

avoid or minimize any adverse environmental effects, through requirements for Environmental Impact Assessments where appropriate.

Mr. PELL. Mr. President many of my colleagues know of the interest that I have long had in the protection of the global commons. As early as 1967 I introduced resolutions containing draft treaty language that eventually resulted in treaties banning the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction on the seabed floor and the use of environmental modification techniques in warfare.

In 1978, a resolution that I had introduced in 1977 was adopted by the Senate, which called on the U.S. Government to seek the agreement of other governments to a proposed global treaty requiring the preparation of an international environmental assessment for any major project, action, or continuing activity which may be reasonably expected to have a significant adverse effect on the physical environment or environmental interests of another nation or a global commons area—Senate Resolution 49, May 18, 1978, Report No. 95-990, July 17, 1978

My proposed Environmental Impact Assessment Treaty did not aim to prohibit a state from carrying out activities, but rather required it to make a detailed assessment of the impact this activity would have, and to communicate this information to the affected countries. As such, it would play a crucial part in ensuring that the United States would not be negatively impacted by the activities of another state. Alternatively, when the activity was to have an impact on a global commons area, the United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP] was to be the recipient of that information.

The United Nations Environment Programme was created in the aftermaths of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972. This conference represented the first concerted effort on the part of all nations to integrate human development and the protection of the environment and natural resources for future generations. UNEP has now become the legal entity where most international environmental programs are either initiated or hosted and, as such, is widely recognized as a useful and efficient arm of the United Nations.

The United States has truly been a visionary in this respect, as the ideas embedded in my 1978 resolution were later endorsed in a number of international environmental legal instruments. The United Nations Environment Programme itself endorsed this view when its governing council adopted a series of goals and principles that specify how important these assessments can be, and how and when they should be carried out.

Building on these goals and principles, the U.S. Government, along with other members of the United Nations Economic Commission for Eu-

rope, signed the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, done at Espoo, Finland on February 25, 1991. While my 1978 resolution initially called for a global treaty applying to all activities worldwide, much of the reflection that followed led to a breakthrough in thinking with which I agree, namely that a regional approach would be more suited.

The Espoo Convention is a perfect example, as it embodies the commitment by member states to the U.S. Economic Commission of Europe to act in a precautionary manner when dealing with transboundary activities. The convention highlights how and when environmental impact assessments need to be carried out, and an annex to the convention lists the activities that will trigger their application. Because different countries in different areas of the world carry out different activities, separate regional conventions, along with specific lists of triggering activities, are more appropriate than one global treaty.

Even after the Espoo Convention was signed in 1991, other international legal instruments highlighted the need for Environmental Impact Assessments. In 1992, at the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development—the Rio Earth Summit—more than 180 participating nations adopted the Rio Declaration of Principles on Environment and Development. Principle 17 of the declaration states that environmental impact assessment, as a national instrument, shall be undertaken for proposed activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and are subject to a decision of a competent national authority.

This was but the latest indication of the endorsement by the whole international community of environmental impact assessment as a means to ensuring that human activities with a view to enhancing human betterment are undertaken in environmentally sound ways.

On October 7, 1992, the Senate gave its advice and consent to the protocol on environmental protection to the Antarctic Treaty, signed in Madrid on October 4, 1991—Treaty Doc. 102-22. This protocol builds upon the Antarctic Treaty to extend and improve the treaty's effectiveness as a mechanism for ensuring the protection of the Antarctic environment. Among other obligations, it requires application of environmental impact assessment procedures to activities undertaken in Antarctica for which advance notice is required under the Antarctic Treaty. Annex I of the protocol sets out different environmental impact assessment procedures that apply according to whether the proposed activities are identified as having less than a minor or transitory impact, a minor or transitory impact, or more than a minor or transitory impact. This is a very rational approach to environmental im-

pact assessment, an approach to which the Senate gave its advice and consent, and the same approach that my 1978 resolution embodied.

As previously noted, the United States has pursued the objectives of my 1978 resolution—Senate Resolution 49—by becoming a party to the Espoo regional convention of the United Nations Economic Commission of Europe. This convention represents the consensus between the United States and its industrialized allies that the best way to proceed is to require environmental impact assessments before transboundary activities are carried out. As I have explained before, regional treaties are the best possible approach because they allow taking into account the particularities of the region at hand. What the United States and its allies have achieved must now be duplicated by other states, in other regions, so that the adoption of environmental impact assessment truly becomes a standard precautionary measure.

Consequently, the resolution I introduce today builds upon my 1978 resolution—Senate Resolution 49—by urging the administration to encourage other states to pursue the negotiation of appropriate environmental impact assessment requirements in other regional treaties. My resolution acknowledges the history of international efforts carried out since 1978 and allows the Senate to endorse once more these important goals.

NOTICE OF HEARING

SUBCOMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE

Mr. ROTH. Mr. President, I would like to announce that the Subcommittee on Post Office and Civil Service, of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, will hold a hearing on July 26, 1995. The Postmaster General of the United States will present the Annual Report of the Postal Service.

The hearing is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. in room 342 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building. For further information, please contact Pat Raymond, staff director, at 224-2254.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. COHEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources be granted permission to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 19, 1995, for purposes of conducting a full committee business meeting which is scheduled to begin at 8:30 a.m. The purpose of this meeting is to consider S. 852, the Livestock Grazing Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.