

system-wide, thereby inexorably requiring joint efforts by the riparian states for their amelioration. Indeed, this recognition was aptly demonstrated by the oft-heard quip, 'We're all in the same boat'. The eight riparian states—greater or lesser fractions of which comprise 99% of the basin—are, though, remarkably diverse as to area, natural resources, population, wealth, political system, and history of friendships and animosities.

Therefore, the primary challenge in achieving environmental security for the Danubian 'ecosystem' was recognized by the conference participants to be the establishment of a firm working relationship among those eight riparian states. Although the necessary formal (legal) mechanisms for interstate cooperation were seen to be inadequate within the Danube region, a basis for establishing such cooperation was found to exist in the fine tradition of regional scientific cooperation. Most appropriately, the women participating in the Conference formulated an appeal to all women and women's groups in the riparian nations involved, to accept their civic responsibility to preserve the Danubian environment for future generations through new ecological and moral education at all levels.

This Conference, in bringing together so many relevant professional groups and scholars from within the region (many for the first time), clearly reinforced interstate ecological cooperation. Indeed, the Ecoforum for Peace established a standing committee on the Danube in order to be able to carry on its catalytic function in the future.

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'FOREENERGY '88' 2ND EUROPEAN FORUM—'ENERGY IN TOWNS'—HELD IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE OF GENEVA, 15 RUE DE VAREMBÉ, 1211 GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, DURING 7–10 NOVEMBER 1988

After 'Forenergy '86',* a second forum 'FOREENERGY '88' took place recently in Geneva, Switzerland, as indicated above. Among numerous sponsors were the City of Geneva and the Council of Europe (the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe). Intended essentially for energy managers engaged at the municipal, urban, or regional, levels, this Forum attracted delegates from some 40 European towns.

The aim of the Forum was again to promote energy conservation, through rational energy management. In urban heating, for instance, district heating and co-generation were the subjects of deliberation, while one session was devoted to the beneficial utilization of waste, with emphasis on recycling and recuperation. Another session dealt with 'Energy and the quality of life', which included considerations of surroundings and the general environment.

Throughout the Forum indeed, the links between energy and environment were stressed. There is no doubt, nowadays, that the production and use of energy by Mankind, have substantial effects on The Biosphere. All misuses of energy have a bearing on the quality of our environment. The use of fossil fuels for the production of energy is a foremost example: in combustion engines or when used for

heating purposes, it leads to the production of gases which are damaging to the atmosphere. Our efforts should therefore tend to exploit pollution-free and renewable sources of energy.

Regarding wastes, the method of incineration for their disposal is not a satisfactory solution: one should try to recuperate the energy-content of discarded materials. This would also limit the pollution arising from the burning of wastes. Indeed, in order to solve the complex problems with which we are confronted, we should consider the energy aspects and the effects on environment together. They are closely interwoven.

The last session of the Forum was devoted to hydrogen. This is not a source of energy, of course, but a promising energy-vector. A hydrogen distribution network would supplement the electricity distribution network, with advantages regarding storage and long-distance transportation. The production of hydrogen could occur in regions such as northern Canada, which produces a surplus of hydroelectric power. Most important, one could make use of large-scale solar installations in desert areas. The decisive advantage of a 'hydrogen economy' would evidently be the virtual absence of pollution, and hence an optimal preservation of the environment.

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FIRST SESSION OF WMO–UNEP INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC), HELD IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, DURING 9–11 NOVEMBER 1988

The first meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was opened by statements from G.O.P. Obasi, Secretary-General of WMO, and by M.K. Tolba, Executive Director of UNEP, on 9 November 1988. Statements were made by representatives of eighteen of the 35 governments represented. The representative of Malta drew attention to the draft resolution on Conservation of Climate as part of the Common Heritage of Mankind, that had been submitted by his Government to the United Nations General Assembly on 26 October and which would be duly considered by the General Assembly.

The Panel decided that, to attain its objectives of

- assessing the scientific information that is related to the various components of the issue of climate change, such as emissions of major 'greenhouse' gases and modification of the Earth's radiation-balance resulting therefrom, and that are needed to enable the environmental and socio-economic consequences of climate change to be evaluated; and

- formulating realistic response-strategies for the management of the climate-change issue;

three main tasks would be involved, namely

- 1) to assess available scientific information on climate change;
- 2) to assess environmental and socio-economic impacts of climate change; and
- 3) to formulate response strategies.

To accomplish these tasks it was decided to establish three Working Groups, chaired by representatives of the United Kingdom, the USSR, and the USA, respectively. The first would consider, *inter alia*, factors affecting climate change, including greenhouse gases, responses to these factors of the atmosphere–ocean–land system, the

* Described in *Environmental Conservation*, Vol. 14, No. 2, p. 184, 1987.