

INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND RESOURCES

Negotiations proceeded relatively smoothly on the basis of the Secretariat's document PC/100/Add.15 as this chapter had been the subject of negotiations at PrepComm III. The resulting PrepComm IV decision document contains no bracketed text (other than that within the Means of Implementation). The majority of suggested changes during the negotiations at this session were directed at providing a more precise focus to the objectives and activities; more precisely identifying timeframes; providing the required flexibility to allow implementation in the variety of political, economic and social circumstances; and encouraging a cooperative approach involving local communities and the private sector in the decision-making process.

DEFORESTATION

The negotiations on Agenda 21 for forests at PrepCom IV were generally satisfactory to Canada, although somewhat disappointing in terms of the lack of vision of the final text. The main Canadian objectives of preserving mention of the need to negotiate an International Convention for Forests and to produce criteria for sustainable development of forests were maintained. The final text does not contain wording which for policy or technical reasons is objectionable to Canada. The negotiated text will be subject to final agreement at the Conference level on financial resources, technology transfer and institutional arrangements.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FORESTS

Canada has been at the forefront of the movement to draft Guiding Principles for Forests from the outset of the UNCED process. In preparation for the fourth PrepCom, Forestry Canada had undertaken a thorough national consultation process to formulate the Canadian position. Unfortunately however, the negotiations on Forest Guiding Principles at PrepCom IV were to make relatively little use of the extensive preparatory work done in Canada.

Furthermore, to the disappointment of Canada and most other nations, what were expected to be the final series of negotiations proved to be a difficult and largely inconclusive series of exchanges. Negotiations quickly bogged down into a deeply-rooted political debate between North and South. The minority of delegations within both developed and developing camps which assumed extreme