

the rationale or "basis for action", quantifiable objectives, and specific activities that governments could pursue to achieve them.

The UNCED Secretariat could then cross-reference the objectives and activities agreed upon in Agenda 21, using an electronic data-base, by such categories as: economic sectors affected (e.g. agriculture, industry, transport); primary institutions co-ordinating these activities; public constituencies most directly involved (e.g. women, youth, unions, indigenous people); and by regions or sub-regions, especially in fragile eco-systems (e.g. tropical forests, arid zones, mountainous regions). This methodology could reveal the linkages - both positive and negative - between different activities undertaken by governments and the public to achieve sustainable development.

Finally, to provide a yardstick to evaluate the success or failure of Agenda 21, there would be a set of global goals - such as eradicating poverty, ensuring food security, revitalizing the economies of developing countries, halting destruction of renewable natural resources, protecting the global commons - which would apply to all programme areas. Strong proposed ten such global goals in his overview of Agenda 21 and the Secretariat tabled ten Agenda 21 options papers for Working Groups I and II to consider.

PREPCOM DISCUSSION

Unfortunately, Strong's complex and visionary approach to the structure of Agenda 21 was never adequately explored at this PrepCom. Neither Strong's global goals, nor the linkages between programme areas, were discussed. This was largely due to the failure to schedule a general debate on Agenda 21 at the start of PrepCom. Instead, the delegations arrived with their own very hazy conceptions of what Agenda 21 should look like, and found themselves scheduled to begin negotiating in each Working Group on the basis of the sectoral Agenda 21 drafts provided by the Secretariat.

The result was inconsistency and confusion. On some issues, such as freshwater and waste, delegations proceeded with a line-by-line negotiation on the Secretariat text. On other issues, such as oceans, delegations provided their own competing programme areas for Agenda 21. On yet other issues, such as forests and biodiversity, the Working Group never got around to negotiations on the Agenda 21 draft and delegations were invited to submit their own written suggestions on programme areas to the Secretariat for PrepCom IV.

Nevertheless, delegations have now left the PrepCom seized with the necessity of coming to terms with Agenda 21 and determined to put their own stamp on the programme areas to be negotiated at PrepCom IV.