SCP Workshop Paper #1:
Background on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Context of North America

Discussion Questions

- What concepts of SCP are relevant to the way in which North America approaches sustainability?
- Are there unique characteristics that distinguish North America from other regions and which influence how we address SCP?
- What effect might recent economic events have on how North Americans view SCP?
- How do we explain SCP to people – what is it, why is it important and how will it change society?

Introduction

Recognizing that supporting an ever growing population and fulfilling high consumption demands within the current framework of production is degrading the environment and significantly impairing its ability to provide essential ecosystem services such as assimilating wastes, storing carbon, filtering and distributing fresh water, and sustaining biological diversity, the international community is working to address the negative impacts of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. This paper provides a brief background on the development of international policy on sustainable consumption and production (SCP), describes the international framework to stimulate and organize efforts, and discusses the distinguishing characteristics of North America that influence our regional approach to SCP.

Development of International Policy on SCP

In 1987, the United Nations report, *Our Common Future*, formally introduced the concept of sustainable development to the international community, defining it as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[1] To support sustainable development, it called for a fundamental change to the systems of production and consumption. The report helped to organize international thinking and served as a foundation for the activities at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the Rio Earth Summit. The conference resulted in several progressive and meaningful outcomes, three of which have particular importance on the issue of SCP:

1.) *The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*
With the goal of improving cooperation and establishing global partnership to work towards international agreements that protect the integrity of the environment and the interests of society, the Rio Declaration established a foundation of 27 principles.[2] Of

[1] United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. *Our Common Future.* 1987.
[2] UN Document A/CONF.151/26;31I.L.M.874 (1992) *Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development.* Signed June 13, 1992.

particular relevance is Principle 8 which states, "To achieve sustainable development and higher quality of life for all people, States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies."[3] This Principle infused social aspects into SCP.

2.) *Agenda 21*
Agenda 21 created a 'blueprint' for international activities that would foster sustainable development.[4] Within the pages of what is essentially an implementation strategy for sustainable development, there is a specific focus on consumption and the role of developed countries. Chapter 4 of Agenda 21, "Changing Consumption Patterns," places responsibility on industrialized countries and calls for actions to improve global understanding of the role of consumption and how to shift to more sustainable patterns of consumption that have minimal environmental impacts while meeting the needs of society.

3.) *The establishment of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development*
The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was charged with ensuring effective follow-up on the conference outcomes, and monitoring and reporting on the implementation of Agenda 21. In 1995, CSD elaborated upon the definition of sustainable consumption, acknowledging its many aspects and incorporating a stronger emphasis on social equity. CSD defines sustainable consumption as "the use of services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations."

Since the Rio Earth Summit, the international community has continually reaffirmed sustainable consumption and production as essential to meeting the objectives of sustainable development. Both the United Nations Human Development report in 1998 and the establishment of UN Millennium Development Goals in 2000 integrate the need to shift to sustainable patterns of consumption and production to enable sustainable development and achieve the goals for global social provision.

Building on the concept of shifting patterns of consumption and production, in 2002, the United Nations Environment Program clarified the meaning of patterns of consumption and presented an alternative conceptual approach for describing SCP. 'Patterns of consumption and production' refers to both the consumption of goods and services, in terms of volume and use, and the environmental and social impacts that result from their production. It is influenced by three inter-related systems[5]:

1. Provision - the way products and services are sourced, produced, delivered and utilized;
2. Motivation – market incentives and consumer tastes shape the provision and demand for environmentally preferable products and services; and
3. Access – factors that enable or discourage consumer participation in the market and affect access to particular products and services.

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[3] 'Patterns of production and consumption' refers to both the consumption of goods and services, in terms of volume and use, and the environmental and social impacts that result from their production.
[4] UN Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) *Agenda 21.* Rio de Janeiro. 3-14 June 1992.
[5] UNEP. *Sustainable Consumption and Cleaner Production: Global Status.* September 2002.

This systems perspective provides a useful insight into the different aspects of consumption and production and serves as a conceptual framework for organizing analysis and activities.

With a strong focus on implementation, international action on SCP progressed further at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002. The WSSD identified changing patterns of consumption as one of the three key elements for sustainable development, the other two being poverty eradication and protecting and managing the natural resource base. An outcome of the conference was development of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI).[6] Chapter 3, titled "Changing Unsustainable Patterns of Consumption and Production," of the JPOI begins by articulating the need to change consumption patterns and directs developed countries to take the lead based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (See appendix for the full text, which describes in detail the specific action areas). From this basis, all parties and stakeholders have a role to play in supporting SCP with primary responsibility resting with developed countries.

To kick start and organize countries' efforts, the JPOI called for the development of "a 10-year framework of programs in support of regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards SCP to promote social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems by addressing and, where appropriate, de-linking economic growth and environmental degradation through improving efficiency and sustainability in the use of resources and production processes and reducing resource degradation, pollution and waste." The 10 year framework of programs (10YFP) is to include actions that:

(a) Identify activities, tools, policies, indicators, and monitoring for measuring and assessing progress;

(b) Adopt and implement policies based on the polluter pays principle;

(c) Using scientific approaches, develop policies to reduce the environmental and health impacts of products and services;

(d) Develop awareness-raising programs, especially in developed countries, on the importance of sustainable production and consumption;

(e) Develop and adopt, on a voluntary basis, effective, transparent, verifiable, non-misleading and non-discriminatory consumer information tools; and

(f) Increase eco-efficiency, with capacity building, technology transfer with developing countries.

The initial process of discussing and developing the 10YFP is referred to as the "Marrakech Process." The Marrakech Process works to develop strategies and coordinate voluntary action through meetings of international experts, regional roundtables, and task forces. Under the umbrella of the Marrakech Process there have been working groups on: production processes and industrial development; urban planning; waste management; sustainable products; public procurement; buildings and construction; tourism; agriculture; and energy, climate and air pollution. Some of the efforts within these workgroups, including energy, climate and air pollution, have been incorporated into other international initiatives or informed through existing national programs. The intended purpose of the Marrakech Process is to have a body of work and experiences from which to provide input and recommended actions to CSD for

[6] World Summit on Sustainable Development *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.* Johannesburg. 26 August – 4 September 2002.

consideration and inclusion in sustainable development policy and initiatives. At CSD 18 countries will highlight and discuss their efforts, initiatives, and lessons learned that will help advance the understanding of how to shift patterns of consumption and production. At CSD 19 the discussion will look to focus primarily on negotiations to the actual 10YFP which will include key elements of a framework that will support SCP. The 10YFP would then be launched in 2011 and in effect through 2021.

International Activities Supporting SCP

At its most expansive, SCP encompasses a broad spectrum of activities such as efforts to: increase the consumption rates of those struggling to fulfill their life-essential needs; improve social equality; develop economic measures that capture societal well-being in addition to gross domestic product; modify consumer behavior and material aspirations; reduce the environmental footprint of products and services; improve urban planning; and rethink the design, production, distribution, and utilization of entire systems. Through the Regional Marrakech Process Consultations, different regions have identified energy, agriculture, the built environment, transportation, tourism, waste, and water as priority sectors. Countries and regions have chosen to focus on specific aspects of SCP based on their priorities, capabilities, and potential to affect positive change. For example, France and Italy are leading initiatives addressing sustainable public procurement and education on sustainable consumption, respectively.[7] The United Kingdom's activities have primarily centered on sustainable products and market transformation. Africa tailored their 10YFP to their priorities of energy, water and sanitation, habitat and sustainable urban development, and industrial development.[8] Although countries and regions have emphasized various components of SCP, the ultimate intent of these activities is to change systems of consumption and production.

Distinguishing characteristics of North America that influence our approach to SCP

North America's character and priorities are distinguishable from other regions and consequently influence the North American approach on SCP. Canada and the United States have many unique economic, environmental and cultural similarities. For example, they have democratic governments with delegated responsibilities to the provinces and states, and similar policy perspectives on the use of economic and environmental regulations. Both countries maintain a relatively laissez faire approach to the market, and preserve a high degree of consumer sovereignty. They have globally competitive economies with robust international trade. There are intertwined manufacturing systems, with both components and products crossing the border.

The two countries have similar infrastructure in terms of waste management, transportation networks, population distribution, housing and the built environment, and energy use patterns. Shared environmental characteristics include strong natural resource bases, massive amounts of land, and open space. Additionally, Canada and the US have cultural likenesses in their levels of personal wealth, social aspirations, consumer behavior, and high consumption of goods.

These characteristics influence the North American approach to SCP and the relevant activities undertaken. For the most part, SCP activities in North America have focused on improving

[7] UNDESA and UNEP. *Background paper 1: Key Elements of Proposed 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production.* Third International Expert Meeting on 10 Year Framework of Programs on SCP (Marrakech Process). Stockholm, Sweden: 26-29 June 2007.

[8] Second expert group meeting on the African 10 YFP, 19-20 February 2005, Nairobi.

aspects of the system of provision, changing the way products and services are produced, delivered and utilized by reducing environmental impacts and improving production efficiencies. Products and services are directly connected to issues of consumption and production given that the types and volume of products consumed, and the manner in which they are sourced, produced, delivered, used, and managed at their end of life determine their impacts. Therefore, working to improve aspects of a product's life cycle can have positive repercussions throughout. There have been a variety of efforts to green supply chains, minimize waste, improve the energy efficiency of products, and move towards a service oriented model of provision. Broadly focusing on products can also serve as a tangible entrée for beginning to discuss issues of consumption, work to educate consumers about the impacts of their purchasing decisions, and harness the market to support a shift towards products that are more in line with the goals of sustainability.

Summary

The United Nations Environment Program has described SCP, as a term that "brings together a number of key issues, such as meeting needs, enhancing quality of life, improving resource efficiency, minimizing waste, taking a lifecycle perspective, and taking into account the equity dimension." [9] The complexity of these key issues necessitates significant, coordinated effort amongst all stakeholders. Canada and the United States are working together as a region and with the international community to support SCP. With concerted, cooperative effort North America can change unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and thereby improve environmental quality, maintain economic competitiveness, and foster sustainable development.

[9] UNEP. *Sustainable Consumption and Cleaner Production: Global Status.* September 2002.

Appendix

Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
26 August – 4 September 2002

III. Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production

14. Fundamental changes in the way societies produce and consume are indispensable for achieving global sustainable development. All countries should promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, with the developed countries taking the lead and with all countries benefiting from the process, taking into account the Rio principles, including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities as set out in principle 7 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. Governments, relevant international organizations, the private sector and all major groups should play an active role in changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns. This would include the actions at all levels set out below.

15. Encourage and promote the development of a 10-year framework of programmes in support of regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production to promote social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems by addressing and, where appropriate, delinking economic growth and environmental degradation through improving efficiency and sustainability in the use of resources and production processes and reducing resource degradation, pollution and waste. All countries should take action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development needs and capabilities of developing countries, through mobilization, from all sources, of financial and technical assistance and capacity-building for developing countries. This would require actions at all levels to:

(a) Identify specific activities, tools, policies, measures and monitoring and assessment mechanisms, including, where appropriate, life-cycle analysis and national indicators for measuring progress, bearing in mind that standards applied by some countries may be inappropriate and of unwarranted economic and social cost to other countries, in particular developing countries;

(b) Adopt and implement policies and measures aimed at promoting sustainable patterns of production and consumption, applying, inter alia, the polluter-pays principle described in principle 16 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;

(c) Develop production and consumption policies to improve the products and services provided, while reducing environmental and health impacts, using, where appropriate, science-based approaches, such as life-cycle analysis;

(d) Develop awareness-raising programmes on the importance of sustainable production and consumption patterns, particularly among youth and the relevant segments in all countries, especially in developed countries, through, inter alia, education, public and consumer information, advertising and other media, taking into account local, national and regional cultural values;

(e) Develop and adopt, where appropriate, on a voluntary basis, effective, transparent, verifiable, non-misleading and non-discriminatory consumer information tools to provide

information relating to sustainable consumption and production, including human health and safety aspects. These tools should not be used as disguised trade barriers;

(f) Increase eco-efficiency, with financial support from all sources, where mutually agreed, for capacity-building, technology transfer and exchange of technology with developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in cooperation with relevant international organizations.

16. Increase investment in cleaner production and eco-efficiency in all countries through, inter alia, incentives and support schemes and policies directed at establishing appropriate regulatory, financial and legal frameworks. This would include actions at all levels to:

(a) Establish and support cleaner production programmes and centres and more efficient production methods by providing, inter alia, incentives and capacity-building to assist enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, particularly in developing countries, in improving productivity and sustainable development;

(b) Provide incentives for investment in cleaner production and eco-efficiency in all countries, such as state-financed loans, venture capital, technical assistance and training programmes for small and medium-sized companies while avoiding trade-distorting measures inconsistent with the rules of the World Trade Organization;

(c) Collect and disseminate information on cost-effective examples in cleaner production, eco-efficiency and environmental management and promote the exchange of best practices and know-how on environmentally sound technologies between public and private institutions;

(d) Provide training programmes to small and medium-sized enterprises on the use of information and communication technologies.

17. Integrate the issue of production and consumption patterns into sustainable development policies, programmes and strategies, including, where applicable, into poverty reduction strategies.

18. Enhance corporate environmental and social responsibility and accountability. This would include actions at all levels to:

(a) Encourage industry to improve social and environmental performance through voluntary initiatives, including environmental management systems, codes of conduct, certification and public reporting on environmental and social issues, taking into account such initiatives as the International Organization for Standardization standards and Global Reporting Initiative guidelines on sustainability reporting, bearing in mind principle 11 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;

(b) Encourage dialogue between enterprises and the communities in which they operate and other stakeholders;

(c) Encourage financial institutions to incorporate sustainable development considerations into their decision-making processes;
(d) Develop workplace-based partnerships and programmes, including training and education programmes.

19. Encourage relevant authorities at all levels to take sustainable development considerations into account in decision-making, including on national and local development planning, investment in infrastructure, business development and public procurement. This would include actions at all levels to:

(a) Provide support for the development of sustainable development strategies and programmes, including in decision-making on investment in infrastructure and business development;

(b) Continue to promote the internalization of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should, in principle, bear the costs of pollution, with due regard to the public interest and without distorting international trade and investment;

(c) Promote public procurement policies that encourage development and diffusion of environmentally sound goods and services;

(d) Provide capacity-building and training to assist relevant authorities with regard to the implementation of the initiatives listed in the present paragraph;

(e) Use environmental impact assessment procedures.

20. Call upon Governments as well as relevant regional and international organizations and other relevant stakeholders to implement, taking into account national and regional specificities and circumstances, the recommendations and conclusions adopted by the Commission on Sustainable Development concerning energy for sustainable development at its ninth session, including the issues and options set out below, bearing in mind that in view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. This would include actions at all levels to

(a) Take further action to mobilize the provision of financial resources, technology transfer, capacity-building and the diffusion of environmentally sound technologies according to the recommendations and conclusions of the Commission on Sustainable Development, as contained in section A, paragraph 3, and section D, paragraph 30, of its decision 9/1[9] on energy for sustainable development;

(b) Integrate energy considerations, including energy efficiency, affordability and accessibility, into socio-economic programmes, especially into policies of major energy-consuming sectors, and into the planning, operation and maintenance of long-lived energy consuming infrastructures, such as the public sector, transport, industry, agriculture, urban land use, tourism and construction sectors;

(c) Develop and disseminate alternative energy technologies with the aim of giving a greater share of the energy mix to renewable energies, improving energy efficiency and greater reliance on advanced energy technologies, including cleaner fossil fuel technologies;

(d) Combine, as appropriate, the increased use of renewable energy resources, more efficient use of energy, greater reliance on advanced energy technologies, including advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and the sustainable use of traditional energy resources, which

could meet the growing need for energy services in the longer term to achieve sustainable development;

(e) Diversify energy supply by developing advanced, cleaner, more efficient, affordable and cost-effective energy technologies, including fossil fuel technologies and renewable energy technologies, hydro included, and their transfer to developing countries on concessional terms as mutually agreed. With a sense of urgency, substantially increase the global share of renewable energy sources with the objective of increasing its contribution to total energy supply, recognizing the role of national and voluntary regional targets as well as initiatives, where they exist, and ensuring that energy policies are supportive to developing countries' efforts to eradicate poverty, and regularly evaluate available data to review progress to this end;

(f) Support efforts, including through provision of financial and technical assistance to developing countries, with the involvement of the private sector, to reduce flaring and venting of gas associated with crude oil production;

(g) Develop and utilize indigenous energy sources and infrastructures for various local uses and promote rural community participation, including local Agenda 21 groups, with the support of the international community, in developing and utilizing renewable energy technologies to meet their daily energy needs to find simple and local solutions;

(h) Establish domestic programmes for energy efficiency, including, as appropriate, by accelerating the deployment of energy efficiency technologies, with the necessary support of the international community;

(i) Accelerate the development, dissemination and deployment of affordable and cleaner energy efficiency and energy conservation technologies, as well as the transfer of such technologies, in particular to developing countries, on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed;

(j) Recommend that international financial institutions and other agencies' policies support developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, in their own efforts to establish policy and regulatory frameworks which create a level playing field between the following: renewable energy, energy efficiency, advanced energy technologies, including advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and centralized, distributed and decentralized energy systems;

(k) Promote increased research and development in the field of various energy technologies, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced energy technologies, including advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, both nationally and through international collaboration; strengthen national and regional research and development institutions/centres on reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy for sustainable development;

(l) Promote networking between centres of excellence on energy for sustainable development, including regional networks, by linking competent centres on energy technologies for sustainable development that could support and promote efforts at capacity-building and technology transfer activities, particularly of developing countries, as well as serve as information clearing houses;

(m) Promote education to provide information for both men and women about available energy sources and technologies;

(n) Utilize financial instruments and mechanisms, in particular the Global Environment Facility, within its mandate, to provide financial resources to developing countries, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States, to meet their capacity needs for training, technical know-how and strengthening national institutions in reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy, including promoting energy efficiency and conservation, renewable energy and advanced energy technologies, including advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies;

(o) Support efforts to improve the functioning, transparency and information about energy markets with respect to both supply and demand, with the aim of achieving greater stability and predictability, and to ensure consumer access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services;

(p) Policies to reduce market distortions would promote energy systems compatible with sustainable development through the use of improved market signals and by removing market distortions, including restructuring taxation and phasing out harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, with such policies taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries, with the aim of minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development;

(q) Take action, where appropriate, to phase out subsidies in this area that inhibit sustainable development, taking fully into account the specific conditions and different levels of development of individual countries and considering their adverse effect, particularly on developing countries;

(r) Governments are encouraged to improve the functioning of national energy markets in such a way that they support sustainable development, overcome market barriers and improve accessibility, taking fully into account that such policies should be decided by each country, and that its own characteristics and capabilities and level of development should be considered, especially as reflected in national sustainable development strategies, where they exist;

(s) Strengthen national and regional energy institutions or arrangements for enhancing regional and international cooperation on energy for sustainable development, in particular to assist developing countries in their domestic efforts to provide reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services to all sections of their populations;

(t) Countries are urged to develop and implement actions within the framework of the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, including through public-private partnerships, taking into account the different circumstances of countries, based on lessons learned by Governments, international institutions and stakeholders, including business and industry, in the field of access to energy, including renewable energy and energy-efficiency and advanced energy technologies, including advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies;

(u) Promote cooperation between international and regional institutions and bodies dealing with different aspects of energy for sustainable development within their existing mandate, bearing in mind paragraph 46 (h) of the Programme of Action for the Further Implementation of Agenda

21, strengthening, as appropriate, regional and national activities for the promotion of education and capacity-building regarding energy for sustainable development;

(v) Strengthen and facilitate, as appropriate, regional cooperation arrangements for promoting cross-border energy trade, including the interconnection of electricity grids and oil and natural gas pipelines;

(w) Strengthen and, where appropriate, facilitate dialogue forums among regional, national and international producers and consumers of energy.

21. Promote an integrated approach to policy-making at the national, regional and local levels for transport services and systems to promote sustainable development, including policies and planning for land use, infrastructure, public transport systems and goods delivery networks, with a view to providing safe, affordable and efficient transportation, increasing energy efficiency, reducing pollution, congestion and adverse health effects and limiting urban sprawl, taking into account national priorities and circumstances. This would include actions at all levels to:

(a) Implement transport strategies for sustainable development, reflecting specific regional, national and local conditions, to improve the affordability, efficiency and convenience of transportation as well as urban air quality and health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including through the development of better vehicle technologies that are more environmentally sound, affordable and socially acceptable;

(b) Promote investment and partnerships for the development of sustainable, energy efficient multi-modal transportation systems, including public mass transportation systems and better transportation systems in rural areas, with technical and financial assistance for developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

22. Prevent and minimize waste and maximize reuse, recycling and use of environmentally friendly alternative materials, with the participation of government authorities and all stakeholders, in order to minimize adverse effects on the environment and improve resource efficiency, with financial, technical and other assistance for developing countries. This would include actions at all levels to:

(a) Develop waste management systems, with the highest priority placed on waste prevention and minimization, reuse and recycling, and environmentally sound disposal facilities, including technology to recapture the energy contained in waste, and encourage small-scale waste-recycling initiatives that support urban and rural waste management and provide income-generating opportunities, with international support for developing countries;

(b) Promote waste prevention and minimization by encouraging production of reusable consumer goods and biodegradable products and developing the infrastructure required.

23. Renew the commitment, as advanced in Agenda 21, to sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and of hazardous wastes for sustainable development as well as for the protection of human health and the environment, inter alia, aiming to achieve, by 2020, that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, using transparent science-based risk assessment procedures and science-based risk management procedures, taking into account the precautionary approach, as set out in principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and

Development, and support developing countries in strengthening their capacity for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes by providing technical and financial assistance. This would include actions at all levels to:

(a) Promote the ratification and implementation of relevant international instruments on chemicals and hazardous waste, including the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedures for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade[10] so that it can enter into force by 2003 and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants[11] so that it can enter into force by 2004, and encourage and improve coordination as well as supporting developing countries in their implementation;

(b) Further develop a strategic approach to international chemicals management based on the Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action beyond 2000 of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety[12] by 2005, and urge that the United Nations Environment Programme, the Intergovernmental Forum, other international organizations dealing with chemical management and other relevant international organizations and actors closely cooperate in this regard, as appropriate;

(c) Encourage countries to implement the new globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008;

(d) Encourage partnerships to promote activities aimed at enhancing environmentally sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes, implementing multilateral environmental agreements, raising awareness of issues relating to chemicals and hazardous waste and encouraging the collection and use of additional scientific data;

(e) Promote efforts to prevent international illegal trafficking of hazardous chemicals and hazardous wastes and to prevent damage resulting from the transboundary movement and disposal of hazardous wastes in a manner consistent with obligations under relevant international instruments, such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal;[13]

(f) Encourage development of coherent and integrated information on chemicals, such as through national pollutant release and transfer registers;

(g) Promote reduction of the risks posed by heavy metals that are harmful to human health and the environment, including through a review of relevant studies, such as the United Nations Environment Programme global assessment of mercury and its compounds.

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[9] Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 9 (E/2001/29), chap. I.B.

[10] UNEP/FAO/PIC/CONF.5, annex III.

[11] www.chem.unep.ch/sc.

[12] Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, third session, Forum III final report (IFCS/Forum III/23w), annex 6.

[13] Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, third session, Forum III final report (IFCS/Forum III/23w), annex 6.