

possibly in February 1993, to elect officers and decide on the agenda of its first substantive session planned for New York during the May/June 1993 period. The location of future meetings is still to be decided.

It is expected that rules of procedure for non-governmental organizations (NGOs)' participation will be considered at the organizational session of ECOSOC, in time to permit NGO involvement in the Commission's sessions. Canada is very supportive of NGO involvement in the work of the Commission and has played a significant role during negotiations to ensure their active participation.

### **Program of Work**

The Secretary-General will submit proposals for the Commission's program of work to its organizational session. At the same time, the UN General Assembly recommended that the Commission adopt a "multi-year thematic program," setting particular issues in Agenda 21 as priorities each year.

The Assembly recommended that, to ensure an integrated approach to environment and development and to link sectoral and cross-sectoral issues, the Commission's work could be "clustered" as follows: financial resources and mechanisms; the transfer of environmentally sound technology; capacity-building; and implementation (at international, regional and national levels) of Agenda 21 and relevant environmental conventions.

A high-level meeting, to include government ministers, would also be held as part of the Commission's annual session to provide an integrated overview of implementation of Agenda 21 and to consider emerging policy issues. This meeting is intended to give political impetus to the decisions taken at the Earth Summit and to the fulfilment of commitments made there.

### **Canada's Priorities for the Commission**

Canada's key substantive priorities for the Commission include:

- building international co-operation on forest management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests;
- providing impetus for the development of new international environmental law;
- ensuring transparency in the Commission's work by involving Indigenous groups, business, scientists and all major groups; and
- supporting the work of the UN Conference on High Seas Fishing.