

AGENDA 21 PREAMBLE

DOCUMENTATION

A/CONF.151/PC/L.76: Adopted preambular paragraphs

CANADIAN OBJECTIVE

To ensure that Agenda 21 implementation is driven by governments rather than international organisations and the United Nations system.

PREPCOM DISCUSSION

Canada took the initiative in PrepCom IV to convene meetings of interested delegations with the objective of ensuring that there would in fact be a preamble to Agenda 21 that would lay out the basic context.

Canada's central concern was to ensure that implementation of Agenda 21 will not be driven by international organisations or the United Nations system, but by governments, based on national sustainability plans (Green Plans). Canada was also concerned that the preamble reflect the need for broad public participation, and recognition that Agenda 21 is an evolving process.

A CANZ (Canada, Australia and New Zealand) written submission to the Chair of the PrepCom, largely drafted by Canada, became a significant component of the preamble to Agenda 21. Australia was reluctant to oblige governments to create national plans, on the grounds that under certain circumstances full national plans may not be necessary; the text therefore indicates that "national strategies, plans, policies and processes are crucial in achieving" successful implementation of Agenda 21 by governments.

OUTCOME AND ASSESSMENT

The CANZ written submission is almost entirely reflected in the final adopted text of the Agenda 21 preamble. No substantive concerns in the CANZ text were dropped. The Canadian objectives have therefore been met.