

v) recognize that policy dialogue is a labour intensive (i.e. costly) exercise for both sides which should not be initiated if there isn't strongly shared interest to go ahead. (If government didn't have an interest but NGOs did, NGOs would then have to consider other strategies to create a more propitious policy dialogue environment.)

## Conclusions

The long term trend has been towards growing and improving NGO public policy participation in the context of an increasingly conducive public and governmental environment. Saying that does not discount the seriousness of current challenges but merely suggests that the potential exists to meet each in its turn.

The fact remains that building sustainable human development, at a time of increasing global inequity and conflict and a systemic degradation of the biosphere, will require the development and implementation of new policies based on social innovation and practical experience. NGOs diverse and often experimental micro experience can make an important contribution if systematized and communicated in ways that can influence the public policy process.