

Nevertheless, the conference recognized that the process would benefit from ongoing co-ordination by officials, backed up by regional governments and existing institutions such as the Pacific Economic Co-operation Conference (PECC).

Ministers agreed that officials meet soon to develop a work program based on their discussions. In addition to Canada's proposal for consultations on the MTN, Ministers agreed to pursue co-operation in such areas as technology transfer, and economic and trade data collection and exchange. They also agree to explore work in specific areas such as energy, transportation, telecommunications, and the environment.

Mr. Crosbie encouraged Asia-Pacific countries to address environmental concerns in economic decision-making. "No economic gains can justify irreparable ecological loss," Mr. Crosbie said.

Mr. Crosbie particularly stressed the benefits of greater regional co-operation in the area of marine resource conservation. "The ocean is our common heritage and our most precious resource."

Mr. Crosbie joined a number of other Ministers in asserting the need for greater control over driftnet fishing.

On the question of participation, Mr. Crosbie supported the involvement of Hong Kong, as well as China and Taiwan. He noted that these major regional economies should be drawn into the consultative process.

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