
In response to Question 7, it is recommended that the principle priorities for each Major Programme in the 31 C/5 be evaluated for progress, completion and continued relevance before active consideration is given to their replacement. It is recognized that a delicate balance exists between the ability to achieve programme objectives during a biennium, and renewal and the ability to keep pace with changing circumstances. The identification of new priorities for the sake of change, however, does not constitute progress.

With respect to the main orientations and priorities identified for each Programme, we would encourage greater co-ordination between the Sectors, expert committees and external organizations working in a similar field. For example, COMEST is presently concentrating on the ethics of outer space, energy, water and the information society. There appears to be little or no co-ordination, however, between COMEST and the preparatory work being done for the World Summit on Sustainable Development where energy and water issues will be paramount. Similarly, we are not sure of the relationship between the ethical dilemmas posed by the information society, the work of COMEST and the preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society. We strongly support increased integration, as we believe that many of UNESCO's priorities will derive and evolve from these two World Summits.

Paragraph 8 – Other Priorities by Major Programme

Question 9

<p>Should those priorities be maintained in document 32 C/5? If not, what other priorities should, in your view, be considered? Would you favour a different clustering and designation of the other priorities? And if so, which one?</p>
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Response of Canada

As a general comment, we wish to recall Resolution 40 adopted by the General Conference at its 31st session inviting the Director-General to examine whether sustainable development should become a third cross-cutting theme in the Medium-Term Strategy for 2002-2007 (with the necessary adjustments to the time frame of this document). It should also be remembered that the Joint Statement of the Chairs of the Five Scientific Programmes of UNESCO at the 31st General Conference also recommended that a new cross-cutting theme, built around sustainable development, should be added. As defined in the Brundtland Report, sustainable development means not only sound environmental policies but socio-cultural development, human security and social justice. If implemented, the addition of this cross-cutting theme will have a major impact on the programme activities of all Sectors. Sustainable development, and these recommendations, will also take on additional significance in the light of the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.