

IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Prime Minister, in his address to the Earth Summit, proposed a number of steps to quick-start the implementation of sustainable development:

- Canada committed \$2 million to "Capacity 21", a new program to assist countries in the creation of national plans for sustainable development. Canada had argued that formulation of a "green plan" was the first national step toward sustainable development. Canada agreed to share with other countries its green plan experiences.
- Canada pledged to ratify¹⁵ both the Biodiversity and Climate Change Conventions before the end of 1992. On 4 December 1992, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney signed in Delta, British Columbia, the ratification documents for these international conventions.
- Canada suggested a package of measures to assist developing countries make the transition to sustainable development. These included liberalized North-South trade, environmental emphasis at the next round of GATT negotiations, conversion of \$145 million in Latin American debt to sustainable development projects, and the negotiation of new agreements with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the International Development Association (IDA).
- Canada supported the prompt creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development, within the United Nations infrastructure, as a means of holding all countries, sectors and people accountable for progress on the Rio Agenda, and in particular, on Agenda 21.
- The mandate of Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) was broadened to assist in the infusion of sustainable development research and technological capacity into developing countries.
- Canada called for a renewed international effort to agree on an Earth Charter by 1995.

The UNCED process was the genesis of a new way of doing things. This new direction in achieving consensus and commitment has been called "The Rio Way". It is characterized by transparency, inclusiveness and accountability. The process must be transparent and accessible to all people who may be affected by the decisions. The second key to ensuring progress is the inclusion of all sectors of society in a decision-making partnership. From open negotiation and inclusive consensus flows all-sector accountability.

¹⁵ Ratification involves the formal indication of a state's consent to be bound by an international convention.