

CHANGING CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

SUMMARY

Canadian objectives were largely met in the development of the final version of the chapter on consumption. This was an area where Canada was able to play a positive role with respect to the proposed chapter by strongly supporting its intent in our opening intervention on behalf of CANZ (Canada, Australia and New Zealand). Initially the USA put square brackets around Programme Area A (Focusing on unsustainable patterns of production and consumption) but after several negotiating sessions, all square brackets were removed with little dilution of the text, with the exception of two introductory paragraphs for which the USA and G77 could not find consensus language.

While the chapter could be improved considerably, it is a good first commitment by developed countries to take the leadership in achieving sustainable consumption patterns. Follow-up at the international level on the recommendations proposed in the chapter will be necessary and has not yet been clearly assigned.

DOCUMENTATION

A/CONF.151/PC/L.68 (see Tab#25) Adopted Agenda 21 document: Combating Poverty, Changing Consumption Patterns, and Demographic Dynamics and Sustainability (replaces PC/100/Add.2).

CANADIAN OBJECTIVES

1. Support this section of Agenda 21 with wording changes to bring it into line with Green Plan objectives, and other parameters as outlined in Annex I to the second UNCED MC.
2. Seek to shift the debate over consumption patterns from the moral arena to an economic forum, and pursue the development of market mechanisms by which to correctly address the environmental costs of product consumption and material on energy use.
3. Seek expansion of programmes that educate and inform consumers about their role in minimizing wasteful use of resources, and that help them make wise choices in the marketplace.