

## A WORLD POLICY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

*Under this title, Professor Lynton K. Caldwell at the University of Indiana (United States), the author of several books on problems of the environment, has written for the Unesco Courier (Paris, January 1973) an article, the concluding part of which is reproduced below. As we have already pointed out on several occasions and as was stressed, too, by Mr. H. Beer, Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross Societies, at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm (June 1972)<sup>1</sup>, the Red Cross movement is taking and will always increasingly take a part in the struggle for the protection of the environment which is in danger today.*

At international levels, the diversities among nations require a broad base of deliberation for decisions that affect all or large groups of national states. At national levels (but increasingly at international levels also) there is need to benefit from the contributions of the non-governmental organizations to the decision process. Non-governmental organizations were strongly represented at the Stockholm Conference and made major direct and indirect contributions to official action.

A structure for environmental decision-making is thus emerging, slowly perhaps in relation to need—but rapidly by historical precedent. This structure may in time provide a coherent system for environmental decision-making that links all political levels—local, national, regional, and international, and that provides regular channels for continuous communication among scientists, planners, and decision-makers, as well as between official and non-governmental agencies. But meanwhile, who makes the decisions on environmental affairs?

A superficial answer would be: almost everybody—or in some instances, nobody. The present disorders of our global environment reflect the inadequacy of our decision process at all jurisdictional

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<sup>1</sup> See *International Review*, August 1972.

levels. No nation as yet can claim true expertise in environmental management. The so-called developed nations are only a few years ahead of the developing states in awareness and experience.

Environmental protection technologies may be rapidly transferred where receptive conditions exist. Awareness of the need for wise environmental management is rapidly becoming evident among the leadership in many developing countries. Ecologically sound policies are increasingly understood to go hand in hand with effective development. There is indeed ground for optimism that, at least, some developing countries may bring their environmental problems under control more rapidly than will the older industrialized states.

The task of international environmental and developmental policy today is to develop the concepts, criteria, and institutional arrangements which will give the best chances for public action addressed to the broad range of human needs experienced by all mankind.

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