

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

The "Stockholm to Rio" Seminar was intended to be an opportunity for sharing the views and experiences of many of the principal Canadian delegates and others involved in the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment (The Stockholm Conference), with the key Canadian officials responsible for Canadian preparations for the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

Given the short time available for discussions, no overall conclusions or recommendations were intended or made. Instead, this summary highlights in point form the views and proposals made by different invited speakers during the discussions. Although there was wide agreement on some issues, the following should not be regarded as representing consensus views. None of these points should be attributed to specific participants, nor should their publication by the Canadian government be read as official endorsement of the views expressed. Rather, this summary is being distributed as a record of the seminar, in order to provoke further reflection and debate among Canadians, both inside government and outside of it, who are involved in the UNCED process.

To avoid duplication, this summary does not include the many relevant points made in the two main background papers which follow this summary. However, to assist the reader the footnotes include cross references to the relevant sections and points in the two main background papers.

The broad categories for summarizing the main points are in chronological order. Many of the points made were presented on a comparative basis, linking the 1972 Stockholm Conference and UNCED, and they are presented that way below. As the issues of the implementation of the 1972 Stockholm Action Plan and the main successes and failures of international action on the environment in the period 1972-1992 were extensively assessed in the two main background papers, the discussions during the Seminar focused more on the differences between the Stockholm and Rio Conferences, the lessons learned and on the elements and prospects for success at and after UNCED.

(i) Canadian Preparations for Stockholm and Rio¹

- In 1968 Canada was an early supporter and co-sponsor of the Swedish resolution on convening a UN Conference on the Human Environment and took an active role in the UN Preparatory Committee during 1970-72. In 1981 Canada took the lead in proposing the creation of the World Commission on Environment and Development which constituted the first crucial step towards the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. Canada was also one of the original co-sponsors of the resolution in 1988 calling for the establishment of UNCED.

¹See Bruce, pp. 3-4 and 9-11