Conclusion

The global environment in the twenty-first century: Prospects for international cooperation

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The earth's environment faces critical threats as we enter the twenty-first century. Economic development and population growth, coupled with high levels of consumption by affluent members of society, on the one hand, and abject poverty on the other, have stretched to the limit our planet's ability to absorb environmental abuses. If current trends continue, anthropogenic environmental problems, including climate change, desertification, deforestation, ozone depletion, biodiversity loss, shortages of fresh water, depleted fisheries, persistent organic pollutants, hazardous and solid wastes, and air pollution, could bring us to the brink of ecological disaster. Yet, in spite of the potential political, social, and economic consequences of environmental degradation, the environment remains a politically contested issue at the global, national, and local levels.

States are the final determinants of the outcomes of global environmental issues. States are responsible for adopting national and international policies that directly and indirectly affect the environment. States also decide which issues are considered by the international community and negotiate the international legal instruments that create global environmental regimes. However, non-state actors also exert major and increasing influence on global environmental politics. International and regional organizations help to set the global environmental agenda, initiate and mediate the process of regime formation, and cooperate with developing countries on projects and programmes that directly affect the

environment. NGOs work to influence agenda-setting, international environmental negotiations, national environmental policies, and trade and economic policies that have an impact on the environment (Porter and Brown 1996). Market forces affect the overall framework in which environmental issues are addressed, and influence the means by which states attempt to resolve transnational environmental problems.

This book has examined the roles of these different actors *vis-à-vis* the environment during the last quarter of the twentieth century. But the question still remains, can the existing locus of actors find the proper solutions to current and future environmental problems? Related questions, first put forth in the Introduction, include the following. What will be the nature of the issues that will have to be addressed in the next century? What should be the role of the United Nations? Is there a better model for international cooperation to address environmental issues? This Conclusion will attempt to answer these questions, although, as is the case in any predictive exercise, these questions give rise to new ones – questions that may not yet have any answers.

Issues to be addressed in the twenty-first century

A number of issues have been raised in this volume about the future role of the United Nations and other actors with regard to the environment. While this is by no means a comprehensive list of environment-related issues to be addressed by the international community, it does reflect some issues of concern emerging from the preceding chapters.

Environmental problems compete with other problems for public attention

One of the biggest problems in resolving and preventing environmental crises is that environmental problems compete with other significant problems for public attention – and often lose the battle. As Kohli, Sørensen, and Sowers noted in their introduction to the section on states, "There is no uncontested consensus that environment problems are very serious and need to be addressed immediately. This lack of consensus is as true to individual states in both the developing and the developed world as it is to the international actors, including the United Nations." Environmental problems struggle for political recognition with other issues internationally, within governments, and also within populations. People need a healthy environment, but they also need food, shelter, and a number of other things. While fundamentally linked, in the short and medium run these different objectives may appear to conflict.

At the state level, as Evans points out, conventional approaches to the political economy of the state suggest little in the way of positive strategies. Realist analysis of the ways in which states use their power as sovereigns to maximize the ''national interest'' suggests pessimistic conclusions when it comes to environmental problems. It is not only global environmental issues, like the ozone layer, that will be neglected if the traditional logic of competing sovereign states prevails. States primarily concerned with enhancing their sovereign power are also unlikely to address domestic environmental issues successfully. Again, it is only in the long run that economic and military prowess depend on sound environmental policy.

Evans argues further that if traditional state-centred politics have little to offer in the environmental arena, calls for curtailing the role of the state offer even less. The ''natural'' logic of markets leaves environmental improvements as undersupplied collective goods and degradation as a negative externality for which both producers and consumers will try to avoid responsibility. Shifting incentives in a way that forces private economic actors to pay real attention to environmental issues implies more state involvement, not less. A central question is thus to determine how states and the public can constructively focus on environmental problems.

Finding a role for civil society in global environmental governance

The second section of this book, on civil society, raises the issue of the role of civil society in global environmental governance. What should the relationship be between civil society and the UN system? In his chapter, Wapner points out that NGOs greatly influence the way the international system addresses environmental issues. There are literally thousands of NGOs throughout the world working for environmental protection, and they devote significant resources to their campaigns. NGOs expend tremendous effort lobbying states and influencing international regime formation and implementation. But their efforts do not stop there, nor are such strategies undertaken separate from a host of other forms of political practice. NGOs aim to reorient human practices at all levels of collective life. To do so, they enlist the governing power not simply of states but also of economic and sociocultural forces that significantly influence human activity.

From his experience with Asian NGOs, Gan makes his own observations on the role of NGOs. First, NGOs will continue to create new social linkages, or webs of contacts, and help establish and improve relationships between the general public and governments, international agencies, the private sector, and the scientific community. Second, the diver-

sification of NGOs will continue to increase in both scope and speed. Their influence will reach increasing numbers of people, and their power will be further strengthened by wider participation of the general public.

While NGOs are gaining power and recognition in the international arena, the United Nations remains an organization of states, with only a limited role for civil society. In some cases it can be argued that some states actually fear expanding the role of civil society in international organizations, as it may undermine their own sovereignty. Nevertheless, civil society, particularly in the form of community-based organizations and NGOs, is playing an increasingly important part in protecting the earth's environment. Their voices must be heard and supported at the state, regional, and international level. The challenge, therefore, lies in devising an acceptable arrangement that will allow the formal participation of civil society in international arenas such as the United Nations without threatening state sovereignty.

Conflicts between energy production or use and environmental sustainability

The conflict between energy production or use and environmental sustainability is likely to be one of the main environmental issues of the twenty-first century. A number of the chapters in this book, including the chapters by Gan, Goldemberg, Sims, Wilkening, Von Hippel, and Hayes, and Zarsky, address various issues related to energy.

The global energy situation does not seem to be promising. The earth's capacity to absorb energy-related pollution will be exceeded before energy shortages become a problem. Energy consumption is on the rise, while the current energy glut has structurally impeded the development of alternative energy sources. At the same time, a vicious cycle of development, an increased demand for energy consumption, and extensive emissions of air pollutants are turning the energy issue into one of the major environmental problematiques in the twenty-first century.

As Sims points out, if the pursuit of environmental responsiveness is inherently a collective enterprise, so too is the monitoring of emerging energy systems. Private interests have strong incentives to monitor profitability, which is one aspect of efficiency. States have incentives to measure the overall efficiency of energy use and effectiveness of its distribution. Environmental responsiveness is a shared concern of states, market-led forces, and the citizens who use energy in their daily lives. Because of its extensive experience with environmental technology and informal education about its use and effects, the United Nations can and probably will be a catalyst in crystallizing both goals and standards for environmental responsiveness in the twenty-first century.

Market forces are fundamentally flawed in coping with the environment

The third section of this book stresses the belief that market forces alone cannot cope with environmental dilemmas in the twenty-first century. Briones and Ramos argue that unruly market forces have severely undermined food security by distorting food production, distribution, and consumption in the developing world. Wilkening, Von Hippel, and Hayes state that old inertia associated with the industrial paradigm has prevented energy markets from adopting the idea of sustainability, clouding the energy future in the twenty-first century. In the case of fresh water, according to Gleick, market forces have a mixed outlook. Although they are deficient in satisfying the basic water needs of the majority of inhabitants in developing countries, market forces can serve as an effective deterrent to overuse and misuse of scarce water resources.

First, as long as the current pattern of population growth and conspicuous consumption continues, market forces and technology cannot ensure future sustainability. Second, market forces often fail to take into account normative dimensions of resource scarcity. Third, market mechanisms cannot resolve the undersupply or overexploitation of collective goods through free-riding behaviour. The tragedy of commons is likely to abound, unless market failures are corrected and ecological sustainability is enhanced.

Improving global environmental governance

It is clear from the chapters in the fifth section of this book that existing international organizations have not been totally effective in improving environmental protection on a global scale. UNEP has been hindered by its limited mandate, lack of resources, and physical location. The CSD has too broad a mandate and no enforcement powers. Environmentally sustainable development is now considered to be one of the World Bank's fundamental objectives, but the World Bank was never intended to be the focal point of international environmental governance. There is an ongoing debate about whether to expand UNEP's powers into what Downie and Levy call a "super-UNEP," to create a new Global Environmental Organization, as argued by Esty (1994a; 1994b) and outlined by Doyle and Massey in this volume, or to maintain the status quo.

At the same time, there is a school of thought that regional environmental cooperation may be a better solution to certain types of transboundary environmental issues. The fourth section of this book looks at a sample of regional organizations in Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. As Alagappa explains, since the 1970s regional

arrangements and agencies pertaining to the environment have proliferated in nearly all parts of the world, and are becoming an important component of the global architecture for environmental governance. The role and effectiveness, and hence the significance, of regional institutions, however, vary widely. They depend on the nature of the problem (global issues, regional or subregional-specific concerns, bilateral problems, or issues of concern within state boundaries), the level at which it is addressed, the nature of the specific regional institution, and its capacity to address such problems. All these factors vary widely. In practice, therefore, the role of regional institutions in managing the environment is not uniform across regions and subregions.

Representatives of regional organizations and arrangements are increasingly participating in global environmental regimes, institutions, and forums. This participation often serves in turn to strengthen regional organizations. One global agreement, the UN Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, actually recognizes, supports, and incorporates the work of various regional fisheries agreements. Yet this agreement is the exception rather than the rule. In other areas, such as forests, there is vehement disagreement among states, NGOs, and regional and global organizations about the need for a global, legally binding agreement on the sustainable management of all types of forests. Some argue that regional agreements are more appropriate given the different types of forests and ecosystems around the world. Others believe that a global instrument is needed to harmonize the various regional and national arrangements and codify what exactly comprises ''sustainable forest management.'' There is no consensus on the relationship between most global organizations or institutions and regional arrangements, which types of arrangements are appropriate for different situations, and how they should relate to the concept of global environmental governance.

Recommendations: What is the role of the United Nations?

There is no shortage of books and articles that contain recommendations about what the United Nations can do to address the world's environmental problems effectively. Some experts call for convening more conferences and negotiating more treaties. Some support strengthening existing institutions, while others prefer the establishment of new institutions. There are calls to expand the UN's work in new areas, such as energy, fresh water resources, and sustainable tourism. So what does this volume add to the debate? The following list of recommendations put

forth by the authors identifies possible actions that the United Nations and the other major actors in the international system can take, and proposes a set of realistic goals for the twenty-first century.

Inform and educate international policy-makers

There is a variety of ways in which the UN system can continue and enhance its contributions in the field of environmental accountability. The UN system has already played a proactive role in bringing environmental issues to international attention, particularly through member agencies such as the UNDP, UNEP, the UNU, and UNIDO. Through publications, research, workshops, and training sessions, these agencies have sought to build and disseminate conceptual models and practical measures that integrate environmental and development concerns. These activities also provide an important networking function, bringing scientists and professionals from developing countries together to share ideas and difficulties, as well as providing additional training and funding. The UN system should continue to promote such activities, because a well-informed and well-educated international system of policy-makers and experts is the first step towards formulating effective solutions to global environmental problems.

Influence member governments to play more environmentally responsible roles

An international organization is only as strong as its member states. Therefore, to improve the effectiveness of international organizations at tackling environmental issues it is necessary to encourage governments of member countries to play more environmentally responsible roles. How can the UN system promote this? One way is through provision of information about environment-friendly technologies and modes of production. This must remain a key focus of UN endeavours, especially those that might deliver the simultaneous provision of competing public goods. As stressed by Evans, ''small injections of new knowledge can play an important role in arriving at positive resolutions.'' The United Nations has already assisted in the spread of alternative energy technologies, particularly wind and solar community development projects, notes Sims. This role could be expanded from technical assistance *per se* to other forms of incentive-building. For instance, one of Goldemberg's most innovative suggestions is that developing countries aggregate their demand for environmentally friendly technologies such as photovoltaics; since most technologies exhibit exponentially declining cost curves when mass

marketed, such demand might spur multinational and domestic energy companies to cheaper production and more research and development. Such a process could be facilitated by cooperation between UN agencies such as the UNDP or UNEP on the one hand, and selective member states on the other.

Build capacity and the use of appropriate technology in member states

UN member states, particularly developing ones, often lack the capacity to address their environmental problems adequately. Sims points out that specific areas where expertise is needed include planning and the reconciliation of local, regional, and national priorities and capabilities, and also in demonstrating, monitoring, maintenance, and evaluation of energy technologies. Such tasks will draw upon the extensive experience of international agencies and, particularly, the United Nations, which has actively assisted the spread of energy technologies that are widely viewed as environmentally responsive, rather than the massive but environmentally controversial projects of the past. As a result, the United Nations offers vast experience with wind and solar energy technology and their use in rural areas of low-income countries. Its staff and advisers with general expertise in community development can assist both official and agency technical specialists and local community representatives.

The possibilities for ''leapfrogging'' that Goldemberg describes for technological adaptation can also apply to governmental tasks. Institutional development concerning environmental supervision and the diffusion of knowledge about experiences with environment-friendly policies at all political levels is of paramount importance. Some initiatives have already emerged, such as UN sponsorship of guidelines to handle hazardous waste in developing countries; such tasks should be expanded.

Address the potentially environmentally hazardous effects of globalization

Increasingly, the challenge for UN agencies is to address the potentially environmentally hazardous effects of globalization. This could be done by UN-sponsored proposals for reforms in international trade regimes, especially devising mechanisms to address issues of environmental accountability. Eventually, however, cooperation of states will be important, because integral to such a project is the promotion of national systems of environmental accounting and auditing for investments, including the innovative use of tax incentives for environmental entrepreneurs.

Assist in the diffusion of innovations across national boundaries

In his chapter, Evans argues that "a state-society synergy image suggests a fluid political arena in which solutions to environmental problems emerge out of creative conflicts between local communities and state agencies." Indigenous innovation is the most likely source of such solutions, but if each locality has to "reinvent the wheel" then problems may evolve more rapidly than local innovations are replicated. Public institutions or community/NGO networks at the national level may help diffuse innovations across localities, but the degree to which cities in different countries and regions share similar problems is striking, and diffusing innovations across national boundaries is likely to depend on supranational organizations.

Since collective solutions to environmental problems involve, almost by definition, ideas from which the returns are not amenable to private appropriation through markets, corporations are not the best choice as vehicles. Ideas that could be put into practice by communities on their own may be most effectively spread by international NGOs. But if implementation depends on the joint action of communities and government agencies, UN agencies, which appear at the local level as a peculiar hybrid of global NGOs and supranational state agencies, may well have a special aptitude for complementing the local dynamics of state-society synergy.

Enable NGOs to act as agents to empower the people

According to Gan, the increasing involvement of NGOs in environmental activities provides good opportunities for both the United Nations and the international development assistance community. Through increasing participation of NGOs in the design, consultation, operation, and evaluation of development projects, these institutions will be able to act as agents to empower people at the lower levels of society. With more incentives to support the NGO sector, greater social equilibrium could be achieved. It can be expected that NGOs will assume many of the conventional mandates that are usually performed by governments and specialized UN agencies. What represents the so-called global civil society is the inclusion of people's voices and needs.

Wilkening, Von Hippel, and Hayes take this argument one step further and state that the United Nations has a valuable role to play in catalysing the creation, coordination, and institutionalization of epistemic communities. The United Nations can, for example, connect and coordinate multiple and scattered epistemic communities. Some suggested forms of UN support for epistemic community creation, coordination, and institution-

alization include ongoing support for research, analysis, and scholarship; support for building institutional capacity for epistemic community activities; support for regional coordination of epistemic communities; and support for global information resources. In many cases, the United Nations is uniquely qualified to provide the suggested support.

Allow greater NGO access within the political processes of the UN system

The post-Rio period has seen a continuous participation of NGOs within some political processes of the UN system, such as the work of the CSD and of other international organizations including the conferences of the parties to a large number of international environmental conventions. These international conventions increasingly provide for the participation of NGOs in treaty-based decision-making processes. However, there are still complaints about NGOs' limited access to international bodies.

In their chapter, Breitmeier and Rittberger cite the work of the Commission on Global Governance, which suggests a reform of existing institutions of international governance at the global and regional levels. It seeks to democratize the UN system and enhance the participation of civil society in the UN General Assembly by creating a People's Assembly and a Forum of Civil Society. The members of the proposed People's Assembly consist of delegates from national parliaments but not of representatives directly elected by the citizens of member states. Whether or not such a People's Assembly is created, it is essential to provide NGOs with a voice in the international arena since they are instrumental in implementing any environmental programmes, action plans, or agreements.

Correct market failures and enhance ecological sustainability

Moon argues that there are two viable ways of correcting market failures and enhancing ecological sustainability. One is to engineer changes in the dominant social paradigm which defines social reality and shapes social expectation. New norms, values, ideas, knowledge, and institutions should be developed and socialized so as to enhance global sustainability. The other is the critical importance of global governance. Local and national governments alone cannot handle the dilemmas of market failures and distributive injustice. National governments are obsessed with the maximization of short-term national interests rather than long-term global human interests. It is in this context that the role of the United Nations becomes important. The United Nations must take on a more active leadership role. Shaping new global governance structures under the rubric of the United Nations will be the best way to resolve the current dilemmas and prevent future calamities.

Augment the roles and effectiveness of other actors through regional cooperation

According to Alagappa, regional and subregional cooperation can augment the roles and effectiveness of other actors (global institutions, states, NGOs, and the private sector) in implementing international conventions on global issues like climate change and ozone depletion, as well as take a lead role in addressing regional or subregional-specific concerns like land degradation, food security, international rivers' management, and acid rain. Regional organizations may mediate bilateral disputes among member states and provide technical assistance in the development of national legislation. They can also provide a number of supporting functions and services, like the development of databases and information-sharing networks, regional education and training schemes, sponsorship of clean technology projects, arrangement of funding support, and fostering of regional networks among NGOs and experts. Regional environmental cooperation, however, is still relatively new and, except in Western Europe, still in an early stage. Regional institutions, especially those in the developing world, face numerous difficulties and their track record is, at best, mixed. In order to function effectively, they require the support of their member states as well as the support and assistance of global institutions and the rich nations.

Notwithstanding their limitations, regional institutions can be and have been a critical force in raising national and regional awareness of environmental problems and in urging the need for and benefits of cooperation in addressing such problems. Regional arrangements and agencies are becoming more significant, and have the potential to become an important component of the global environment architecture. The United Nations should foster the development of regional agencies in the management of environmental concerns, and seek to integrate them into its institutional framework for the formulation and implementation of global conventions as well as the management of region-specific problems.

Address environmental concerns and policies within the larger regional picture

Environmental concerns and policies must be embedded in the larger regional picture, and institutional and policy frameworks. Environmental problems have multiple causes and implications, and successful implementation of environmental policies hinges upon a variety of factors that span the political, economic, and security arenas. They cannot be addressed in isolation. An integrated approach that connects environmental concerns to the more urgent concerns like development and security is critical to the effective implementation of environmental ini-

tiatives. It is imperative to encourage the inclusion of environmental concerns into the agenda of existing multipurpose regional institutions that are concerned with the management of political, security, and economic affairs, and to develop environmental policies in the context of the broader regional institutional and policy frameworks. The multifaceted nature of environmental problems and their resolution also requires regional institutions to act in concert with other actors, especially parliamentarians, the private sector, the scientific community, NGOs, and grassroots organizations. They must not only serve as a vertical link between the state and global institutions, but also as a horizontal link fostering cross-fertilization among these and other actors at the national and subnational levels.

However, as Zarsky points out, the development of a regional – or even subregional – consensus is not easy. Different regions of the world are wracked by political animosities and lack of a common language. Significant gaps in economic development and political power create undercurrents of mistrust. In many countries there is still little opportunity for critics and innovators – either inside or outside government – to have their say. The United Nations may have a role to play in assisting in the establishment of regional institutions, especially in areas and on issues where regional cooperation may actually accomplish more than global cooperation.

Encourage greater cooperation between existing international organizations

While UNEP was envisioned as the central focus of UN environmental activities, the reality is that many UN specialized agencies, programmes, and funds are active on environmental issues. UNEP was supposed to coordinate these activities, but never quite succeeded in this area during its first 25 years. The CSD was also given a mandate to coordinate system-wide activities and has made some progress in this area. Nevertheless, a certain amount of system-wide review is still needed to determine priorities and ensure that they are adequately addressed by the international system.

International cooperation

While this list of issues and possible solutions focuses primarily on the UN system, the crux of the matter is that managing the environment demands high levels of cooperation and policy coordination. This includes cooperation at all levels, from the village or community level to

the state, regional, and global levels. Cooperation must involve all types of actors – individuals, NGOs and community-based organizations, states, regional arrangements, and international organizations. The problem is that the necessary vertical and horizontal cooperation is often lacking.

Vertical cooperation involves communication between those who manage natural resources at the local level, NGOs, states, appropriate regional arrangements, and international organizations. There needs to be a balance between the ''top-down'' approach of mandating environmental sustainability and the ''bottom-up'' approach of listening to the voices of the people. At times it appears as though the UN system is operating in its own ''ivory tower.'' During the negotiation and adoption of resolutions and treaties, delegates often forget the impact (or lack thereof) that their deliberations will have ''on the ground.'' The debate over the wording – and even the placement of commas – is far more political than practical. It is important for international bodies to understand and recognize what is happening in the trenches, and do what is necessary to promote sustainability that works. Not only do there need to be improved mechanisms to get local-level input into international deliberations, but there must be improved efforts by the United Nations and other international bodies to disseminate information, technology, and financial assistance at the state and local levels to ensure greater and more effective implementation of environmental programmes.

Global environmental protection must begin at the community and bioregional level. Local watersheds, ecosystems, and microclimatic conditions are among the primary objects of bioregional protection, and their alteration by human activities is much easier to understand from the vantage point of local communities than from the macro perspective of global ecology. Moreover, if it is true that global threats to the environment require supranational policy responses, the empowerment of local communities may provide needed checks and counterbalances to reassure citizens interested in democracy that environmental stewardship does not necessarily imply authoritarian forms of global government (Hempel 1996, 6).

Horizontal cooperation involves communication between states, between international organizations, or between regional arrangements. For example, a number of different environmental treaty bodies, including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat Desertification, the Ramsar Convention, and others are attempting to improve coordination and cooperation. States that share common ecosystems, such as countries in the Amazon Basin, or the members of the Inter-State Committee for Drought Control (CILSS), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), and the Southern African Development Community

(SADC) in Africa, which are described in Myers's chapter, are forming organizations or regional environmental cooperation agreements.

One area where greater horizontal cooperation is needed is between environmental organizations and development-oriented organizations. Environmental issues have appeared increasingly on the agendas of development-oriented institutions including the UNDP, the World Bank, the regional multilateral development banks, and such specialized agencies as the WHO, the WMO, the FAO, UNESCO, UNIDO, and the UN Regional Economic Commissions. The ''greening'' of these bodies has been a welcome step, but the integration of environmental considerations in their programmes clearly needs to go further. The Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development has brought together the UN bodies concerned with these issues and helped to coordinate their work. But more needs to be done.

The United Nations, as the only organization in the world with universal membership, is well placed to promote both vertical and horizontal cooperation. According to the UN Task Force on Environment and Human Settlements' June 1998 report, the main roles of the United Nations in the field of environment are to:

- facilitate intergovernmental consensus and international cooperation on environmental components of policies and actions for sustainable development, including legally binding commitments;
- promote support, especially from developed to developing countries, so as to facilitate the implementation of agreed environmental action plans, especially Agenda 21;
- involve, encourage, and support relevant ''stakeholders'' so that they make their appropriate contribution at global, regional, national, and local levels;
- monitor and assess existing and emerging environmental problems, alert policy-makers and the public to them, and advocate and coordinate measures and action to tackle these problems and their causes, thereby reducing future risks;
- provide support and resources to enable the effective implementation of global and national commitments relating to the environment, and to build capacity for environmental action in developing countries (UN 1998).

If the UN system were to operate along these lines in both theory and practice, it could make great strides in increasing vertical and horizontal cooperation, as well as in achieving the ultimate goal – effective management of the planet's natural resources and environment.

But is there a better model for international cooperation? Some argue that shaping a new global governance structure will be the best way to resolve current environmental dilemmas and prevent future calamities.

But it is important to remember that global governance does not necessarily mean a centralized world government. Although the successful design of global environmental governance will depend a great deal on the efforts of national leaders, the design itself is likely to relegate nation-states to a position of declining influence in world affairs. Both the global and the local ends of the political spectrum must be strengthened in order to achieve effective environmental governance. This means that some of the environmental authority currently reserved by sovereign states may have to be redistributed to supranational entities and local communities, simultaneously (Hempel 1996, 6). Whether or not this becomes the scenario in the future remains to be seen.

There is no doubt that international action will continue to be essential in meeting the environmental challenges of the twenty-first century. The UN system is well placed to play a central part in this action, but it will not be successful unless it actively cooperates with other components of society and remembers the need to act both locally and globally.

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