

# Recommendations to the IIDH of the Inter-American Seminar on Human Rights and the Environment (Brasília, 1992) - Bases for a Program on Education in Human Rights and the Environment

1. The participants of the Inter-American Seminar on Human Rights and the Environment (Brasília, 4-7 March 1992), after four days of consideration of the theme "Human Rights and the Environment" and of discussions, in plenary sessions and in five working groups, on its conceptual and operational frameworks, have adopted the recommendations that follow. The IIDH can build upon the contribution of the following recommendations to establish and develop a Program on Education in Human Rights and the Environment and to draft the corresponding request for funding to the Inter-American Development Bank (BID) and to other possible funding Institutions.

2. The IIDH draft project is a valuable proposal and embodies ideas which would provide a most appropriate follow-up to this Seminar. The two suggestions of, respectively, establishment of a program of teaching and training (*capacitación*) in human rights and the environment, and drafting of a legal document - a Charter - on the subject for the American continent should be separated for individual funding and operation to give them the attention they both deserve.

3. At the present stage, priority should be given to the program of teaching and training (*capacitación*). The IIDH should proceed to seek funding to develop that program on a regional, Latin-American basis. This Seminar has elaborated on the links between human rights, the environment and sustainable development. The program should further develop this theme in case-studies provided by six pilot countries (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Venezuela), and further consider its impact on present and future generations.

4. The target groups (*destinatarios*) to be addressed are distinct:

a) formal education: elementary, secondary and university level teachers and administrators; civil servants; members of local, regional and national legislative or

governing bodies; judges, lawyers and members of the *Ministerio Público*; businessmen;

b) non-formal education: NGO leaders and members, community leaders, members of particularly vulnerable groups (including indigenous populations and other minority groups), journalists and other members of the mass-media.

Among such target groups, priority should be given to those which will have a multiplying effect through teaching and further general dissemination of the materials taught.

5. The teaching materials are to be problem-oriented and multidisciplinary in approach. They are to pursue a holistic approach, and to draw attention to the links between human rights, the environment and sustainable development, as elaborated in this Seminar. They are to focus on the joint responsibility of public authorities, the private (industrial) sector and other entities of the civil society. Special attention is, however, to be given to legal and regulatory aspects of the relations between human rights and the environment, especially for the sessions for judges, lawyers and members of the *Ministerio Público*.

6. It should be kept in mind that the broader the range of groups addressed in a single teaching-and-training session the less precise the materials are to be in responding to the particular concerns or interests of each group. It should, thus, be further kept in mind that while such teaching-and-training sessions might reach a larger number of groups, they might on the other hand reach them less effectively if attention is not given to this point.

7. It will be convenient to start the program with a pilot group of three countries, with three more to follow preliminary evaluation of the program's success. It is recommended that, on the basis of the results of this Seminar, the IIDH undertakes to prepare, as a general instrument of teaching and training (*capacitación*) in the different projects developed in each of the six pilot countries, a Handbook titled "The Human Right to a Healthy Environment" ("El Derecho Humano a un Medio Ambiente Sano"); the volume of Proceedings of this Seminar can certainly provide a valuable guide to this undertaking.

8. A possible module for a weekly teaching-and-training session (of 38 hours) could be the following:

A) Lectures:

- General principles of human rights protection 4h
- General principles of environmental protection 4h
- Law and development in Latin America 4h
- Local (national) environmental law (Brazil/Chile/Colombia/  
Costa Rica/Mexico/Venezuela) 6h
- Latin American cooperation in development and environment 2h

- Legal and political means of action for environmental protection (information, participation, means of redress)	2h
- Role of NGOs	2h
B) Case Studies: three case studies related to local environmental problems involving human rights	6h
C) Pedagogical methods and approaches (seminars)	6h
D) Synthesis, conclusions and evaluation	2h
Total	<hr/> 38h

9. After accumulating some experience with this program, the IIDH could then turn in the future to the other suggested course of action, namely, the drafting of a legal instrument - an American Charter - on the subject. Such instrument should aim at a time at human rights protection, environmental protection and sustainable development. Here, again, the IIDH could proceed by stages, first with appointment of two consultants to prepare a discussion draft. Upon completion of the draft, a meeting of experts, including representatives of the OAS as well as of NGOs, could be convened to discuss the draft. Next, further "public or open hearings" could be held in the six pilot countries as part of the series of teaching-and-training sessions above suggested. The final version of the draft would then be completed.

10. Along with drafting such regional legal instrument, the IIDH could further consider promoting in the future technical assistance to countries in the region to help those in need in drafting environmental legislation based upon the observance of human rights and pursuance of sustainable development. The experience of UNEP's technical assistance program for developing countries could be recalled in this connection.

Brasília, 7 March 1992.

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## COMITÉ DE REDACCIÓN/DRAFTING COMMITTEE

### *"Conclusiones/Conclusions"*

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