

such as the well known Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Agreement on Conservation of Polar Bears and their Habitat. Canada is also playing an active role in the negotiation of the three major conventions to be brought forward at UNCED —

Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy to tackle pressing environmental problems such as persistent organic contaminants, radioactivity, oil pollution and heavy metals. Canada proposed that a permanent Arctic Council be set up to help deal with environmental issues of common concern.

Canadian assistance, already in progress under a Canada-Germany Memorandum of Understanding on increased environmental co-operation, includes training courses for German officials in areas such as water management, control of air pollutants and the decommissioning of mines.

Canada played a key role when the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Ministers of the Environment met, in January 1991, for the first time since 1985. Several important Canadian initiatives were adopted in the final communiqué, including policy reviews to serve as report cards on OECD countries' environmental policies and performance, a study of the relationship between trade and environmental policies, and the intensification of the OECD's work on environmental indicators.

Another priority on Canada's international agenda is the work of the Interim Multilateral Fund for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol. The Fund became operational in February 1991 and, from its headquarters in Montreal, is assisting developing countries to reduce ozone-depleting substances as required by the Protocol. The establishment of such a fund represents a new level of partnership between developed and developing countries as they work together toward achieving sustainable development.

The relationship between trade and the environment is a facet of international sustainable development that has special interest for Canadians in light of the ongoing North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) talks with the United States and Mexico. Canada is working with Mexico and the United States to ensure that the proposed NAFTA will be consistent with Canada's commitment to protect the environment and promote sustainable development.

The environmental challenges facing this planet are many and complex. Canada's approach emphasizes the importance of diplomacy and international co-operation in addressing the management of our precious shared environment. ♦



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climate change, biological diversity and forestry.

On the bilateral front, our environmental co-operation includes agreements and arrangements with the United States, the People's Republic of China, the European Community, Denmark, Germany, France, Japan, the Netherlands, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela.

Recent international initiatives include the signing of the first Ministerial Declaration on the Protection of the Arctic Environment, in June 1991, at a meeting of the eight Arctic Circle countries. Under this Declaration, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Soviet Union and the United States agreed to an

Canada is also signatory to the first international Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, reached in February 1991. Canada, the United States and 23 European governments agreed to negotiate with neighbouring states on any activities that could have "significant, adverse" cross-border impact. These include the construction of large factories, oil refineries, nuclear power plants, highways, large dams or waste disposal plants.

During a visit to Germany in June, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney offered Canadian expertise to help clean up disused uranium mine sites in what was once East Germany.

All countries must co-operate to find sustainable lifestyles at a planetary level.

Canada is also providing \$1.5 million from 1990 to 1993 to assist the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe in Budapest to help develop solutions to the serious environmental challenges common to the nations of Central and Eastern Europe.

In July, responding to the Gulf War environmental crisis, Canada sponsored, with the United Nations, a meeting of 46 legal experts from 30 countries to discuss international laws and conventions to prohibit eco-terrorism.