

5.3 Some Concluding Remarks

This paper's final observation relates more to process than to policy matters. Before we can determine our priorities with regard to technology consortia, we need to know where the prerogative resides to formulate a coherent technology strategy, if such is needed, and who is going to implement it.⁹¹ It has become apparent, over the course of researching this paper, that a number of federal departments and agencies are interested in taking the initiative in this area and this has created some confusion. Both ISC and EAITC have a substantial interest in various aspects of Canada's trade policy related to international technology alliances. There are numerous other federal departments and agencies that have some interest in contributing to the debate. Furthermore, it is apparent from the Prosperity Initiative's Action Plan that the private sector also wishes to be an active participant in the process.

The recent Policy Staff Paper on globalisation⁹² has already identified areas where trade policy increasingly intrudes upon the domestic policy domain. If we are to handle these issues effectively, jurisdictional conflicts will have to be resolved. At a time when resources are scarce, this will require some tough decisions and the political will to see it through. There is scope for clearer rules, not only for international cooperation in technology development, but also for managing change within and between governments, so that we can deal with complex issues more effectively.

⁹¹ A recent ISC report analyzing federal science and technology alliances states: "There appears to be a consensus among the authors that rapid global growth of knowledge-based industries has resulted in an internationalization of technology research, development and application. Some authors conclude that this internationalization trend calls for strategic decision-making on S&T issues by governments."

⁹² See footnote 3.