



Atlantic Canada
Opportunities
Agency

Agence de
promotion économique
du Canada atlantique

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY III 2004-2006

Raising The Bar



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Minister's Message

Sustainable development is a dynamic process that enables all people to realize their potential and to improve their quality of life in ways that simultaneously protect and enhance Earth's life-support systems. The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency's (ACOA) mandate is to work with the business community of Atlantic Canada to improve the economic health of the region, while ensuring that the approach enhances the environmental health and social integrity of the region.

ACOA recognizes the delicate balance between economic development and environmental quality, between technological innovation and community stability, and between investment in people and investment in infrastructure. Many opportunities are emerging for innovation in environmental technologies. ACOA supports research and development in this area as well as funding for projects that bring these products to the marketplace, both nationally and internationally. At the same time, ACOA, on behalf of the Government of Canada and the four Atlantic Provinces, is assisting communities to upgrade their infrastructure through the Infrastructure Canada Program.

ACOA expects to contribute funds to infrastructure projects over the next three years. Improvements to infrastructure not only improve the quality of life for residents, but attract and maintain businesses. The first priority is "green" municipal infrastructure – projects that improve the quality of our environment and contribute to national goals of clean air and water. Priority projects target water and wastewater systems, water management, solid waste management and recycling.

I am pleased to say that ACOA's Sustainable Development Strategy III commits the Agency to further incorporating sustainable development into its priorities, planning and internal operations.



The Honourable Joseph McGuire, P.C., M.P.





Part I

Introduction

It has been six years since the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), with 27 other federal departments and agencies, submitted the first Sustainable Development Strategies (SDS) to Parliament. The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD), located in the Office of the Auditor General (OAG), has worked with these departments and agencies to ensure that progress is made toward meeting the sustainable development (SD) objectives and actions identified in these strategies and their updated versions. It has been a learning experience for all departments and agencies as the possibilities and implications of sustainable development become clearer and the direct links are made to core business lines and strategic priorities.

In designing SDS III, ACOA has again followed the overall direction set out in *A Guide to Green Government* (1995). The strategy builds upon comments and observations made by the CESD in his 1998 and 1999 annual reports and in *Moving Up the Learning Curve* (1999). SDS III also takes into consideration the 2002 Speech from the Throne and 2003 federal budget references to climate change and Canada's World Summit on Sustainable Development commitments.

ACOA also reviewed progress made against its SDS II targets, identified lessons learned from preparing and implementing SDS I and II, and discussed issues and challenges with Atlantic Canadians during a series of ACOA-led external consultations as well as internal consultations with key staff.

SDS III captures the many activities that support those Agency priorities that embody the social, economic and environmental elements of sustainable development, and further integrates sustainable development into its strategic priorities. It builds on the strengths of ACOA's SDS II by ensuring that targets are clear and measurable, yet with allowance to be qualitative where necessary. It also reflects the possible economic and environmental challenges as well as opportunities for the Atlantic region resulting from the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol. The targets chosen provide the basis for actions that are supported by ACOA senior management and link the priorities of Atlantic Canadians with those of ACOA, within the context of the goal of sustainable development.

Overall, the new strategy represents the Agency's commitment to advancing sustainable development in Atlantic Canada over the next three years. ACOA will continue its efforts to develop more competitive, resource-efficient and sustainable businesses in the Atlantic region through policies and programs that inform and fund private sector businesses. It will also promote sustainable communities and manage its internal operations eco-efficiently.

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Brundtland Commission,
1987**



Part II

Agency Profile

Who We Are

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) is a Government of Canada agency whose mission is to work in partnership with the people of Atlantic Canada to improve the economy of our communities through the successful development of businesses and employment opportunities.

Created in 1987 by the *ACOA Act*, the Agency offers a broad range of programs and services designed to create economic growth and business opportunities in Atlantic Canada. The Agency ensures that a wide variety of business development tools and resources are available to Atlantic entrepreneurs throughout all stages of the business lifecycle, from the time they are thinking about setting up a new business until the time they plan for growth and expansion.

Our Legislative Mandate

ACOA has a broad mandate for economic development in Atlantic Canada to increase the number of jobs and the earned income of Atlantic Canadians. New employment is the direct result of business growth, particularly among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

While ACOA has changed since its inception in June 1987, its mandate has remained constant. Modifications have been made to its financial support programs for SMEs, but, essentially, its vision for Atlantic Canada in terms of increased self-sufficiency and increased earned incomes is still at the heart of Agency operations. Consistency in ACOA's mandate has allowed the Agency to enjoy a measure of stability in its programming, while permitting Agency staff to remain focussed on the tasks at hand.

Our Structure

ACOA's mandate and organizational structure were determined following consultations with Atlantic Canadians across the region. For the first time, a federal organization charged with regional economic development in Atlantic Canada is actually headquartered in the region, in Moncton, New Brunswick, with regional and field offices in cities and towns across the four Atlantic provinces. In Cape Breton, ACOA's programs are delivered by Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (ECBC).

ACOA's Head Office comprises the President's Office, Policy and Programs, Finance and Corporate Services, Legal Services, and Human Resources. Each Atlantic provincial capital (St. John's, Halifax, Charlottetown and Fredericton) has a regional Vice-President responsible for the delivery of ACOA programs. Through its Ottawa office, which reports to the Vice-President responsible for Policy and Programs, ACOA advocates on behalf of Atlantic Canadians in the development of national policies and programs, and assists the region's entrepreneurs in the procurement of federal government contracts. ACOA legislation provides for an ACOA Advisory Board with the President as Chair and Board members representing all areas of Atlantic Canada.

The President of ACOA is also Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chairman of the Board of Directors of ECBC. ECBC is a Crown corporation established by legislation to promote and assist the financing and development of industry on Cape Breton Island in order to provide employment outside the coal-producing industry and to broaden the base of the economy of Cape Breton Island. The Vice-President of ECBC is responsible for delivering most of ACOA's programs in Cape Breton.

While ECBC and ACOA have a close working relationship, and many ACOA programs are delivered in Cape Breton through the Corporation, ECBC is a separate entity and reports separately to Parliament through the Minister responsible for ACOA.

In total, ACOA has 635 full-time equivalent positions in its work force (2003–2004). The Agency occupies space in 36 locations: the Head Office in Moncton, the four provincial capitals, Ottawa and 30 smaller centres within the Atlantic region. Its fleet consists of 19 vehicles, of which three are alternative fuel vehicles. It is a significant consumer of paper used to keep records, publish reports and circulate information. All offices are linked by an electronic mail system and have access to ACOA intranet and the Internet. Please refer to Annex A for an overview of ACOA's regional profiles.

What We Do

ACOA approaches its work in a strategic manner, focussing on creating economic growth through: innovation; research and development; business expansion; entrepreneurship and business skills development; trade and investment promotion; community economic development; and building the region's infrastructure. At ACOA, we believe that a healthy environment is essential to the development of a strong, growing and sustainable economy. We are, therefore, committed to protecting the environment of this region by promoting sustainable businesses and communities in Atlantic Canada that use natural resources to achieve social and economic goals without harming the environment upon which we and future generations depend. We also strive to set an example through the environmental management of ACOA's own operations.

The *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) requires that all ACOA projects undergo environmental screening or assessment prior to approval. The assessment process is designed to identify and minimize potential negative environmental impacts.

The Agency works toward its objectives through six strategic priority areas. The reason and the focus for each strategic priority are presented below.

Policy, Advocacy and Co-ordination

The Reason:

Relevant and effective government action in the region requires the best and most current research and information on the specific economic challenges and opportunities facing the economy of the Atlantic region. ACOA has a legislated mandate to advocate for Atlantic Canada's interests, priorities and concerns in federal government policy making, program design and direct investments.

The Focus:

ACOA carries out a policy and research agenda that is based on comprehensive regional experience, information from economic development stakeholders and partners, and a growing body of research and consultation. The approach focusses on emerging regional, provincial and local economic issues; structural conditions within the Atlantic region; sector-specific considerations; key federal policies and ACOA's own priorities and program initiatives.

Innovation and Technology

The Reason:

Innovative companies are vibrant companies. They create jobs and new opportunities for businesses faster and more successfully than do their less innovative counterparts. Building an environment where more companies can fully participate in, and contribute to, the global, knowledge-based economy is key to Atlantic Canada's long-term competitiveness.

The Focus:

Specifically, the Agency focusses on: improving the region's capacity to carry out leading-edge research and development; facilitating the commercialization of new technologies; helping companies adopt the latest technologies and upgrade their technology skills; and encouraging partnerships and alliances among private sector firms, universities and research institutions.

Trade, Tourism and Investment

The Reason:

Trade fuels economic growth, building business opportunities and generating jobs. Every \$1 million in increased export value results in 11 new jobs for Atlantic Canadians. At the same time, increased foreign direct investment accelerates the development of new commercial opportunities and industrial infrastructure necessary to create a critical mass of business expansion. Capitalizing on the region's tourism potential both promotes Atlantic Canada abroad in important markets, and provides significant employment and business opportunities at home.

The Focus:

ACOA works with its partners to increase export activity in Atlantic Canada by focussing on export awareness and training, market information and intelligence, financial assistance for export development, and international business development. ACOA's investment strategy is working toward positioning Atlantic Canada as a location of choice for foreign direct investment. Investment activities include research, promotion, intelligence gathering and dissemination, and investment partnerships. The Agency's tourism strategy involves working in partnership with the Atlantic provincial governments and several important industry stakeholders to develop high-quality tourism products and to promote the region as a world-class tourism destination.

Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development

The Reason:

Investing in the development of existing and potential entrepreneurs is fundamental to ensuring that business start-ups and expansions continue to generate new wealth and employment. Enhancing business management skills in small and medium-sized enterprises increases business survival, growth and productivity rates.

The Focus:

ACOA works to create an environment in which entrepreneurship is widely perceived as a career option, and life-long learning is considered an essential component of the region's business culture. The Agency's strategy focusses on providing more entrepreneurial opportunities and services for young people and women and helping small business owners and their employees acquire the latest in business and technology skills.

Community Economic Development

The Reason:

The long-term economic health of Atlantic communities is essential to the long-term health of the regional economy in general. If strong regions make for a strong nation, then strong communities make for a strong region.

The Focus:

ACOA's mission with respect to community economic development is to help communities plan and implement their own individual visions for long-term, self-sustaining economic activity. The Agency works with its regional and local partners to: support counselling and financial services for entrepreneurs; improve the availability of business capital in rural areas; create sustainable jobs; strengthen the strategic planning process; and empower each community to successfully direct its own future.

Access to Capital and Information

The Reason:

Small and medium-sized enterprises are the engines of growth in the Atlantic economy, generating nearly 60% of all new jobs. Therefore, support for their start-up, expansion, and modernization is crucial to the overall health of the Atlantic regional economy.

The Focus:

ACOA helps address the most critical financing needs of small and medium-sized enterprises by making available interest-free loans for business start-ups, expansions and modernizations as well as for investment in new technology, software, prototype development, staff training, export development, and quality improvement measures. These investment areas, which are fundamental to a business's continued competitiveness, often do not meet either the risk requirements (i.e. security) of commercial lenders or the size requirements of venture capitalists. ACOA helps fill the gap. The Agency also helps to bridge the flow of business information to Atlantic entrepreneurs by providing a client-centred business information network through the Atlantic Canada Business Service Centres and other support organizations.

Our Programs and Services

Business Development Program

The Business Development Program (BDP) provides financial assistance to entrepreneurs to help them start, expand or modernize their businesses. Loans are interest-free and unsecured, and are provided especially for those projects considered to be critical to competitiveness, but which are often considered to be too risky for conventional lenders.

Atlantic Investment Partnership

In June 2000, the Government of Canada introduced the Atlantic Investment Partnership (AIP) to help the Atlantic region benefit more directly from, and overcome the challenges associated with, the knowledge-based economy. The AIP's priorities of innovation, community economic development, entrepreneurship and business skills development, and trade build on the success of ACOA's existing programs. This initiative includes four components administered by ACOA.

- The *Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF)* is designed to strengthen the economy by accelerating the development of knowledge-based industries. The fund finances research and development and related initiatives in the areas of natural and applied sciences or their commercialization.

- The *Strategic Community Investment Fund* helps communities throughout Atlantic Canada create opportunities for economic development in order to stimulate investment and job creation. The fund assists in creating an environment in Atlantic communities that encourages and enhances the development of strategic sectors, the adjustment to a knowledge-based economy, the adoption of new technologies and innovative practices, and the capacity to compete in the global economy.
- The *Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership* helps small and medium-sized businesses access the skills and opportunities they need to export their products and services through key initiatives such as: Team Canada Atlantic missions; the development of sector export strategies; trade education and skills development activities; and export internships for university and college graduates of international trade programs. The Atlantic Investment Strategy attracts foreign direct investment in Atlantic Canada through investment research, promotional activities and partnerships.
- The *Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development Partnership* seeks to ensure that entrepreneurs are equipped with the best available technological, innovation and business management skills through a series of strategic investments with partners and stakeholders throughout the region. The Partnership includes three key elements: the Innovation Skills Development Initiative, the Women in Business Initiative and the Young Entrepreneur Development Initiative.

Canada Business Service Centres

The Canada Business Service Centres (CBSCs) provide business people in every part of Canada with access to accurate, timely and relevant business information and referrals. The CBSCs reduce the complexity of dealing with various levels of government by serving as a central resource for Canadian business information. ACOA manages the CBSCs in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Community Business Development Corporations

Community Business Development Corporations are autonomous, not-for-profit corporations serving rural Atlantic Canada. They provide financing to help create, expand, modernize and stabilize small businesses. They also help entrepreneurs find the information, advice and capital they need to succeed.

Infrastructure Canada Program

The Infrastructure Canada Program is enhancing municipal infrastructure in communities across the country and improving Canada's quality of life through investments that protect the environment and support long-term economic growth. In Atlantic Canada, the Infrastructure Canada agreements are managed by ACOA, on behalf of the Government of Canada and the four provincial governments.

Pan-Atlantic Economic Development Agreements

These agreements are comprehensive, multi-sectoral initiatives designed to strengthen and support economically significant activities, such as trade and tourism. Current pan-Atlantic agreements include the Canada/Atlantic Provinces COOPERATION Agreement on International Business Development and the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership.

Adjustment Programs

ACOA administers several adjustment programs in Atlantic Canada on behalf of the Government of Canada. These programs provide assistance to communities to help them develop alternate forms of employment where traditional industries have suffered a downturn. A recent example of an adjustment program is the Short-Term Adjustment Initiative.

Other Activities

ACOA is also involved in partnerships with other federal departments to help develop and deliver federal programs and investments in the Atlantic region. An example is ACOA's partnership with the Department of Canadian Heritage in the Atlantic Canada Cultural and Economic Partnership, a fund designed to stimulate economic development through strategic cultural activities in the region. ACOA is actively involved in initiatives to promote Aboriginal business development in Atlantic Canada and is also involved in the Government of Canada's Canadian Rural Partnership.

Measuring the Impact

Each year, the Agency outlines its key objectives for each strategic priority in its Report on Plans and Priorities and presents its accomplishments in the annual Performance Report.

Some important performance results include:

- ACOA-assisted firms have consistently outperformed Atlantic firms generally, both in job creation and earned income growth.
- The five-year survival rate of ACOA-assisted business start-ups is two-and-one-half times better than that of all new businesses in the Atlantic region.
- ACOA program spending generates, on average, \$1.25 in tax revenues for every dollar invested in business start-ups and expansions.
- The unemployment rate in Atlantic Canada is 2.8 % lower as a result of ACOA programming.

Part III

Assessing the Second Sustainable Development Strategy

As part of updating sustainable development strategies, the CESD requires that departments and agencies assess their previous strategies to determine what has been achieved, what has changed, and what needs to be done differently in the updated SDS. This assessment serves two purposes: to guide the preparation of the new strategy and to inform those consulted in the previous SDS as to the progress made.

Although not shown as part of ACOA's formal commitments under the second strategy, it is important to mention that the Agency has provided considerable support to sustainable development in Atlantic Canada through program funding. For instance, ACOA contributed about \$7 million on total project costs of \$22 million since April 2001, under its Business Development Program, in support of projects related to the environment sector. Under Round II of the AIF, the Agency has approved contributions amounting to \$9.7 million toward total project costs of \$26.1 million to projects in this sector. In total, ACOA has approved contributions amounting to \$39.6 million under the AIF toward project costs of \$82.4 million, directly or indirectly, for projects in the environmental sector or with an environmental element. Under the International Business Development Agreement, the Agency has contributed, directly or indirectly, to helping Atlantic Canadian companies in the environmental sector explore and succeed in international markets. Since 2000, community leaders in Bouctouche, New Brunswick, have been leading the "Lessons Learned" program, in partnership with Tourism Atlantic-ACOA, to share with other communities in Atlantic Canada their experience of using the concept of eco-tourism to guide regional development.

Progress on ACOA's SDS II Targets

The following table summarizes the status of the commitments contained in SDS II.

Goal 1 – Promoting sustainable communities and businesses in Atlantic Canada

SDS II Targets	Performance Measures	Status
1.1.1 100% of new program applicants receive information on eco-efficiency beginning December 2001.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of new program applicants who have been provided information on eco-efficiency. 	Achieved as of December 2002 and ongoing.
1.1.2 Two of ACOA's clients undertake pilot eco-efficiency reviews by December 2001.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that two of ACOA's clients have conducted an eco-efficiency review. 	Achieved.
1.1.3 100% of new clients have access to an eco-efficiency self-assessment tool, beginning December 2001.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of clients who have accessed the eco-efficiency self-assessment tool. 	Achieved and ongoing.
1.1.4 ACOA's policy statement on SD is included on 100% of ACOA's appropriate outreach documents, as documents are printed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of outreach documents that include ACOA policy statement on SD. 	Achieved and ongoing.

Part III

Goal 1 – Promoting sustainable communities and businesses in Atlantic Canada

SDS II Targets	Performance Measures	Status
1.1.5 100% of Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs) and Regional Development Authorities, are aware of ACOA's SDS goals and objectives by December 2001.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of times that ACOA's SDS is placed on the agendas for quarterly meetings of all CBDCs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially achieved. Presentation to CBDC annual meeting. Correspondence to CBDCs and Regional Development Authorities.
1.1.6 Develop and implement an awareness activity to aid Atlantic youth (15-29) to link SD to entrepreneurship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of Atlantic Canadian youth (ages 15 to 29) who have been exposed to the SD awareness activity. 	Achieved.
1.2.1 ACOA will prepare a strategy for the development of the environmental industries sector by March 2002.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy developed. 	A formal strategy was deferred in favour a series of strategic initiatives undertaken by the Agency and environmental sector stakeholders and reflected in the ACOA plans and priorities.
1.2.2 100% of ACOA's new environmental projects are inventoried, beginning January 2001.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inventory created. 	Achieved and ongoing.
1.3.1 Increase the number of alliances ACOA has with partners with common SD objectives beginning immediately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new alliances formed. Number of environmental interdepartmental and intergovernmental committees in which ACOA participates. 	Ongoing.

Goal 2 – Setting an example in the environmental management of ACOA's operations

SDS II Targets	Performance Measures	Status
2.1.1 90% of employees and contracted resources are aware of SD and of ACOA's role in the goal of SD by December 2002.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of employees and contracted resources who have received general awareness training/information. Number and percentage of employees and contracted resources who are aware of SD and of ACOA's role in the goal of SD. 	Achieved. Information sessions provided. Further information provided via e-mail and available on intranet.
2.1.2 100% of ACOA employees and contracted resources are made aware of how they can contribute to SD at ACOA by December 2002.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and percentage of employees and contracted resources who know how they can contribute to SD at ACOA. 	Partially achieved. Ongoing.
2.1.3 100% of program officers/managers understand the <i>Canada Environmental Assessment Act</i> (CEAA) requirements, by December 2002 (75% by December 2001).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of program officers/managers who have received CEAA training. Percentage of program officers who understand basic CEAA requirements. 	Achieved and ongoing.
2.1.4 Executive Committee is briefed at least annually on the status of ACOA's SDS implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of briefings provided to Executive Committee members on ACOA's SDS. 	Achieved and ongoing.

Goal 2 – Setting an example in the environmental management of ACOA's operations

SDS II Targets	Performance Measures	Status
2.1.5 100% of program officers/managers can provide clients with information on eco-efficiency by December 2001.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of program officers/managers who can provide information to clients on eco-efficiency. 	Partially achieved. One training session took place and information has been made available on intranet.
2.2.1 Reduce per capita paper consumption, by 5% by January 2002, from 1998 levels and maintain that level or better for the remainder of the SDS period (i.e. until December 2001).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage per capita reduction in paper consumption. 	Due to increased program requirements and activities, paper reduction was unachieved. Introduced double-sided printing/photocopying. Paper is also recycled.
2.2.2 The five regional offices meet acceptable air quality standards by December 2003.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation that tests have been conducted. Results of air quality study. 	Partially achieved. Air quality has been tested for various constituents at all regions.
2.2.3 50% of all plain paper purchased will have at least 50% post-consumer recycled content by December 2003.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of plain paper purchased that contains 50% post-consumer recycled content. 	100% of all plain paper has 30% post-consumer recycled content, as per the industry standard.
2.2.4 100% of ACOA's forms and envelopes that are purchased are printed on at least 50% post-consumer recycled paper by 2003.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of ACOA's forms and envelopes that are printed on 50% post-consumer recycled content. 	Achieved. 100% of ACOA's forms and envelopes purchased were printed on at least 55% post-consumer recycled paper.
2.2.5 100% of ACOA's outreach documents are available on the Internet by December 2001.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of ACOA's outreach documents that are on the Internet. 	Achieved and ongoing.



Part IV

Consultations

As stated in A Guide to Green Government, sustainable development is a shared responsibility requiring the involvement of federal and provincial governments, Aboriginal peoples, and departmental stakeholders. A critical element to preparing a sustainable development strategy (SDS) is capturing information from stakeholders who have an interest in seeing the federal government undertake steps toward sustainable development.

External Consultations

ACOA, in co-operation with several other federal departments, consulted with external stakeholders across Atlantic Canada. Through this collaborative effort – the first of its kind concerning sustainable development at the federal level – ACOA led an initiative including four other federal departments, in a series of co-ordinated consultations with Atlantic Canadians. The other departments were Environment Canada (EC), Industry Canada (IC), Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), and Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC). The involvement of other federal departments in these consultations was intended to assure a degree of collaboration and communication in addressing issues and objectives that are often pertinent to more than one department.

The consultations, held in each of the four Atlantic provinces during the first week of May 2003, were attended by a total of 109 stakeholders from industry, academia and non-government organizations. The themes, “Building Sustainable Communities” and “Promoting Innovative Economies,” were chosen as the areas of focus for the consultations. The views of the participants were captured through discussions revolving around these themes, and identified what issues and challenges face Atlantic Canadians with respect to sustainable development. Participants identified 11 priorities within the context of both themes, and this information helped shape the commitments contained in this SDS. These priorities were:

1. Provide a Definition of Sustainable Communities
2. Education
3. Recruitment and Retention of a Skilled Labour Force
4. Infrastructural Improvement
5. Promote Research and Development
6. Community Empowerment
7. Improve Perception of Atlantic Canada
8. Promote Opportunities for Interaction Among Governments and Creation of Partnerships
9. Provide Incentives for “Sustainable Choices”
10. Enhance Long-Term Thinking in Economic Management
11. Make Use of Best Practices

While it was evident that many of the observations and comments obtained during the external consultations are relevant to ACOA's mandate, policy or program activities as a whole, ACOA alone could not address them all. Instead, it was important to capture those aspects of the 11 priorities that fit into ACOA's mandate and include all three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. Nonetheless, all comments, including those that did not result in modification to the SDS update, were forwarded to appropriate staff at ACOA for future consideration.

Internal Consultations

The next step in preparing SDS III involved consulting with ACOA's staff on how the Agency could address those sustainable development issues that fit within its mandate, taking into consideration the priorities and related concerns raised by stakeholders during the external consultations. To assist staff in this exercise, ACOA prepared a guidance document outlining the requirements for SDS III and providing the comments from the external consultations. Input from the regions and strategic sectors focussed on specific objectives, targets, actions and performance measures. These appear in Part VI of this SDS.

Part V

Issue Scan

Sustainable development is often both influenced and characterized by complex social, economic and environmental pressures. The often close interactions and interdependencies among these pressures must be taken into account when making decisions that will impact the welfare of Atlantic Canadians and their current and future environment. ACOA, therefore, has a role to play through this SDS in planning and delivering actions that support these decisions, and the activities that follow.

Social Pressures

With limited economic options, many areas of Atlantic Canada face social challenges in enabling communities to simultaneously enhance or maintain the well-being of their people, with due regard for ecosystem, health and employment objectives. Confronting these challenges must occur in ways that do not place unbearable environmental, economic or social burdens on this and future generations. Atlantic Canada's communities, therefore, require innovative thinking to develop the approaches, partnerships and tools that can effectively address their social issues, while respecting the need to assure clean air and water, energy, employment opportunities, adequate health care, affordable transportation and housing.

Economic Pressures

In 2002, the Government of Canada released an Innovative Strategy for Canada. The strategy emphasizes the importance of addressing the challenges of capitalizing on the knowledge base, increasing the supply of qualified people, and building the capacity to encourage entrepreneurship. These challenges are directly relevant to meeting the economic aspirations of Atlantic Canadians and, therefore, must be confronted if meaningful progress toward sustainable development is to be made in the region.

Promoting economic growth in Atlantic Canada must be undertaken in the context of often shifting external factors, including:

- the effects and pressures of an increasingly complex global economy;
- the out-migration of skilled labour and difficulty in attracting highly qualified people;
- the rising value of the dollar, which negatively affects export; and
- pressures associated with the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol.

Environmental Pressures

Atlantic Canada faces a number of environmental issues (in the biophysical sense) that pose both a threat to the region and an opportunity in addressing the goal of sustainable development. The effectiveness with which these issues are managed is directly linked to the present and long-term social and economic well-being of the region. These issues include pressing concerns, such as: water pollution (e.g. untreated sewage, groundwater contamination); resource depletion (e.g. fisheries stocks, timber limitations); and land degradation (e.g. soil erosion, toxic spills) Indeed, the threat posed by these environmental issues challenges the future viability of some communities. It is incumbent on ACOA, therefore, to recognize its role in helping mitigate this threat and to acknowledge, in this SDS, the direct linkages between socio-economic welfare and a healthy environment. The means by which ACOA addresses these issues (outlined in Part VI) is:

- through its strategic priorities and their attendant influences upon clients and stakeholders; and
- through the management of its internal operations.

ACOA is also concerned with climate change and its impacts on the Atlantic region and Canada overall. Canada accounts for 2-3% of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and it is estimated that climate change will have a significant impact on Canada's fisheries, forestry and agricultural sectors and that rising temperatures will lead to lower water levels in lakes and reservoirs and to drought and severe weather changes. On December 17, 2002, the Government of Canada announced its ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This ratification commits Canada to reducing GHG emissions to 6% less than 1990 levels by 2012.

Internationally, there is a need for adaptation expertise to complement efforts already underway to mitigate climate change through GHG emissions reduction. The demand for adaptation expertise is considerable within the field of international development, and export development opportunities are fast emerging.

ACOA is a contributing member of the private-sector-driven partnership on climate change, launched in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in November 2001. ClimAdapt, comprising seven private sector environmental firms, non-governmental associations, and three levels of government, was established to pioneer the incorporation of a climate change adaptation management framework into government environmental impact assessments and municipal risk management processes, in Canada and internationally. The project supports Nova Scotia's Energy Strategy and efforts by the Eastern Canadian Premiers and New England Governors Group related to climate change. ClimAdapt offers inter-disciplinary expertise in coastal monitoring, environmental assessments, geomatics, and solid waste and wastewater management, and so on.

ACOA Policies and Programs

Since its inception, ACOA has invested in thousands of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and organizations across the Atlantic region. One of ACOA's most effective programs for contributing to projects associated with climate change mitigation and the environment sector is the Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF). As stated earlier, under Round II of the AIF, the Agency has approved contributions amounting to \$9.7 million toward total project costs of \$26.1 million to projects in this sector. In total, ACOA has approved contributions amounting to \$39.6 million under the AIF toward project costs of \$82.4 million, directly or indirectly, to projects in the environmental sector or with an environmental element.

At the same time, ACOA has provided information, counselling and advice to existing and potential entrepreneurs. The businesses ACOA supports may exploit or help conserve natural resources, produce or reduce pollution, alter landscapes, or change the distribution or size of plant and animal populations, while concurrently offering particular groups of people employment and investment returns. Through its extensive network of partners in the public and private sector, ACOA is well equipped to foster behavioural change and create awareness among SMEs in rural and urban areas in support of the Agency's sustainable development goals and objectives. ACOA has a regional advocacy role attributed directly in legislation and the Agency works closely with other federal and provincial departments and central agencies to ensure that economic policies and programs reflect the needs and priorities of Atlantic Canadians. Thus, there is the potential to expand ACOA's influence on sustainable development efforts in Atlantic Canada through the provision of information and/or targeted funding initiatives. As well, ACOA is present at many of the key venues where its influence may help in the choice of actions to support its sustainable development commitments.

Internal Operations

Compared to the extent to which ACOA can influence sustainable development in Atlantic SMEs, ACOA's internal operations have a relatively minor effect on the environment. For example, and as noted in Part II, ACOA has a fleet of only 19 vehicles, three of which are alternative fuel vehicles, and 635 full-time equivalent positions. The main impact that ACOA operations have on the environment is in the amount of paper consumed. ACOA can, however, help influence its applicants and clients, as well as the region's business community, to adopt practices supportive of sustainable development by setting an example through the adoption of environmentally sound practices in the conduct of its own operations. To this end, ACOA will continue to support the greening of its offices through recycling, reduction of waste and energy saving initiatives. For example, ACOA has created a policy that will reduce the power consumption of the computers used by its employees. All computers will be set to take advantage of the energy saving features. This measure is expected to significantly reduce the power consumption of the computers when left on idle mode. ACOA also takes every opportunity to work closely with PWGSC to incorporate the use of recycled-content material and resources in renovation. Finally, ACOA will continue to sensitize its employees about the Agency's efforts – and their part therein – to meet the sustainable development commitments contained in this SDS.



Part VI

Objectives, Targets, Actions, and Performance Measures

The priorities, objectives, targets, actions and performance measures in SDS III set the general direction for what ACOA wants to achieve in the context of this three-year strategy. The linkage is clear: in working to confront and address the social, economic and environmental issues through its strategic priorities, the Agency is making a meaningful contribution to sustainable development in the Atlantic region. The following section presents the priorities and associated objectives, targets, actions and performance measures that will enable ACOA to make this contribution over the coming years.

ACOA SDS III – 2004-2006 Summary of Objectives, Actions, Targets and Performance Measures

Priority 1 . Support to Businesses

Objectives	Targets	Actions	Performance Measures
1.1 To work with the academic and private sector on research and development (R&D) in the environmental industries sector, new technologies, innovation, etc., that have good commercialization potential. Strategic Priorities: Innovation.	1.1.1 ACOA will provide support to a minimum of 10 R&D/innovation/new technology projects in the environmental industry, to be implemented over the next three years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote projects to universities, colleges, institutes, associations and the private sector. Work with academic and private sector to target strategic growth sectors such as ocean industries, biotechnology and aquaculture, etc. Over the next three years, ACOA will support environmental R&D initiatives (e.g. develop marine bioactive compounds and extraction processes from fisheries and aquaculture by-products; foster the development of an emerging bio-business sector). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of projects funded.
1.2 To support the activities of the environmental industries associations. Strategic Priorities: Access to Capital & Information; Policy, Advocacy & Co-ordination.	1.2.1 Fund at least 20 projects or initiatives that support environmental industries through their associations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with environmental industries associations to develop initiatives that are compatible with ACOA's strategic priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of projects funded.
1.3 To contribute to the Government of Canada's overall climate change plan of reducing GHG emissions in Canada. Strategic Priorities: Access to Capital & Information; Policy, Advocacy & Co-ordination.	1.3.1 Over the next three years, work with other federal departments to target climate change initiatives, that also contribute to the economic development of the region; the parties will meet at least three times per year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Industry Portfolio members and other government departments to raise their awareness of the climate change capabilities and expertise of Atlantic Canadian stakeholders. Develop a plan to target economic development projects that have a climate change aspect to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of meetings held. Plan developed.

Part VI

Priority 1. Support to Businesses

Objectives	Targets	Actions	Performance Measures
1.4 To support tourism businesses and associations throughout the Atlantic Region to strengthen best practices with respect to the environment. Strategic Priorities: Trade, Tourism & Investment.	1.4.1 Fund three tourism projects that support healthy environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Tourism Industry Associations to identify areas for joint collaboration. • Work with Tourism clients to promote eco-tourism or environmental/SD related product. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of projects funded.
1.5 Undertake strategic investment in sustainable tourism communities through sustainable tourism development training. Strategic Priorities: Trade, Tourism & Investment.	1.5.1 A minimum of nine communities to attend the training workshop in Bouctouche entitled “What Makes a Sustainable Tourism Community.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate communities to SD through: introduction to the concepts of SD; identification of local potential; development of a vision and objectives for planning sustainable tourism community development; making the transition from planning to implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of communities that have completed the training workshop.
	1.5.2 Fifteen current and previous workshop attendee communities to receive follow-up consultancy aftercare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop follow-up requirements. • Hire consultant for follow-up work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of communities that have received follow-up consultancy aftercare.
	1.5.3 Fifteen current and previous workshop attendee communities to subscribe to restricted access Web site for monthly discussion forums.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have Web site developed. • Establish criteria for participation and discussion topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web site developed. • Number of communities that subscribed and participated in forums.
	1.5.4 Twenty-seven community leaders to take an on-line training session on advanced sustainable tourism topics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop criteria for participation in training sessions. • Create on-line curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria and curriculum developed. • On-line training participation rate.
	1.5.5 Under BDP, fund Université de Moncton to have two students (one full-time, plus the co-ordinator) to complete course work for their Master of Environmental Studies degrees with their Master’s theses on sustainable tourism development (by the end of the project). <i>(continued)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with university to select students for program and program co-ordinators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master’s course work completed. • Case studies posted on ACOA Web site.

Priority 1. Support to Businesses

Objectives	Targets	Actions	Performance Measures
	1.5.5 The completed project will include case studies that will be posted to ACOA's SDS Web page.		
	1.5.6 Account Managers to liaise with nine communities to assess the degree of integration of tourism objectives into community economic development planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the nine communities to attend the Bouctouche workshop and obtain testimonials on integration of tourism objectives. 	
1.6 Promote Atlantic Canada as a leader in sustainable tourism destinations by improving the quality and diversification of tourism services/facilities. Strategic Priorities: Trade, Tourism & Investment.	1.6.1 Forty Atlantic outdoor adventure operations exposed to the Gros Morne Institute of Sustainable Tourism (GMIST) outdoor leadership, adventure tourism training and business development program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the Canadian Tourism Commission, Parks Canada and participating tourism operators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop curriculum for outdoor leadership, adventure tourism training and business development programs. - establish criteria for operator participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of outdoor adventure operations that have been exposed to the program.
	1.6.2 Forty Atlantic accommodations establishments ¹ , forty food service businesses and twenty Signature Attractions exposed to the GMIST sustainable tourism techniques and practices program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop curriculum for sustainable tourism techniques and practices program. Establish criteria for operator participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of accommodations establishments, food service businesses, and Signature Attractions that have been exposed to the program.
	1.6.3 Twenty-five Atlantic operations (e.g. museums, parks, attractions) exposed to the natural/cultural experience-based program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop curriculum for natural/cultural program. Establish criteria for operator participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of operations that have been exposed to the program.
1.7 Work with the environmental industries sector to increase export of their products and services. Strategic Priorities: Trade, Tourism & Investment.	1.7.1 Fund four projects to increase exports from environment and energy technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the environmental industries sector in identifying projects that will contribute to increase exports from environment and energy technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of projects funded.

¹ Accommodations establishments exclude campgrounds.

Part VI

Priority 2. Support to Communities

Objectives	Targets	Actions	Performance Measures
2.1 To work with local, regional and provincial groups to facilitate economic development at the community level that takes the environment into consideration. Strategic Priorities: Community Economic Development.	2.1.1 Co-ordinate two information sessions for the Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs) in Atlantic Canada.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an on-line vertical portal for information dissemination and sharing. Work with Environment Canada and CBDCs to co-ordinate one CEAA training session. Co-ordinate the delivery of at least two information sessions over three-year period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vertical portal established. Number of sessions held and number of CBDCs that attend.
	2.1.2 ACOA will provide tools and assist the CBDCs to provide small businesses with SD information (e.g. guides, information on sustainable initiatives, funding sources).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in semi-annual CBDC conferences/ workshops to discuss information needs and tools available. Send periodic e-mails to provide update on SD information, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in semi-annual CBDC conferences/ workshops. Number of e-mails sent.
	2.1.3 A minimum of 80% of Regional Economic Development Organizations (REDOs) are made aware of the concepts and benefits of SD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and disseminate material to REDOs informing them of the concepts and benefits of SD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of REDOs made aware of the concepts and benefits of SD.
	2.1.4 Twenty-five projects funded per year that promote eco-efficiency ² , over a three-year period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with community groups to identify appropriate projects for funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of projects funded.
2.2 To contribute to improving water and sewer infrastructure through the Infrastructure Canada Program. Strategic Priorities: Access to Capital & Information; Community Economic Development.	2.2.1 Fund up to 175 water and/or sewer infrastructure projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with provincial and municipal governments and other delivery agencies to support projects involving water supply and distribution systems as well as wastewater systems. Develop and implement projects with provincial and municipal governments to support solid waste diversion and disposal to reduce greenhouse emissions and pollution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 50% of funding comes from Infrastructure Canada Program used for green projects. At least 175 communities are upgraded through the Infrastructure Canada Program.

² The World Business Council for Sustainable Development describes eco-efficiency as a management philosophy of doing more with less. In other words, the creation of goods and services that optimize resource use and reduce waste and pollution - minimizing costs while maximizing value.

Priority 3. Awareness and Capacity Building

Objectives	Targets	Actions	Performance Measures
3.1 To collaborate with public and private organizations on SD goals and objectives that fit the ACOA's mandate. Strategic Priorities: All.	3.1.1 Continue to work with partners on at least five new initiatives (e.g. environmental technology development services in Atlantic Canada).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners with common SD objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of initiatives undertaken.
3.2 Increase awareness of SD principles and practices in entrepreneurship education and skills development directed toward Atlantic youth. Strategic Priorities: Entrepreneurship & Business Skills Development.	3.2.1 Develop and implement at least four projects directed at youth to link sustainable development to entrepreneurship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of SD to youth and young entrepreneurs through various media and promotional products (e.g. Sustainable Development Handbook, and television vignettes of young entrepreneurs - "Street Cents", "Me Inc.'s"). • Support youth entrepreneurship and education through youth-directed programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of projects funded.
3.3 To increase level of awareness in businesses and communities about national environmental programs available to them. Strategic Priorities: Access to Capital & Information.	3.3.1 Have businesses and communities attend one of three information sessions, over the three-year period, on national environment funding and assistance programs available and how to access them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite federal government departments to make presentations to these groups on national environmental programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of sessions delivered. • Number of attendees.
3.4 To improve knowledge of climate change impacts and develop effective and appropriate ways of integrating climate change considerations into decision-making. Strategic Priorities: Access to Capital & Information; Policy, Advocacy & Co-ordination.	3.4.1 Fund three projects from ClimAdapt, a private sector-driven network providing innovative climate change adaptation expertise in Canada and internationally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the environmental industries associations, ClimAdapt and provincial government departments to develop three projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of projects funded.
	3.4.2 Refer two ACOA clients to ClimAdapt for integration of climate change considerations into their decision-making process with respect to undertaking a project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with provincial and municipal governments and other delivery agencies in identifying projects that could undergo a ClimAdapt review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of referrals.

Part VI

Priority 3. Awareness and Capacity Building

Objectives	Targets	Actions	Performance Measures
	3.4.3 Fund five R&D projects specifically focussed on climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with R&D proponents to sign contribution agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of projects funded and monitored.
	3.4.4 Build SME's awareness of climate change initiatives such as emissions trading, pollution prevention and alternative energy sources by holding at least four information sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with industry associations, businesses and communities to raise awareness of national climate change programs available to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of sessions delivered.
	3.4.5 Fund at least one policy research project examining the implications and opportunities climate change represents for a strategic sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund project and share results with key stakeholders in order to influence decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project funded. • Results communicated.
3.5 Work with partners and stakeholders to host information sessions, workshops and activities that inform Atlantic Canadian communities and businesses about the benefits of eco-efficiency. Strategic Priorities: Access to Capital & Information.	3.5.1 Inform Atlantic SMEs of the benefits of eco-efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund the Nova Scotia Eco-Efficiency Business Assistance Program pilot project, which will work with SMEs to identify pollution prevention and efficiency options and opportunities. • Participate on the Program's Steering Committee to advise on best management and evaluate performance. • Refer a minimum of ten ACOA clients to the Program for Eco-Efficiency Reviews. • Undertake eco-efficiency workshops during Small Business Week to demonstrate how eco-efficiency can improve business viability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of SMEs that attend the workshops.
3.6 To improve management and innovation skills that relate to environmental industries and/or eco-efficiency. Strategic Priorities: Entrepreneurship & Business Skills Development.	3.6.1 Provide SMEs with information that highlights advanced environmental practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a "Sustainable Development Handbook" for SMEs; profile successful entrepreneurs using advanced environmental practices; and outline ACOA's position regarding business and SD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handbook developed. • Number of handbooks distributed.

Priority 4. Setting an Example

Objectives	Targets	Actions	Performance Measures
4.1 Make more efficient use of resources.	4.1.1 Maintain paper consumption at 2002 level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with double-sided printing / photocopying across ACOA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All printers and photocopiers have default options for double-sided printing and photocopying.
	4.1.2 Use of 100% recycled content paper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Agency standard for paper purchased to incorporate a minimum of 50% recycled content and 30% post consumer recycled content. Annual reports to Executive Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard established. Paper purchase statistics provided by regions and Head Office.
	4.1.3 Reduce energy consumed by Agency computers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a policy that will reduce the power consumption of the computers used by staff. Technical staff will develop a process by which all computers will be set to standards that incorporate “idle mode” defaults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy created. Standards in place.
	4.1.4 Increase number of Agency additional alternative fuel vehicle by at least one, to replace gasoline powered vehicle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase at least one alternative fuel vehicle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of vehicles purchased.
4.2 Strengthen the integration of sustainable development considerations into Agency decision-making through staff training and awareness initiatives.	4.2.1 Deliver training and awareness sessions to all ACOA employees and improve electronic information format and content on ACOA SDS intranet site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update ACOA Intranet SDS site. Improve and deliver SD information session for employees on SD and climate. Develop and launch SD awareness campaign to ACOA staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web site updated. Training sessions delivered. Campaign launched.



Annex A

ACOA Regional Profiles

ACOA's regional Vice-Presidents are responsible for the delivery of Agency's programs within their respective regions, in keeping with the mission and mandate of the Agency. ACOA works through partnerships and its regional Vice-Presidents chair the Federal Regional Councils in each province. The councils provide an information sharing forum involving heads of federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations.

ACOA in Nova Scotia

There are a number of environmental issues of importance to the province, including sewage treatment in coastal towns and cities, fish stock depletion, acid rain, deforestation and water quality. Opportunities are emerging in the environmental industries sector and in fostering sustainable development in firms and communities.

ACOA has 133 full-time equivalent positions in Nova Scotia and is actively involved in a number of initiatives related to sustainable development in the province. Under the Business Development Program, a number of projects have been supported, in particular:

- *Nova Scotia Environmental Industries Association (NSEIA)* – Two-year funding was approved for ongoing operation and incremental activity of the association.
- *Nova Scotia Environmental Industries Association (NSEIA), ClimAdapt* – Two-year funding was approved for establishment, operation and incremental activity. ClimAdapt was launched in 2001 as the Nova Scotia Climate Change Adaptation Initiative, a network of companies within the NSEIA that work in conjunction with Nova Scotia Departments of Environment and Labour, the Halifax Regional Municipality, Canadian Climate Impacts and the Adaptation Research Network. Mutual objectives of this alliance is to improve knowledge of climate change impacts and develop effective and appropriate ways of adapting. Commercial objectives of ClimAdapt are to pursue emerging world market demand for assessment and planning services of climate change referred to as “Climate Change Adaptation.”
- NSEIA funding was approved for compilation of an industry database.
- *Envirofax* – This project involved technically upgrading and expanding the distribution of the environmental industry's principal communication medium. It is published in both official languages on a weekly basis and is also available electronically on the NSEIA Web site.
- *Eco-Efficiency Centre* – Two-year funding was approved for ongoing operation and incremental activity of the Centre. The main objective of the Centre is to work with companies in the Burnside Industrial Park to improve their environmental and economic efficiency in such areas as waste management and water use. The Centre provides arm's-length, credible service to small and medium-sized businesses, with the eventual goal to write a manual to be distributed to industrial parks worldwide. The Centre is also a prototype and is being marketed nationally and internationally.
- *Eco-Efficiency Centre, Eco-Efficiency Business Assistance Program (Pilot)* – Participated as a collaborative funding partner in implementation of a one-year pilot program that will facilitate Nova Scotia

SMEs adoption of eco-efficiency practices, thereby reducing environmental impacts and increasing profitability.

- ACOA is working with the provincial Department of the Environment and Labour and the Nova Scotia Environmental Industry Association to provide opportunities for environmental companies to identify/contact potential European partners. This is being accomplished through development of a Web site for matchmaking purposes and incoming trade mission support.
- *Sustainable Communities Initiative* – ACOA, under the Federal Regional Council, is partnering with federal and provincial departments in exploring ways in which to effectively work together and with communities to support local efforts toward promotion of sustainable development. The Sustainable Communities Initiative is an innovative plan for governments to work in a new, more integrated way with each other, and with communities, to address sustainability issues. Two pilot projects are initially planned for the province.

The goals of the Sustainable Communities Initiative are: to co-ordinate and improve citizen-centred programs and service-delivery across all governments; to forge new partnerships; and to collaborate with local citizens in their efforts to build strong, sustainable communities. Depending on the shared vision and priorities identified by the partner community areas, the initiative should achieve measurable progress in quality of life, whether it is a cleaner environment, higher literacy, improved health, better infrastructure, safer streets or more opportunities to earn a good living.

ACOA in Newfoundland and Labrador

ACOA has 121 full-time staff in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL). The regional office in St. John's houses 102 people and shares a building with 13 other federal offices. Field offices in Grand Bank, Clarenville, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Corner Brook, Plum Point, and Happy Valley-Goose Bay operate in rented space. Temporary offices are currently being established in St. Anthony, Rocky Harbour and Port aux Basques.

Through its provincial programs, ACOA supports sustainable development in such areas as:

- *Infrastructure Improvement* – Extension of technology to rural communities. ACOA will work with partners to plan and implement improvements to broad band services for rural areas of the province. Access to affordable broadband Internet services to the school system in rural communities in Newfoundland and Labrador will be increased.
- *Research and Development* – Through the Atlantic Innovation Fund, ACOA will work with the academic and private sector to develop innovation and research commercialization. Support will be provided to strategic growth sectors, including ocean industries, biotechnology, fisheries and aquaculture.
- *Community Empowerment* – Support measures will be provided to affected communities to enable them to adjust, in the short term, to the socio-economic impact of the cod fishery closure. Communities will be engaged to identify and develop options for long-term strategic adjustment. Partnerships with local, regional, and provincial groups will be used to facilitate economic development at the community level.
- *Support for Entrepreneurial Ventures* – ACOA will work with partners to improve the growth and competitiveness of women-owned businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador. Assistance for business support and expansion will be provided along with planning, counselling and mentoring services. Support required to develop viable businesses will be provided to post-secondary students.

ACOA in Prince Edward Island

The ACOA – Prince Edward Island and Tourism regional office is located in Charlottetown. In total, the office has 65 full-time equivalent positions. There are a number of relevant issues of importance to this region in the areas of sector development, culture, wellness/recreation and tourism, as follows:

- *Bio-Business Sector Development* – ACOA will provide support toward the establishment of a National Research Council Institute for Nutrisciences and Health. To be located on the campus of the University of Prince Edward Island, this Institute will serve as a cornerstone of a future internationally recognized cluster focussing on the discovery, development and commercialization of high-value bioactive compounds for human and animal health and nutrition, derived from a diversity of renewable bioresources and based on sustainable development concepts. Subsequent initiatives will be undertaken or supported in order to enhance further development of the sector.
- *Culture* – ACOA will provide financial support toward the implementation of a provincial marketing strategy relating to the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the French in North America. In support of this significant historical event, activities and events will take place during 2004 in at least seven communities across Prince Edward Island. The project is important because it will encourage both Francophones and non-Francophones to participate in activities and events that are expected to have a durable impact on the Acadian and Francophone communities on PEI.
- *Wellness/Recreation* – ACOA is the lead federal government department, involved with a number of partners under the Infrastructure Canada Program, in the planning and implementation of the Charlottetown Aquatics & Recreation Centre. At an estimated \$20,000,000, the complex will house swimming pools and ice surfaces as recreational facilities for the general population, as well as an active living centre targeted specifically for seniors.
- *Tourism* – ACOA has provided financial assistance toward a study investigating the development of an historic site in eastern PEI commemorating the first commercial settlement in 1740 by French adventurer and merchant, Jean Pierre Roma. A potential future project is envisaged that could entail bank erosion protection; identifying sensitive areas that contain bogs and rare plants; design a nature and heritage trail; and construction of washroom facilities and a cooking shelter.

ACOA has also undertaken a number of internal greening initiatives, such as:

- the promotion of environmental considerations to staff members;
- the promotion of the use of double-sided printing and copying;
- the servicing of all fleet vehicles on a quarterly basis;
- the sorting of paper, plastics, cans, glass and waste in individual bins; and
- the implementation of a green procurement policy that requires, where possible, that purchased goods are made from recycled materials.

ACOA in New Brunswick

The New Brunswick regional office, located in Fredericton, has a staff of 139 and is supported by five district offices as well as six satellite offices located throughout the province. The region continues to focus both internally and externally on various initiatives to enhance the level of environmental awareness as well incorporate relevant processes in the day to day activities.

From an internal perspective, ACOA's New Brunswick regional office was the first ACOA office to acquire a hybrid vehicle that is powered by both electricity and gasoline. In addition to the energy saving achieved from its use, it has also publicly demonstrated the Agency's commitment to sustainable development. Similarly, the region has undertaken a pilot initiative to improve document administration by developing a client file to maintain all current information at one source. Whereas the existing system, requiring copies of the same information be placed on each of the applicant project files, will no longer be required, considerable paper savings are expected. On another internal structural issue, the New Brunswick office continues with its practice of expanding its satellite office network to have a presence in the local communities as is desired by SMEs. The establishment of satellite offices in Bouctouche, Campbellton and Sussex has had the added sustainable benefit of reducing travel costs for both clients and staff.

ACOA continues to be involved in utilizing its programs in a number of external activities related to sustainable development in various sectors in the province, including:

- *New Brunswick Environmental Industries Association (NBEIA)* – As part of the continued implementation of the recommendations contained in the Industry Canada study on the status of the environmental industry in Atlantic Canada, ACOA has been providing financial assistance to the NBEIA. This initiative has helped the organization to become self sustainable as it has grown to a membership of approximately 170 and has led to positive job creation benefits as the industry expands in the province. It is expected that the organization's growth will continue to lead to increases in sustainable practices as the Association promotes its services and creates awareness. One notable activity that has been recently funded was a national conference entitled "Climate Change and Sustainable Communities: Real Problems, Real Solutions," which focussed on the transfer of scientific knowledge on sustainability to New Brunswick communities.
- *Environmental Audits* – ACOA has successfully completed two environmental audits with volunteer clients who had been identified as having a high potential for financial and environmental benefits from participating in this process. Both companies are now in the implementation phase of modifying their operations to comply with the report's recommendations. After the savings are quantified and formally reported, this initiative will be used as a marketing tool to demonstrate the benefits of adopting sustainable environmental practices and promoting these to other ACOA clients.
- *Lean Manufacturing* – The New Brunswick region has recently undertaken an initiative to support the enhancement of the technical skills of the province's SMEs so they are more efficient and competitive in the international market place. This process, known as "Lean Manufacturing," involves the utilization of an expert consultant to work in partnership with the companies management and staff to improve productivity in relation to production (quantity/quality), inventory control, waste reduction, plant layout/design and so forth. In addition to enhancing the companies' overall viability, it is expected that there will be significant sustainable benefits as SMEs reduce wastage, energy consumption and emissions.
- *Sustainable Development* – ACOA continues its practice of utilizing its programs throughout the province to support various economic development initiatives that foster awareness or directly produce sustainable development benefits. These projects cover a diverse range activities from providing assistance to upgrade basic water and sewer infrastructure, to developing or upgrading technologies or processes that reduce or eliminate emissions, to funding environment related conferences, to alternate energy product production, to creating products from waste, to innovation initiatives that reduce energy usage and so forth.

ACOA has played a key role in funding such non-commercial projects in the province as Aboriginal Heritage Gardens Inc., L'Atelier des Copains Ltée, Le Pays de la Saguine, the Kingsbrae Gardens, and the North Shore Forest Products Marketing Board, demonstrating the Agency's ongoing support for rural sustainable development.

Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (ECBC)

ECBC is a federal Crown corporation with a jurisdictional mandate that includes all of Cape Breton Island and a portion of mainland Nova Scotia in and around the Town of Mulgrave. The Corporation is charged with the responsibility of promoting and assisting the financing and development of industry in the region, providing employment outside the coal-producing sector and broadening the base of the local economy.

In addition to its own programs, ECBC is responsible for the delivery of the economic development programs of ACOA on Cape Breton Island. These programs include the Business Development Program and the Canada/Nova Scotia Infrastructure Works Program. The Vice-President and staff of ECBC are located in the Corporation's head office in Sydney and a satellite office in Port Hawkesbury.



Annex B

Acronyms

ACOA	Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
AIF	Atlantic Innovation Fund
AIP	Atlantic Investment Partnership
BDP	Business Development Program
CBDs	Community Business Development Corporations
CBSCs	Canada Business Service Centres
CEAA	Canada Environmental Assessment Act
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CESD	Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development
EC	Environment Canada
ECBC	Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
IC	Industry Canada
NBEIA	New Brunswick Environmental Industries Association
NSEIA	Nova Scotia Environmental Industries Association
NEIA	Newfoundland and Labrador Environmental Industries Association
NRCan	Natural Resources Canada
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
PWGSC	Public Works and Government Services Canada
REDOs	Regional Economic Development Organizations
SD	Sustainable Development
SDS	Sustainable Development Strategy
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises



Annex C

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