

RECOMMENDATIONS

Canada needs urgently to strengthen the Arctic Council as an institution. To this end, the following is recommended:

Recommendation 1: for the Circumpolar Ambassador and DFAIT to produce an Arctic Council Action Plan by the end of May 1997 for the use of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in upcoming bilaterals with his Arctic counterparts.

Recommendation 2: for the Action Plan to consist of scoping, knowledge-gathering, and priority-setting by Arctic Council working groups to be set up on some or all of the following themes, the results to be reviewed at the fall 1998 Ministerial meeting when the Council's sustainable development programme is formally to be launched:

(a) focus on the children of the Arctic in launching the Council's sustainable development programme (Canada to take the lead);

(b) the role of the Arctic in global climate change (United States to be invited to lead);

(c) international cooperation to ensure that Arctic marine transportation of oil and natural gas is environmentally and socially sustainable (Norway and the Russian Federation to be invited to lead jointly);

(d) abatement of Arctic food contamination from long-range transport of pollutants;

(e) codification of basic principles for the sustainable use of renewable and non-renewable resources in the Arctic; and

(f) an Arctic communications strategy to meet the information and cultural needs of northern communities, and to enhance global awareness of the region.

Recommendation 3: for Canada to offer leadership in associating interested and capable non-Arctic states and the European Union with the sustainable development programme of the Arctic Council; and

Recommendation 4: for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to apply the Arctic Council formula for northern and interested non-northern representation in a new Canadian procedure for the making of policy on circumpolar affairs.