

is invited to "consider" rather than "review" the products of PrepCom III, and submit its "report on the results of the meeting" rather than its "recommendations" to PrepCom IV; Canada accepted these changes, since the original language inviting Dublin to identify options for mechanisms remained intact.

OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

The main Canadian concerns are well addressed in the PrepCom III documents. The decision document recognizes the need to develop mechanisms for implementation of Agenda 21, and the importance of the Dublin Conference in the UNCED process. Despite the last minute challenge by India, it contains language inviting the Dublin conference to identify and recommend implementation mechanisms. The revised Agenda 21 document contains strengthened wording regarding the participation of women and indigenous peoples in policy and decision-making at all levels.

Overall, Canada achieved most of its objectives for Freshwater at PrepCom III. The need to improve arrangements for water management at the local, national, regional and global levels was clearly stated in the Canadian intervention and supported by other countries, both in their formal interventions and in informal discussions. Second, Canada successfully influenced the shaping of the PrepCom decision document to ensure that the Dublin conference is asked to identify options for mechanisms for water program co-ordination and implementation. The third objective, testing the acceptability of proposals or options for implementation mechanisms, presented more difficulty. Based on informal discussions with delegates, there is broad agreement on suitable options for mechanisms at the local, national and regional levels. Examples include local water bodies, community involvement, national water agencies and transboundary instruments such as joint commissions and legal instruments such as the ECE Transboundary Water Convention. Mechanisms at the international level, however, raise concerns about creating new institutions.

The matter of the World Water Council was therefore approached with caution. There is noticeable reluctance regarding the creation of new institutions and bureaucracies, and while new mechanisms are not excluded, they must be seen to be responding to an agreed upon and well articulated need. The Nordic countries were aware of the Canadian proposal and, while not ruling it out, indicated that the concept needed further clarification and sounding-out. The Copenhagen and Dublin meetings provide critical opportunities for Canada to test the (fresh)water further, prior to PrepCom IV. A strategy should be developed as soon as possible to take advantage of these fora.