

- o consensus is stronger than a majority and should be the basis for decision making wherever possible
- o decisions should be driven by objective scientific facts, as much as possible
- o organizational forms should be flexible; interim arrangements may be necessary and appropriate.

3. Coordination and Integration in the UN System

The UN system will need to play an important role in implementing the results of UNCED. In recent years, there has been growing concern about the efficacy of coordination efforts within the UN in the economic and social sectors. A number of countries have suggested that, although coordination is important, the UN should also strive to ensure that environmental policies are integrated into its development programmes. Centrifugal tendencies in the UN are strong. However, the critical importance and high political profile of global and national environmental issues today provides UNCED with a unique opportunity to set in place the mechanisms for all elements of the UN system to work in concert to meet sustainable development objectives.

The Role of the General Assembly and the Secretary General

Coordination must start at the top. Inter-governmental coordination must occur through a strong interest and commitment among nations in the UN General Assembly to coordinate policies to achieve commonly agreed environment and development objectives. Inter-agency coordination likewise must start at the top, with a strong commitment and interest by the Secretary-General to implement sustainable development objectives throughout the UN system. In achieving these goals, the Secretary-General would be guided by the decisions of governing bodies, as well as drawing on advice from the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the Director General.

Certain proposals, such as broadening the mandate of the Security Council to address critical environmental problems, establishing an Environmental Security Council, or creating a new Committee of the UN General Assembly, are not likely to be workable in the context of UNCED alone and must await other processes related to UN reform. However, UNCED can give impetus to such broader UN reforms, and needs to give consideration to other coordination mechanisms.