

Summit of Sorts on Global Warming

By ROBERT REINHOLD and SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES

Top Soviet and American scientists, environmentalists, policymakers, industry leaders and artists today urged President Bush and President Mikhail S. Gorbachev of the Soviet Union to form an "environmental security alliance" to reverse what they fear could be a catastrophic warming of the planet.

The gathering urged that the superpowers promote energy-efficient technologies and phase out production and use of chlorofluorocarbons no later than the year 2000. The group said the countries should "substantially reduce" carbon dioxide emissions, reduce the loss of forests and promote tree planting worldwide. Participants asked that the two leaders appeal directly to their citizens to help.

The joint letter avoided specific goals to achieve a compromise between the Soviet and American participants and within the American contingent, even though some participants had wanted specific numerical and time goals on cutting emissions. But it represented the most concerted Soviet-American action yet over fears that the emission of industrial chemicals into the atmosphere is causing a worldwide warming trend, or "greenhouse effect."

"Soviet and U.S. scientists agreed that continued buildup of greenhouse gases at present rates will insure that global temperatures rise before the middle of the next century above anything in human history," an accompanying report stated. The report said disruptions in agriculture and rising sea levels would cause "massive refugee problems." Meeting Has Festive Side

The recommendations came at the end of an unusual meeting of 11 Soviet and nearly 200 American conferees at this remote ski resort, where the issues of global demise were debated in rustic elegance over racks of fire-cooked salmon and

barbecued chicken. It was the largest direct meeting between Americans and Russians on the warming trend.

"The issue of global survival should be elevated to the level of nuclear survival," said Roald Z. Sagdeev, a powerful Soviet academician with the Space Research Institute in Moscow.

A growing number of scientists share the opinion that the gases, mainly carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxides, and the inert industrial gases known as chlorofluorocarbons, trap sunlight reflected by the earth and will raise average temperatures worldwide from 3 to 8 degrees Fahrenheit. Some scientists fear that this greenhouse effect will cause flooding of major cities and catastrophic loss of forests.

For three days in the rarefied atmosphere of Robert Redford's Sundance resort in a spectacular central Utah canyon, the air hung heavy with talk of environmental refugees and of nations turned into "ecological hostages."

The meeting, dubbed "greenhouse glasnost" by its sponsors, was the Sundance Symposium on Global Climate Change. It was organized by the Soviet Academy of Sciences and the Institute for Resource Management, founded by Mr. Redford, the actor who has long been interested in environmental issues. Little Skepticism on Trend

While some scientists remain skeptical that the earth is really warming, few participants here share that view. Mr. Redford said the time for study was over, and that the conference was meant to be a way of "passing the baton from data base to action."

"We are not here to debate the phenomenon," said Terrell Minger, president of the institute. "We are here to debate the response to it."

Whatever the climatic implications of the greenhouse effect, it has spawned a growth industry for hardened regulars of the conference circuit. This was already the fifth major global climate symposium this summer in the United States alone. Just last month, the Aspen Institute held a conference on "The Global Commons," featuring many of the same players. And even as they repaired to this alpine resort, far from smog-ridden cities, there was a competing conference sponsored by the singer John Denver in Aspen. Some of the participants shuttled by private airplanes between the two meetings.

"Until two years ago, you could almost be at all of the conferences - now it's impossible," said one veteran, Dean Abrahamson of the Humphrey Institute of

Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. "Ours will be the last generation that gets to generate a ton of carbon dioxide going to meetings to talk about global warming." Signs of a Consensus

Such irreverence aside, many thought the conference offered strong evidence that a remarkable degree of political consensus was forming.

Among the Soviet representatives were Georgi S. Golitsyn, a member of the presidium of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and chief of the Climate Institute of Atmospheric Physics; Kakimbek A. Salykov, a People's Deputy who is chairman of the Supreme Committee on Ecology and Rational Use of Natural Resources, and Mr. Sagdeev.

The American contingent included such leading proponents of warming theory as Stephen Schneider of the national Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colo.; James E. Hansen of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies and Carl Sagan of Cornell University; environmentalists like John Adams, executive director of the Natural Resources Defense Council, and Frederic Krupp, executive director of the Environmental Defense Fund; Senators Bill Bradley of New Jersey and Timothy Wirth of Colorado, Democrats, and John Heinz, a Pennsylvania Republican; Jane Pauley and Tom Brokaw of NBC News, the cartoonist Garry Trudeau and American Indian chiefs and businessmen.

Nearly all agreed the solution involved reducing gas emissions, more efficient energy use, reforestation and population control. While the two superpowers could not do this alone, Michael Oppenheimer of the Environmental Defense Fund said it was up to them to "jump start" the process.

Mr. Adams said the Soviet-American political thaw opened the way to a "new age" of "global ecological alliances" in which the "primary international issue will be protection of the environment instead of military confrontation." Obstacles Are Seen

But others saw major impediments. Alan Hecht, the new deputy assistant administrator for international affairs at the Environmental Protection Agency, said in an interview that Soviet economic difficulties clashed with their best intentions. "The Russians want to cut emissions, but we will have to give or sell them the technology," he said.

In an interview, Mr. Sagdeev conceded there were impediments, not least that some Soviet experts believed that global warming could actually help their country by turning frozen tundra into farmland. But he said that Mr. Gorbachev was "ready

to accept the fact that future ecological disaster could be as dangerous as nuclear ones." He added that a powerful grass roots environmental movement was emerging in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Salykov pointed out that his Government recently created an agency like the E.P.A. and said Soviet-American cooperation was "not only possible but necessary."

While many agreed with Senator Wirth that the American public believes environmental threats have replaced nuclear threats, there were doubts, too, that American society was prepared to act on global warming. Thomas G. Lambrix, director of governmental relations for the Phillips Petroleum Company, said more incentives rather than penalties were needed to help industry cooperate.

And Kenneth J. Barr, president of the Cyprus Minerals Company, a coal producer in Englewood, Colo., complained that the American public was being sold "panic" on the issue before the evidence was in and without consideration of the costs and lost competitiveness.

Hanging ominously over the conference was the fact that the largest growth in emissions over the next few decades will come from underdeveloped countries as they industrialize. If more modern countries do not help them develop efficiently, Mr. Sagdeev said, "we are going to become ecological hostages of the third world."

There were few voices here from third world countries. Noel Brown, a Jamaican representing the United Nations Environmental Program, said Soviet-American cooperation "can only be beneficial," but that in the interest of "equity" for the third world the superpowers must reduce their own emissions.

The chairman of President Bush's Council on Environmental Quality, Michael Deland, said the two superpowers must first "cleanse our hands" before preaching to the third world - by cooling our "love affair" with the automobile, for example.

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