Canadian Proposal for Ministers of Health & Environment Hemispheric Meeting – Spring 2002

Presentation to IV Regional Meeting
Environmental Health Bureaux, Ministries of Health
30 August, 2001
Health & Environment Link
Long Recognized

• Environment is determinant of health.
• Health is driver for environmental actions.
• Environmental degradation & human health have long been major concerns but growing in priority.
• Problems facing nations at all levels of development are similar.
• Globalization means local problems are world problems & vice versa.
• Maybe local solutions can be world solutions & vice versa.
History Leading to Proposal

• Previous Activity
  – Rio 1992
  – Summit of Americas 1994
  – Pan Am Charter 1995

• Recent Activity
  – G8 Ministers of Environment - 03/2001
  – Hemisphere Ministers of Environment – 03/2001
  – Summit of Americas – 04/2001
Proposed Goals of Meeting

- **Not** to negotiate an agreement – Pan Am Charter.
- Focus on concrete outcomes providing direct benefits to participating countries.
- Strengthen links between health and environment.
- Develop shared/integrated health/environment agenda.
- Obtain Ministerial commitment to priorities/action.
- Establish follow-up mechanism to monitor progress, maintain dialogue, facilitate collaboration.
- Carry linkage into & provide hemispheric contribution to WSSD.
In collaboration with PAHO/UNEP, Canadian Ministers of Health & of Environment are offering to sponsor a meeting of Ministers of Health & of Environment.

- Vancouver or Toronto, Canada
- March 2002
Possible Themes of Meeting

• Possible themes might be:
  – Building Bridges
    • between health and environment sectors
    • among countries
  – Strengthening Capacity to:
    • effectively manage health & environment issues
    • effectively develop and share science information/knowledge
  – Creating Follow-up Mechanisms
    • Pan Am Charter
    • Priorities identified by Ministers
Healthy Environments
Health Impacts Model

Substances
- Organics
- Biological
- Inorganics
- Metals
- Pesticides
- Radiological

Media Pathways
- Air
- Water
- Soil
- Food
- Products

Vulnerable Populations
- Children
- Seniors
- First Nations
- Workers
- Urban/Rural
- All Canadians
Purpose of WSSD – re-energize national & international efforts on sustainable development.

 Likely focus – renewed vision, partnerships, & strategies to implement Agenda 21.

 WSSD regional/international preparatory process underway – opportunities to shape agenda/process.

 Hemispheric meeting could provide opportunity to:
  – Integrate health & environment positions.
  – agree on priorities.
  – consolidate hemispheric themes, strategies, approaches.
Organizational Activity to Date

• Meeting Health Canada & PAHO – 09/2000
• Letter to PAHO/UNEP from Cdn Ministers – 06/2001
• Preliminary Meeting – PAHO/HC/UNEP/EC – 06/2001
• PAHO Executive Meeting – 07/2001
• ENEP-ROLAC Inter-Sessional Meeting – 07/2001
• PAHO Brasilia Meeting – 08/2001
Organizational Activity Proposed

- Discussion in Brasilia - today
- PAHO Directing Council – 09/2001
- Letter from Canadian Ministers to Ministers of Health & of Environment in Hemisphere
- Preparatory meeting in November 2001
- Backgrounders/discussion papers developed
- Ministers meeting in March 2002
- WSSD in Fall 2002
Proposal for Today

- Explore interest of countries
- Discuss goal/time/location of hemispheric meeting
- Discuss possible themes
- Discuss preparatory process
- Propose meeting agenda & format