



Atlantic Canada
Opportunities
Agency

Agence de
promotion économique
du Canada atlantique

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2007-2010

Moving Forward on Sustainable Development



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Message from the Minister



Atlantic Canada boasts some of the richest and finest natural attributes in the world – energy, minerals and metals, forests, and marine and freshwater resources. Our region’s amazing natural beauty and captivating historical and cultural roots have contributed to fostering a quality of life for Atlantic Canadians that is second-to-none. This Government is committed to ensuring that our natural habitat continues to flourish and that our communities remain strong and dynamic.

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) is committed to building a stronger Atlantic economy, encouraging innovation, improving productivity and competitiveness, and spurring growth in communities throughout our region. The Agency will pursue its broad-based mandate to stimulate economic growth and business opportunities while, at the same time, to maintain a clean environment.

Sustainable development is not something that can be achieved in isolation – it requires the support of all Atlantic Canadians. ACOA works closely with businesses and associations in a variety of economic sectors. These partnerships are crucial in managing our region’s future and in fostering prosperity in Atlantic communities. ACOA is well-positioned to bring awareness of, and promote action on, sustainable development issues and initiatives of the private sector, research institutions and communities throughout Atlantic Canada.

The consultations with stakeholders from around Atlantic Canada, which helped develop ACOA’s strategy, confirm the leadership role the Agency can play in contributing to the improved economic health of our region. The strategy sets realistic goals and objectives that will allow us to work with Atlantic Canadians to promote a more competitive, productive and sustainable economy.

I am confident that ACOA’s policies and programs will support the large number of initiatives that are turning challenges into opportunities. Atlantic Canada’s economy is changing and the Agency will continue to encourage its public and private sector partners, and its employees, to support sustainable development and adopt eco-friendly practices. Together, we can make a genuine difference and achieve real results.

As Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, I am pleased to present the Agency’s Sustainable Development Strategy IV as part of our contribution to the Government of Canada’s commitment to sustainable development.

The Honourable Peter G. MacKay
Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Part I. Introduction

Sustainable businesses and communities in Atlantic Canada are the main focus for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). Since its inception, ACOA has worked to foster economic growth and prosperity in the Atlantic region. Having served the citizens of Atlantic Canada since 1987, the Agency is proud of the work it has done to improve the number of jobs and level of earned incomes, and its contributions to promoting research and development (R&D) in new technology. At ACOA, we recognize there is no easy way to build a vibrant economy in the face of global competition. Nevertheless, our broad-based approach to development has helped create thousands of jobs in Atlantic Canada, and our investments in the region have helped lower the overall unemployment rate. Such results will continue to drive our work in the years to come.

The ultimate aim of development is to improve the quality of human life. People depend on their environment and on economic development to meet their basic needs and to improve their quality of life. Economic growth is an important component of development, and reviving growth through improved productivity is the primary focus of economic policy.

Economic growth also provides the wealth to make investments in protecting the environment, supporting education, science and technology, and in maintaining the health and well-being of Canadians.

A Guide to Green Government - 1995

Sustainability, however, encompasses much more than the economy; it also requires consideration of the environment and society. To that end, ACOA is also involved in community

development through support to Community Business Development Corporations and Regional Economic Development Organizations. The Agency is also jointly responsible for managing infrastructure programs in Atlantic Canada. These programs are designed to renew and build infrastructure in rural and urban municipalities in Atlantic Canada.

Since its first sustainable development strategy, tabled in Parliament in 1997, ACOA has developed a balanced approach to regional development, which considers and responds to social, economic and environmental dimensions. ACOA is well-placed to help Atlantic Canada move toward a prosperous and sustainable future.

Our Vision – Making the Business Case for Sustainable Development

The Government of Canada wants to ensure a prosperous economy and a clean and healthy environment. The Government of Canada wants Canadians to have a safe, secure place to work and live. This means encouraging highly efficient use of energy, water and resources, and efforts that seek to reuse or recycle all that it produces. ACOA's vision for sustainable development in Atlantic Canada is to help develop more competitive, resource-efficient and sustainable businesses and communities in the region. This includes finding ways to minimize the environmental impact of economic development by supporting businesses that practice "smart

growth" – keeping a balance between economic growth and environmental and societal considerations. It also includes supporting sustainable communities through support to programs and services at the local level.



Part II. Agency Profile

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) is a Government of Canada agency that works in partnership with the people of Atlantic Canada to improve the economy of the region through the successful development of businesses and employment opportunities.

ACOA offers a broad range of programs and services designed to build a stronger Atlantic economy. ACOA improves the growth and competitiveness of Atlantic enterprises, helps rural communities to become more economically self-reliant, and influences and co-ordinates national policies and investments that affect economic growth in Atlantic Canada. The Agency's sustainable development strategy is built around this work.

Developing and adopting new products and services that are currently unavailable in the market place will give businesses a competitive advantage critical to capturing market share and maintaining healthy profit margins. ACOA approaches its work in a strategic manner, focusing on: creating economic growth through innovation; improving the financing continuum for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); entrepreneurship and business skills development; trade and investment promotion; community economic development; and investment in the region's infrastructure.

The Agency ensures that a wide variety of business development tools and resources are available to Atlantic entrepreneurs throughout all stages of the business life cycle, from the time they are thinking about setting up a new business, to the time they are planning for growth and expansion.

ACOA strives to ensure SMEs, universities and regional communities in the region become more innovative in the development and adoption of new products, services and technologies. Through its policies and varied funding programs, such as the Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF) and the Business Development Program (BDP), ACOA is working with all stakeholders to improve the level of technology development and adoption within the region.

Strong communities, both rural and urban, are key to economic growth in Canada and the foundation of Atlantic Canada's social and economic fabric. According to the 2001 Census, there are 867 communities in Atlantic Canada, 97% of which have a population of less than 10,000. In addition, 46.1% of the region's population lives in rural areas. While the overall economy of the Atlantic region has fared quite well over the past five years, unemployment, youth out-migration and rural depopulation remain significant challenges for Atlantic Canada. For example, over the past decade, Atlantic Canada's rural population declined by 7.5% and the number of Atlantic Canadians aged 15 to 29 declined by over 20% (representing a loss of over 115,000 young people).

For these reasons, ACOA continues to focus on community economic development initiatives to foster business and economic opportunities for communities within Atlantic Canada. Such activity and programming empower communities to take responsibility for managing their own future.

ACOA's Head Office is located in Moncton, New Brunswick, and the Agency is represented in each Atlantic province with a regional office in the provincial capitals and smaller district and sub-district offices throughout the provinces.

The regional vice-presidents are responsible for the delivery of ACOA's programs and initiatives within their respective regions, in keeping with the mandate of the Agency. The Agency chairs three of the four Regional Federal Councils in Atlantic Canada, which provide an information sharing forum involving heads of federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations. In Cape Breton, ACOA's programs are delivered by Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation.

Our Legislative Mandate

ACOA's mandate is derived from Part 1 of the *Government Organization Act*, Atlantic Canada 1987, R. S., c G-5-7, otherwise known as the *Atlantic Canada Opportunities Act*. Its purpose is to "increase opportunity for economic development in Atlantic Canada and, more particularly, to enhance the growth of earned incomes and employment opportunities in the region."

While ACOA has changed since its inception, its mandate has remained constant. Modifications have been made to its financial support programs for SMEs but its work to increase self-sufficiency and earned incomes in Atlantic Canada is still at the heart of Agency operations. Consistency in ACOA's mandate allows the Agency to enjoy a measure of stability in its programming and permits Agency staff to remain focused on the tasks at hand.

Virtually all of ACOA's developmental work involves collaboration with stakeholders. The Agency works closely with business leaders and associations in a variety of economic sectors. For instance, in tourism, the Agency leads broad-based initiatives with the industry through the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership, Tourism Best Practices Missions,

Our Partners

- **Business Sector**
- **Community-based Economic Development Organizations**
- **Research Institutes**
- **Other Federal Departments**
- **Provincial Governments**
- **Universities**
- **Municipalities**
- **Aboriginal Communities**
- **Educational Institutions**

and the TourismTechnology.com initiative. The Agency also focuses on specific developmental priorities, such as external trade, notably through the work of the Team Canada Atlantic missions.

The Agency plays a leadership role in developing the regional agenda for innovation. For example, ACOA works closely with stakeholders to maximize access to national programs such as the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the National Research Council, the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council, and Genome Canada.

ACOA's Key Programs and Services

The sustainable development strategy outlines objectives and commitments for incorporating sustainable development into departmental policies, programs and operations.

The Business Development Program (BDP) and the Atlantic Investment Partnership (AIP) are currently ACOA's primary program vehicles and make major investments in four key areas: innovation; business climate through trade and investment; human capital through entrepreneurship and business skills development; and community economic development.

The BDP is ACOA's principal program for providing direct financial assistance to Atlantic Canada's small and medium-sized enterprises. It helps them to start, expand or modernize their businesses by offering access to interest-free, unsecured, repayable contributions. Under the innovation element of the BDP, ACOA supports the adoption and development of new products and technology by SMEs in the region. Innovation is recognized as a critical factor in achieving long-term competitiveness and sustainability. The BDP also provides financial contributions to non-commercial organizations that support SMEs. ACOA's Productivity and Business Skills Initiative encourages SMEs to improve their competitiveness through the provision of training for existing personnel, the acquisition of skills by hiring new employees, and the development and implementation of plans for improved production efficiency, product quality or environmental management effectiveness.

Innovation - The Atlantic Innovation Fund (AIF) supports projects and activities that have a strategic importance for the development and commercialization of technology in Atlantic Canada. It focuses on R&D projects in the area of natural and

applied sciences, as well as in social sciences, humanities, arts and culture, where these are explicitly linked to the development of technology-based products, processes or services, or their commercialization.

More specifically, the AIF focuses on areas of strategic regional importance, which offer the most potential for future growth. These include information technology, ocean technologies, aquaculture, bio-technology, health/medical technologies, and environmental technologies. AIF investments also strengthen the region's ability to develop technologies that allow natural resource industries (e.g. oil and gas, agriculture and agri-food, fisheries, forestry and mining) to maintain and increase their competitiveness.

Business Climate - The Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (ATIP) helps companies export through initiatives that include: trade missions to U.S. and Europe; development of export strategies for key industries; trade education and skills development; and export internship for trade graduates. ATIP also works to increase foreign direct investment in the Atlantic region through investment research, promotional activities and investment development partnerships. The Canada/Atlantic Provinces Agreement on International Business Development assists SMEs in Atlantic Canada to explore, enter and succeed in international markets. The partners in this agreement include three federal departments (ACOA, Industry Canada and Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada) and the four Atlantic provincial governments.

Tourism development is important to Atlantic Canada's economy. The Tourism Atlantic branch of ACOA plays a leadership role in growing tourism in the region by bringing

a pan-Atlantic approach to research, marketing and product development. Its initiatives are designed to enhance and extend the tourism-related efforts of the provincial tourism departments and the private sector. The principal pan-Atlantic tourism initiative is the Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership (ACTP), which includes ACOA, Atlantic Canada's four tourism industry associations and the four provincial departments responsible for tourism. The partnership is dedicated to promoting Atlantic Canada as a tourism destination in international markets, including the primary market of the New England States, and secondary markets in the Mid-Atlantic States, Europe and Japan.

Human Capital - The Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development (EBSD) sub-activity aims to provide Atlantic Canadians with the motivation and skills required to successfully start, sustain or grow a business. This is done by increasing awareness and interest in entrepreneurship as a viable career option, enhancing entrepreneurs' business skills needed to establish, maintain and grow their businesses, and by building capacity in the region for individuals to obtain the business skills they need to succeed.

The EBSD activities are funded through two initiatives. One is the Women in Business Initiative, which helps improve the growth and competitiveness of

women-owned businesses and increase their representation in Atlantic Canada's emerging growth sectors. The other has a particular focus on youth – the Young Entrepreneur Development Initiative – and helps raise awareness of entrepreneurship among young Atlantic Canadians by exposing them to the process of starting a business. This initiative also helps young people who are already in business to improve their capacity to succeed and grow.

Communities – The Agency reaches out to communities through the Innovative Communities Fund (ICF), which invests in strategic projects that build the economies of Atlantic Canada's communities. Working in partnership with Atlantic communities and stakeholders, the ICF builds on the strengths of communities and provides the tools needed to identify opportunities available for their sustainable economic growth. The ICF focuses on investments that lead to long-term employment and economic growth in rural communities. Urban initiatives that stimulate



the competitiveness and vitality of rural communities may be considered on a selective basis.

ACOA also reaches out to businesses and communities through Canada Business (formerly the Canada Business Service Centres), the Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs) and the Regional Economic Development Organizations (REDOs). The objective of Canada Business is to improve service to small businesses and start-up entrepreneurs by providing comprehensive information and referrals on government services, programs and compliance requirements for both the federal and provincial levels of government. ACOA is the federal managing partner of Canada Business in Atlantic Canada. The CBDCs comprise an ACOA-funded network of 41 autonomous, not-for-profit organizations, located throughout rural Atlantic Canada, which work with all levels of government and the private sector to assist small businesses through counselling and financial services. The CBDCs also deliver the Seed Capital Program, which provides loans to start, expand or improve a small business, as well as acquire business skills training.

The REDOs include 52 ACOA-funded organizations that work to plan and drive economic development at the local level. These work in partnership with other federal, provincial and municipal governments, economic development organizations and various stakeholders.

Community infrastructure is an essential building block for community development. Investments in infrastructure ensure safe drinking water, effective waste management systems, and key transportation projects that facilitate the safe movement of people and goods. As well, strategic infrastructure that supports community development and economic growth benefits all communities. Community-based infrastructure programs are managed by ACOA in the Atlantic region on behalf of the Government of Canada. Provinces and municipalities manage the individual projects. In most cases, the Government of Canada matches provincial contributions and generally provides up to one-third of the cost of infrastructure projects. Under various funds, Infrastructure Canada provides national co-ordination among delivery partners in the implementation of the projects.

Part III. Assessing Our Progress

As part of updating sustainable development strategies (SDS), the Commissioner for the Environment and Sustainable Development requires that each federal department and agency assess its previous sustainable development strategy to determine: what has been achieved; what has changed; and what needs to be done differently in an 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 what progress has been made.

Highlights from SDS III

ACOA's detailed commitments to sustainable development are reported in the Agency's Report on Plans and Priorities, and performance is measured in its Departmental Performance Report. Both reports can be found on ACOA's website at <http://www.acoa-peca.gc.ca/e/library/parliament.shtml>

Following are highlights from the initiatives and commitments presented in the Agency's SDS III.

Support to Business

ACOA recognizes that both business and the environment benefit from eco-efficiency. In its SDS III, the Agency committed to helping SMEs find ways in which they could

reduce energy costs and material waste. This commitment is supported under the Agency's BDP, its previous Innovation Skills Development Initiative, and the new Productivity and Business Skills Initiative, all of which help businesses improve their productivity. The BDP contributed to projects that promote eco-efficiency and lean manufacturing through awareness sessions and workshops. The Agency also assisted companies in becoming more eco-efficient through changes to production processes and attitudes in day-to-day operations, as well as the purchase of more efficient equipment.

ACOA established a direct portal for clients on the ACOA website. This portal, *ACOA Direct*,

allows existing clients to do business with ACOA electronically via the Government of Canada's secure channel – rated one of the most secure networks in the world. It is part of the Government of Canada's and ACOA's overall plans to deliver programs, services and information via the Internet. It represents a key component in ACOA's vision to improve service delivery to clients, and to Atlantic Canadians in general. Allowing clients to submit claims and to view their profiles, the status of their claims, and repayment schedules online – wherever and whenever they want – reduces paper consumption and mailing costs.

Support to Communities

ACOA's support includes funding to the CBDCs, which work with all levels of government and the private sector to provide counselling and financial services for small businesses; the Agency also supports the work of the REDOs, which assist businesses in their local communities in Atlantic Canada. ACOA engaged the services of a consultant to develop a customized workshop package on eco- and energy efficiency, and deliver it to all of the CBDCs and REDOs in the region. The last of 13 sessions will be completed by the end of March 2007. In addition, ACOA manages the federal portion of the infrastructure programs in Atlantic Canada. Through these programs, ACOA was able to surpass its goal of supporting 175 green infrastructure projects (e.g. clean water and waste management systems).

ACOA has been very active in the energy sector, and provided financial assistance to the Prince Edward Island Wind Test Site and support for the establishment of the Wind Energy Institute of Canada (more details are provided in Annex A). The Agency is also working with provincial colleagues on oil and gas and alternative energy initiatives, such as tidal power, that will reduce the region's dependency on fossil fuels.

Awareness and Capacity Building

Eco-efficiency fact sheets were created under SDS II and are sent to all who apply for ACOA funding. In addition, ACOA, with Environment Canada, provided support for sector-specific workshops to promote eco-efficiency for the National Association of Metal Finishers, and the Wineries and Breweries Associations in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

The Agency's New Brunswick regional office undertook a pilot project to determine the feasibility of integrating pollution prevention and eco-efficiency practices into the management of SME operations. The goal is to improve the productivity and economic sustainability of the businesses involved. This is an ongoing initiative that is expected to be rolled out to the rest of Atlantic Canada.



In collaboration with Environment Canada, Industry Canada and the National Research Council, ACOA held a series of stakeholder meetings to discuss ways to advance environmental technology innovation in Atlantic Canada. Aegis Management Consulting Group was engaged to analyze existing models that would foster greater environmental technology innovation and commercialization in the region. Its report was submitted in August 2005, and ACOA and its stakeholders continue to work on this initiative.

Setting an Example

In an effort to continually reduce paper consumption, ACOA encourages double-sided copying of all documents. The Agency will continue to look for other ways to reduce paper consumption, particularly through communication with staff. The use of electronic documents and announcements and posting items on the ACOA intranet site,

have reduced printing and distribution costs. All external printing suppliers working for ACOA must use paper with a recycled content as well as print with vegetable-based inks.

ACOA's information technology/information management (IT/IM) group was able to leverage technology (Systems Management Server) integrated within the existing IT/IM infrastructure that permits staff to shut down their computers at night without having a major impact on the maintenance schedule. The Agency's intranet site for sustainable development has been updated and work is progressing on making the site a source for tips and information as well as an avenue for staff to access numerous green websites.

The Agency has purchased three additional alternative-fuel vehicles, making a total of 11 hybrid vehicles in the Agency's 25-vehicle fleet. The vehicles have proven to be very popular with staff and are fully utilized.

Evaluation of SDS III

ACOA's Internal Audit Directorate undertook a review of the Agency's sustainable development strategies and prepared a guidance report to help ensure that ACOA's SDS IV would be an effective strategic planning document reflecting the comments and recommendations made by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) and the Greening of Government Operations Initiative. The review focused on accountability and operations. It also provided recommendations on how to integrate sustainable development into the Agency's strategy, planning and operations.

The review looked at four specific areas, which were approved prior to the review by the Agency's SDS Committee:

1. ACOA is clear on the role and fit of its SDS.
2. Goals and objectives are clear, long-term and focused on outcomes.
3. The targets and actions are measurable and clearly linked to goals and objectives.
4. Reporting is complete and balanced.

A common point of interest within each was the upkeep and use of the Environment Management System (EMS). Whereas the EMS was developed as a framework for managing the Agency's environmental agenda (e.g. tracking, evaluating and communicating environmental performance), it became obvious that it should be maintained and used to drive the integration of SD into the Agency's core operations (activities).

The review found that the Agency's SDS needed to be more clearly linked with its planning and reporting cycles to ensure a greater impact on the Agency's strategic outcomes. Among the challenges in making this link, is the fact that the SDS is on a three-year planning cycle, while the Agency is on a one-year planning cycle. In addition, there appears to be a need for an SDS visioning exercise to gather the various SD priorities into one logic model that can provide a lens for the Agency's strategic outcomes.

Some results based on the four areas mentioned above include:

1. Federal departments and agencies are to implement SD within their organizations and the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) is responsible for monitoring SD activities. The audit review noted that strengthened guidelines and a clear vision would make it easier to link SD to the Agency's Program Activity Architecture (PAA). Because SD impacts directly on economic development, it should be more clearly integrated into the Agency's vision. There is also a need for increased senior management involvement in the implementation of SD within the Agency's core activities. Formal integration of SD into the annual planning cycle and the organizational work plans would help ensure that the Agency's SD-related activities meet the CESD's expectations.
2. ACOA's previous strategies did not completely meet the expectations of the CESD. Specifically, the strategies did not establish clear, long-term plans focused on outcomes, goals and objectives, therefore, there is a need for a structured logic model linking ACOA's SD vision to strategic outcomes. It would also be beneficial if the planning and reporting cycles of SD could be co-ordinated with those of the Agency.

3. Management could be more involved in the planning of the Agency's SD objectives and defining performance expectations.
4. According to the EMS manual, responsibility for reporting on SD projects is defined within program delivery. Account managers should report to committee members who, in turn, report to senior management. The enhancement of the Agency's information management system would allow it to accurately capture the data required for monitoring and performance reporting purposes.

By addressing these four specific areas, ACOA would move closer to achieving the goals and objectives set out in the SDS, as recommended by the CESD.

Lessons Learned and Future Direction

In looking back over progress and commitments made since the first strategy was tabled in 1997, some very good initiatives have been completed. In each strategy, however, the challenge has been to establish targets that are quantifiable in the sense of numbers of projects and initiatives. ACOA is a regional economic development agency and must focus on areas that will have the greatest positive effect on businesses and communities in Atlantic Canada. In terms of sustainable development, this focus is promotion, primarily through support to workshops, conferences and information sessions, either to non-profit organizations or in collaboration with larger federal departments. This responds to comments from external and internal consultations that there is a need to make people more aware of sustainable development and of the SD funding programs available to them. The focus also addresses eco-efficiency by encouraging clients to undertake eco-efficiency reviews and by including an eco-efficiency fact sheet with letters sent to acknowledge funding requests.

Increased sustainable development activity in the region is the result of many factors, some of which can be attributed to ACOA's SD activities. The Agency does not control the number or type of applications for funding it receives; therefore, linking funded projects to SD performance measures will not provide an accurate success indicator. ACOA's SDS IV will concentrate on areas it can control such as getting the message out, promoting eco-efficiency and monitoring success through the increase in program activities related to sustainable development.

ACOA has made a concerted effort to partner on many projects in the region, particularly with respect to promotion and enhancing awareness of sustainable development and funding available from national programs. This has proven to be very successful and the Agency will seek other opportunities to capitalize on the federal presence in Atlantic Canada, in order to promote the region's natural and innovation resources that contribute to the federal government's environmental sustainability objectives.

The planning cycle for SDS IV and future strategies will be changed to fiscal years to match the regular cycle of ACOA planning and program activities.

In summary, ACOA's SDS IV responds to feedback from both external and internal consultations to promote the use of innovative eco-efficiency tools, practices and technologies and to inform both the private sector and communities of the benefits of sustainable development. It will also respond to the expectations of the CESD, as outlined in *Sustainable Development Strategies: Making a Difference*, March 2003, which focuses almost exclusively on improving the strategies to make them more effective planning documents, with strong results-based performance measurement frameworks. ACOA has recognized the need to clarify its SD vision for Atlantic Canada and to use that as the beacon to direct SD initiatives in the future.

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 people, and departmental stakeholders. A critical element to preparing an SDS is capturing information from stakeholders who have an interest in seeing the federal government realize its sustainable development goals.

Highlights of External Consultations

Recognizing the value of consultation and co-operation, ACOA invited four other federal departments to participate in joint consultations in May 2006 in preparation for their next sustainable development strategies. The consultations afforded an excellent opportunity to gather valuable information and insights about issues and challenges facing Atlantic Canada. They also led to a greater understanding of the different perspectives throughout the region. Six key issues emerged from the consultations.

The results of these consultations would suggest that participants now have a better understanding of what constitutes a sustainable community than they did during the consultations conducted in 2003. They also have a more positive perception of the region than they did during SDS III consultations in 2003. Areas of concern are similar to those expressed in the SDS III consultations – education, skills development, and recruitment and retention of

- 1. Education, Skills, Training**
- 2. Infrastructure**
- 3. Energy**
- 4. Sustainable Development Leadership**
- 5. Innovation, Competitiveness and Productivity**
- 6. Protection of Eco-systems**

skilled labour, as well as infrastructure, research and development, and government interaction and partnerships. However, participants believe that Atlantic Canada has moved forward on a number of key issues since the last consultations. They emphasized that it is important to promote the positive attributes of Atlantic Canada (e.g. its rugged natural beauty, the reasonable cost of living compared to major centres, the coastline and friendly population).

One major concern of participants in all sessions is the out-migration of the region's

skilled workforce to other areas of Canada. Another concern is the population shift from rural to urban areas within Atlantic Canada. This issue is not unique to Atlantic Canada as statistics show a global shift from rural to urban centres. In fact, many areas are struggling to keep their skilled labour, especially young workers who seek better career opportunities and access to a greater number of local amenities.

Participants in all sessions agreed that there was a general lack of awareness and education about sustainable development and its impact on the economy, society and the environment. They also stated that greater importance must be placed on promoting the option of technical, industrial and trades programs earlier in the public education system, perhaps through career days. This would provide youth with a better understanding of career options available, thereby identifying diverse skills required for responding to existing and future labour needs. All participants agreed there is a need for communities and businesses to promote sustainable actions and attitudes, and to truly integrate SD practices into everyday work and personal life.

Infrastructure was another major concern for the majority of participants, who stated that improved infrastructure was essential to building sustainable businesses and communities, and to promoting an innovative economy. The introduction of community-based infrastructure programs was cited as having helped many communities improve their infrastructure, but much remains to be done.

Energy was discussed in all sessions. Participants pointed to the need to educate the population about energy conservation as a means to decrease energy demand. They stated that the region should invest in more alternate energy sources, in order to reduce dependence on the import of fossil fuels.

All participants felt that the region faces challenges in competing in the global marketplace, but that there are opportunities to capture some distinct niche markets opening up in the environment sector.

The dependence on fossil fuels for energy needs was raised by all participants as a major concern.

The key issues were:

- **Concern about energy price, supply and security (current level of import and export)**
- **Insufficient government research and development support in renewable energy**
- **Lack of incentives for alternative energy (wind, tidal, bio-mass, geothermal, hydrogen)**

External SDS consultations, May 2006

Sustainable businesses and communities cannot survive without an innovative economy and a means to attract and/or retain skilled workers. When it came to identifying a lead in the areas identified, the participants saw governments as the obvious leaders in setting a climate for business opportunities, developing policies to drive sustainable development, and providing appropriate funding to businesses and communities. Communities must be the leaders in driving their respective economies and attracting business opportunities. Non-government organizations, the change agents, need more support. The private sector needs to take the lead in providing career opportunities for young workers, and the private sector and universities must work together to move research toward commercialization.

Government interaction and partnerships were identified in all consultations as priorities for both sustainable communities and innovative economies. Participants identified leadership as being a critical element, and said that all levels of government should work together to ensure “real” sustainable development in Atlantic Canada. We need to work together as a region, not as disparate parties, split across bureaucratic levels and geographic jurisdictions.

There was an overwhelming agreement that co-ordination of effort and leadership are crucial to sustainable development in Atlantic Canada; all levels of government must work together to help reinforce sustainable businesses and communities in the region. The SDS IV external consultations report, including a list of participants, can be found on ACOA’s website at www.acoa-apec.ca

Highlights of Internal Consultations

The next step in preparing SDS IV involved consulting with ACOA’s staff on how the Agency could address those SD issues that fit within its mandate – taking into consideration the priorities and related concerns raised by Atlantic Canadian stakeholders at the external consultations. All employees were invited to participate in a two-part session, comprising an information session on sustainable development and group consultations. Each group was asked to address a series of questions regarding sustainable development and ACOA’s related responsibilities.

The general consensus among staff was that ACOA should play a lead role in promoting sustainable development in the region, ensuring that national SD funding programs are well known by both staff and clients. ACOA’s web portal, *ACOA Direct*, was seen as an excellent tool for reducing the red tape clients often encounter when dealing with government, as well for reducing the amount of paper copies required.

Staff were anxious to try more internal initiatives in order to maintain the momentum created by the consultation process. The ideas offered included: arranging competitions between sections and regions to determine which can realize a greater reduction in paper

consumption, and finding alternative transportation methods to commute to and from the office. All participants recommended that internal SD committees be re-established to keep employees focused on sustainable development.

Staff in all sessions agreed that getting the message out to clients and stakeholders in Atlantic Canada will be key in advancing sustainable development in this region. Participants also noted the advances already being made in energy, notably: the Newfoundland and Labrador Comprehensive Energy Plan, Prince Edward Island’s commitment to use a combination of wind and hydrogen to power the province, and the joint initiative between New Brunswick and Nova Scotia on tidal power generation.

The final task in the consultation process involved a series of interviews undertaken with senior ACOA officials. The interviews included several questions pertaining to ACOA’s vision, its role in promoting sustainable development, and ways to provide effective training and awareness to ACOA staff. Recommendations from these officials helped to clarify the Agency’s vision and point to areas of focus in staff training.

Part V. Issue Scan

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

Assessing ACOA's Activities in Terms of Their Impact on Sustainable Development

A principal focus of an SD issue scan is to identify opportunities for, and challenges to, the advancement of sustainable development. ACOA impacts sustainable development through: policies and programs that inform and fund private sector businesses; support for research and development that leads to commercialization of new technology; support to communities through infrastructure program funding; and the efficiency of its internal operations.

The economy of Atlantic Canada is changing. Traditional resource sectors like tourism and forestry are modernizing, new sectors are growing rapidly, and the potential of offshore oil and gas production has already begun to have a positive impact on the Atlantic economy. While this is good news, Atlantic Canada still faces skills, innovation and productivity gaps. Total business research and

development expenditures in Atlantic Canada are relatively low compared with other regions in Canada, and overall productivity levels are below national averages. ACOA is working to close these gaps by supporting projects under its Atlantic Innovation Fund, and through its considerable network and partnerships. ACOA and its economic development partners support a large number of initiatives that are turning challenges into opportunities. Atlantic Canada has natural assets (e.g. renewable energy sources like wind and ocean) as well as environmental technology innovations in universities and companies, which can contribute to the attainment of the federal government's environmental objectives.

ACOA's internal operations have a relatively minor effect on the environment, however, the Agency is committed to do its utmost to reduce its impact on the environment. For

example, with a fleet of only 25 vehicles, ACOA does not have a major impact on greenhouse gas emissions, but it plans to increase the number of alternate-fuel vehicles from 44% (11 vehicles) to 100% as the gasoline-fueled vehicles become eligible for replacement.

The main impact of ACOA's operations on the environment is paper consumption. The Agency has committed to using double-sided documents and reducing the number of copies printed. It has also been successful in promoting online client applications and claims, thereby reducing the need to print paper copies. ACOA can be an example to

applicants, recipients and the region's business community by adopting 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. ACOA is also committed to following the federal government's requirements for green procurement. ACOA will continue to encourage its employees to contribute toward achieving the commitments identified in this SDS and to supporting sustainable development in general.

Issues Affecting Sustainable Development in Atlantic Canada

ACOA's activities take place in the context of the broader concerns and issues of Atlantic Canada. In some areas, ACOA can play an active role, in other areas, matters are the jurisdiction of other governments or federal departments and form the setting in which ACOA operates.

Economic Pressures

Atlantic Canada's economy is generating sustained economic growth, however, economic performance throughout the region has been uneven. Urban areas have registered strong economic activity, while rural areas and their dominant sectors have experienced weaker economic conditions. A major social concern for rural communities has been economic disruption due to plant shut-downs in resource-based industries. While some rural areas have been able to seize new business opportunities, others have not. In many cases, out-migration, especially of younger individuals, has compromised the ability of communities to provide the range of services necessary for sustainable communities.

Despite overall economic progress, the region's economy continues to face difficult adjustments in the major resource sectors, in particular, agriculture, pulp and paper, aquaculture and the fisheries. Atlantic Canadian businesses must continue to adjust to the increased value of the Canadian dollar. The Atlantic economy faces the challenges of intensifying global competition and an aging population, coupled with a shortage of skilled labour and increasing energy and resource costs.

On the innovation front, the region continues to lag in advanced technology adoption, private sector research and development (R&D), commercialization, and institutional/business collaboration on R&D. In terms of human capital, the region is underperforming in areas of workplace training, advanced technical skills and business management skills.

Environmental Pressures

With respect to the environment, chemicals and waste from industry and communities were released untreated in past years, due to inadequate infrastructure and/or regulations. Even so, Atlantic Canada has a relatively clean environment. Many urban and rural areas have invested in green infrastructure, which, in turn, has benefited the local citizens and the environment. It has also helped to attract business to the region. Soil erosion, due to intensive cultivation, land use and the forces of nature, remain concerns in parts of Atlantic Canada. Sediments that are carried off agricultural land by water or wind can silt up drainage ditches and severely alter aquatic habitats. Nutrients and pesticides that are transported with the eroded soil reduce the water quality of ponds, streams, rivers and lakes; often their altered ecology makes them unsuitable for recreation or even as a source of irrigation water. In coastal areas, such contaminants may also adversely affect shell fisheries. The effects of global warming have precipitated an increased number and intensity of storms along the coastline, which have caused damage to coastal areas.

The handling and remediation of water pollution (e.g. untreated sewage, groundwater contamination), resource depletion and land degradation (e.g. soil erosion, toxic spills) are directly linked to the present and long-term social and economic well-being of the region.

Social Pressures

Many areas of Atlantic Canada face social challenges in sustaining communities and maintaining the well-being of residents. The out-migration of skilled labour, aging infrastructure and limited employment opportunities, make it difficult for communities, especially in rural areas, to survive. Not only have skilled workers moved from Atlantic Canada, but people are moving from rural areas to urban areas within their respective provinces. This out-migration has another negative effect on rural communities – the reduction of the tax base available to upgrade local infrastructure.

Access to high-speed Internet has helped some communities and businesses to create employment opportunities, but it is not yet available throughout the entire region.

The removal of rail lines connecting smaller centres with urban areas has caused transportation problems for some rural communities, making it difficult to transport goods and people. Commuting to urban centres is hampered by the condition of secondary roads. Upgraded transportation corridors connect the urban areas across the region, but many of these secondary roads are in need of repair.

Part VI. Logic Model – Inputs, Outputs, Outcomes

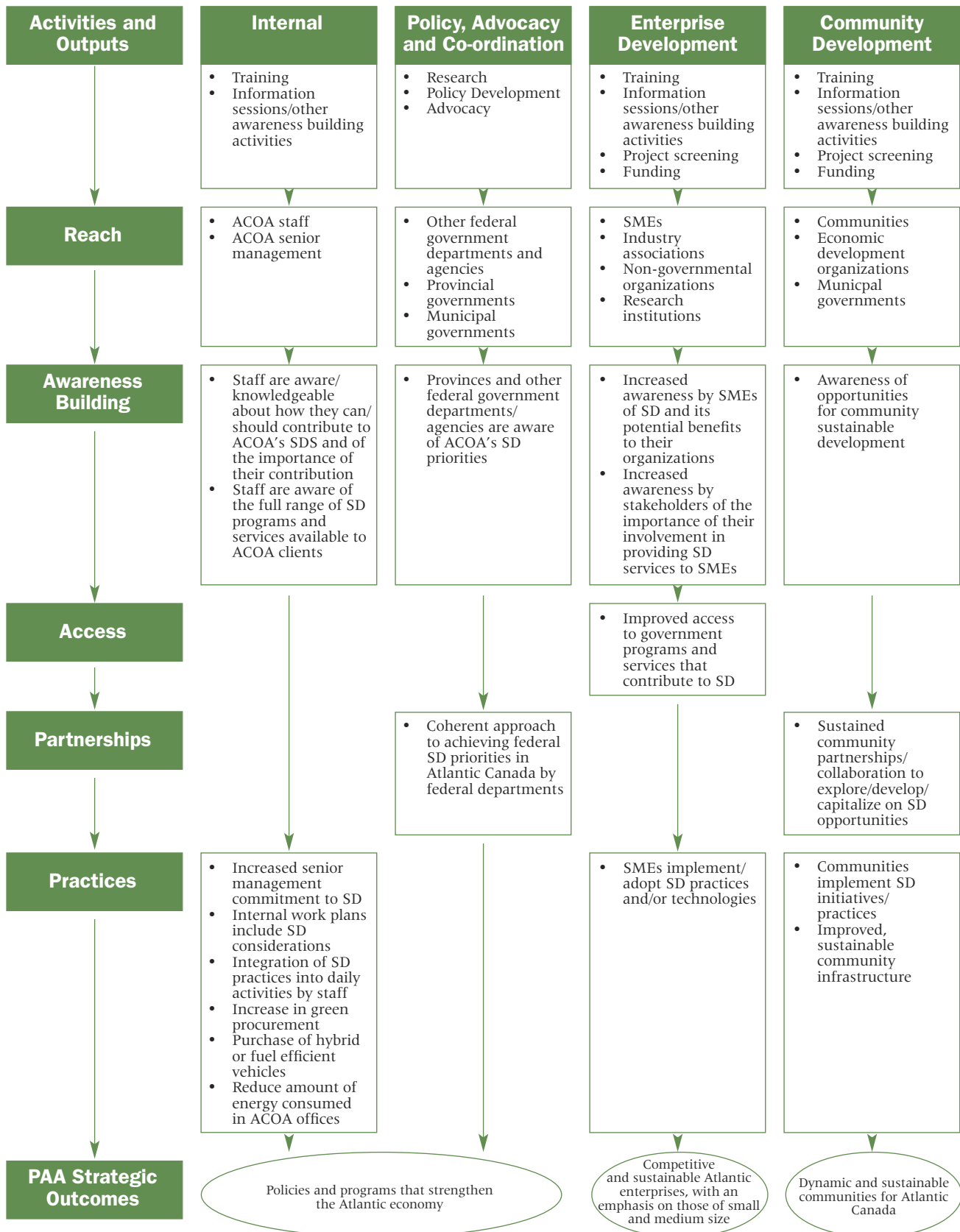
Logic Model

The targets, actions and performance measures in ACOA's SDS IV set the general direction for what the Agency wants to achieve in the context of this three-year strategy. Using material resources much more efficiently will help to preserve valuable natural resources, as well as reduce waste and pollution. Energy efficiency is an important element in conserving natural resources. ACOA will concentrate on communicating this message to SMEs and communities throughout the region. ACOA will promote SD in the region through support to workshops, conferences and information/training sessions, in collaboration with its network of partners and stakeholders.

In getting the message out, ACOA will make a meaningful contribution to sustainable development in the Atlantic region. Comments from both external and internal consultations point to a need to make Atlantic Canadians aware of the benefits of sustainable development and how to help make the region a model of sustainability.

The following logic model presents the targets and outcomes that will enable ACOA to make this contribution over the coming years.

ACOA Sustainable Development Strategy Logic Model



ACOA SDS IV

Summary of Outcomes, Outputs, Targets and Indicators

Priority 1. Support to Businesses

Outcomes	Targets	Outputs	Indicators
1.1 Increased awareness by SMEs of SD and its potential benefits to their organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 information/awareness sessions 120 SMEs attend sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver sessions in partnership with OGDs and NGOs Share best SD practices/findings through sessions Fund SD reviews/audits of SMEs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of sessions given # of SMEs attending sessions # of SMEs receiving SD reviews/audits
1.2 Increased awareness by stakeholders of the importance of their involvement in providing SD services to SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four information sessions to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver information/awareness sessions Stakeholders promote SD practices to their clients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of information sessions with stakeholders
1.3 Improved access to SD government programs and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three information sessions to SMEs and SME service providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with OGDs to deliver information sessions on national SD-related programs available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of information sessions # of federal partners who participate in sessions
1.4 SMEs implement/adopt SD practices and/or technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% of SMEs attending one of the 12 information/awareness sessions undertake SD initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACOA staff to work with these SMEs to implement SD practices/initiatives Fund projects to undertake SD initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of SMEs (ACOA clients) undertaking sustainable development practices in their operations # of SMEs adopting/developing new technologies

Priority 2. Support to Communities

Outcomes	Targets	Outputs	Indicators
2.1 Awareness of opportunities for community sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sessions for community development partners in Atlantic Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a series of information sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of information sessions
2.2 Improved, sustainable community infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 175 “green” infrastructure projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinate the delivery of the infrastructure programs in Atlantic Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of green infrastructure projects
2.3 Sustained community partnerships/collaboration to explore/develop/capitalize on SD opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborations in community development planning and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACOA staff to work with community stakeholders on collaborations in community development planning and implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of collaborations in community development planning and implementation \$ levered on community development projects/investments

Priority 3. Awareness and Capacity Building

Outcomes	Targets	Outputs	Indicators
3.1 Provinces and other federal government departments/agencies are aware of ACOA's vision for SD in Atlantic Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four presentations to Regional Federal Councils Three ACOA SDS presentations included in information sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver presentations to Regional Federal Councils Provide ACOA SDS information to provincial partners and stakeholders in Atlantic Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of presentations delivered/ documents provided or presented
3.2 Coherent approach to achieving federal SD priorities by federal departments in Atlantic Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SD sub-committee of Regional Federal Councils established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the establishment of an SD sub-committee of Regional Federal Councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of partnerships established through sub-committees

Priority 4. Setting an Example

Outcomes	Targets	Outputs	Indicators
4.1 Staff are aware/knowledgeable of how they can/should contribute to ACOA's SDS and the importance of their contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff attend at least one workshop/training session on SD Communications plan to promote SD awareness to staff Increased traffic on ACOA SD intranet site 50 incremental SD practices integrated into individual's daily activities (e.g. recycling, composting, walking to work) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deliver workshops and training sessions for all staff Develop a communications plan to promote SD awareness Provide SD information and tips on ACOA's SD intranet site Establish regional and Head Office SD committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of workshops/training sessions offered Communications plan established # of SD communication products developed and distributed # of visits to ACOA's SD intranet site # of incremental SD practices # of SD committees established
4.2 Staff are aware of the SD programs and services available to ACOA clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five information sessions with invited speakers from OGDs to discuss their programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate information sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of information sessions held # of staff attending sessions
4.3 Increased senior management commitment to SD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate SD into annual planning cycle Agency program activity work plans include SD considerations All Program Activity work plans to have SD activities (Corporate Services, PAC, ED, and CED) Agency budget established for SD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include SD in the President's call letter to commence the annual planning cycle Include SD activities in Program Activity work plans Establish an Agency SD budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The corporate work plan and all regional work plans contain SD activities Human and financial resources allocated to SD
4.4 Emphasize green procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of printer toner cartridges purchased be remanufactured/ recycled All procurement staff to have access to list of available green products All new equipment purchased be energy efficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test products to determine satisfactory product Conduct trial period for use at Head Office Enforce mandatory use of remanufactured toner cartridges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of remanufactured cartridges purchased # of existing supplies replaced by green products # of energy efficient equipment purchased

Priority 4. Setting an Example (cont...)

Outcomes	Targets	Outputs	Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an identification method through financial system to capture the purchase of green products • Establish inventory of items currently being purchased • Look for more eco-friendly products to substitute • Provide inventory list, including eco-friendly alternatives, to all procurement staff 	
4.5 Purchase of hybrid or fuel efficient vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of Agency fleet vehicles to be alternative fuel vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All replacement or new vehicles to be alternative fuel vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of hybrid and energy efficient vehicles of total fleet
4.6 Reduce amount of energy consumed in offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% reduction in energy consumption • All new ACOA equipment to be energy efficient • Five energy audits completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate energy consumption of all ACOA equipment • Conduct energy audit of ACOA Head Office and regional offices • Purchase energy efficient equipment when replacing existing equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of landlords with whom negotiations have been initiated • # and types of energy reduction measures implemented

Link Between Federal Goals and ACOA's SDS IV

For the fourth round of Sustainable Development Strategies, the federal government has worked to develop a set of six sustainable development goals related to Clean Air, Clean Water, Reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Sustainable Development and Use of Natural Resources, Sustainable Communities, and Governance for Sustainable Development. These goals integrate and complement the objectives set earlier this year as part of Greening Government Operations. By identifying how departmental activities support broader federal goals and objectives with respect to sustainable development, Canadians will gain a clearer picture of how the federal government works, in an ongoing way, to ensure improvements in our quality of life. This improved co-ordination will strengthen accountability, drive government-wide performance, and focus on and stimulate activity in some key areas.

ACOA has identified a number of activities and commitments related to the delivery of its mandate that support progress toward achieving the federal sustainable development goals. These are identified with a common element in ACOA's sustainable development strategy. More information on the federal sustainable development goals and work to green government operations is available at www.sdinfo.gc.ca

Link between federal goals and ACOA's SDS	
Federal Goals/Objectives/Outcomes	ACOA's SDS
Goal 1: Water – Clean and secure water for people, marine and freshwater ecosystems	
<i>Objective 1.1: People have access to clean water</i>	
1.1.1 Water pollution is reduced	2.2 - Infrastructure funding (water treatment plants)
1.1.2 Drinking water quality and wastewater management are improved	2.2 - Infrastructure funding (sewage infrastructure)
<i>Objective 1.2: People use water efficiently</i>	
1.2.1 Water efficiency and sustainable water use are improved	1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding – productivity improvements
<i>Objective 1.3: Conserve and protect aquatic ecosystems (marine and freshwater) and biodiversity</i>	
1.3.1 Marine and freshwater resources are protected and continue to support ecosystems and biodiversity	1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding
1.3.2 Knowledge of water resources is increased	1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding 1.1-4 - Awareness building activities (see Awareness Building outcomes in logic model)

Federal Goals/Objectives/Outcomes	ACOA's SDS
Goal 2: Clean Air – Clean air for people to breathe and ecosystems to function well	
<i>Objective 2.1: Reduce the risks to human health and well-being caused by air quality</i>	
2.1.1 Emissions of and exposure to harmful indoor and outdoor air contaminants are reduced	4.5 - Purchases of hybrid and fuel efficient vehicles (internal) 1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding – productivity improvements
<i>Objective 2.2: Canada's clean air solutions support long-term competitiveness</i>	
2.2.1 Clean air solutions are supported and promoted (including market mechanisms and the development of environmental technologies)	1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding
<i>Objective 2.3: Reduce the environmental impacts of air pollution on ecosystems, natural and built heritage</i>	
2.3.1 Threats to ecosystems, natural and built heritage from the effects of air pollution are reduced and mitigated	1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding (CEAA)
Goal 3: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions	
<i>Objective 3.1: Increase resilience to a changing climate</i>	
3.1.1 Impacts of climate change are understood and vulnerability is reduced	Not directly applicable to ACOA
3.1.2 Canada adapts to a changing climate	Not directly applicable to ACOA
<i>Objective 3.2: Develop and deploy longer term solutions to address climate change</i>	
3.2.1 Support for clean technologies is provided	1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding – R&D support 3.1-2 - Awareness building activities (see Awareness Building outcomes in logic model)
3.2.2 Renewable and clean energy is promoted	3.1-2 - Awareness building activities (see Awareness Building outcomes in logic model)
<i>Objective 3.3: Mitigate and reduce emissions that contribute to climate change</i>	
3.3.1 Emissions are reduced	4.5 - Purchases of hybrid and fuel efficient vehicles (internal) 1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding – productivity improvements
Goal 4: Sustainable Communities – Communities enjoy a prosperous economy, a vibrant and equitable society, and a healthy environment for current and future generations	
<i>Objective 4.1: Maintain and foster social well-being within communities</i>	
4.1.1 Communities are well-positioned to advance sustainable social development	2.1-3 - All community development outcomes
<i>Objective 4.2: Encourage vibrant, competitive local economies</i>	
4.2.1 Communities are well-positioned to adapt and to maintain or generate sustainable economic activities	1.2-3 - All community development outcomes

Federal Goals/Objectives/Outcomes	ACOA's SDS
<i>Objective 4.3: Promote a high level of environment quality in community</i>	
4.3.1 Canadian communities are actively engaged in sound environmental and natural resource management practices, stewardship initiatives, and biodiversity conservation	2.1-3 - All community development outcomes
4.3.2 Risks to human and ecosystem health from harmful substances are reduced	2.2 - Infrastructure funding
Goal 5: Sustainable development and use of natural resources	
<i>Objective 5.1: Reduce adverse effects on ecosystem and public health from the use of resources</i>	
5.1.1 Integration of knowledge about health and environmental effects into decisions is increased	3.1-2 - Indirectly through awareness building activities
<i>Objective 5.2: Maintain and strengthen the competitiveness of the Canadian economy through the sustainable development and use of natural resources</i>	
5.2.1 Sustainable consumption and protection of natural resources is promoted	4.1 - Through internal activities and outcomes (see change in internal practices in logic model) 1.1-4 - Eco-efficiency awareness building activities 1.1-4 - Reactive through specific project funding
<i>Objective 5.3: Encourage responsible use of natural resources that conserves and protects environmental quality</i>	
5.3.1 Environmentally sustainable use of natural resource is promoted	4.1-5 - Through internal activities and outcomes 1.1-4 - Through Enterprise Development activities and outcomes 2.1-3 - Through Community Development activities and outcomes
Goal 6: Strengthen federal governance and decision-making to support sustainable development	
<i>Objective 6.1: Organizational structures and processes support meaningful and significant sustainable development objectives</i>	
6.1.1 SDS commitments are integrated into the key planning and reporting processes of departments and agencies	4.3 - Internal plans include SD considerations
6.1.2 Clear and effective governance mechanisms to integrate sustainable development in decision-making e.g. SEA	4.3 - Senior management commitment to SD

Annex A - Regional Success Stories

Atlantic Canada is proud of the many successful entrepreneurs who have launched businesses in the environment sector and the many excellent initiatives that support SD in the region. Following is a snapshot of some of the very best.

Nova Scotia

Dalhousie University Burnside Eco-efficiency Centre's Business Assistance Program

is an initiative to encourage eco-efficiency and pollution prevention among various industry operators in Nova Scotia. The funding program is available to eligible small and medium-sized enterprises to assist them in identifying cost-effective opportunities for improving their environmental performance and their bottom line. The program has several components to help companies identify opportunities and assess their viability.

1. Eco-Efficiency Review – the staff of the Eco-Efficiency Centre provide a review of business premises free of charge to help owners and operators gain an understanding of how eco-efficiency and pollution prevention may benefit their businesses.
2. Eco-Efficiency Opportunity Assessment – a qualified consultant, chosen by the company, will undertake a thorough assessment and prepare a report. This exercise includes an overview of the operations, identification of eco-efficiency and pollution prevention opportunities, and an explanation of implementation. The report provides an estimate of potential savings possible from implementing various pollution prevention opportunities.
3. Eco-Efficiency Implementation Assessment – a consultant will prepare a comprehensive implementation plan that includes a detailed assessment of selected options and their technical, environmental and financial impacts and benefits. This report provides the company with a detailed action plan, including a cost-benefit analysis, projected savings, capital cost considerations, and overall pros and cons of eco-efficiency activities. The in-depth assessment may include reviews of energy, water and material usage, capital equipment, process operations, management practices, opportunities for improved public image, and environmental policy and plans for spill prevention and toxic material use.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Blue Line Innovations – At a time when energy conservation is becoming increasingly important, companies such as Blue Line Innovations, of St. John's, are making powerful contributions. The firm has developed a PowerCost Monitor™ that augments an analog electricity meter and provides real-time feedback of energy consumption to a wireless digital display meter inside the home. The company is developing and marketing the product to utility providers as a demand side management tool. Website: www.bluelineinnovations.com

Johnson GEO CENTRE – ACOA joined other public and private partners to support the construction of the Johnson GEO CENTRE. Located on historic Signal Hill in St. John's, the GEO CENTRE actually extends well beneath the surface, with most of its 3,100 square meters of floor space situated underground. The GEO CENTRE is a natural and cultural museum featuring

state-of-the-art interactive exhibits that interpret the 4-billion-year-old geological history of Newfoundland and Labrador. Website: www.geocentre.ca

Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism (GMIST) – GMIST is a centre of excellence for sustainable nature-based tourism. The program is delivered in Gros Morne National Park area using a variety of public and private facilities. It includes marketing and curriculum development and delivery for three tourism industry programs: adventure tourism training and business development, sustainable tourism techniques and practices, and natural/cultural experience-based tourism.

The target audiences for the centre and its programs are tourism operators, travel industry suppliers, travel industry associations, tourism education program suppliers, traditional nature-based experience facilitators, non-traditional tourism experience facilitators, natural resource attraction agencies, economic development agencies, related public sector program officers, and related public and private sector stakeholders.

East Coast Trail – The East Coast Trail Association Inc. is a 625-member non-profit group incorporated in 1995. Its purpose is to undertake and promote the ongoing development and maintenance of an international-caliber hiking trail on the Avalon Peninsula. Through a large-scale volunteer effort and corporate contributions from as far away as Vancouver, a major portion (220 kms) of the trail has been completed and is now open. The association has generated significant international interest in Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, U.S. and throughout Canada. In 1997, it was the recipient of the Canadian Heritage/Hospitality Newfoundland Sustainable Tourism Award; it has also achieved national recognition as a Tourism Attraction (Attractions Canada) and received acclaim of international media.

The trail has provided opportunities for traditional fishing communities to expand into the tourism sector. Funding for the project has come from a variety of sources and has been supplemented by an estimated 40,000 hours of volunteer labour as well as direct and in-kind contributions from its membership. Website: www.eastcoasttrail.com

Prince Edward Island

Wind Energy Institute of Canada (WEICan) – Evolving from the Atlantic Wind Test Site (AWTS) established in 1980 as Canada’s National Wind Energy Laboratory, the Wind Energy Institute of Canada will become the cornerstone of Canada’s wind energy research and development program. The mission of WEICan is to support the development of safe, reliable, efficient, sustainable and affordable wind power generation in Canada, as well as the development of wind energy-related products and services for Canadian and export markets. Located at North Cape, the northernmost tip of Prince Edward Island, with 300 degrees of exposure to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, WEICan offers one of the harshest environments available for the testing of wind technology. It will focus on five key areas of work: testing, research, innovation, industry training and public education, and technical consultation and assistance. The 7,860 square-foot facility takes into account the look and design of nearby structures and is located alongside the entrance to the existing administration building at the AWTS, just off the parking lot of the North Cape Interpretive Centre.

New Brunswick

Sustainable Business Initiative – A pilot project entitled the Sustainable Business Initiative (SBI) is currently being developed in collaboration with Natural Resources Canada's Office of Energy Efficiency and Environment Canada. The SBI is aimed at improving the economic and environmental sustainability of SMEs in New Brunswick, through the integration of cleaner technologies and practices. Through this initiative, the Agency will encourage New Brunswick SMEs to permanently integrate pollution prevention and eco-efficiency practices into the management of their operations, by identifying how such practices will improve productivity, economic sustainability and overall competitiveness. This initiative should increase awareness within SMEs of the benefits of adopting SD practices and will lead to a reduction in their operating costs and waste.

Energy Saving Opportunities Study With CME – ACOA and Natural Resources Canada are supporting a study, initiated by Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters' Association (CME), to estimate the economic and achievable energy management potential of the region's industrial and manufacturing sectors, and to establish a basis for realizing productivity improvement and green house gas reduction.

Lean Manufacturing – ACOA's New Brunswick region has completed an initiative to support the enhancement of technical skills among the province's SMEs, to ensure they are more efficient and competitive in the international marketplace. This process, known as lean manufacturing, involved the engagement of an expert consultant to work in partnership with the management and staff of participating SMEs to improve productivity in relation to production (quantity/quality), inventory control, waste reduction, plant layout/design and so forth. More than 70 projects have been completed across the province and these companies have experienced improved viability and competitiveness. Corresponding gains for participating SMEs include significant sustainable benefits, such as reductions in waste, energy, energy consumption and emissions.

Sustainable Development – ACOA continues to utilize its programs throughout New Brunswick to support various economic development initiatives that foster awareness or directly produce sustainable development benefits. These projects cover a diverse range of activities and highlight the Agency's ongoing support for sustainable development in rural communities. ACOA has played a key role in funding such non-commercial projects as:

- L'Atelier des Copains Ltée, which provides training and job support for mentally and physically challenged individuals through a paper, plastic and glass recycling program;
- the North Shore Forest Products Marketing Board, which assists communities in northern New Brunswick with sustainable management of forest industries by increasing the availability and quality of healthy seedlings;
- the River Trails Network, enhancing tourism infrastructure while conserving and protecting the waterfront in communities along the lower St. John River; and
- the Really Local Horticultural Cooperative Ltd., which markets and sells products under the Eco-Logik label, for which growers must meet environmentally responsible standards that protect soil, waterways and respect biodiversity.

Atlantic Hydrogen Ltd. – Although hydrogen is widely viewed as a fuel of the future, researchers are still many years away from using pure hydrogen for power generation. Until that time, Atlantic Hydrogen’s CarbonSaver™ technology can help bridge the gap to cleaner energy by improving the clean qualities of natural gas. With help from ACOA, the company has partnered with university researchers to develop this innovative technology. By enriching natural gas with hydrogen, the company has effectively demonstrated that it can reduce pollutants and greenhouse gases – some by as much as 50%. The technology has immediate commercial application for vehicles powered by natural gas as well as back-up power generators that run on natural gas. Website: www.atlantichydrogen.com

Maritime Geothermal Ltd. – With energy costs continually increasing, demand for renewable energy resources is stronger than ever. For more than 20 years, Maritime Geothermal has been developing and refining its line of geothermal heating and cooling systems. Using pumps, these geothermal systems draw heat from the earth, concentrate it and pump it through residential or commercial heating systems. The results are dramatic, typically generating enough savings to recover the costs of the system within four to six years. With help from ACOA, the company now manufactures and sells more than 62 models under the brand name NORDIC. With energy costs and environmental awareness on the rise, the company sees no end to its growth potential. Website: www.nordicghp.com

Annex B - Acronyms

ACOA	Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
ACTP	Atlantic Canada Tourism Partnership
AIF	Atlantic Innovation Fund
AIP	Atlantic Investment Partnership
AWTS	Atlantic Wind Test Site
BDP	Business Development Program
CBDC	Community Business Development Corporation
CEAA	Canadian Environmental Assessment Act
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CESD	Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development
CME	Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Association
EBSD	Entrepreneurship and Business Skills Development
EC	Environment Canada
EMS	Environmental Management System
GMIST	Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism
IC	Industry Canada
ICF	Innovative Communities Fund
IT/IM	Information Technology/Information Management
NRCan	Natural Resources Canada
NSEIA	Nova Scotia Environmental Industries Association
OAG	Office of the Auditor General
PAA	Program Activity Architecture
PWGSC	Public Works and Government Services Canada
R&D	Research and Development
REDO	Regional Economic Development Organization
SBI	Sustainable Business Initiative
SD	Sustainable Development
SDS	Sustainable Development Strategy
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
WEICan	Wind Energy Institute of Canada

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