

But before the first step is taken, we need to remind ourselves of the need to consult and to hold forth the prospect of consultation with northern inhabitants even in the initial formulation of a proposal here and in regard to other initiatives being discussed in this report. After all, an abatement strategy for food contamination will require the collection and study of human blood and tissue samples. These are likely to be given freely, but certainly not if the initiative were somehow handed down as a priority from on high by the Eight or, in Canada, by well-intended Ministers.

Denmark/Greenland could be invited to lead an Arctic Council working group on the theme of food contamination. David Stone of DIAND, who is AMAP chair and who has been spoken with very briefly, would be the first person to contact for guidance in the coordination of a Canadian proposal.

*Basic principles of sustainable development in the Arctic.* The Arctic Council is in need of a bridging procedure to help manage the transition from environmental protection to sustainable development as the overall framework for its activity. As matters stand, there is an inclination among attentive NGOs to regard the transition in terms of a move from environmental protection to a priority for development. Further growth of this attitude will not serve the Council well, particularly among opinion-makers in Washington. In addition, among officials around the region sustainable development has been regarded as something of a non-starter in that it connotes considerably more ambitious, expensive, and possibly unworkable commitments than are suggested by environmental protection. In effect, there is a problem not merely of coherence but of faith in the Council's transition to a sustainable development programme. The solution to the problem is not merely to give due regard to environmental protection, but to develop confidence-building principles for collective action in the use of Arctic resources.

Basic principles of sustainable development will have to be tailored to the particular ecological and also the cultural and socio-economic conditions of the circumpolar North. They should be keyed substantively to an ecosystems approach, and procedurally to an understanding that ecosystems are more likely to be respected when resource users closest to the effects of collective action are directly associated with the decisions that give rise to it. Specifically, there is need for an Arctic Council working group to codify and help standardize national experience on the use of (a) renewable and (b) non-renewable resources throughout the region. Basic principles for the regulation of activity in these two fields should contribute greatly to the practice of sustainable development in the Arctic, while also lending strength to collective action within the Arctic Council itself.

Sweden could be invited to lead a working group on basic principles of sustainable development if indeed groups were to be apportioned to all members of the Arctic Council.

*An Arctic communications strategy.* The proposal here is for member states to deploy their existing cultural, scientific, education, and telecommunications assets in order to sustain