

The *Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA 1999)* and Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Sources of Pollution

Who protects Canada's marine environment?

The protection of the marine environment in Canada is a responsibility shared by all levels of government. Protection is already under way through a number of initiatives, and others are being developed. The CEPA 1999 provisions are intended to complement existing regulatory measures.

What is marine pollution?

The major threats to the health, productivity and biodiversity of the marine environment result from human activities on land - in coastal areas and further inland. About 80% of the pollution load in the oceans originates from land-based activities. This includes municipal, industrial and agricultural wastes and run-off, as well as atmospheric deposition. These contaminants affect the most productive areas of the marine environment, including estuaries and nearshore coastal waters.

The following definitions are included in Part 7, Division 2 of CEPA 1999:

- **"land-based sources"** - these refer to point and diffuse sources on land that release substances or energy to the sea by water, through the air or directly from the coast. They include any sources under the sea bed that come from land by tunnel, pipeline or other means.
- **"marine pollution"** - the substances or energy introduced into the sea by humans, directly or indirectly, that result or may result in:
 - hazards to human health;
 - harm to living resources or marine ecosystems;
 - damage to amenities; or
 - interference with other legitimate uses of the sea.

Further information:

Internet:

Additional information on the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999 is available on Environment Canada's Green Lane on the Internet at: www.ec.gc.ca/CEPARRegistry

Inquiry Centre:

351 St. Joseph Boulevard
Hull, Quebec K1A 0H3
Telephone: (819) 997-2800
toll-free 1 800 668-6767
Fax: (819) 953-2225
E-mail: enviroinfo@ec.gc.ca