



**1° Forum Internazionale dell'Informazione per la Salvaguardia della Natura**  
**THE GREEN ACCORD FOR JOURNALISTS**

Sotto l'Alto Patronato del Presidente della Repubblica  
**RAPOLANO 2003**

**Preamble**

**Environment – the Media's Greatest Challenge?**

We know the climate is changing, probably as a result of humanity's pollution; species are disappearing fast; deforestation is rampant; over-fishing is rife; water shortages are increasing; resource consumption is growing and so is the world's population.

Let us project ourselves a hundred years into the future. If we take the wrong path, we could face a world where temperatures have soared, with potentially devastating consequences for life as we know it. Economic activity would be severely disrupted. Mass migration of environmental refugees would bring misery to millions. People previously dependent on fish would face serious problems with nutrition. Grain belts may shift and food security be disrupted. More wars would erupt over natural resources. The poor will bear the brunt, but no one will completely escape.

If this catastrophe unfolds, historians will look back and ask how it was allowed to happen with so little media debate. They may wonder what stories journalists were telling while the world was transformed around them.

Is this all scare-mongering? We don't know. Some of these trends are already emerging. But there is massive uncertainty about their outcomes and there remains a potential for a positive future if the right decisions are taken. Given the level of risk and uncertainty, we must ask if our peoples and leaders are served with the depth of information and quality of debate to make these crucial decisions.

It is clearly the responsibility of the media to help ensure that these issues are properly discussed. They may be the most significant of our time. This is instinctively understood by peoples around the world, as surveys consistently confirm.

Many of the issues are extremely complex and contentious. They cover almost all the activities of people and the rest of the natural world. They include economics, business, philosophy, culture, education, transport, energy and agriculture. There is an inextricable link, in many areas, between the maintenance of natural ecosystems and the health and wealth of people.

These issues don't lend themselves to easy headlines or straightforward narratives. They are often subverted by cheap slogans and oversimplistic analysis.

We can envisage a world in which development is achieved, poverty is reduced, and the environment is improved, not degraded. The likelihood of this happening will greatly increase if the media substantially improves the quality of the debate.

### **Goals**

1. To promote a forum for dialogue and professional support among environmental journalists and media professionals.
2. To strengthen the capacity and skills of journalists and media professionals working on environmental issues.
3. To monitor the trends and conditions that impact on our work and effectiveness.

### **Objectives**

1. To establish an e-mail list-serve.
2. To develop a working website and incorporate the following elements:
  - a. a list of environmental journalism networks
  - b. a list of environmental list-serves and subscriptions
  - c. a list of environmental journalists and contact details differentiating print, television, radio and on-line
  - d. a list of support people and services for environmental journalists
  - e. a list of institutions that offer training relevant to environmental journalists
  - f. a list of environmental journalism awards and scholarships
  - g. a section for environmental stories from around the world
  - h. a section of articles relating to analysis of environmental reportage
  - i. a monthly list of key environmental issues in individual countries around the world
  - j. a list of media outlets that publish environmental stories
  - k. an open forum for debate relating to environmental reportage.