

FOREWORD

The Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE) was established by the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) in 1969 with the long-term objectives of:

Advancing knowledge of the influence of human activities on the environment, and the effects of any resulting changes on human health and welfare, with particular attention to those influences which are global or common to several nations;

Serving as a non-governmental, interdisciplinary source of objective advice for the benefit of governments and intergovernmental agencies with respect to environmental questions of wider purview than those of individual unions and committees of ICSU.

As a first step towards achieving the long-term objectives, a mid-term program, for the years 1974-76 and comprising a set of *core projects*, has been adopted with the following objectives:

To assess the extent to which existing knowledge of environmental processes provides a sound basis for predictions of trends and for decisions on environmental policy and management;

To identify deficiencies in existing knowledge;

To define research and development programs needed to remedy the deficiencies and provide new knowledge;

To provide scientific data which will assist in clarifying the major choices available to society for environmental management and to seek criteria for decision making in the face of uncertainty in order to minimize the hazards of irreversible decisions;

To help ensure, by effective communication of the findings of the core projects to individuals, groups, and public bodies concerned with legislation and action programs, and by promoting environmental education and training, that the results of the program contribute significantly to future environmental action, management, and research.

A Steering Committee has been appointed to advise the SCOPE Bureau on implementation of the mid-term program which is intended to produce a series of monographs in the following areas.

1. Biogeochemical cycles of important chemical elements and compounds in normal and disturbed situations.
2. Environmental aspects of human settlements.
3. Rational management of natural resources.
4. Biological and chemical effects of environment on man and biota including human health aspects and epidemiology, and environmental toxicology.
5. Communication of environmental information and societal assessment and response.
6. Environmental monitoring.
7. **Simulation modeling.**

Illumination of environmental issues in the developing countries was recognized early by SCOPE as one of its more important concerns. A symposium on these matters was held in Canberra, Australia in 1971 at the time of the First SCOPE General Assembly. The Nairobi conference expanded on this interest. A special committee of scientists from developing countries, The Working Group on Environment and Development, has been appointed to assist SCOPE in relating the implementation of the mid-term program to the needs of the developing world.