

2001 - 2003

Sustainable Development Strategy



The *Sustainable Development Strategy* is available on Environment Canada's Green Lane at http://www.ec.gc.ca/sd-dd_consult/

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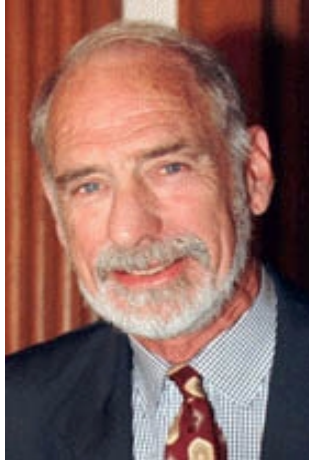


Minister's Message

Ensuring a legacy for the future requires a commitment to improving the quality of life of people today, while considering the economic, social, and environmental needs of future generations. Meeting this commitment presents us all with an enormous challenge.

It is in essence a challenge of innovation. We must find the commitment and creativity to look at problems in new ways, and to discover new solutions that will allow us to meet our economic and social goals while protecting our health and the quality of our environment.

I believe innovation will play an essential role in our efforts to make progress towards sustainable development. As a result, Environment Canada's Sustainable



Development Strategy lays out an agenda for innovation by focusing our efforts for the coming three years on four priority areas: Knowledge for Decision Making; Incentives; Partnerships and Sustainable Communities; and Managing for Sustainable Development. Each of these areas demands innovation in thought, practice and approach to meet our sustainable development objectives.

Whether it be in enhancing our scientific capacity, exploring new incentives or contributing to community sustainability, we recognize the importance of collaborating with others in the public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver on Environment Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy. Together, we can build a vibrant and just society, a prosperous economy, and a healthy environment for Canadians today and for future generations.

The Honourable David Anderson
Minister of the Environment

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Sustainable development is about how we meet the needs of people today, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It is not an end point, but rather an approach to decision making. It recognizes that social, economic and environmental issues are interconnected, and that decisions must incorporate each of these aspects if they are to be good decisions in the longer term. It is an approach that will help us to achieve a healthy environment, a prosperous economy, and a vibrant and just society for current and future generations.

Environment Canada (EC) tabled its first Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) in April 1997. The Strategy has been an important instrument for helping the Department to turn the concept of sustainable development into reality. The 1997 SDS covered a wide range of issues and resulted in a number of important accomplishments that have strengthened EC's capacity to make integrated decisions, build the partnerships necessary to move further toward sustainable development, provide Canadians with the knowledge and tools they need to make good decisions, and set a good example in the greening of departmental operations.

This second Sustainable Development Strategy provides an excellent opportunity to further institutionalize sustainable development in Environment Canada's decision-making processes, while supporting and encouraging others to do the same.

While making a renewed commitment to some of the same fundamental directions outlined in the first Strategy, this second SDS focuses on commitments that have the potential to be further reaching in their impact. Environment Canada's updated Strategy more clearly articulates goals, objectives and targets that we believe will enable the Department and Canadians to better judge where progress is being made.

This SDS has been shaped by a number of factors. It reflects the results of an internal management review that provided lessons learned from the first Sustainable Development Strategy, an issue scan undertaken to identify specific challenges and opportunities for the Department, and an extensive consultation process. It also builds on the Department's commitment to expanding the capacity for innovation in Canada. Environment Canada believes that long-term effective management of environmental issues requires innovation in three areas: increasing and sharing the spectrum of knowledge upon which decisions are based; providing new incentives and tools to more fully integrate environmental and economic decision making; and forming new partnerships to both define and help deliver our mandate.

The result is a Sustainable Development Strategy that is focused on four themes:

- Knowledge for Decision Making;
- Incentives;
- Partnerships and Sustainable Communities; and
- Managing for Sustainable Development.

These areas of focus enable the Department to both build on its strengths and address some areas of weakness. The SDS reinforces Environment Canada's key role as a knowledge-based department that seeks to build upon our understanding of environmental problems, and assists in devising solutions that take into account environmental, economic and social considerations. At the same time, the Strategy will encourage the Department to more fully examine the range of tools and incentives that it uses to manage environmental problems and to build on and strengthen existing partnerships with communities and other sectors of Canadian

society. Finally, it will encourage Environment Canada to renew its efforts to be a model in its operations and in managing for sustainable development. The Strategy does not attempt to reflect everything that Environment Canada does, or could do, to promote sustainable development. It is a strategic document that lays out an agenda for innovation necessary to achieve long term goals. It is intended to provide guidance to the Department, and to highlight for Canadians key directions and priority commitments that Environment Canada will pursue over the next three years to make progress on sustainable development.

Chapter 2: Strategic Approach to Sustainable Development

At Environment Canada, our primary responsibilities are the protection and conservation of Canada's environment and the delivery of weather and environmental predictions. Our science, our community engagement and our work on issues such as climate change, endangered species, contaminated sites, toxics and ecosystems are primarily focused on understanding, preventing and solving environmental problems.

As we better understand the interconnectedness of environmental issues and the linkages among different social, environmental, and economic factors that affect our well-being, we recognize that longer term success will depend on an ability to find creative solutions that contribute not only to a healthy environment, but to a prosperous economy and a vibrant and just society at the same time. Allowing these different factors to be considered in an integrated way in decision making demands some systemic changes and innovative approaches.

By improving EC's capacity to integrate social and economic concerns into environmental decision making, we will be more successful in the long run in protecting and conserving the environment. This understanding is reflected in Environment Canada's mission statement, which is *to make sustainable development a reality in Canada by helping Canadians live and prosper in an environment that needs to be respected, protected and conserved*. While focused on environmental goals, these goals are pursued in the context of sustainable development.

Such an integrated approach to policy and programming decisions is increasingly evident in Environment Canada's work. Three current examples include:

- *Climate Change*: Sustainable development was reflected in the process that Environment Canada, other federal departments and provinces engaged in to develop a National Implementation Strategy for Climate Change. Through a series of issue tables, governments, public interest groups and the private sector worked in partnership to examine the costs and benefits of a wide range of greenhouse gas reduction scenarios. Based on the work of these issue tables, decisions were made about how to most effectively implement the Kyoto Protocol. The National Implementation Strategy on Climate Change and the First National Business Plan were released in October 2000.
- *Canadian Environmental Protection Act (1999)*: CEPA reflects a commitment to sustainable development in several ways. Its goal is to protect not just the environment but also the health of Canadians from toxic substances and other pollutants. By focusing on pollution prevention, the *Act* is moving away from dictating specific solutions. Rather, it encourages companies to systematically examine their production processes to identify the best method for them to prevent pollution. This allows Environment Canada to stipulate environmental results but also allows companies the flexibility to define ways and means. The *Act* also provides for substantial public involvement.

- *Canada's Strategy for Protecting Species at Risk*: Canada's strategy for protecting species at risk adopts a long term sustainable approach that considers social and economic issues alongside environmental issues. It focuses on 1) building partnerships with provinces and territories through the Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk, 2) promoting stewardship and incentive programs to assist private landowners, citizens, Aboriginal peoples and organizations that are helping to protect species and habitats, and 3) regulating where necessary through legislation.

It is clear, however, that if Canada's environmental heritage is to be sustained for the benefit of present and future generations, support for sustainable development must be built across government and throughout Canada. Decision makers at all levels and in all sectors of society need to consistently integrate environmental concerns along with economic and social concerns in their decisions. Environment Canada has an important advocacy role to play in this regard.

Making the right decisions for the longer term requires innovation in thought and implementing these decisions requires innovation in practices and techniques. Environment Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy advances an agenda for innovation by focusing on priority areas and setting longer term goals for the Department. The great potential offered by innovative approaches will only be realized by working with others.

In this context, Environment Canada sees its two primary ongoing roles as:

- **Showing leadership by example** by ensuring departmental operations, management practices, policies and programs support sustainable development; and

- **Building capacity and commitment** to sustainable development with partners in the public and private sectors, and with Canadians, by providing information, tools and other support.

The SDS provides Environment Canada with an opportunity to regularly review progress toward sustainable development and to consider, in a strategic way, how best to move forward over the short term (the three-year period of the Strategy) while supporting innovation in the longer-term. The Strategy is both an important guidance document for the Department, while also highlighting for Canadians some of those things that we commit to doing differently as a department to promote sustainable development. While much of EC's ongoing work already makes an important contribution to sustainable development, the purpose of the Strategy is to highlight a selected number of new directions and new opportunities that the Department intends to pursue.

The commitments for the period 2001-2003 build on the work undertaken through our first SDS of 1997. They reinforce our department's commitment to providing strong leadership by moving toward integrated decision-making in our own policies and programs and managing our operations in an environmentally responsible manner, and to helping guide others to do likewise. Environment Canada's Strategy describes an agenda for innovation that we believe will help steer the transition to sustainable development.

Chapter 3: Goals and Objectives for 2001-2003

Environment Canada believes in the need to adopt government-wide approaches to meet the sustainable development challenge. By its very nature, sustainable development implies the importance of working across departmental boundaries. Much of EC's effort in recent years has focused on developing this horizontal approach - and a commitment to moving forward with a government-wide sustainable development agenda - as outlined in Chapter 4 of this Strategy.

At the same time, Environment Canada has its own priorities and opportunities for moving the sustainable development agenda forward, given its unique departmental responsibilities and activities. These priorities can be addressed alongside government-wide priorities in a coherent, mutually reinforcing manner by focusing the updated SDS on the following four themes:

- Knowledge for Decision Making;
- Incentives;
- Partnerships and Sustainable Communities; and
- Managing for Sustainable Development.

These four areas are important in moving toward sustainable development, and are fundamental for delivering on an agenda for innovation. They are areas where the Department has some strengths and opportunities that it can build on at this time. Of course these areas represent only a small number of a much larger set of issues that need to be addressed at a variety of levels (local, national, international) in order to move forward on sustainable development. By being selective, however, we hope to ensure success in these areas, and thus build a strong foundation before moving on to new challenges.

We have intentionally used the Sustainable Development Strategy as a means to try new approaches, and to focus our efforts on those areas where we believe we can make the greatest difference in promoting sustainable development. For each of these four theme areas, a small number of goals, objectives and targets have been identified. The eight goals reflect the longer term outcomes we are working toward beyond the three year life of this Strategy. The objectives under each goal state more specifically what we would like to achieve in the three year period of this Strategy. And finally, the targets represent even more specific commitments for the short term, to serve as progress markers in meeting our objectives.

Theme 1: Knowledge For Decision Making

One of the key ingredients in being able to make wise decisions about the environment or any other issue is the knowledge that we have, and can use, in decision making - having the right information, at the right place, at the right time. Canada's current sustainable development information and knowledge base is inadequate to provide the foundation for informed public debate and knowledge-based decision making. Environment Canada believes there are a number of things we can do to enhance the sustainable development knowledge base within the Department and in the country, and the communication and use of that knowledge.

Science is an essential piece of the knowledge base for sustainable development. It is science that has enabled our understanding of the mutually dependent relationships between human activities and environmental quality. As a science-based department, science is one of

EC's strengths, yet there remain opportunities for further consolidation, enhancement and improved access.

In order to ensure that Environment Canada's science and knowledge base is as comprehensive and accessible as possible, a more robust environmental information system is needed. While EC already reports to Canadians in a variety of ways, including through weather and environmental prediction services, the National Pollutant Release Inventory, the National Environmental Indicators Series, and the annual report on the status of migratory birds in Canada, our information and reporting roles could be strengthened. Building a more comprehensive Canadian Information System for the Environment would help to 1) enhance accountability to Canadians through better reporting on progress in addressing environmental concerns; 2) provide information to Canadians and organizations that would enable them to take action to contribute to environmental protection; and 3) provide a basis for sound public policies. A stronger information system would also increase the visibility of environmental issues relative to other national issues.

Environment Canada also needs to improve how it uses knowledge and information in its own decision making processes. For example, while our policies and programming have historically been based on western scientific knowledge alone, we recognize that Aboriginal peoples have practised sustainable development for thousands of years, and that their traditional ecological knowledge should be incorporated into our decision making processes.

The Department is also committed to a more consistent consideration of social and economic impacts in our decision making (such as considering the impacts of our policies on different populations), but needs the tools and

training to further this goal. Research to better understand sustainable development and the relationships among environmental, economic and social conditions would help with the challenge of integrated decision making. For example, building a better understanding of the linkages between environmental deterioration and human health is one area where further work is required.

Another priority issue for Environment Canada is improving knowledge and awareness of short term weather hazards and longer term changes in environmental conditions. Improving our predictive capacity and the access of Canadians to that information is of primary importance to ensuring that they can take appropriate steps to protect themselves and their businesses from severe weather and environmental hazards.

In order to address these priority concerns about improving knowledge for decision making, EC is committed to working toward the following goal, and over the period of this Strategy, to meeting the objectives and targets described below.

GOAL 1

The capacity of Canadian institutions and individuals to make decisions that support sustainable development is enhanced through the development and sharing of new knowledge and tools

Objective 1.1 Environment Canada's science and technology capacity in support of sustainable development is enhanced.

TARGETS:

- Develop an EC Monitoring Strategy by end of 2002.
- Explore with the environmental science community and others, ways of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of scientific research through networking and partnership opportunities, and report by end of 2002. An interim report on opportunities for

strengthening Canadian environmental sciences through new networking and partnership initiatives will be prepared for the EC Science and Technology Advisory Board by end of 2001.

- Provide new knowledge to support decision making for sustainable development through implementation of EC's Nature, Clean Environment, and Weather and Environmental Prediction research agendas.
- Develop and implement an integrated Business Plan on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development with the five federal natural resource departments.

Objective 1.2 Policy makers, civil society and Canadian citizens receive timely and useful information, including access to a Canadian Information System for the Environment, that empowers them to adopt sustainable practices.

TARGETS:

- Complete the final report of the Canadian Information System for the Environment Task Force (outlining environmental information and knowledge requirements, the status of existing data and knowledge systems, and investments needed to meet these requirements), by end of 2001.
- Ensure that EC's communications and outreach activities reflect a sustainable development approach to the issues, and where appropriate adopt the use of social marketing tools to encourage more sustainable lifestyles and practices.
- Renew the GreenLane by the end of 2001, to ensure it has up-to-date, easy-to-find, reliable content based on an in-depth understanding of audience needs and reflective of departmental priorities.

Objective 1.3 Environment Canada's ability to make integrated decisions is enhanced through new knowledge and decision support tools.

TARGETS:

- Establish, by end of 2001, a multi-disciplinary Sustainable Development Policy Research Program that enhances our understanding of sustainable development and informs decision making and public debate.
- Undertake a study on Canadian values and on techniques to influence behaviour change towards sustainable development in communities by end of 2001, and use results to inform EC's community initiatives and communications strategy.
- Develop an EC policy, by end of 2003, on how to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge in departmental decisions.
- Develop and pilot a sustainability assessment tool for EC policies and programs by end of 2003.
- Co-ordinate policy and strategic approaches for climate change and clean air initiatives in key sectors such as electricity and transportation.

Objective 1.4 Knowledge and awareness of short term weather hazards and longer term changes in environmental conditions is improved.

TARGETS:

- Improve lead time for extreme weather forecasts/warnings.
- Put proper mechanisms in place, through work with community partners, to make warning information accessible to individuals in time for them to take action.

- Develop and implement new warning products.
- Make data on weather, climate, and water quantity more accessible to industry and other users.
- Build awareness of special weather forecast products that can assist targeted client groups in adopting sustainable practices (such as advisories on pesticide spraying).
- Introduce the forecast of particulates into regional smog forecasts by end of 2001.

Theme 2: Incentives

One of the critical challenges of sustainable development is ensuring we get the signals and incentives right to encourage activity that will conserve and protect our environment. Traditionally, this has been done through government regulation and indeed, environmental regulations will continue to be essential. However, there is growing recognition of the need to expand the risk management policy choices and to shift the balance towards economic instruments.

Given the need to encourage significant behavioural change at the individual, corporate and community levels, market-based incentives are increasingly viewed as one of the most efficient means of ensuring appropriate levels of investment in our natural capital.

Natural capital includes environmental assets such as forests, land, mineral and energy resources, as well as ecosystem components such as water, air, the atmospheric carbon cycle, oceans, wildlife habitats and wetlands. Our natural capital makes a substantial contribution to the Canadian economy, and provides necessary life-support functions for citizens. The better known economic uses are for agriculture, mining and forestry. In addition, nature-related recreation such as canoeing, fishing and swimming contribute substantially

to the Canadian GDP (\$12.1 billion in 1996). Life-support functions range from the health benefits of cleaner air (such as lower incidences of asthma and bronchitis) to the water purification functions of wetlands. Investing in natural capital means restocking forests, conserving soil, maintaining or improving air and water quality, and restoring Canadian wetlands and other wildlife habitat. Where, how and when we invest in natural capital is the result of countless daily decisions by individuals and organizations, as we respond to a variety of signals or incentives put before us.

Key among these signals are market-based incentives: the prices of goods and services, and the cost of capital and labour. The market is good at sending the right signals for human and man-made capital. However, it does a poor job of reflecting the true value of natural capital, because there is no market for its services (such as improved air quality or habitats).

While Environment Canada recognizes that economic instruments are only one of an important mix of policy instruments, the Department believes that the Sustainable Development Strategy provides an important opportunity for focusing attention on advancing our capacity to use these instruments.

Environment Canada will work with the Department of Finance and other appropriate government departments to further explore and encourage the use of incentives. Some specific areas of interest include:

- evaluating the wide range of subsidies throughout the Canadian economy which may have an unintentional but negative impact on the environment and need to be re-considered;
- exploring the use of incentives for companies which invest in new technologies or approaches that reduce pollution or conserve natural resources;

- examining the use of charges for activities that are the source of an environmental problem such as pollution emissions, inputs to production, or final products;
- reviewing systems of tradeable permits or emission rights (for example, domestic emissions trading for greenhouse gases); and
- exploring broader use of deposit-refund systems where money is reimbursed to consumers when they return an item such as a battery or waste lubricating oil to a collection point.

Environment Canada will also examine opportunities including the use of incentives, to encourage Canadian industry to become more eco-efficient. Eco-efficient practices are innovative ways to: reduce material requirements, energy intensity and toxic dispersion; find value-added uses for material wastes; and produce goods that are durable and reusable, while contributing to productivity gains, reduced costs and lower liabilities.

GOAL 2

Market signals are gradually shifted so they more accurately reflect the true value of Canada's natural capital such as water, air, nature and wetlands

Objective 2.1 Market-based incentives and economic instruments are developed and increasingly implemented in coming years.

TARGETS:

- Build broader support for market-based incentives and economic instruments with other federal departments, provincial and municipal governments, and key Canadian and international stakeholders.
- Define the role of non-regulatory initiatives within the context of risk management (particularly for toxic substances) and develop options for implementation.
- Promote further work on environmental valuation studies.

- Implement the EcoGifts Program and ensure its smooth operation by 2002.

GOAL 3

Productivity and environmental performance of Canadian industry is improved through the adoption of innovative practices and tools

Objective 3.1 Capacity of Canadian industry to develop and use innovative approaches including eco-efficient practices, tools, technologies and products is enhanced.

TARGETS:

- Use the pollution prevention provisions in CEPA, and voluntary initiatives, to encourage companies to systematically review operations and identify opportunities to address environmental issues in an efficient and effective way.
- Work with small and medium-sized enterprises to increase the number identifying and implementing eco-efficient tools and practices (e.g. through the expansion of programs like Quebec Region's Enviro-Club program).
- Advance incentives that encourage eco-efficient production.

Theme 3: Partnerships and Sustainable Communities

As the complexity of environmental and sustainable development issues continues to increase, more partners than ever must be involved in developing solutions and implementing them throughout the economy and society. New approaches are needed that help leverage the greatest possible collective impact from action by business, non-government organizations, universities, Aboriginal people, provinces, municipalities and citizens. Achieving results through innovative partnership arrangements is both a requirement and a critical opportunity in the transition to sustainable development.

We believe that some of the most important opportunities for partnerships are at the community level. Many communities are undergoing unprecedented change. They face complex social, environmental and economic challenges (e.g. downturn in rural communities, loss of traditional industries or way of life, environmental degradation, out-migration, seasonal unemployment, urbanization) and emerging opportunities (e.g. information and other technologies, value-added industries, tourism, community renewal).

Across the country, citizens and the voluntary sector are becoming more proactive in addressing these issues through community-based initiatives and comprehensive planning. Municipal governments, led through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, are actively pursuing environment and sustainable development agendas. As communities make the connection among economic, social and environmental pressures, they look for similarly integrated support and responses from government (not centrally developed solutions). They also seek a more meaningful interface with governments through partnership approaches.

A more integrated approach to bringing communities information and expertise and delivering federal programs and services will empower both communities and the Government to identify and respond to sustainability goals and objectives.

At Environment Canada, we have been working to enhance community sustainability through our programs and services for some time (e.g. through our regional ecosystems initiatives and our education and communications efforts). We have focused considerable attention on building partnerships at the community level which bring together a broad range of government, private and voluntary sector organizations, and on

providing vital knowledge, tools, information and funding to enhance the ability of communities to promote sustainable development. As a department, we draw on our partnerships in and with communities to help carry out our sustainability mission, and to address key issues of concern to Canadians such as clean air, clean water, nature, climate change and weather at the local level.

Despite the many community-level programs and services offered by EC, it continues to be a challenge to successfully engage Canadians in their communities in efforts to move toward sustainable development. By focusing part of our updated Sustainable Development Strategy on building partnerships with communities, we believe we can improve the effectiveness of our contribution to community sustainability and help empower citizens to take appropriate action. Stronger partnerships - with communities and others - are fundamental to leveraging the greatest possible collective impact from our efforts on sustainable development.

GOAL 4

Progress toward sustainable development is enhanced through the development and implementation of innovative approaches for working with key partners

Objective 4.1 Shared agendas and agreed-upon outcomes are built with key partners and sectors.

TARGETS:

- Put in place partnership strategies with business, non-governmental organizations and universities by 2002.
- Strengthen EC's capacity to use partnerships to advance sustainable development and support and stimulate innovation.

GOAL 5

Canadian communities are supported in their transition to sustainable development

Objective 5.1 The perspectives, needs, and interests of communities and the barriers they face to adopting more sustainable practices are better understood by Environment Canada.

TARGETS:

- Put mechanisms/strategies in place (including Internet and more traditional means) to ensure that stakeholders, partners and other communities of interest have regular opportunities to put forward their ideas, concerns and perspectives on community sustainable development issues.
- Increase involvement of Aboriginal people in migratory bird management and other conservation initiatives.

Objective 5.2 Capacity building tools are made available to communities.

TARGETS:

- Enhance community access to EC science that is “useable” and that meets community needs, through pilot projects and government-on-line initiatives.
- Assist the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in 2001 with the implementation of the Environmental Capacity Development Initiative to build First Nation, Innu and Inuit capacity in environmental stewardship and to strengthen partnerships.
- Provide support for environmental education and training to Indigenous youth beginning in 2001.
- Build the capacity of youth to provide policy input and support environmental action by providing support to youth groups to develop a governance framework, create a fundraising strategy and develop a youth network across the country.

- Develop, with partners, a national strategy on environmental education and an action plan for its implementation, and submit these to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development by spring 2002.

Objective 5.3 Environment Canada’s programming and Ecosystems Initiatives reflect an enhanced commitment to sustainable communities.

TARGETS:

- Strengthen the Ecosystems Initiatives to be more effective delivery mechanisms for sustainable communities, through the integration of social, economic and environmental considerations in program objectives and implementation.
- Implement the North American Bird Conservation Initiative by 2002 - a regionally-based, biologically driven, landscape oriented bird conservation initiative that will work closely with landowners to inform and influence land use practices.

Objective 5.4 The delivery of individual federal programs is better integrated at the community level in order to maximize their impact in meeting environmental, social and economic goals.

TARGETS:

- Develop and implement, with partners, a federal framework on sustainable communities.
- Explore the feasibility, with partners, of applying a sustainable communities approach through selected pilot projects (including those with Aboriginal communities), using Federal Councils as a catalyst where appropriate.
- Develop and implement government-on-line projects to support the delivery of sustainable communities initiatives and related federal programming.

- ☛ Implement the Habitat Stewardship Program nationally through partnerships, and coordinate and integrate with other similar programs by 2002.

Theme 4: Managing for Sustainable Development

We believe that Environment Canada has a responsibility to show leadership across the federal government on sustainable development. In order to be successful, internal operations, procurement and management practices must support and promote sustainable development.

Greening operations and Environmental Management Systems (EMSs) are examples of areas where EC has a great deal of expertise and where concrete steps can be taken over the short to medium term to promote the Department's sustainable development agenda. Environment Canada must be a leader in this area, and continue to build on past successes in solid waste management, green laboratory operations and energy conservation and conversion.

Environment Canada supports current efforts to build a coordinated, government-wide approach to sustainable development in government operations. A guidance document released in June 2000 with suggested targets and performance measures was an important first step in building a greater capacity to report government-wide progress in greening operations. This kind of coordinated approach will be helpful to departments as they plan improvements in their environmental performance and to Canadians who want to monitor the Government's progress. Key challenges for EC in its own operations include: continuing progress in implementing the departmental EMS; developing appropriate

performance indicators for greening operations; and making progress on greenhouse gas reductions from its facilities. Environmental accounting is one of the tools that could help the Department to move toward its operational goals by encouraging better integration of its environmental management system and its financial information system. A closer integration of these two systems would enable the Department to report on both the financial and the environmental costs and benefits associated with its operational decisions. This kind of more integrated accounting would help to promote sound management, reduce environmental costs and foster greater awareness and accountability among managers for operational decisions.

In addition to work on greening its operations, in order to truly show leadership across the federal government on sustainable development, Environment Canada also needs to develop effective human resource strategies that ensure the Department has the critical knowledge and skill sets required to deliver on its sustainable development goals.

A final important component under the theme of managing for sustainable development relates to how our department works with other departments across government. We recognize the need to enhance the co-ordination of policies horizontally across government departments, and see efforts to build and institutionalize that horizontal co-ordination as a key challenge of "managing for sustainable development". It is a long term challenge and, as with all big challenges, progress will have to be made one step at a time. The following commitments will provide the focus for EC over the next three years.

GOAL 6

Environment Canada provides a model to others by reducing the environmental impact of its operations

Objective 6.1 Targets and performance measures from the guidance document *Sustainable Development in Government Operations: A Coordinated Approach (SDGO)* are incorporated into Environment Canada's EMS aspect action plans, and work is underway to achieve these targets as they relate to Environment Canada's operations.

TARGETS:

- Develop a detailed implementation plan by end of June 2001.
- Incorporate SDGO targets into EC's EMS by end of 2003.

Objective 6.2 Environment Canada's EMS is integrated into Environment Canada's operations and Management Framework.

TARGETS:

- Put in place EC's EMS action plans in six priority aspect areas (Energy Management; Halocarbons; Potentially Contaminated Sites; Greener Procurement; Solid Waste Management; Transportation and Motorized Equipment) and commence annual reporting on progress toward targets (including SDGO and other targets), by March 31, 2002.
- Implement action plans and commence annual reporting on the remaining six aspects of EC's EMS by March 31, 2003 (Facility Air Emissions; Hazardous Materials Management; Land Use Management; Spills; Storage tanks; Water Management).

Objective 6.3 Environment Canada reduces its greenhouse gas emissions and along with Natural Resources Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada provides leadership on greenhouse gas emissions reductions from government operations.

TARGETS:

- Develop a three year action plan for greenhouse gas reductions within EC by end of March 2001, as EC's contribution to the government-wide target of a 31% reduction from 1990 levels.
- Make EC's contribution to meeting the Government of Canada's target of purchasing at least 20% of its electricity from low and non-emitting sources by 2005.

Objective 6.4 Environment Canada reduces the number of its contaminated sites.

TARGETS:

- Identify EC's contaminated sites liability and contingent liability by March 31, 2002.
- Replace mercury-based equipment with alternative technologies by 2003.
- Clean up 25% of Meteorological Services of Canada-operated contaminated monitoring sites on federal lands by 2003.

Objective 6.5 The practice of environmental accounting is advanced within Environment Canada where appropriate.

TARGETS:

- Undertake a study, by end of 2001, to examine the feasibility of, and opportunities for, implementing environmental accounting within EC.

GOAL 7

Environment Canada staff understand sustainable development and EMS principles and are able to make decisions and act in ways that promote sustainable development

Objective 7.1 The skills and knowledge required to promote sustainable development decision making within Environment Canada are acquired and continually improved.

TARGETS:

- Develop sustainable development and EMS components and integrate them into new employee orientation packages by end of 2001.
- Develop and deliver, beginning in 2001, an employee sustainable development capacity-building course.
- Identify senior management training opportunities on sustainable development and encourage participation.
- Review and revise as necessary corporate recruitment strategies to reflect sustainable development skill set needs.

GOAL 8

Horizontal policy coordination across government on sustainable development is improved

Objective 8.1 The Deputy Minister-level Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee serves as an effective means of managing interdepartmental sustainable development issues.

TARGETS:

- Achieve measurable progress on coordinated government-wide initiatives for priority horizontal sustainable development themes by end of 2002.

- Work with other government departments to update the government's sustainable development policy framework by end of 2002.

Objective 8.2 Canadians are meaningfully engaged on sustainable development issues by federal departments working in a coordinated way.

TARGETS:

- Establish a forum for departments to consult in a coordinated way with Canadians about priority sustainable development issues on an ongoing basis by end of 2001.
- Work with other government departments to ensure that Canadians are effectively engaged in the process leading up to Rio+10 in 2002.

Objective 8.3 Environment Canada actively supports the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs' initiative to develop a coordinated Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for the North.

TARGETS:

- Provide an update, by the end of 2001, on progress in developing and implementing a Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for the North. Incorporate targets from the Northern strategy into Environment Canada's Sustainable Development Strategy and begin annual reporting on progress.

Chapter 4: Support for Government-wide Sustainable Development Initiatives

Building a Government-wide Approach to Sustainable Development

Environment Canada believes in the need to adopt government-wide approaches to meet the sustainable development challenge. Sustainable development by its very nature implies the importance of working across departmental boundaries, and this has been a focal point for the Department in recent years.

While each department is required to prepare its own SDS, since the tabling of the last Strategies considerable attention has focused on building support for government-wide initiatives on certain key sustainable development issues. Federal departments are currently working toward coordinated action and planning in eight areas, as listed below in Table 1. In each of these areas, the focus is on establishing

shared results and goals, coordinated actions and common measures of performance for participating departments. Promoting teamwork and collaboration among departments will decrease overlap and improve the effectiveness of programs. More importantly, it will put into practice a more horizontal approach to advancing sustainable development across the federal government, and therefore a stronger likelihood of measuring progress government-wide. This coordinated planning effort reflects an important step forward in this second round of Strategies. Further steps will be required in the coming years as the process of building greater coherence and coordination across the federal government continues and evolves.

Table 1: Sustainable Development Coordinated Action and Planning Across Federal Departments

Initiative	Dept'l Leads*	Description
1. SD in Government Operations	PWGSC NRCan EC	This initiative has been broadly defined to include work to green government operations (including reducing greenhouse gas emissions) and procurement practices, and work on federal stewardship initiatives.
2. International Aspects of SD	DFAIT CIDA	The work on international aspects of sustainable development will focus on issues like capacity building under Multilateral Environmental Agreements, building more strategic approaches to international events and promoting environmental assessment in the international context.
3. A Federal SD Strategy for the North	INAC	An effort is underway to develop an integrated government-wide sustainable development strategy for the North.
4. SD and Healthy Canadians	HC	This action plan will address issues related to sustainable development and the health of Canadians in the context of the natural and built environments, the social environment and the economic environment.

Initiative	Dept'l Leads*	Description
5. Social and Cultural Aspects of SD	HRDC CH	Social and cultural issues are perhaps the least well explored in the context of sustainable development, and work in this area aims to advance our capacity to address these issues.
6. Productivity Through Eco-efficiency	IC NRCan	This coordinated action plan will address issues related to promoting eco-efficiency, ISO 14000, extended producer responsibility, etc. in the corporate sector.
7. SD Knowledge and Information / Indicators and Reporting	NRCan StatsCan EC	Work in this area is designed to ensure we have the information, knowledge and means to promote sustainable development and to understand our performance. Initial work on sustainable development indicators is underway through the government's inter-departmental Policy Research Initiative. The government's 2000 budget committed resources to this end, which will help to advance progress.
8. Sustainability in Communities	EC NRCan	The sustainable communities initiative will focus on building the capacity of communities to integrate social, economic and environmental factors into local decision-making and to address critical needs.

*(PWGSC - Public Works and Government Services Canada; NRCan - Natural Resources Canada; EC - Environment Canada; DFAIT - Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade; CIDA - Canadian International Development Agency; INAC - Indian and Northern Affairs Canada; HC - Health Canada; HRDC - Human Resources Development Canada; CH - Canadian Heritage; IC - Industry Canada; StatsCan - Statistics Canada)

Progress and Commitments to Date

1) Sustainable Development in Government Operations

In an effort to build a coordinated approach to sustainable development in government operations, a guidance document entitled *Sustainable Development in Government Operations: A Coordinated Approach* was released in June 2000. The document recommends best practices in seven priority areas of operations - procurement, waste management, water conservation and wastewater management, energy efficiency, vehicle fleet management, land use management, and human resources management. It proposes a tool box of collaboratively developed performance

measures and offers a sample set of targets in each of the seven areas (see Table 2). By encouraging the adoption of common performance measures and targets, the aim is to further reduce the impact of federal operations on the environment and to facilitate measuring and reporting on progress across government in these priority areas.

Over the next three years, EC proposes to:

- incorporate targets and performance measures from the guidance document *Sustainable Development in Government Operations: A Coordinated Approach* into Environment Canada's EMS aspect action plans, and work toward achieving these targets as they relate to EC's operations.

Table 2: Sample targets from *Sustainable Development in Government Operations: A Coordinated Approach*

<p>1. Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By March 31, 2002, adopt as the default condition the purchase of environmentally responsible goods and services, whenever available and in a manner consistent with Canada's international trade obligations. • By March 31, 2002, PWGSC will introduce environmental specifications into all standing offers, where requested by client departments. • By March 31, 2002, introduce environmental specifications into all appropriate sections of the <i>National Master Specifications</i>. Specifically by March 31, 2001, introduce environmental specifications into the 23 sections of the Specifications that address energy efficiency issues. This recognizes the primacy of Kyoto commitments with respect to greenhouse gas emissions. • By March 31, 2002, provide green procurement training to all personnel with purchasing responsibility. • By September 2004, include reports based on Treasury Board's <i>Green Procurement Reporting Framework</i> in all departmental performance reports. <p>2. Waste Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By March 31, 2004, divert 70 percent of solid waste from landfill — that is, 70 percent by weight of all solid waste is to be recycled. • By March 31, 2004, develop and implement a protocol to use economical alternatives to hazardous materials and/or processes that generate hazardous waste. • By March 31, 2001, incorporate solid waste diversion practices into all construction, renovation and demolition projects. <p>3. Water Conservation and Wastewater Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By March 31, 2004, implement water conservation measures at all federal facilities, when it is feasible and cost effective to do so. • By March 31, 2001, develop and implement revised wastewater management guidelines for federal facilities. <p>4. Energy Efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By March 31, 2001, complete a study to identify cost-effective opportunities to use more efficient and environmentally responsible energy sources in Crown-owned buildings. • By March 31, 2004, implement in Crown-owned buildings energy conservation measures associated with the Federal Buildings Initiative and other programs, when an energy assessment has demonstrated that it is cost effective to do so. • By March 31, 2001, introduce enhanced energy efficiency specifications into the 23 sections of the <i>National Master Specifications</i> relating to equipment that uses energy. <p>5. Vehicle Fleet Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By September 2002, include report on compliance with Treasury Board's <i>Motor Vehicle Policy (1996)</i> and the <i>Alternative Fuels Act</i> in all departmental performance reports. <p>6. Land Use Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to assess all proposed projects to determine if they are considered projects as defined by the <i>Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)</i>. • Continue to comply with the CEAA for any proposed activity considered a project as defined by the <i>Act</i>. • By March 31, 2001, identify and prioritize federal contaminated sites, and prepare action plans. • Continue to remediate and monitor Crown-owned contaminated sites as determined by action plans. <p>7. Human Resources Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By March 31, 2002, establish and implement environmental training plans commensurate with operations. <p>(More detail on these targets can be found online at http://www.ec.gc.ca/sd-dd_consult/pdf/ea130-e.pdf)</p>
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2) *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for the North*

During consultations for the last round of Sustainable Development Strategies, Northerners expressed a desire for a more coordinated approach across government to sustainable development issues in the North. As a result, an effort is currently underway to prepare a single coordinated Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for the North. The aim is to develop and adopt a strategy that:

- identifies goals and actions of federal departments that will contribute to sustainable development in the North;
- establishes linkages and coordinates activities; and
- uses consistent approaches to consultation, and involvement of Northerners in its implementation.

Several departments and agencies are participating in the development of this coordinated strategy. Two phases of consultations have been undertaken. The first phase in November 1999 provided the opportunity for departments to report on progress on their 1997 strategies and to discuss key issues with Northerners. Based on feedback, a second round of consultations was held in the spring of 2000 to discuss possible actions. Departments are currently working on drafting a strategy. Given that the Federal Strategy for Sustainable Development in the North has not yet been completed, it is too early to outline all of EC's northern commitments in our Strategy at this time. It is possible, however, to describe some of the areas in which EC is working to build support for coordinated work across departments in the North.

For instance:

- communicating with Northern communities about the Kyoto Protocol commitments, their implications for Canadians and specifically how Northern communities can contribute to these commitments;

- providing Northern communities with waste management information and tools (e.g. guides to recycling, composting, green procurement) as it applies to remote communities, including those with only air or sea lift re-supply;
- advancing knowledge, tools and awareness of the response of northern ecosystems to major drivers of change in the Canadian North through the Northern Ecosystem Initiative;
- incorporating Aboriginal traditional knowledge in the development of Environment Canada legislation, policies and programs by developing an Environment Canada traditional knowledge policy, and training staff in the application of the policy;
- participating in and/or leading in the development of a government-wide approach to traditional knowledge;
- developing a Cumulative Effects Monitoring and Assessment Framework for application to all types of northern development projects;
- undertaking a literature review on the issue of valuing country foods in the North; and
- developing a Land Claims Agreement familiarization program for Environment Canada staff by September 2001, that is piloted within Environment Canada by December 2001 and delivered to 50% of Environment Canada staff managing or delivering northern programs and policies by 2003.

3) *Productivity through Eco-efficiency*

Improving the capacity of Canadian industry and small business to develop and use eco-efficient practices that improve their environmental performance is recognized as an important element of making progress on sustainable development. It is also an area in which several federal departments have a significant role to play. As a result, an interdepartmental working group has been established to develop a framework and identify

potential initiatives that could be pursued in a coordinated way. There are three key areas in which work is being considered:

- strengthening research and development to address the need for trained people to work for industry to identify and implement eco-efficient practices;
- working with industry, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, to help them identify and implement eco-efficient practices and tools; and
- developing performance measures and benchmarks to quantify both environmental and productivity benefits of eco-efficiency.

As part of its contribution to this horizontal initiative, EC proposes to:

- use the pollution prevention provisions in CEPA and voluntary initiatives to encourage companies to systematically review their operations and identify opportunities to address environmental issues in an efficient and effective way; and
- work with small and medium-sized enterprises to increase the number identifying and implementing eco-efficient tools and practices (e.g. through the expansion of programs like Quebec Region's Enviro-Club program).

4) Knowledge and Information/Sustainable Development Indicators and Reporting

Departments recognize the need to build a stronger foundation of knowledge to support more integrated decision-making and informed public debate on sustainable development issues. They also recognize the need to develop a set of indicators and a process to report regularly to Canadians on the state of sustainable development in Canada. These are both efforts that require inter-departmental collaboration.

Key efforts to enhance knowledge and information include:

- developing a plan to address knowledge and information gaps related to sustainable development through the government's Sustainability Project - a policy research initiative;
- establishing a Task Force on a Canadian Information System on the Environment, that will cover all aspects of knowledge management related to the environment; and
- establishing an environment and sustainable development research program with the academic community.

Departments intend to work together to develop an appropriate framework for sustainable development indicators, and a set of national indicators. These would then be submitted to the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy who have been tasked with building a national consensus around a set of sustainable development indicators for Canada.

As part of its contribution to this coordinated effort, EC proposes to:

- ensure the final report of the Canadian Information System for the Environment Task Force (outlining environmental information and knowledge requirements, the status of existing data and knowledge systems, and investments needed to meet these requirements), is completed by end of 2001.
- establish a multi-disciplinary Sustainable Development Policy Research Program by end of 2001 that enhances our understanding of sustainable development and informs decision making and public debate.

5) *Sustainability in Communities*

The aim of the sustainable communities initiative is to better integrate the delivery of individual federal programs focused on community issues in order to maximize their impact within the context of community economic, social and environmental development.

In order to integrate the delivery of these programs and ensure a consistent focus on sustainable development issues, a federal framework on sustainable communities will be developed in collaboration with other government departments and partners. The framework will describe the federal government's vision, guiding principles, strategic approach, mechanisms and tools and a process for evaluation and reporting. In addition, an action plan will be developed which draws on the strengths of programs across departments to apply the framework at the community level.

Progress to date includes:

- interdepartmental working group on sustainable communities established;
- National Rural Conference held in April 2000;

- research and analysis on sustainable community development commissioned through the government-wide Policy Research Initiative's Sustainability Project; and
- informal dialogue with multi-sectoral community and sustainable development experts held to scope issues and a broader policy framework for sustainable community development.

As part of its commitment to this horizontal effort EC proposes to:

- develop and implement, with partners, a federal framework on sustainable communities;
- explore the feasibility, with partners, of applying a sustainable communities approach through selected pilot projects (including those in Aboriginal communities), using Federal Councils as a catalyst where appropriate; and
- develop and implement government-on-line projects to support the delivery of sustainable communities initiatives and related federal programming.

Chapter 5: Measuring our Performance

A critical component of the Sustainable Development Strategy process is a strong focus on implementation. Environment Canada has been making efforts to close the gap between commitments and implementation in a number of areas (e.g. improving our tracking and implementation of international commitments and agreements), and sees measures to ensure effective implementation of the Department’s Strategy as equally important.

Environment Canada will measure and report on its performance in implementing its SDS on an annual basis. Through the annual Departmental Performance Reports, progress at the level of goals as outlined in this Strategy will be examined, through the use of the performance measures as defined below in Table 3.

There is an ongoing challenge associated with reporting at the level of results, as opposed to reporting on activities undertaken. Environment Canada will work toward measuring the results of its actions, though in many cases the longer term changes we are intending to contribute to can be difficult to measure in the shorter term.

Annual reporting through EC’s Departmental Performance Reports will enable us to check whether we are on course, and identify any corrective action needed during the three year period of the Strategy. We would anticipate making any necessary adjustments to our goals or targets through the Department’s annual Report on Plans and Priorities.

Table 3. Sustainable Development Strategy Goals and Performance Measures

EC’s Goals	Performance Measures
1. The capacity of Canadian institutions and individuals to make decisions that support sustainable development is enhanced through the development and sharing of new knowledge and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress toward a Canadian Information System for the Environment • number of EC-sponsored Cabinet documents assessed from sustainable development perspective • extent to which traditional knowledge is being incorporated into EC decision making • accuracy of severe weather and marine warnings • changes in behaviour in response to warnings
2. Market signals are gradually shifted so they more accurately reflect the true value of Canada’s natural capital such as water, air, nature and wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extent to which EC is involved in partnering on development and implementation of valuation projects, tools, and associated methodologies • Ecological Gifts certified and tax receipts issued in a timely manner

EC's Goals	Performance Measures
3. Productivity and environmental performance of Canadian industry is improved through adoption of innovative practices and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extent to which non-regulatory initiatives are considered and/or implemented as a means to promote environmental responsibility by industry
4. Progress toward sustainable development is enhanced through the development and implementation of innovative approaches for working with key partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence of regional partnerships with provinces/territories, NGOs and industries
5. Canadian communities are supported in their transition to sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • satisfaction with information and usability of EC's GreenLane, as determined through regular client surveys • level of satisfaction of users with various community-based products and services provided • scope and number of community partnerships for sustainable development where EC is actively engaged • evidence of integration of Aboriginal concerns/issues into conservation management programs and policies • number of landowners participating in North American Bird Conservation Initiative
6. Environment Canada provides a model to others by reducing the environmental impact of its operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extent to which EC's EMS targets are being met • progress toward EC's greenhouse gas reduction target
7. Environment Canada staff understand sustainable development and EMS principles and are able to make decisions and act in ways that promote sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of sustainable development related courses and awareness materials made available to EC staff • staff awareness of sustainable development, EMS and Sustainable Development Strategy issues
8. Horizontal policy coordination across government on sustainable development is improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress on sustainable development coordinated action and planning by federal government departments in priority areas • participant satisfaction with coordinated consultations processes

Glossary

Aboriginal traditional ecological knowledge -

A cumulative body of knowledge handed down through generations from time immemorial. It is a sacred knowledge, rooted in a people's spiritual beliefs, interaction with the environment, culture, and values.

Climate change - A warming of the Earth's atmosphere caused by increases in the atmosphere of certain gases that absorb the radiation emitted by the Earth, thereby retarding the loss of energy from the system to space.

EcoAction - A departmental funding program that helps Canadians take action in support of a healthy environment. It provides financial assistance to non-profit Canadian groups that wish to undertake local environmental projects

Eco-efficiency - Eco-efficient practices include: reducing the material intensity of goods and services; reducing the energy intensity of goods and services; reducing the dispersion of toxic materials; enhancing the recyclability of materials; maximizing the use of renewable resources; extending the durability of products; and increasing the service intensity of goods and services.

Ecosystem - An integrated and stable association of living and non-living resources functioning within a defined physical location.

Ecosystem approach - The design of policies, programs, and operations in consideration of the unique and fundamental characteristics of individual ecosystems and in recognition of the interdependence of social, economic and environmental systems.

Environmental Management System (EMS) -

A systematic approach for organizations to bring environmental considerations into decision making and day-to-day operations. It also establishes a framework for tracking, evaluating and communicating environmental performance. An EMS helps ensure that major environmental risks and liabilities are identified, minimized and managed.

Greenhouse gases - Gases in the atmosphere that trap the sun's energy and thereby contribute to rising surface temperatures. The main greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change is carbon dioxide, a by-product of burning fossil fuels.

Halocarbons - Halocarbons are the most important group of ozone-depleting chemicals. They are a group of chemical compounds formed from carbon and one or more members of the halogen family (chlorine, bromine and fluorine). Halocarbons are widely used in industrial processes and human activities. Most are very stable chemicals, enabling them to eventually reach well into the stratosphere, where the ozone layer is situated.

Indicators - An indicator is a statistic, tracked over time, that provides trends in the condition of a phenomenon, beyond the properties of just the statistic itself. It points to, or provides additional information. Indicators provide the means to assess progress toward an objective.

Integrated decision making - An approach to planning and decision making that ensures progress on each and all of the dimensions - social, economic and environmental - of sustainable development.

Issue scan - An assessment of a department's activities in terms of their impact on sustainable development.

Pollution prevention - The use of processes, practices, materials, products, or energy that avoid or minimize the creation of pollutants or wastes and reduce overall risk to human health or the environment.

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

Sustainable Development Strategy - The strategy that each Minister responsible for a department is required to submit to Parliament. It includes the department's concrete goals and plans of action to integrate sustainable development into its policies, programs and operations.

Annex I - Sustainable Development Strategies: Background

At the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, more than 178 Governments adopted *Agenda 21*, a comprehensive plan of action for governments at the global, national and local levels to pursue more sustainable development.

One of the challenges to countries coming out of Rio was to elaborate national sustainable development strategies to identify how they intended to implement the *Agenda 21* commitments in their own national contexts. Since then, countries have responded to this challenge in a number of different ways.

In Canada, the government's commitment to sustainable development was reflected in 1995 amendments to the *Auditor General Act*. The amendments required Ministers to table in Parliament, within two years, Sustainable Development Strategies that outline their department's objectives and plans for action to further sustainable development. The amendments also provided for the creation of a Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development in the Office of the Auditor General.

Under this unique arrangement, twenty-eight departments and agencies, including Environment Canada, tabled their first SDSs in

1997. These Strategies were based on guidelines provided in the government's *A Guide to Green Government*, signed by all Ministers in 1995. Over the course of the past three years, departments have focused their attention on ensuring their SDSs are properly implemented.

As a means of ensuring continuous improvement in this long term challenge, the *Auditor General Act* requires that departmental Strategies be updated at least every three years. The current set of Strategies are, as such, the updates of that first round of SDSs in 1997.

In preparing their updated SDSs, departments have benefited from a number of learning opportunities over the past three years. They have worked through the challenges of preparing and implementing Strategies within their departments, they have worked with stakeholders to identify strengths and weaknesses in their approaches, and they have also benefited from the advice of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, who reports annually to Parliament on the Government's progress on environment and sustainable development issues, including implementation of departmental SDSs.

Annex II - A Departmental Profile

MANDATE

Environment Canada's mandate covers the preservation and enhancement of the quality of the natural environment, renewable resources (including water, migratory birds and other non-domestic flora and fauna), meteorology, enforcement of the rules of the Canada-U.S. International Joint Commission, and coordination of federal environmental policies and programs. While the Department's mandate has not changed since it was founded in 1971, the range and character of the issues and challenges it faces have evolved considerably.

MISSION

To make sustainable development a reality in Canada by helping Canadians live and prosper in an environment that needs to be respected, protected and conserved.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Environment Canada's organizational structure crosscuts business lines in a matrix management approach defined by seven headquarter organizations:

- Minister and Deputy Minister's Offices
- Policy and Communications
- Environmental Protection Service
- Environmental Conservation Service
- Meteorological Service of Canada
- Corporate Services
- Human Resources Directorate

There are also five regional offices: Atlantic; Quebec; Ontario; Prairie & Northern; and, Pacific & Yukon.

BUSINESS LINES

Business Lines are, by definition, groupings of departmental programs based on the results they are primarily intended to achieve. Environment Canada's four business lines include:

(1) Clean Environment (CE)

Objective

To protect Canadians from domestic and global sources of pollution. Emphasizing a preventive approach, this business line leads in the development of shared, long-term strategies to reduce human impacts on the atmosphere and air quality (including climate change, smog, and depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer) and to reduce the threat posed by toxic substances.

Roles

- a) identifying threats from pollutants, their sources and means of controlling them through the application of sound science;
- b) developing standards, guidelines and codes of practice to ensure adequate levels of protection of environmental quality;
- c) in collaboration with provinces, industry and non-governmental organizations, identifying and implementing appropriate strategies for preventing or reducing pollution;
- d) administering and enforcing regulations for pollution prevention and control within areas of federal jurisdiction;
- e) monitoring levels of contaminants in air, water, and soil;
- f) representing Canada's interests in the development of international agreements and accords to reduce pollution;

- g) providing advice and tools for preventing pollution and support to the development and deployment of green technologies.

(2) Nature

Objective

To conserve biological diversity in healthy ecosystems. This Business Line leads in building shared sustainability strategies for Canada's wildlife and ecosystems. It contributes to scientific understanding of ecosystem functioning, develops partnerships to improve the health of nationally significant ecosystems, and discharges federal responsibilities for managing wildlife, water and wetland resources.

Roles

- a) developing scientific knowledge and tools needed to understand and respond to the effects of human activities on ecosystems;
- b) managing migratory birds and nationally significant migratory bird habitat;
- c) in collaboration with provinces and other partners, developing and implementing recovery plans for endangered species;
- d) providing leadership on the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- e) in partnership with others, applying an integrated approach to conserving and restoring significant ecosystems, and providing tools to build local capacity to continue this work;
- f) representing Canada's interests in international arenas dealing with wildlife, ecosystem health and biodiversity;
- g) providing federal leadership in conserving and protecting Canada's water resources.

(3) Weather and Environmental Predictions (WEP)

Objective

To help Canadians adapt to their environment in ways which safeguard their health and safety, optimize economic activity and enhance environmental quality. Through this Business Line, Environment Canada provides meteorological and hydrological warnings and forecasts; develops information on weather, climate, air quality, ice and hydrology, and contributes to the understanding of the impacts of human activity on the atmospheric environment.

Roles

- a) monitoring the state of the atmosphere (weather, climate, air quality and ultraviolet radiation), hydrosphere (water) and cryosphere (ice and snow);
- b) providing information on the past, present and future states of the physical environment;
- c) issuing warnings of severe weather and environmental hazards;
- d) engaging in scientific research on the causes of severe weather, the mechanisms which transport chemicals and weather through the atmosphere and around the world, and the impacts of human activity on the atmospheric environment;
- e) providing advice on adaptation to changing weather and climate.

(4) Management, Administration and Policy (MAP)

Objective

To provide strategic and effective departmental management to achieve environmental results. In this Business Line,

EC develops its integrated management and policy agenda; specifically, its strategic medium and long-term agenda, leadership skills, partnerships, innovative means to inform and engage citizens, and provides efficient and innovative support services.

Roles

- a) strategic policy advice, including responsibility for overseeing the updating of the Department's Sustainable Development Strategy;
- b) socio-economic analysis;
- c) coordination of international activities of the Department;
- d) leadership and coordination in fostering partnerships with industry, non-governmental organizations, Aboriginal peoples, provinces and other government departments;
- e) communications and public outreach services;
- f) support services to decision making and accountability, including planning and financial systems and services;
- g) information technology, records and information holdings;
- h) human resources;
- i) security and the management of assets and accommodations;
- j) environmental management systems.

Annex III - Results of the Management Review

As a basis for improving on Environment Canada's 1997 Sustainable Development Strategy, an internal review was undertaken by EC's Review Branch at the request of senior departmental managers in the summer of 1999. The objective was to identify successes, areas for improvement, management, and implementation issues around EC's 1997 SDS, and to consider concerns raised by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The review revealed a number of areas of strength. It was evident that there was a general awareness amongst managers of the goals of the SDS and of the concept of sustainable development. It was also clear that EC has and continues to demonstrate leadership in working with federal departments on sustainable development matters (e.g. through the Deputy Minister's chairing of the Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee, and through EC's chairing of the working level Interdepartmental Network on Sustainable Development Strategies). The review also concluded that departmental reporting had been improved through the SDS process. Departmental reports now highlight to Parliamentarians which of our activities contribute to sustainable development.

At the same time, the review also identified a number of challenges for the Department. An overriding concern was that our first SDS was not seen as an effective strategy for change within the Department. More specifically there were concerns that the Strategy did not clearly enough articulate the Department's strategic approach to sustainable development. To truly bring a sustainable development "lens" to decision making within the Department it was felt that the concept needed to be clarified and

translated into principles and practices that could be adopted at all levels throughout the Department. The review also concluded that more effort was required to ensure EC has the capacity to integrate economic and social aspects, alongside environmental aspects in its decision making. In addition to building its own capacity, the review identified a need to strengthen EC's capacity building and advocacy roles with others, as a way of moving beyond the status quo on sustainable development issues.

In addition, the review highlighted a number of internal management needs, including for example the need to: better integrate the SDS planning process into the Department's overall business planning process; ensure clear roles and responsibilities, including expectations and accountability mechanisms, are defined for program managers; and identify clear, measurable and realistic targets that have a direct relationship to the goals they are meant to achieve.

The principal recommendations arising out of the management review included the need to:

- articulate a clear strategic approach to sustainable development for the Department;
- focus on a few real targets for change;
- focus on how EC can better incorporate social and economic factors into decision making;
- focus on EC's advocacy and capacity building roles;
- ensure roles and accountabilities for action are clear; and
- ensure clear goals and targets are included that will enable performance to be adequately measured.

Annex IV - Issue Scan

As one of the key steps in updating Environment Canada's SDS, the impacts of EC's policies, programs and operations on sustainable development were assessed by reviewing the key functions under each of the Department's four business lines and asking:

- 1) *Where are EC policies, programs, operations making the most significant contributions to sustainable development?*
- 2) *Where are they having a negative impact on sustainable development? and*
- 3) *How can EC best build on its current strengths and address any gaps?*

The results of this review, or issue scan, are summarized below. Not all the issues revealed through this scan have been addressed in EC's updated Strategy, given the limits of time and resources. A strategic selection of the following issues will be addressed in the coming three year period, while others will be revisited in subsequent years.

Environment Canada's most significant contributions to sustainable development

As a department focused on environmental protection and conservation and weather and environmental predictions, it is clear that EC contributes significantly to the environmental component of sustainable development. There are particular areas of strength that can be highlighted, however, where EC's policies and programs truly reflect a broader commitment to sustainable development.

Of particular note is the ecosystem approach EC has adopted as a strategy for delivering environmental results. The Department works with a broad spectrum of governments and communities of interest in pursuit of shared objectives in 6 ecosystem areas (Atlantic

Coastal Action Program, Saint Lawrence Vision 2000; Great Lakes 2000; Northern Rivers Ecosystem Initiative; Northern Ecosystem Initiative; Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative). Ecosystem initiatives have the capacity to lever government resources, focus science, coordinate efforts, generate public, industry and political support and produce the informed decisions necessary to address ecosystem issues in a sustainable development framework.

Environment Canada is particularly strong in its use of partnerships as a strategy for delivering results. Broad participation in decision making and shared responsibility for action is an important part of sustainable development as a means of ensuring that different views are included, social, economic and environmental concerns are brought to bear in decisions, and goals can be achieved.

Environment Canada works with other governments, non-government organizations, the private sector, and other departments in delivering almost all of its policies and programs. Examples include multi-sectoral cooperation through the national implementation strategy for climate change, work with the provinces through the Harmonization Accord, work with Aboriginal people on the renewed CEPA, work with Mexico and the United States through the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, cooperation with the private sector through the ARET process, and efforts to mobilize community action through initiatives like Eco-Action. Environment Canada has shown considerable leadership within the federal family in the promotion of sustainable development through the DMs Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee, the ADM Sustainable Development Task Force, the

Interdepartmental Network for Sustainable Development Strategies, the Federal Committee on Environmental Management Systems, and the Policy Research Initiative. Through these various bodies Environment Canada has helped to: provide forums for discussion of horizontal policy issues across government; promote integrated decision making; and encourage the sharing of information, expertise and best practices. As a result of this effort, departments are working in a coordinated way on action plans in eight priority sustainable development issue areas as described in Chapter 4.

Environment Canada's promotion of pollution prevention approaches has also made an important contribution to sustainable development. In addition to formally incorporating pollution prevention into the renewed CEPA, the Department has for example, provided pollution prevention assistance to business, supported the Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention, and been engaged in numerous international technology transfer and information sharing initiatives.

Another area making an important contribution to sustainable development is EC's provision of warnings for health, safety, adaptation and reduced economic loss. Providing warnings to Canadians and Canadian businesses about environmental conditions or hazards that could impact their health (e.g. enhanced air quality warnings) or business, makes important linkages between the environmental, social and economic factors that come into play in decision-making.

On the operational side, EC is moving forward on the implementation of its Environmental Management System. In addition, it has made significant progress on fleet and waste reduction and has implemented one and is working on a number of other innovative green power agreements. Environment Canada has made considerable progress in identifying our more than 7,000 interests and properties and incorporating them into a single database, and is

continuing work on remediating those sites that are considered contaminated. The use of the Meteorological Service of Canada's meteorological information and expertise allows for the minimization of environmental impacts in the transportation and energy sectors.

Opportunities to improve Environment Canada's contribution to sustainable development

As an overall challenge, EC lacks a coherent strategic approach to sustainable development which makes it difficult to make progress on this issue at times. There are different views within the Department as to what its role should be with regard to sustainable development and as a result, there is not always consistent awareness of, support and capacity for sustainable development across Environment Canada staff and managers.

Just as EC's greatest strength is its contribution to the environmental component of sustainable development, one of its biggest challenges is in finding ways to integrate the social and economic dimensions. Environment Canada needs to better consider the social impacts of its decisions. For example, in identifying pollution controls, different impacts on different populations (women, children, northerners, etc.) need to be considered. The social outcomes of environmental problems (e.g. health impacts) are not always adequately understood or considered. Equity issues (e.g. who is bearing the costs and benefits of decisions) are also not often explicitly addressed.

On the economic side, EC's capacity to value ecosystem components and to effectively integrate these values into decision making needs to be improved. In addition, the cost effectiveness of regulatory options could be improved by considering a broader range of instruments. The tools that the Department does have to undertake socio-economic analysis need improved input data, and new tools are needed

to model the interaction between the three elements of sustainable development. There are certainly some good examples within the Department where environmental and economic issues have been analyzed in an integrated way (the sulphur in gas regulations and the analysis undertaken by the climate change issue tables, provide just two examples). What is lacking, however, is a more systematic approach to this kind of analysis across all EC decisions. There could perhaps be a role for the departmental EMS to assist in gathering the necessary data to aid in such an approach.

Given the emphasis that sustainable development places on long term thinking and intergenerational equity, there needs to be a greater capacity within EC for longer term strategic policy making. Certainly in the context of its Strategy, commitments need to be made and understood as steps toward some clearly articulated longer term objectives.

Environment Canada lacks adequate sustainable development performance measures. It is difficult to measure progress on sustainable development if there are no clear performance indicators.

On the operational side, EC continues to face challenges in addressing issues like energy use, travel, contaminated sites, and the establishment of an effective EMS data collection network.

Conclusions

The Issue Scan undertaken by the Department revealed some of the gaps that EC faces and identified some strategic opportunities to enhance its contribution to sustainable development during the 2001-2003 period.

- **Integrating social and economic considerations in EC decisions:** There is a need for a consistent approach across the Department to integrating social and economic considerations alongside environmental considerations in departmental decisions.
- **Capacity for assessing social and economic impacts:** Environment Canada needs to ensure it has the capacity to incorporate social and economic considerations into its decision making. This may involve training within the Department, or building stronger relationships with other federal departments or non-government organizations who could assist us with this (e.g. Health Canada, Human Resources and Development Canada, NGOs in the social sector). Some enhanced capacity for social/economic modeling within the Department or in partnership with other departments may be necessary.
- **Enhanced recognition of environmental considerations in economic policies:** Federal economic policies and priorities (e.g., trade, taxation, energy) need to better reflect environmental considerations. Environment Canada needs to enhance and use its economic and environmental expertise to achieve this. For example, economic valuation of ecosystem components is an important part of being able to integrate environmental considerations in decision making. Environment Canada needs to improve the uncertainty associated with some of this work and broaden the scope of valuation, while working to ensure that the information is properly integrated into decisions.
- **Non-regulatory instruments:** The cost effectiveness of regulatory options would be improved by expanding the analysis to include a broader range of options (e.g., market instruments, voluntary mechanisms).
- **Strategic Environmental Assessment:** To build on the existing Cabinet Directive on environmental assessment, further work can be done within EC and across government to more comprehensively apply Strategic Environmental Assessment to policy decisions.

- **Sustainability Indicators:** Environment Canada needs better sustainable development performance measures throughout its business lines, and could also, in cooperation with other OGDs, lead the development of a set of sustainability indicators for Canada, promoting consistency in how we measure and communicate progress.
- **Environment Canada's science for sustainable development:** Environment Canada's science supports the Department's work and the work of others on sustainable development issues. We need to build on the strength of this science and enhance our sharing and communication of it with our partners and the Canadian public. Science for sustainable development would require, for example, efforts to better understand the relationships between social, economic and environmental issues, to better understand the long-term impact of trends like resource depletion and pollution impacts, and to better assess the risks and opportunities associated with new technologies from social, economic and environmental perspectives.
- **HR training and staff engagement on sustainable development:** A comprehensive agenda to enhance sustainable development skills within Environment Canada (for both EX and non-EX staff) addressing such elements as science capacity, and broader sustainable development skills training (consensus-building, partnerships, facilitation, consultations for sustainable development) and an effort to engage staff on sustainable development would help to build the capacity and consistency needed to address sustainable development across the Department.
- **Green Operations and Accounting for sustainable development:** Environment Canada needs to continue to move forward in implementing its EMS and setting appropriate targets for greening its operations. One way of encouraging better decisions in this area is to improve the information available to managers so that they can more clearly see the current costs associated with their operations from both an economic and environmental point of view and see the potential for direct environmental and financial benefits from greening their operations. This can be done by integrating the Department's environmental and financial management systems.
- **Community capacity building:** Recognizing the important role of communities, EC could do more work to ensure that communities have the tools and capacity they need for local sustainable development initiatives and integrated decision making. This would include ensuring they have adequate access to EC's science. The federal government needs to support sustainable community development linked to national priorities in a more comprehensive manner.
- **Sustainable development communications and outreach:** Given the complex nature of sustainable development issues, EC needs to have a longer term, more consistent strategy in place for communications and outreach around sustainable development issues. This would help to avoid a fragmented approach. Proper evaluation of outreach and communications activities is also important.
- **Capacity building in small and medium-sized enterprises:** Despite the potential benefits to companies in moving toward sustainable development, many companies, and in particular small and medium sized enterprises, lack either the knowledge or capacity for action. Environment Canada could take further action in promoting eco-efficiency and innovation, particularly amongst these smaller enterprises that do not have the same capacity for change that some of the larger companies have.

Annex V - Consultations Summary Report

The Consultations Process

Environment Canada adopted a two-phased approach to its Sustainable Development Strategy consultations, the first on a Discussion Paper (Spring 2000) and the second on a Draft SDS (Fall 2000). Both consultation phases involved a targeted mail-out from Environment Canada's Deputy Minister to approximately 350 stakeholders representing community-based and national level non-government organizations, industry and private sector organizations, Aboriginal organizations, academics, youth, and federal and provincial/ territorial government departments. Participants had the choice of sending comments by paper mail, by electronic mail or on-line via an Internet Green Lane web site which was also available to the general public.

In phase one, open meetings with EC officials in seven cities across the country (Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto, Hull, Montreal, Ste-Foy and Dartmouth) were offered to all stakeholders. In phase two, a meeting with representatives from various sectors and a meeting with Aboriginal organizations were organized in the National Capital Region. To facilitate broad departmental input, sessions for employees were organized in regional and headquarters offices to receive feedback on the Discussion Paper and then on the Draft SDS. A separate meeting was organized with EC summer and co-op students. Moreover, we took advantage of existing forums to inform people about the SDS and to receive feedback, for example, EC's Youth Round Table for the Environment, the interdepartmental Pollution Prevention Coordinating Committee and the Gitksan Nation Annual Gathering.

Coordinated Consultations

In addition to our own consultations, EC embraced opportunities to collaborate with other departments to coordinate consultations throughout the Strategy updating period. Examples include:

- A Leaders' Forum on Sustainable Development which brought together sixty senior federal government officials and societal leaders to discuss sustainable development challenges and opportunities facing Canada.
- Two rounds of extensive consultations with a broad range of Northern stakeholders and Aboriginal peoples to inform the development of a Federal Sustainable Development Strategy for the North--an initiative led by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the participation of more than ten other departments.
- An event organized with Health Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Veterans Affairs which was attended by fifty representatives from many sectors who came together to discuss the health related elements of the strategies.
- A meeting with thirty members of the Canadian Environmental Industries Association and twelve government departments to examine cross-cutting areas of interest.
- A meeting of eighteen federal departments to offer views on respective strategies.

Key messages

Overall, the consultations process generated input from individuals and organizations representing a wide variety of sectors. The advice offered was comprehensive, thoughtful and very constructive. Input received on the Discussion Paper contributed greatly to the preparation of the Draft SDS. Generally, comments received on the Draft SDS endorsed the goals, objectives and proposed actions as presented and confirmed that earlier views had been successfully incorporated. Some of the messages received are briefly described below.

Environment Canada should be a leader in sustainable development. Participants recognized that leadership could take many faces--a facilitator, a catalyst, an example--but overall, EC was encouraged to embrace this special responsibility. Reducing the environmental impact of departmental operations was seen as integral to EC's leadership and employees reinforced their commitment to being environmentally responsible in the workplace. The Department's ongoing roles for sustainable development were revised to highlight leadership by example and reaction to this was positive.

Environment Canada's communication and outreach roles are important. Participants endorsed proposals for strategies to increase Canadians' awareness about sustainable development. They asked for additional commitments related to environmental education. Participants stressed that linking environmental objectives with the human health impacts resonates well with Canadians and should be considered when developing communication and outreach plans.

Access to useful information is needed. The desire for current, accurate and understandable information was reflected in strong support for

the objectives under the theme, Knowledge for Decision Making. A trust in and reliance on Environment Canada's science and weather related information was very evident. It was accepted that EC should aim to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into departmental decisions while being sensitive to the complexities that surround this issue.

Incentives to change behaviour are required. Many participants emphasized that information provides the foundation, but it does not necessarily translate into changed behaviour. Environment Canada was advised to learn more about the incentives and techniques that influence change as well as the values underpinning Canadian society. Early on, participants linked the notion of incentives to the power of economic mechanisms and asked EC to give greater attention to this area. A theme devoted to Economic Incentives and Instruments in the Draft Strategy was well received.

Community level focus is vital. Participants asked Environment Canada to work with communities to understand their needs, and the barriers they face to becoming sustainable. Providing information, tools and resources to communities in order to help them understand their own ecological footprint was endorsed. Participants noted the good link with government on-line initiatives to deliver this support and welcomed the idea of better integration of federal government services in communities. When implementing community level commitments EC was asked to be sensitive to regional variances and to the different needs of rural and urban settings.

Partnerships should be fostered. The synergy and effective use of resources that partnerships generate was seen as the most effective way to achieve sustainable development goals. In many cases, organizations and government departments offered to collaborate with EC on

initiatives and this principle of working with partners is reflected in many of the Strategy targets.

Making progress on government-wide approaches is crucial. Environment Canada's commitment to coordinated action and planning on sustainable development themes across the federal government was commended. Advancing this horizontal activity was recognized as critical to making true progress towards sustainable development.

Feedback on consultations process

Most participants rated our consultations process from satisfactory to excellent while a few indicated they would withhold their opinion until they saw how their comments were used.

Many participants stated that they could tell their views on the Discussion Paper had been considered when the Draft SDS was prepared.

Participants appreciated having a choice of mechanisms available for contributing feedback. A few stakeholders said that lack of resources—money, time and/or capacity, restricted or prevented their involvement. Participants welcomed efforts by departments to coordinate consultation processes.

More detailed reports on both phases of consultations (including lists of organizations that participated and a discussion of issues raised and how they were addressed in our Strategy) are available on Environment Canada's Green Lane at http://www.ec.gc.ca/sd-dd_consult/.