

Business representatives called on NGOs to move from advocacy to involvement. This would mean clearly documenting their expectations and giving assistance in terms of the interpretation and implementation of these goals. NGOs need to indicate where they stand on the spectrum of views, who they see as their constituency, where flexibility can be expected and what is 'non-negotiable'. This would help corporations identify potential partners. Above all, greater consistency is needed. The perception is that NGOs choose 'easy' targets: large companies or those that have already articulated a commitment to social responsibility. This reduces credibility and erodes corporate willingness to enter into partnerships with them.

At the same time, NGO representatives agreed that a more tolerant attitude toward alternative strategies is needed within the NGO movement and noted that this tolerance is in the process of emerging. There is a growing recognition that pragmatic engagement does not mean sacrificing principles. However, it was firmly stated that some movement from government and corporations is needed if the current polarized, adversarial climate is to be improved.

In Addition:

- Business representatives were receptive to the idea that NGOs might act as monitors. Certainly NGOs should be involved in developing key performance indicators. However, a lack of resources was noted as a real obstacle to fulfilling this role.
- NGOs should engage in ongoing discussions with business in part to develop a common language for discussing corporate social responsibility issues and gain greater appreciation of business strategies.
- An important role for NGOs is helping local communities develop advocacy tools and improving their capacity to negotiate with firms.

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