



sustainable development. Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is considered to be sustainable by the international community.

Sustainable development, however, does not deny the need to use a resource or even to develop it. This principle calls for responsible development, where potential environmental impacts are considered before making irreversible decisions. Environmental impact assessment is fundamental to such decision making.

In some cases, development is essential to environmental sustainability. For example, when current resource use patterns are not sustainable, new patterns of resource use need to be developed. An example in Ukrainian agriculture is the continued depletion of the natural soil fertility. To rebuild that fertility, grain straw is now more badly needed to replace the lost soil organic matter than for animal feed. In other cases development is required to adjust or recover from severe environmental destruction.

While Ukraine has development needs that will continue well into the future, it cannot afford the type of development undertaken in the past. Such development failed to consider the future consequences of depleting a resource base beyond its ability to recover. Altering natural ecosystems in ways that destroy their viability or relying on high risk technologies without suitable safeguards is no longer an acceptable way to develop.

Ukraine must improve its food production capacity. This may mean raising efficiency through new technology and modern agro-chemicals (fertilizers and pesticides), since expanding the land base is no longer possible. Ukraine must also diversify its production systems to relieve the pressure on the large areas of the same crop being grown on the same land year after year. Ukraine must also re-evaluate its land tenure systems. With the society in rapid transition, both social and environmental impacts of plans related to privatizing land will require assessment.

Ukraine is known internationally for having a rich agricultural resource base. With its large areas of deep black soil, Ukraine will no doubt once again become an important food exporter. But Ukrainian farmers will find a new and changing

EMIL BARAN TO HEAD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AT CANADIAN EMBASSY



Emil Baran, former Vice-President, New Initiatives, Centre for Central and Eastern Europe at the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), has been appointed Technical Assistance Counsellor at the Canadian Embassy in Kyiv.

Mr. Baran brings to his new assignment a wealth of experience in international development and education, Canadian and international human resource development, and institution-building, along with a longstanding personal and professional interest in Central and Eastern European affairs. His knowledge of Ukraine and fluency in the Ukrainian language has proved invaluable in numerous missions to Ukraine when he served as an advisor to the External Affairs' Task Force on Central and Eastern Europe.

Mr. Baran holds degrees in Economics and Education from the University of Saskatchewan. He began his career with CUSO in the Caribbean and subsequently joined CIDA where, over the years, he held a wide range of assignments in Project and Program Management. Overseas postings with Canadian embassies and High Commissions included Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tanzania and Indonesia. Prior to his appointment with the Canadian Embassy.,

The *Monitor* extends its best wishes to Mr. Baran. We are confident that his vast experience and expertise in the field will ensure success for CIDA's exciting initiatives in Ukraine.

international market place in which the same commodities offered every year may no longer be competitive. For this reason also, Ukrainian agriculture must diversify. Diversification means development, and such development must be socially, economically and ecologically sustainable, despite the philosophies behind it.

THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT IN PLANNING

As compelling as the new environmental ethic is, the incentives for sustainable development provided by the new global market place are also very compelling. Protecting the environment is important because a cleaner environmental image has value in the market place. Consumers in developed countries are becoming more concerned about the safety of their food and that the means of food production does not deplete the agricultural resource base or degrade the surrounding environment.

One of the most effective ways to convince potential trading partners that the Ukrainian agricultural industry is being environmentally responsible is to show a good record of doing environmental impact assessments. The process allows planners and managers of agricultural projects to identify potential impacts before buyers or competitors and

therefore facilitate the required curative or preventive measures.

All of these development needs can be met without causing environmental or social impacts if environmental and social considerations are incorporated into the planning stage of development projects. Environmental impact assessment is the process by which this is carried out. Students trained by the Academy in Zhytomyr will be capable of making these considerations.

FOLLOW-UP

The immediate results of the mission, the handbook and the first group of students who have received training, represent a first stage in the introduction of environmental impact assessment to Ukraine. The aim at this stage is not to change Ukraine's development policies overnight, or even to set new policy directions. The long-term goal is to broaden the base of knowledge among young professionals about impact assessment and long-term sustainability in agriculture. Taking the process to higher decision making levels to influence development policies must evolve gradually the way it has in the west.