

these issues. It also monitors and tests the commitments of the World Bank, the IMF, regional development banks, and national governmental agencies, including CIDA, to promote public participation, transparency, information disclosure, project monitoring and evaluation, and accountability. The Coalition's Shrimp Consumer Action Campaign has sought to educate consumers about the impacts of their food choices including the ecological and social impacts of shrimp aquaculture projects funded by the World Bank. One member of the Halifax Initiative, the Sierra Club, has taken the lead in challenging the Canadian Government's decision to circumvent its own environmental assessment regulations in the sale of nuclear reactors to China.

The Halifax Initiative coalition has established credibility as an effective interlocutor on these issues. Members agree that the coalition gives them a profile and capacity they would not have otherwise. They have opened up political space on these issues with the Department of Finance for the first time. They are also connecting with NGOs around the world -- primarily through the Internet -- and bringing their experience and analysis to the table. The coalition depends for its existence, however, on a grant from a single American foundation to cover the costs of its coordinator, office, and related expenses. It does not have its own research capacity, and the members themselves are stretched thin by funding cuts. Given its vulnerability, the coalition is focusing on building capacity in the member organizations rather than in the coalition per se.

The Task Force on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility (TCCR) has a strong ecological dimension to its work. This is now done mainly through the Inter-Church Committee on Ecology (ICCE) which was launched in 1995 as a unit of the TCCR. Through the ICCE, the Taskforce participates in the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) which aims to promote environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests. The FSC accredits certifiers to conduct audits on forests and pass or fail them based on their adherence to the FSC's Principles and Criteria for Forest Management. It can give the FSC trade mark to products from that forest. The goal is to promote consumer consciousness of the ecological implications of their choices.

The TCCR also participates on the Canadian Environmental Performance Evaluation Committee with a particular focus on establishing standards for forest management globally. It participates in the recently founded Canadian Working Group of the FSC to work on establishing standards for forest management in Canada and to promote the FSC in Canada. It took part in the NGO Forum around the hearings of the World Commission on Forests and Sustainable Development in