

12. AGENDA 21

There exists a certain amount of confusion about the actual form that Agenda 21 will take. According to the UNCED Secretariat, Agenda 21 is being conceived as a tool for the coordination of all UNCED initiatives, inputs and negotiating processes. However it will also ensure linkages between the substantive issues and between environment and development issues.

A central concern for NGOs relates to public participation. NGOs at our Daily Strategy Session felt that formal mechanisms, perhaps analogous to PC-8 (Secretariat Guidelines for Public Participation in the preparation of National Reports) should be implemented to ensure a sufficient level of NGO involvement and active participation in the formulation of Agenda 21 at whatever level the formulation may take place (i.e. at the Secretariat level or at the national level). NGOs expressed interest in the Secretariat's suggestion that NGOs prepare their own Agenda 21's. However, we are concerned that many Southern NGOs do not have adequate resources to carry out such an initiative. Support from northern governments will be essential in this regard.