

ROUND TABLE 1:
ACTIONS AGAINST POLLUTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION
William Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Canada

TALKING POINTS

- There is a large role for the Arctic Council in addressing common environmental issues. First, in our view, is the Arctic Ocean. Canada is anticipating significant increases in resource development in the Arctic, including oil and gas development, combined with climate change and increased shipping activity. This will place great pressures on the Arctic environment.
- Because the Arctic Ocean lies largely outside national jurisdiction, its health can only be ensured by the joint stewardship of the eight Arctic states. This is why Canada strongly supports the work undertaken by PAME, the working group on the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment. Canada applauds the work of PAME in continuing its assistance on the Russian National Program of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment. We are also prepared to co-lead, with Iceland, a workshop to begin the development of an Arctic Ocean strategy.
- We note with satisfaction that the information gathered by the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program has played a key role in providing compelling evidence on the need for international controls on persistent organic pollutants. However, we are disappointed that the 1998 POPs and heavy metals protocols under the *Long-Range Trans-boundary Air Pollutants* Convention, and the 2001 Stockholm POPs Convention have not yet entered into force. Canada urges that, if they have not already done so, all Arctic Council member states ratify these agreements. We believe that the opportunity for the Arctic Council to display leadership should be seized, and we would like to propose that this be considered a priority for the Arctic Council while under Iceland's leadership.
- Canada is contributing to the CAFF working group's ECORA project in Russia, because we support building local capacity to manage biodiversity. I encourage other Arctic States to take similar action to implement CAFF's recommendations for the protection of the Arctic flora and fauna.
- Finally, I would like to underline that Canada is prepared to chair the Emergency Preparedness, Prevention and Response working group over the next two years and to host its secretariat.