

12. Isolating OPEC: Led by Saudi Arabia, the OPEC countries played a highly disruptive role across-the-board at CoP5, attempting to tie up key issues such as compliance in order to slow down progress and leverage a decision in their favour on 4.8/4.9. However, the experience of CoP5 demonstrates that OPEC is increasingly isolated within the G-77 & China group and amongst the parties overall. This was evidenced at a decisive moment in the contact group on 4.8/4.9, when Zimbabwe took the floor on behalf of virtually all developing countries, including the Saudi's traditional allies China, to contradict the OPEC position. While OPEC got very little in terms of concessions at CoP5, the continuing format of workshops addressing their issues (albeit in an extremely limited way) does provide the Saudi's with enough rationale to continue to be insistent on those issues of most importance to them within an overall negotiations "package" at CoP6. Despite the relative isolation of the OPEC countries after CoP5, the combination of OPEC demands which remain anathema to Annex 1 countries (and hence makes them an effective bargaining tool) and the very skillful negotiating tactics of the Saudis which enable them to slow down or block consensus, makes for a very risky situation at CoP6. In this sense, CoP5 confirmed that the success of CoP6 will hinge to a great extent on deliberations on articles 4.8/4.9 where the concerns of the least developed and most vulnerable countries clash with those of OPEC.

13. EU-UG relations: One of the main features of CoP5 was the absence of conflict between EU and the Umbrella Group (UG). Prior to the CoP, then EU had signaled that it would not be pressing the flashpoints of capping the mechanisms (supplementarity) or coordinated policies and measures and therefore there was not much cause for friction between the two groups. EU and UG delegates worked especially well on the Kyoto Mechanisms, as was evident by the fact that, for the first time, EU and UG members formally agreed to establish working groups on technical issues related to registries and reporting, baselines and project certification/validation. EU and UG delegates also worked in close cooperation on key developing country issues throughout CoP5. However, a meeting of the Common Interest Group (Annex 1) chaired by Canada during the first week of the CoP confirmed that relations between the two groups continue to be underlined by lack of trust, even in dealing with issues of shared concern. It appears likely that divisive issues such as supplementarity and coordinated policies will come to the forefront once again, particularly when France assumes the EU presidency from July 2000, continuing through CoP6.

14. High Level Segment: Ironically, the awkward compromise meeting formula for the HLS (forced by Saudi Arabia, China, India and the Philippines at the subsidiary body meetings in June 1999), designed to defeat effective dialogue, actually contributed to showcasing a display of much needed political will. To the surprise of most parties and the clear displeasure of those who had sought to undermine it, the High Level Session, in which Hon. David Anderson, Minister of Environment participated actively, was particularly successful, resulting in an animated discussion and clear signals from Parties of their political commitment to the process and to maintaining momentum for the Kyoto Protocol to come into force as soon as possible. Many Parties called for ratification by 2002 (10 years after the agreement of the UNFCCC at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992).