

II

New perceptions of environmental issues

4. Considers that the following new perceptions which evolved during the past decade are generally accepted and, together with the Nairobi (declaration), complement the principles contained in the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment:

(a) Issues of disarmament and security in so far as they relate to the environment, because UNEP's role is to promote environmentally sound development in harmony with peace and security, need to receive appropriate attention;

(b) Wise use of resources and enlightened conservation strategies are consistent with the economic growth imperative and should be considered prerequisites for sustainable growth;

(c) Imaginative research into alternative consumption patterns, technological styles and land-use strategies, and the institutional, economic, juridical and educational framework to sustain them, are called for;

(d) The important interconnections between the components and processes which support the life of the planet should be taken seriously into account in development plans. Actions which benefit one area may cause unforeseen damage in others, and the possibility of such consequences should be considered at the planning stage;

(e) Because of the great space and time variability in environmental processes and the fallibility of models of technological and social change, environmental development and management should be planned in a flexible fashion. Unexpected changes should be detected at an early stage through continuous monitoring;

(f) Development plans should take account of the "outer limits" to the stability of environmental systems;

(g) Developments in the transfer of certain inappropriate technologies; export of toxic substances and hazardous materials and certain marketing arrangements, such as the patenting of seeds, can pose serious risks to the environment which need to be arrested;

(h) The United Nations system, involving especially the catalytic role of UNEP, must address environmental problems of poverty and underdevelopment, particularly in the framework of the efforts being undertaken to establish the new international economic order;