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10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

27 November 1989

Dear Roger,

EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - PROPOSAL FOR SITING IN UK

The Prime Minister was grateful for your Secretary of State's minute of 23 November about the handling of the UK's bid for the European Environment Agency to be established in Britain.

She considers that it would be best to give specific preferences at tomorrow's Environment Council rather than waiting for the European Council on 8 December. She feels that both London and Cambridge are good candidates and expressed no direct preference for either. However, she asked me to stress the importance of finding an attractive site for the new Agency. She does not like the idea of locating it in Cornwall House near the South Bank Arts Complex in London. She has said that a site near the Science Museum, perhaps at Imperial College, or alternatively in the Docklands, should be considered. As far as Cambridge is concerned, the Prime Minister feels that, provided space can be found, this would offer an attractive location for the Agency in a centre of academic excellence.

Your Secretary of State mentioned that other countries have mainly nominated capital cities and that Germany has nominated Berlin. You might like to note that the Prime Minister commented in response that Berlin is an international city under four-power administration.

I am copying this letter to Richard Gozney (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Rosalind Cole (Department of Trade and Industry), Uriel Jamieson (Scottish Office), Stephen Williams (Welsh Office), Stephen Pope (Northern Ireland Office) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,
Caroline

(CAROLINE SLOCOCK)

Roger Bright, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

AS

**EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY**

**PROPOSALS FOR SITING THE AGENCY
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM**





FOREWORD



The Rt Hon Chris Patten MP
Secretary of State for the Environment

Good environmental policy can only be built on sound science and economics. This is why it is essential for the Commission and member countries to have an effective means of assembling reliable and comparable environmental information for the Community, and the capacity to analyse such information expertly. The proposed European Environment Agency, operating through a network of focal points in the member countries, should fill an important gap in this respect. By linking centres of excellence to each other and to the Agency itself the maximum use can be made of existing high level expertise.

I am determined that the UK should play its full part in this important project. Our bid for the siting of the Agency in the UK is based on strong evidence of the existence of suitable sites and of the opportunities they offer for links with centres of excellence in the UK already having a high reputation in the international environmental information and analysis field. Many other advantages of siting in the UK are described in the pages of this short booklet.

The development of a Community system for delivering sound scientific and economic information of an authoritative kind on environmental issues has my strong support. My hope is that such a service, operating with the full support of Community countries, would take the 'facts' about the environment out of political dispute and leave the way clear for environmental policy to be built on firm and agreed foundations.

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Front cover: A view near Bywell, Northumberland, looking south over the valley of the River Tyne in the Tyneside Green Belt area.

We would like to thank the following for supplying photographs:

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INTRODUCTION

Following the December 1988 European Council's adoption of the Rhodes' Declaration on the Environment, President Delors, in a speech to the European Parliament in January 1989, announced an initiative to create 'A European Environmental Measurement and Verification System'.

In response to this initiative the Commission has proposed the establishment of a **European Environment Agency**. The proposal, now in the form of a **draft Regulation**, was discussed by the Environment Council in September 1989 and accepted in principle by all member countries. Detailed discussions on the draft Regulation are now taking place.

At the September Environment Council **Chris Patten, Secretary of State for the Environment**, made a **strong bid** for the proposed Agency to be **located in the UK**. This document describes the advantages of choosing a UK location and gives examples of available space.

The main objective of the proposed Agency is to **furnish the Community, member states and, where appropriate, participating third countries with:**

Objective, reliable and comparable information to enable them to take necessary measures for the protection of the environment and for assessing the results, and to ensure sound information for the public on the state of the environment.

Technical and scientific support to allow them to achieve the goals of environmental protection and improvement.

It aims to meet these objectives by establishing a Community-wide system with **information being collected via a network of 'focal points'**. The Agency would operate by assembling information from this network and by making effective use of the existing work done in the environmental information field within member states. A more detailed explanation of how the Agency would work is given on page 15.

A number of sites in the UK offer excellent accommodation and services. Links with relevant centres of excellence in the international environmental, information and analysis field feature particularly strongly, and general support from Government, industry and the academic world for a UK location is very firm.



WHY LOCATE THE AGENCY IN THE UK?



The UK is able to offer a number of sites, both inside and outside London, situated close to world-recognised centres of scientific and technical excellence in the environmental monitoring and data-collecting field. A site in London can offer close links with the colleges of London University which are already involved in international environmental research, and sites outside London offer contact with, and often access to, computer networks, associated with high quality environmental research going on in, for example, Oxford, Cambridge and other universities.



Suitable office accommodation is available with ready access to superb computer and other services relevant to the successful running of an Agency. For some sites space is available immediately. For others plans are firmly in place for space to be ready for use in the near future. Travel facilities between the UK and the other Community countries are excellent, as are its transport links to other European countries. Hotel and conference facilities are well developed and available both in the capital and elsewhere in the UK, should they be needed to support Agency activities. The UK's cultural and recreation activities compare with any in the world today.



A decision to locate the Agency in the UK could be implemented within a short space of time and would be welcomed by Government, regulatory bodies, the academic world and industry alike.



UK SITES



Further details of all sites mentioned in this booklet are available on request from

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A SITE IN LONDON

Available sites

Suitable office accommodation is available within one of the University campuses of London University. The Kensington campus of King's College, situated in central London, has accommodation that is immediately available and, on a slightly longer time-scale, purpose-designed accommodation will be available in Cornwall House on the South Bank of the Thames adjacent to the National Theatre.

The proposed site would be on the same campus as the University's Monitoring and Assessment Research Centre (MARC). The centre is well known in the international environmental field and is staffed by high quality research professionals. It provides the

focal point for the UK's contribution of scientific information to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and has strong links with the World Health Organisation (WHO).

London University has a most extensive range of activities in the environmental field. For example, the University's Centre for Remote Sensing brings together experts from many disciplines. A further example, particularly relevant to the functions of the proposed Agency, is the major involvement of Birkbeck College in the construction of the database for the CORINE project. In addition the University participates in international programmes such as the United Nations Environment Programme's GRID and GEMS and is involved in the planning of

the new International Geosphere and Biosphere Programme.

The University's special expertise in environmental data collection and monitoring should not however be seen as separate from its other work. Rather, it should be seen in the broad context of the great range of environmentally related research being carried out in the University. This extends across the whole spectrum from the major work on the economics of environmental protection (Professor Pearce at University College); the agricultural environment (work going on in Wye College and elsewhere); the Centre for Environment Technology (Imperial College), through to the work in biological conservation, population biology and eco-system research taking place at a number of other colleges of London University.

London University's powerful computer network is well known and the Agency would be able to take advantage of these superb facilities.

LONDON'S FACILITIES



Transport

Both the current and future proposed sites are excellently placed with respect to transport facilities. Heathrow and Gatwick Airports can be reached by direct underground and rail links, and offer unrivalled transport links within and beyond the Community. The new London City Airport offers a convenient terminal for turbo-prop aircraft from Northern European airports. A dedicated river bus service, timed to connect with flights in and out, cuts journey time into central London to 35 minutes.



Sport, recreation, the arts

London is justly famed for its recreational sport and cultural facilities. Few sites can best boast such an impressive acreage of central park land, such a galaxy of theatres, museums and art galleries, or indeed so many opportunities for participating in and watching sport.

London's reputation as an international centre for the arts speaks for itself. It houses 50 theatres, two leading ballet companies, the South Bank arts complex, the Barbican Centre and a whole range of art galleries and famous museums.



Hotels, exhibition centres, etc

The sites suggested in London are within easy reach of many well-known hotels catering for a wide price range. There is also a well-established net of conference centres including the spacious modern Queen Elizabeth II Centre close to the Houses of Parliament.



Centres of excellence

In addition to the links with other parts of the University of London mentioned earlier, many research and academic bodies active in the international environment field are located in London, offering many opportunities for expert consultation.



London as a world centre

The Agency will need to look outward as well as inward as far as the Community is concerned. London's long historical position as a global centre makes it a natural home for an agency that needs to be seen as central in global environment terms.

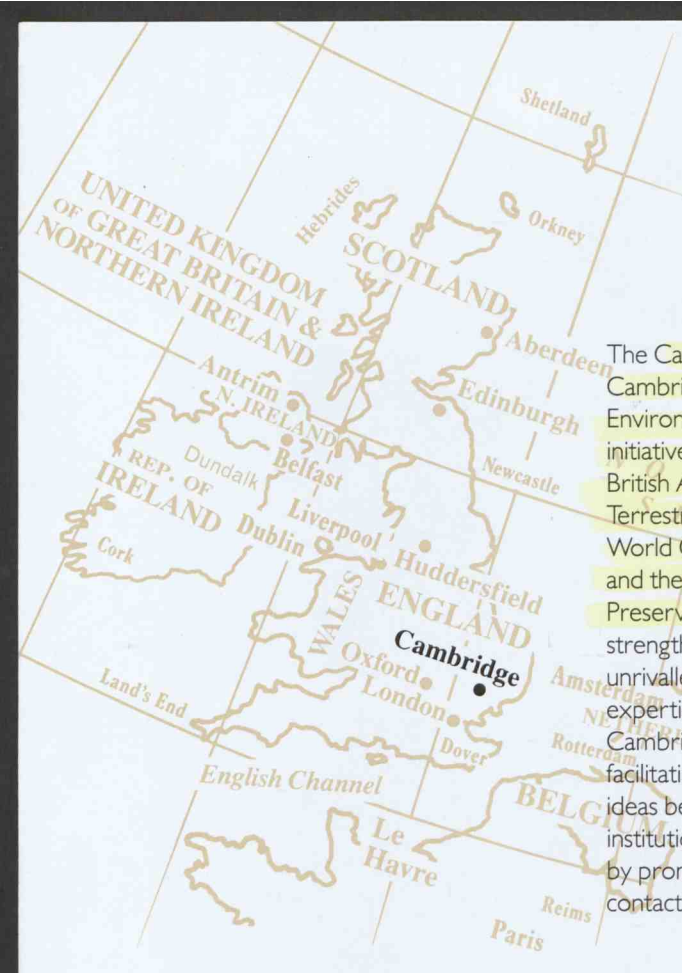


The Atkins Building, part of the University of London, is centrally placed in Kensington.



Cornwall House is situated close to the South Bank Arts complex.

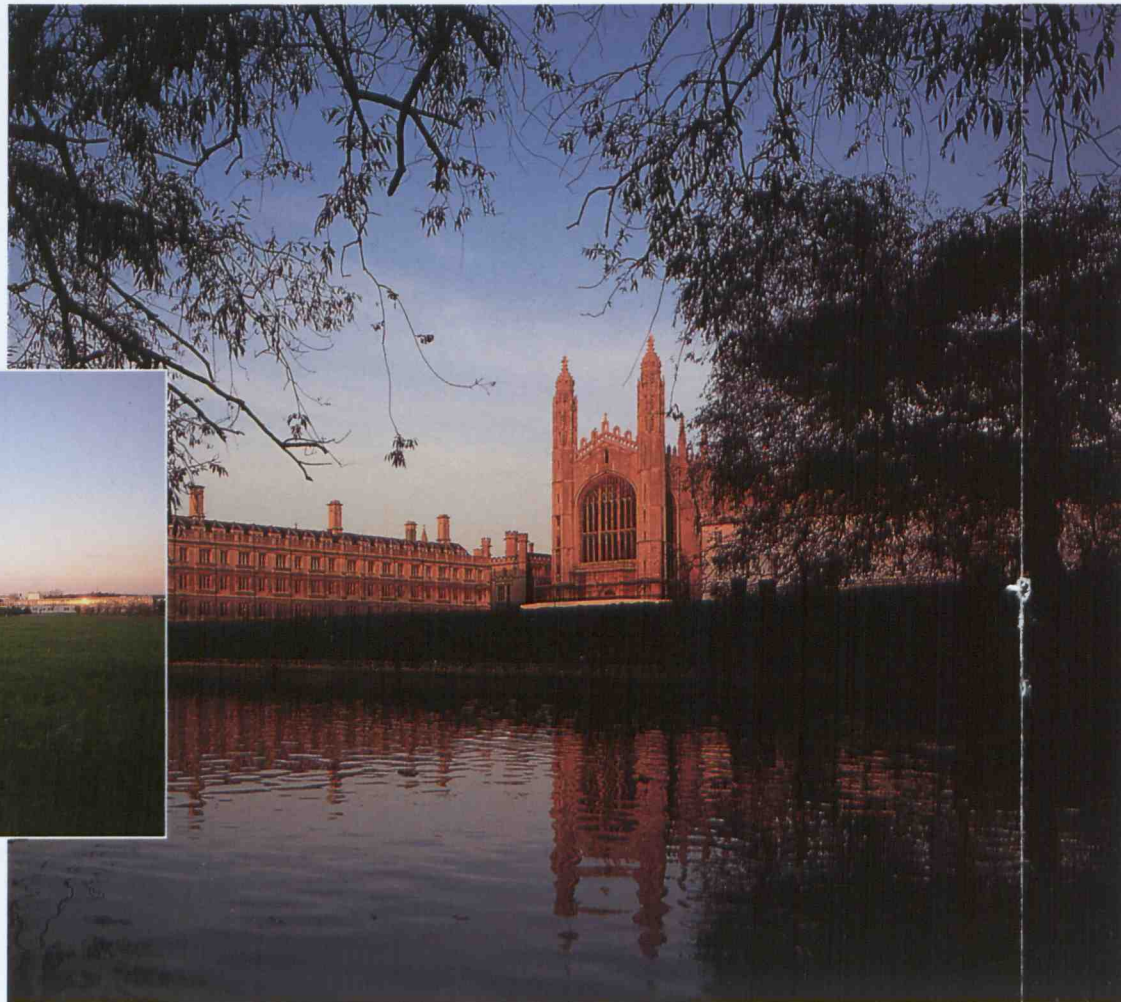
A SITE IN CAMBRIDGE



The Cambridge site is within the Cambridge Inter-Disciplinary Environment Centre which is a joint initiative of Cambridge University, the British Antarctic Survey, the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (at Monks Wood), World Conservation Monitoring Centre and the International Council for Bird Preservation. The new centre aims to strengthen and consolidate the unrivalled technical and intellectual expertise that already exist in the Cambridge area. It will do this by facilitating the flow of information and ideas between departments and institutions in the Cambridge area and by promoting a much more direct contact between the University and

specialist institutions and the wider national, European and world community. The EC/EFTA co-ordination centre for stratospheric ozone research is already located in Cambridge University.

Space is available for up to 100 staff and the accommodation will be backed by a full IBM super computer and data base. The Cambridge Centre also includes a full provision for environmentally specific training at graduate level and for mid-career and special short-term purposes. Cambridge is in a position to provide the highest quality of response to the need for environmental information in almost every environmental field.



The purpose-built centre will be built on this site and form part of the Cambridge Inter-Disciplinary Environment Centre.

In addition to the main Cambridge development a further location in the same area is offered, situated within the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) site at Monks Wood. Computer facilities are particularly good here with a new computer network installed recently.

The Monks Wood location would allow access to NERC staff with direct and relevant experience of dealing with Community environmental information including the CORINE project. Its closeness to Cambridge means that the many centres of excellence are also accessible from Monks Wood.



Madingley Hall



The Natural Environment Research Council can provide excellent computer facilities at their site at Monks Wood.

CAMBRIDGE'S FACILITIES



Transport

Cambridge has a private airport which handles business and executive flights. Stansted Airport is only 25 minutes' drive from the City centre providing a regular service of flights to Brussels and other European cities. A direct train service from Cambridge to Stansted Airport is due to open shortly, improving transport facilities still further.



Arts and leisure

Cambridge provides ample scope for recreation and leisure activities. An Arts Festival is staged each year comprising a series of concerts and recitals, art exhibitions, drama, banquets, fairs and a folk music festival. At other times in the year two theatres provide a diverse programme of entertainment including drama, ballet, opera, music and films. Numerous facilities exist for active recreation. The City has a modern multi-purpose sports hall, swimming pools, golf courses and provides the opportunity to participate in many other sports and games.



Hotels and conference facilities

The City is an important conference centre and has many fine hotels catering for a wide price range.



Centres of excellence

In addition to the institutions mentioned earlier it should be noted that almost all the departments of the University have research and teaching capabilities of international reputation, much of it directly relevant to the environmental field. The Centre is also establishing close working links with the Climate Research Unit at the University of East Anglia and with the Nature Conservancy Council Headquarters situated nearby, in Peterborough. The Scott Polar Research Institute located in Cambridge undertakes work in the environmental field and is currently developing a major new museum and exhibition project.

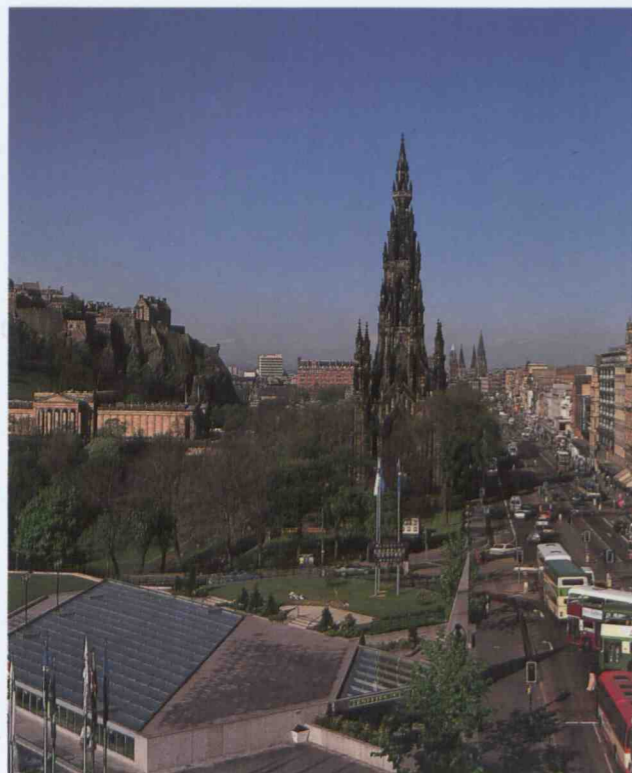


SITES IN EDINBURGH

Edinburgh is a city with a strong history and foundation in the field of environmental science dating back to the 18th century. Edinburgh University's own reputation in this field is reinforced by the close proximity of a large number of centres of excellence, detailed below. Many of these organisations are actively involved in monitoring and collecting information through field research and there is a wide knowledge base and strong potential for collaboration that could be drawn on by a new and developing European Environment Agency.

The quality of life in Edinburgh is one of its greatest advantages. In a recent independent study on the quality of life in some 40 major British cities Edinburgh was ranked first as the most attractive place to live.

Edinburgh has a wealth of high quality sites which could be made available to house the Agency. One excellent site is situated close to the University in the heart of Edinburgh, at the foot of the Royal Mile, near the Palace of Holyroodhouse.

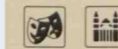


EDINBURGH'S FACILITIES



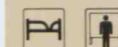
Transport

Edinburgh Airport is on the outskirts of the city, only 15 minutes or so by car from the central area. As well as regular flights to London (sometimes as many as three an hour), there are direct flights daily to many other UK cities and European destinations including Brussels, Dublin, Paris, Geneva, Frankfurt and Amsterdam. Scheduled flights to many other European countries are available from Glasgow Airport, which is less than 50 minutes away by car.



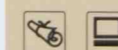
Arts

Edinburgh is a city rich in culture with an abundance of art galleries, libraries and museums to suit all interests. It also boasts a number of exciting cultural venues including the King's Theatre and Royal Lyceum Theatre which present a variety of theatrical performances as well as ballet and opera. The highlight of the Edinburgh cultural calendar, of course, is the International Festival, the world's largest arts festival.



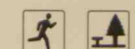
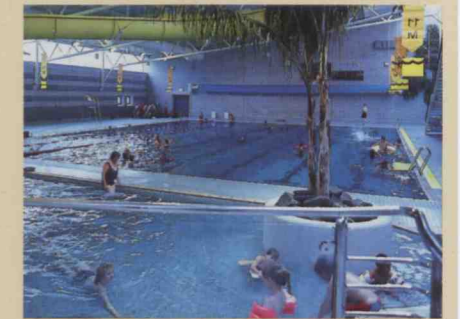
Hotels and conference facilities

Edinburgh is able to offer a variety of fine hotels including a number which provide Conference facilities. An international conference centre will open in 1993.



Centres of excellence

- Edinburgh University
- Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (Edinburgh)
- Royal Botanic Gardens
- Centre for Tropical Veterinary Medicine
- British Geological Survey
- International Forest Science Consultancy
- The Meteorological Office
- UK headquarters of the Forestry Commission



Leisure

Sports facilities of all kinds are available, including the internationally known Meadowbank Sports Centre and the Royal Commonwealth Pool. Other facilities within its boundaries include Europe's largest dry ski slope, 23 golf courses and ice skating. There is also Murrayfield Stadium, home of Scottish international rugby.

A SITE IN HUDDERSFIELD

Accommodation is offered in a planned Business Park situated just outside Huddersfield in West Yorkshire. Development of the site, which is in a good quality residential area and close to open countryside, is due to begin in spring 1990.



Location

The site is situated on the north side of Huddersfield, about three miles from the town centre.



Transport

The location of Huddersfield at the hub of the UK motorway network is one of the area's greatest assets. Manchester International Airport is within an hour's drive and a direct rail link to the airport is planned. Leeds and Bradford Airport is also within easy reach.



Arts and leisure

The Huddersfield district is well provided with sporting and recreational facilities of all kinds. A new theatre is planned for Huddersfield town centre, and the surrounding area benefits from a wide range of cultural and arts facilities, including some notable museums, and countryside attractions. Huddersfield is renowned for its annual international Contemporary Music Festival.

A SITE IN OXFORD

Locating in Oxford

Oxford University has considerable expertise in the environment field. The University has particularly strong schools of geography and forestry and, in the Department of Zoology, an outstanding centre of ecological research. These academic groups are all participating in the development of an Environmental Change Unit. Furthermore there is the Hook Institute, which works in climatic and meteorological areas.

In addition to the activities in the University, the National Radiological Protection Board and the Environmental Section of the Atomic Energy Authority are both nearby, at Harwell.

Although no site has been identified at this stage, accommodation in the Oxford area could certainly be offered, allowing easy access to the resources available at the University and at nearby centres of excellence.



THE WORK OF THE AGENCY



The British Antarctic Survey is carrying out studies of deep ice cores from the Antarctic Ice Cap. Scientists have mapped the duration of Ice Ages and have discovered a close connection between air temperatures and carbon dioxide concentrations from samples taken from ice formed during the last 160,000 years.



The Meteorological Research Flight uses a Hercules aircraft to carry out research into the effects of clouds on atmospheric radiation from the sun and infra-red radiation from the earth; the physical characteristics of cloud formation at all levels; and the chemistry of the lower part of the atmosphere.

To enable the Agency to achieve its objectives it is proposed that the Agency be given the following tasks:

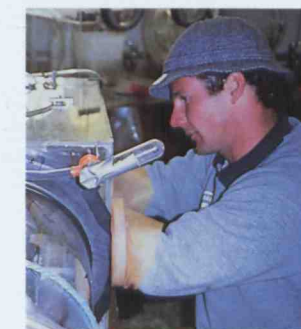
- to encourage the development of a European environment monitoring and information network and to assure its co-ordination. To this end, the Agency shall encourage the collection and the processing of data (particularly in the fields of the quality and sensitivity of and the pressures on the environment), which are necessary for the formulation and implementation of sound and effective environmental policies
- to help ensure the harmonisation and comparability of environmental data in the Community as well as the integration of European environmental data into international environmental monitoring programmes, such as those established within the framework of the United Nations and its system of agencies
- to ensure the wide diffusion of reliable environmental data. It shall publish every three years a report on the state of the environment
- to stimulate the development and application of techniques of environmental modelling and forecasting in order that adequate preventive action can be taken at the appropriate time
- to provide technical, scientific and economic information requested by the Commission in order that the latter may discharge its tasks of identification, preparation and assessment of actions and legislation in the field of the environment.



The Meteorological Office at Bracknell, Berkshire, uses some of the most up-to-date computer installations available for weather forecasting and climate modelling. Meteorologists are currently modelling the effects that global warming may have on world climates.



The Ozone Conference, initiated and organised by the United Kingdom, drew together representatives from 123 countries, of whom 23 signed the Montreal Protocol. The signatories to this agreement have pledged to halve their consumption of CFC gases by the end of this century. One of the foremost speakers at the Conference was President Moi of Kenya who stressed that all countries, whatever their stage of development, can play their part in conserving our planet.



Removing seawater from sediment core under nitrogen at 4°C on board the Natural Environment Research Council ship, RRS Charles Darwin during its global voyage 1986-89.

THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT MONITORING AND INFORMATION NETWORK

In order to collect the data necessary to establish and maintain a European environmental data base it will be necessary to set up a network based on existing national institutes and organisations. This network should be flexible in its structure in order to accommodate current national arrangements but will consist of four main components:

- i The European Environment Agency
- ii National focal points
- iii Operational topic centres
- iv Individual subject focal points within member states.

The diagram shows how the network components will fit together.

The individual subject focal points within member states will be situated in a national institute with staff who are expert in the particular field of study. They will co-ordinate the national data, likely to come from a variety of sources, for that subject. They will then supply that information to the Agency, possibly via the national focal point, and to the topic centres.

The national focal points will co-ordinate all the environmental information for that country. It may often be necessary for the national subject focal points to provide their information direct

to the Agency but the national focal points will be able to monitor all the data supplied from their country and to liaise between the Agency and the subject focal point when required.

The topic centres will undertake statistical evaluations of data from the various countries' data with a view to ensure comparability. For some subjects maybe just one topic centre will be needed for the whole Community whereas for others it may be more appropriate for there to be a number of topic centres collecting data together from like countries.

