

FUTURES AND FORECASTING

1 In order to have any hope of coping with future change, we must acquire and make use of the knowledge of the past and develop the ability to anticipate the possible future. No one model can or should be expected to deal with the uncertainties in forecasting, the details needed for making decisions, and the social, technical and economic implications of change. Hence an array of techniques must be used in order to produce useful results.

2 Not only are continued efforts needed to improve forecasting-methodologies and to integrate cause-and-effect modelling, but also improvements are needed in our ability to communicate and convey their implications for the broader culture so that individual and collective decisions can be made appropriately and with foresight. Attitudinal and institutional changes will be necessary because of the projected serious global consequences. Equally important is the need to take action, in an environmentally sustainable way, on the interrelated issues of population growth, resource use and depletion, and technological inequalities.

DECISION-MAKING AND UNCERTAINTY

1 The reduction of uncertainties requires advanced understanding of the chemistry of the atmosphere, of the implications of climate change for health, agriculture, economies, and other social concerns, and of the legal, political and other aspects of the possible responses to climate change (prevention, compensation and adaptation).

2 The industrialized nations should begin to restore the integrity of the environment, making atmospheric change the turning point for an ecological innovation of industrial economy.

3 Emission targets ought to be the subject of an international treaty between the nations that take the first step. Those nations should invite all the others to join them in advancing environmentally sustainable economic development.

4 Open decision-making may well provide for decisions that are not easily accepted by the public. We recommend a democratic discussion about possible responses to the atmospheric threat. Non-governmental organizations should play a decisive role in furthering this discourse.

INDUSTRY, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Proposed as matters for urgent action are:

1 creation of a World Atmosphere Fund financed by a levy on the fossil fuel consumption of industrialized countries, sufficient to support development and transfer fuel-efficient technologies.

2 development of mechanisms for incorporating environmental considerations and responsibilities into the internal decision and reporting processes of business and industry.

3 formation of an international consultative mechanism at the highest level, reporting to heads of government, to assure:

- accelerated research and development efforts
- reduction of institutional barriers to the adoption of appropriate low-emission technologies by industries and households