

CAMRE

Call for a Sustainable Development Strategy

The Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment met on 3 February 2001 in Abu Dhabi, for a Special Session of their Council (CAMRE), held on the occasion of the International Conference and Exhibition – Environment 2001.

A report was reviewed on the *Perspectives of Environmental Action in the Arab World*, which was prepared on the initiative of and with support from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and with generous support from the United Arab Emirates.

The Meeting concluded with the Abu Dhabi Declaration (see page 182). In this the States declare, first, the urgent need for the alleviation of poverty and improvement of living standards and economic conditions of the Arab citizen through programmes of sustainable development, “one of whose cornerstones is environmental protection and the rational use of natural resources”, and, second, that the most urgent environmental problems fac-

ing the Arab world at the beginning of the twenty-first century are:

- “severe shortages of water resources and deterioration of their quality;
- limitation of available lands and deterioration of their quality;
- irrational consumption of natural resources;
- increasing urbanisation and its consequent problems; and
- deterioration of marine and coastal areas and wetlands.”

Third, the Ministers call for a new strategy to achieve their objectives based, *inter alia*, on identification of areas of strength and weakness as revealed by past experience. The Declaration then details the principles on which such a strategy must be based.

