

issue, reduced senior level attention. This is in sharp contrast to NAFTA, where there were real negotiations on trade and environment, requiring senior official and Ministerial attention, both in terms of the NAFTA itself and the side agreements.²

CTE process:

One can divide the CTE process into four main phases:

Positioning: The first year of the CTE in 1995 began as most initial phases do, by long general policy statements, and the setting out of initial positions of delegations on individual agenda items. The Secretariat prepared background documents to provide delegations with the basis for more sophisticated analysis. This phase, however, largely resulted in negotiating markers being laid down rather than undertaking a more objective working through of the issues or better appreciating the real environmental concerns.

Proposals: The tabling of position papers and non-papers early in 1996 focussed the CTE discussion in terms of proposals to address specific agenda items. This was perhaps the most creative phase of the CTE when many delegations made the serious efforts at policy integration in their domestic policy process, necessary to allow them to table formal or informal proposals. This phase allowed for some real debate (in capitals as well as in the CTE) over various options under each agenda item, although the debate was overly formal and ritualistic. The disengagement of the USA became particularly pronounced, as it became increasingly critical of proposals presented by other delegations.

Counter-reaction: By June, however, the counter-reaction had set-in and the CTE moved to the "moving backward" phase. While papers continued to be presented, in many cases they came from delegations that did not have or appear to have domestic policy coordination, and thus largely reflected a defensive, largely trade ministry perspective. The EU in this phase became less engaged as it became clear that their original ambitions were unrealistic and arriving at revised formal EU positions very difficult. The contradictions between the positions taken by some governments in environmental fora, and by the same governments in the WTO, became even more apparent. The Chair's bilateral consultations in August represented the end of this phase.

Salvaging the possible - the endgame: By September, the stage was set for redefining the minimum, as any hopes for substantive results had vanished and the focus had shifted to the search of positive, political messages. In this phase, particularly the intensive negotiations of October and early November, the debate was essentially whether or not the Committee could agree on any such positive messages or whether the report would only remain a factual recounting of the debates over the past two years. Here, the main *demandeurs* - the EU and USA - were still stretching the limit of what was possible but in the context of much more modest ambitions. The sequence of events in the endgame are of interest and are of as follows: