



CHAPTER 6

# SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

*environment, the complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival*

*Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15TH EDN, VOL. 4 (1993)*

*Man is more the product of his environment than of his genetic endowment. The health of human beings is determined not by their race but by the conditions under which they live*

*RENÉ DUBOS, Man, Medicine and Environment*

SCIENCE, AS WE HAVE seen, is often used as the scapegoat for the world's environmental predicament. In this chapter we confront this accusation directly. We ask – is science to blame for our environmental problems, or does it provide our only chance of solving them? To illustrate the crucially important role that science and science-based technology must play if we are to effectively address our various environmental crises, let us take a look at some of the most serious environmental problems confronting the world today. We shall consider the actual nature of the problems in scientific terms, and how science can be used to solve them.