDA's policies comprehensive and effective?
- 4) How can CIDA's environmental policies be improved?

### What is CIDA's policy regarding the environment?

The first question necessitated the examination of various CIDA documents on its environmental policy. From the initial stages of its dialogue on environmental policy to its latest policy, released in 1992, an evolution is evident in CIDA's decision-making on the environment. Essentially, CIDA's environmental policy involves two documents intended to compliment and augment each other. The initial policy, Environment and Development: The Policy of CIDA focused on incorporating environmental concerns into CIDA's bilateral aid projects. It mandated an environmental assessment process for

CIDA's bilateral projects and articulated CIDA's commitment to sustainable development and to the promotion of environmentally friendly projects. CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability redefined sustainable development for CIDA and attempted to expand environmental initiatives to all areas of CIDA's assistance, not just bilateral projects. The intent of this policy was to expand and clarify CIDA's environmental objectives. Although the intent of CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability was to clarify CIDA's policy stance, The Progress Report of this policy released a year later indicates that much of the direction within this policy has been abandoned. Each regional branch within CIDA is now formulating its own environmental policy. Thus, it is now difficult to ascertain the actual status and contents of CIDA's environmental policy. Although it is difficult to establish a clearly defined environmental policy from CIDA, a transition has occurred in its policy dialogue. More emphasis is now being placed on incorporating environmental concerns into all aspects of decision-making. As well, CIDA's Policy on Environmental Sustainability articulates a new concentration on capacity development and environmental education, which are essential aspects of sustainable development.



What are the factors, both domestic and international, involved in the evolution of CIDA's policies on the environment?

This paper contends that CIDA's environmental policies culminated from both internal and external pressure. Domestic and international pressure worked in conjunction with each other to stimulate CIDA to create and alter its stance on environmental issues. International dialogue worked as an impetus for the initiation of environmental pressure within Canada.

Internationally, the realization that environmental problems know no barriers and that environmental protection in developing countries is just as significant as measures taken at home also served as an impetus for CIDA. It was recognized that the environment was part of a new framework for international security and that global cooperation was the only answer:

Because of its intimate size and interconnectedness, and the immediacy of its activities, all the inhabitants of a village - be it minuscule or global - must inevitably share its good and bad times together. Moreover, this metamorphosis is not a temporary aberration, but a profoundly new and irrevocable step in planetary evolution.<sup>238</sup>

The evolution of the global environmental debate from a side issue to centre stage at the Rio Conference impacted all governments' policy making on the environment. In anticipation of Rio, CIDA redefined its environmental policy hoping to keep abreast with the new developments arriving from the Earth Summit.

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<sup>238</sup>Alistair Taylor and Angus Taylor, Poles Apart: Winners and Losers in the 20th Century (Ottawa: IDRC, 1992), p. 65.

The growing popularity of sustainable development forced CIDA to incorporate it within its own policy. Pressures from the LDCs themselves to stop the exploitation of their natural resources and to focus on development patterns that would carry them into a brighter future also sparked CIDA into action.

In response to growing international environmental awareness, the Canadian public opinion stressed the intrinsic value of protecting the global environment. Some of CIDA's partners, most significantly, Canadian NGOs and IDRC stressed the importance of promoting environmentally sound development practices. The Canadian government attempted to respond to the diverse issues within the global environmental debate by holding discussion with various groups, both domestic and international. This attempt to ascertain Canada's environmental responsibility caused various government agencies to reexamine their policies. Growing awareness of the interdependence of CIDA's political, economic and humanitarian objectives with environmental concerns spurred CIDA to take the environment seriously. Finally, a myriad of critiques and documents produced in Canada forced CIDA to make its policy on the environment clear to the Canadian public and Canadian policy makers.

Thus, a combination of international and domestic pressures called into question the efficacy of CIDA's environmental policies. These factors pressured CIDA to develop a more sustainable policy stance.

Are CIDA's policies comprehensive and effective?

Although CIDA's policies are moving in the right direction, more effort must be made to confirm the Agency's commitment to sustainable development. CIDA has been criticized for its lack of articulation on what its environmental policies entail and a lack of commitment to sustainable development. CIDA's policies, in their current form, are vague and ambiguous and lack several aspects crucial to sustainable development. CIDA's policies and programmes have not paid close enough attention to the importance of environmental education and the positive aspects of decentralization. CIDA does not fully take advantage of the resources and information made available by various NGOs and the IDRC.

As well, CIDA's policies remain confused due to the fact that each division has its own interpretation of the environmental policy. In their current form, the Agency's policies do not reflect clearly defined mandates. As well, public consultation and access to information is mandatory.

CIDA still supports policies that contradict its commitment to the environment, for example; structural adjustment, large scale infrastructural projects, non-emergency food aid, export of food irradiation technology, and agricultural subsidies.

CIDA's commitment to protecting the poor has also been called into question. CIDA's concentration on higher income LDCS and projects that benefit the elite in the Third World further

compound problems of poverty, hunger and environmental degradation. Obviously, CIDA has not incorporated principles of sustainable development into all aspects of its policies and programs.

How can CIDA's environmental policies be improved?

Various proposals have been made for ways for CIDA to renew its commitment to sustainable development.

In December 1993 Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andre Ouellet announced that he would initiate a parliamentary review of foreign policy this year. An assessment of aid policies will be an integral part of this review. CIDA should utilize the opportunity of the forthcoming foreign policy review to bring environmental concerns into the mainstream of Canadian foreign policy discourse. Incorporating the environment into Canadian foreign policy will work well to assist CIDA in clarifying and prioritizing its own objectives.

CIDA can also improve its commitment to sustainable development by placing greater emphasis on environmental education. Educating those in the Third World about their natural environment is the first step to sustainable development in developing countries. In order to accomplish environmental education in LDCs, CIDA officials need to be more aware of the environmental risks and problems in different regions. A renewed concentration on decentralization could assist in the development

of this knowledge base. CIDA field workers working one on one with the people of the Third World will be more responsive to the actual needs of those people. CIDA also needs to better utilize the resources offered by NGOs and IDRC. Often these groups avoid the political constraints that bind the hands of CIDA officials. Greater collaboration with these groups will compliment CIDA's initiatives.

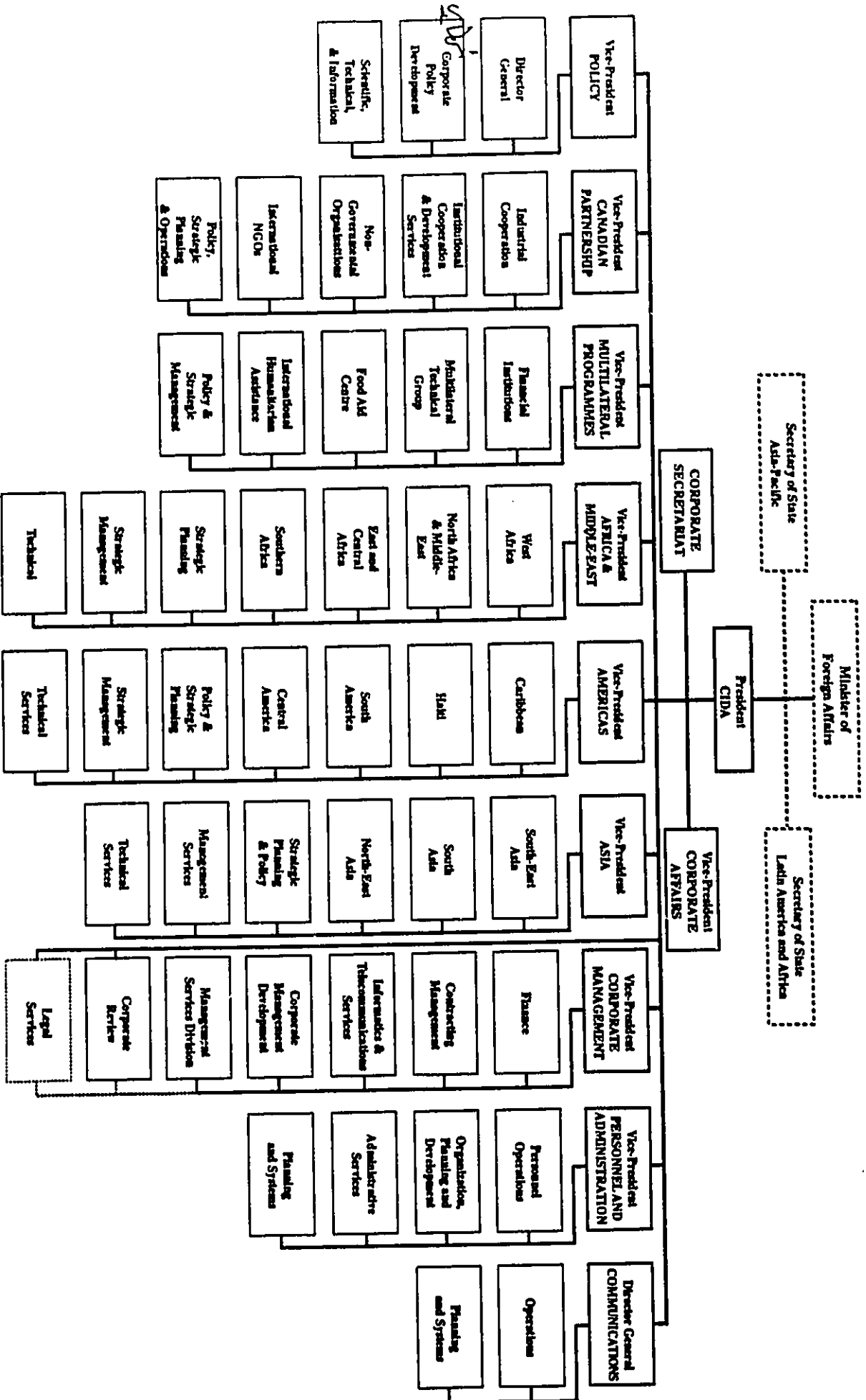
CIDA should renew its commitment to the poor and reassess how the Agency can better achieve this mandate. CIDA's commitment to the environment could be augmented by greater attention to the principles of social justice.

The methodology used in this paper was effective in answering the four questions addressed. The secondary literature and CIDA documents were useful in determining the contents of the Agency's environmental policy, how it evolved and the continuing problems within it. The case studies of the Three Gorges Project, Indonesia's EMDI and the Cote d'Ivoire's forestry project reflected both the positive and the negative aspects associated with CIDA's current environmental framework and work to substantiate various criticisms directed against CIDA's commitment to sustainable development. Each case highlights a diverse aspect of CIDA's policies and programming. Finally, the CIDA interviews clarified the Agency's motivations in the development of its various projects and policies, while the IDRC interview raised questions concerning the efficacy of some of

CIDA's policies and programs.

In sum, CIDA's commitment to sustainable development, although evolving, needs to be re-examined and renewed. Although international and domestic pressures have forced CIDA to establish a more coherent environmental framework, difficulties with CIDA's policies and objectives still remain. The alteration in policies and programming over the years does indicate that CIDA's commitment to sustainable development is moving in a positive direction. CIDA, however, needs to reaffirm its commitment to its stated policy and put this policy into action. CIDA needs to evaluate its involvement in all projects with the central objectives of sustainable development in mind. Environmental concerns must be incorporated into all aspects and forms of CIDA assistance. Policies which are contradictory must be revised or abandoned. Finally, only when all of these initiatives are implemented can CIDA's development assistance be considered truly environmentally sustainable.

The following is the most recent organizational chart. This was released in April 1994. The Environment and Development Policy Section is found within Corporate Policy Development.



APPENDIX 2 - Questions For CIDA Interview

- 1) How did CIDA's environmental policy evolve?
- 2) What are the main objectives of this policy?
- 3) What impact did the Brundtland Commission's report have on CIDA's environmental policy?
- 4) Has the 1986 Environmental Policy been altered since its inception? If so, how has it been changed?
- 5) Has the environmental policy been expanded to include all aspects of development assistance, rather than just bilateral assistance?
- 6) Has the number of field workers in recipient countries been increased since the release of the SCEAIT report? If so, by how many workers?
- 7) Has there been increased interaction with the International Development Research Centre on environmental issues?
- 8) How have CIDA's three partners; NGOs, business, and colleges and universities assisted in the creation and implementation of CIDA's environmental policy?
- 9) Has there been domestic pressure on CIDA to make their development policy and programs more environmentally responsible?
- 10) How much influence has the Canadian public had on the development of the environmental policy?
- 11) What types of factors constrain CIDA's implementation of environmentally responsive policies and programs?
- 12) Have recipient countries been responsive to new environmental standards imposed on development assistance?
- 13) How have budget cuts affected CIDA's commitment to its environmental policy?
- 14) How much money had CIDA invested in environmental projects since the creation of its environmental policy?
- 15) In cases where past CIDA projects inadvertently caused environmental degradation, what efforts are being made to reverse this trend or to compensate for the damages?



- 16) Does CIDA continue to support structural adjustment policies although they often perpetuate harm to the natural environment?
- 17) What efforts has CIDA made to work towards compliance with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)?
- 18) How did the Rio Conference impact upon the creation of CIDA's policy for environmental sustainability?
- 19) What are the basic principles underlying this policy?
- 20) Have new initiatives been undertaken for the implementation of this policy since the release of the progress report in October of 1993?
- 21) In the 1992-1993 Progress Report, two surveys on Canada's capacity to help promote environmental sustainability in developing countries and on the options for CIDA to rapidly and cost-effectively access up-to-date information about this capacity were mentioned. What were the results of these surveys?
- 22) What type of process does CIDA employ to determine whether or not CIDA projects are environmentally friendly?
- 23) What is the number of CIDA officials involved in environmental work?
- 24) How does CIDA ensure that NGOs observe environmentally responsible behaviour?
- 25) Does CIDA continue to stand behind its policy of non-emergency food aid?

APPENDIX 3 - Questions For IDRC Interview

- 1) In what capacity is IDRC involved in CIDA's environmental policies?
- 2) Has interaction increased with CIDA over the last five years?
- 3) What are your views on CIDA's commitment to structural adjustment?
- 4) What are your views on CIDA's commitment to non-emergency food aid?
- 5) What are your views on CIDA's efforts to decentralize?
- 6) What are your views on CIDA's tendency to support large scale capital projects?
- 7) How can CIDA improve its commitment to environmental sustainability?

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**VITA AUCTORIS**

Tracey Bentein was born in 1970 in Sarnia, Ontario. She graduated from St. Patrick's High School in 1989. From there, she went on to obtain her Honours Bachelor's degree in Political Science at the University of Windsor in 1993. She is currently a candidate for the Master's degree in Political Science at the University of Windsor. She hopes to graduate in the Spring of 1995. As well, she is enroled in the first year of Law School at the University of Western Ontario.