FINAL REPORT

Evaluation of WD's Sustainable Development Strategy 2000-2004

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Finally, sincere thanks are extended to our research team:

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0   BACKGROUND TO THE EVALUATION

Sustainable development has been a focus of the federal government since 1990 and was formalized in law in 1995 through amendments to the *Auditor General Act*. These amendments created both the position of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) within the Auditor General's department and the requirement that each department develop a Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) to be updated, reported on, and tabled in Parliament every three years, beginning in 1997.

Sustainable development was defined in the Brundtland Report as *development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.* For Western Economic Diversification (WD), sustainable development will be achieved when *full consideration is given to economic development, the preservation of the environment and the social well being of Canadians* (WD SDS 2000). According to WD's 2000 Strategy, broad positive change in the areas of economic growth and job creation; sustainable, self-reliant communities; the development and diversification of local economies; healthy vibrant communities; and the safeguarding of natural resources and the environment will be indicators of the achievement of this goal.

WD's first SDS was tabled in December 1997 and provided WD with the experience necessary to make a meaningful contribution to Canada's sustainable development goals. Based on the lessons learned from that strategy, WD developed SDS 2000 with three main goals:

- To facilitate the integration of sustainable development into the business practices of small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Western Canada through network partners;
- To integrate sustainable development into the programs, services and activities that WD delivers directly and in partnership; and
- To foster a sustainable development culture within WD.

Two teams were formed to implement the action items related to these goals, the Green Team and the Sustainable Development Implementation Team (SDIT). The Green Team is mainly comprised of officers responsible for procurement and administrative office operations, and has taken the lead on "greening" internal operations. The SDIT is made up primarily of project officers for WD, and is responsible for promoting sustainable

development to external partners, clients, organizations and stakeholders with whom WD works.

WD developed an action plan that specified objectives, targets and activities that addressed their goals. They also made three major commitments to improve their accountability for sustainable development:

- Implementation of SDS using an ISO 14001-based environmental management system (EMS);
- Development of a performance measurement framework; and
- Participation of WD senior management.

WD is now in the process of developing their third SDS, known as SDS 2003. This report, which will be tabled in Parliament in December 2003, will need to include a thorough evaluation of WD's SDS 2000 as well as a broader discussion of the suitability of the SDS and its management and implementation process.

2.0   PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Barrington Research Group (BRG), Inc. was asked to provide WD senior management with an independent assessment of the WD SDS 2000 and considerations for the development of SDS 2003. The evaluation was to examine the relevance, success and effectiveness of WD's SDS 2000 from its development through its implementation. BRG's evaluation focused on the time period from late 2000, when WD's SDS 2000 was written, to July 2003, when preparation for SDS 2003 began. As managers will use this evaluation to make decisions about directions for SDS 2003, lessons learned from WD's SDS 2000 were also considered.

3.0   METHODOLOGY

To assess the WD SDS 2000, the evaluation focused on four key areas (i.e., Relevance, Success, Effectiveness and Lessons Learned/Future Directions). A series of evaluation questions was developed to address whether WD's SDS 2000 was *relevant* in terms of what it was trying to achieve, if WD was *successful* in implementing SDS 2000, and whether their approach to implementation was *effective*. In order to answer these evaluation questions, a series of indicators were developed for each, and data collection was focused on addressing these indicators. Key evaluation questions and their respective data sources are highlighted below in the Data Collection Matrix.

Data Collection Matrix

Evaluation Area	Evaluation Question	Sources of Data
Relevance	▪ Was the SDS 2000 appropriate in terms of the needs and capabilities of WD and the expectations of the CESD? ▪ Were the identified goals, targets and outcomes clear and measurable? ▪ Were the planned goals, targets and outcomes clearly linked and comprehensive?	▪ A review of documents relating to the development of SDS 2000 and CESD expectations
Success	▪ To what extent has the SDS been implemented as designed? ▪ What progress has been made toward the achievement of intended goals?	▪ Documents that discussed achievements of SDS 2000 ▪ Interview data from Green Team and SDIT members, managers, and project officers
Effectiveness	▪ Was this the most effective way to deliver SDS 2000?	▪ Documents that discussed achievements of SDS 2000 ▪ Interview data from Green Team and SDIT members, managers, and project officers
Lessons Learned/Future Directions	▪ What has worked well and what has not worked well? ▪ What are the recommendations for change and improvement?	▪ Interviews with Green Team and SDIT members, managers, and project officers

Data collection consisted of two major processes; a review of documents related to WD'S SDS 2000 and its development, and telephone interviews with relevant WD staff.

Document review

Documents for review were chosen in consultation with the WD SDS Evaluation Project Team. Relevant information was extracted and summarized. Information was then linked to the key evaluation questions in the Data Collection Matrix. In particular, documents were examined to identify how activities and outcomes were linked with SDS objectives, and how these objectives were linked with CESD expectations and the WD mandate.

The following documents were reviewed as part of the present evaluation:

Western Economic Diversification Canada:

- Western Economic Diversification Sustainable Development Strategy (December 2000)
- Summary of Results from the Sustainable Development Strategy 2000 Survey
- Environmental Management Systems (Western Economic Diversification Canada); DRAFT, October 2002)
- Evaluation of Western Economic Diversification Canada's 2000 SDS – DRAFT (Innovative Management Solutions Inc., March 2003)
- Review of SDS 2000 Commitments (Innovative Management Solutions Inc., 2003)
- WD SDS 2000 Action Plan Details (DRAFT)
- WD SDS 2003 – DRAFT
- Minutes from meetings of the Green Team and the Sustainable Development Implementation Team
- Western Diversification Green Team Business Plan – F/Y 2003-2004
- Green Team Accomplishments – F/Y 2002-2003
- Terms of Reference for the Green Team and the Sustainable Development Implementation Team
- Project Assessment Tool: Next Steps (Preliminary Assessment – DRAFT, June 2003)
- WD Horizontal Impacts by Region (March 31, 2000 – April 01, 2004)
- WD's Departmental Performance Report (DPR March 2000) and Reports on Plans and Priorities (RPPs) (1999-2003)

Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development:

- A Guide to Green Government: Turning Talk into Action
- Greening Government Operations: When Will the Government Measure Up? (2000 Report of the CESD)
- Developing Performance Measures for Sustainable Development Strategies
- Moving Up the Learning Curve: The Second Generation of Sustainable Development Strategies
- 2002 Report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to the House of Commons: Chapter 5 Sustainable Development Strategies
- Sustainable Development Strategies: Preparing for the Third Round (CESD – DRAFT, January 2003)
- Sustainable Development Strategies: Expectations for the 3rd Round (Presentation to Members of the Interdepartmental Network on Sustainable Development Strategies, January 22, 2003)
- Sustainable Development Strategies: Making a Difference (CESD, March 2003)

Auditor General of Canada:

- Managing Departments for Results and Managing Horizontal Issues for Results (2000 Report of the Auditor General of Canada)

Treasury Board Secretariat and Government of Canada:

- Evaluation Policy (April 1, 2001)
- Interim Evaluation of the Treasury Board Evaluation Policy
- Guide for the Development of Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks
- Guidance for Strategic Approach to Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks (Centre for Excellence for Evaluation, Comptrollership Branch TBS, August 2002)
- Progress Towards a Sustainable Development Strategy for the Government of Canada: A Report to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (DRAFT – June 17, 2002)

Other:

- Global Reporting Initiative. (2002). 2002 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines. Boston, MA, USA. Retrieved September 2003 from the World Wide Web: http://www.globalreporting.org/guidelines/2002.asp.
- Krippendorff, K. (1980). Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Mayne, J. (April, 2003). Discussion Paper – Reporting on Outcomes: Setting Performance Expectations and Telling Performance Stories. Office of the Auditor General of Canada. Retrieved September 2003 from the World Wide Web: http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/.
- Thompson, D. & Kirkland, L-H. (2002). Environmental management systems. In D. Thompson (Ed.), Tools for environmental management: A practical introduction and guide (pp. 19-42). Gabriola Island, BC, Canada: New Society Publishers.

Telephone interviews

Interview guides were designed in consultation with the WD SDS Evaluation Project Team. The SDS Evaluation Project Team also identified key staff to be interviewed. Respondents included Green Team members and SDIT members as both groups are responsible for delivering parts of the Strategy. In addition, five managers and project officers with WD who do not work directly on the sustainable development file were interviewed in an attempt to gain an "external" perspective on the Strategy.

> Telephone interviews were conducted between July 16th and August 13th, 2003 with:
> - 7 Green Team members
> - 7 SDIT members
> - 5 Managers and Project Officers external to the sustainable development file
> - 1 consultant with Innovative Management Solutions, Inc.

Data analysis

Qualitative data resulting from open-ended interview questions was entered into QSR NUD*IST Vivo (NVivo) and analyzed using traditional content analysis techniques (Krippendorff, 1980). That is, comments were grouped according to main themes that emerged from the data and through consultation with the Data Collection Matrix.

Documents and interview data were analyzed by different researchers and then triangulated. Emergent themes and key findings were discussed among members of the research team and clarified as necessary.

Limitation of the evaluation

There was no opportunity to *systematically* examine the impacts of the Strategy external to WD (e.g., network partners and funded projects). A list of funded projects that contain an element of sustainable development was reviewed along with summaries of key projects that were chosen by the regions. These summaries contained information on the projects' purpose and objectives, background, applicant profile, relation to sustainability, and project costs/financing. However, the impacts of these projects could not be examined based on these sources, and as WD has not yet identified expected impacts (and associated measures) due to the long-term nature of the projects for these sustainable development activities, one cannot ascertain whether the Strategy is really producing any significant results. For future evaluations, information on external impacts needs to be obtained from sources such as the GX database, reports on completed projects, and interviews with network partners and Western SMEs.

4.0   DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section is a summary of findings from the review of the documents and interviews with WD staff. Where appropriate, quotes from interviews and documents are included.

Presented first are findings related to the Strategy's relevance, followed by its success and effectiveness. The report concludes with a summary of lessons learned and considerations for the development of SDS 2003.

4.1   Relevance of the Strategy

> The focus here is on understanding the appropriateness and clarity of the goals and actions of SDS 2000 in order to inform the writing of SDS 2003. The following questions are addressed in this section:
>
> - Was the SDS 2000 appropriate in terms of the needs and capabilities of WD and the expectations of the CESD?
> - Were the identified goals, targets and outcomes clear and measurable?
> - Were the planned goals, targets and outcomes clearly linked and comprehensive?

CESD expectations

The CESD noted several weaknesses in the first round of strategies that were tabled by 28 federal departments in 1997. These weaknesses included: (1) a lack of clear targets that would enable *measurement* of progress on the implementation of the strategy, and (2) a lack of *meaningful* changes to policies, programs and operations beyond reducing their environmental footprint. To remedy the second deficiency, departments were required to conduct an in-depth examination of sustainable development issues facing their organization, identify areas where they can make the biggest difference, and incorporate this information into their 2000 strategies.

In *Moving Up the Learning Curve: The Second Generation of Sustainable Development Strategies*, the Commissioner outlined expectations for the second round of sustainable development strategies (SDSs) that were to be tabled in December of 2000. For their SDS 2000, departments were expected to meaningfully involve senior management in three areas:

1. ***Assessing*** *their first strategies – determining what the first strategy has achieved, what has changed, and what needs to be done differently – and*

making those assessments available in the consultations leading to the second strategies;

2. *Strengthening the **planning** of strategies – drawing clear links between the departments' activities, the significant impacts of those activities and priorities for action; and*

3. *Accelerating the development of the **management** systems needed to turn the strategies from talk into action.*

Consistency with CESD expectations and WD's mandate and needs

WD took a systematic approach in the development of its 2000 Strategy, consulting key documents written by the Commissioner. The WD SDS 2000 addressed each area outlined in *A Guide to Green Government*, including an evaluation of the 1997 WD SDS, an environmental management system (EMS), and a commitment to involve senior management in the delivery of the Strategy.

According to *A Guide to Green Government*, SDSs should contain a:

- **Departmental profile:** to establish the broad context for the strategy, describing the department's mandate and key activities.
- **Issue Scan:** to identify the key sustainable development issues from a departmental standpoint and help the Commissioner understand the implications of the department's activities for sustainable development.
- **Consultations:** to assist the departments in identifying their sustainable development goals and targets, and the actions required to meet them.
- **Goals, Objectives and Targets:** to manage its sustainable development agenda, and as benchmarks for measuring progress.
- **Action Plan:** to outline how the department will translate its sustainable development targets into measurable results.
- **Measurement, Analysis and Reporting of Performance:** to monitor and improve performance.

A key strength of the WD SDS 2000 is the compatibility between the goals outlined in the Strategy and WD's mandate. The three goals stipulated in WD's SDS 2000 are:

1. To facilitate the integration of sustainable development into the business practices of small- and medium-sized enterprises in Western Canada through WD's network partners;

2. To integrate sustainable development into the programs,

WD's mandate as defined in the Western Economic Diversification Act of 1988 is to:
- Promote the development and diversification of the Western Canadian economy;
- Represent Western perspectives in national decision-making; and
- Coordinate federal economic development activities in the West.

services and activities that WD delivers directly and in partnership; and

3. To foster a sustainable development culture within WD.

WD's external activities (which are the focus of Goals 1 and 2 in the Strategy) promote and support economic development in Western Canada while making contributions to the environmental and social areas. For example, a number of service partnerships; business, capital and information services; strategic initiatives; national programs; and legacy programs were already incorporating sustainability considerations in the economic, social and environmental areas prior to the Strategy. However, to meet the Commissioner's expectations, this integration of sustainable development into WD's activities needed to be systematic, measurable and strategic. The methods that WD chose to incorporate sustainable development into its external activities in a more systematic fashion were to:

> *We are trying to think of ways to operate that have the best impact on the environment and try to be smarter about the way we develop the economy* **(Green Team member).**

- Provide network partners and Western SMEs with information on the environmental consequences of their management practices and business opportunities for environmentally and socially responsible products and services;
- To support projects that promote sustainable development principles, practices and technologies; and
- To implement a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process for all new program and policy initiatives, as required by a Cabinet directive.

These methods of integration were outlined as objectives for Goals 1 and 2 in the WD SDS 2000. Although compatible with WD's mandate, and measurable in theory, the WD SDS 2000 goals and objectives are short-term and are accompanied by activities and their outputs. Few outcomes are mentioned that are expected to result from these activities. Some activities that have long-term sustainable development outcomes are not measurable within the timeframe of a three-year strategy but may be more significantly reported in future SDS progress reports. However, at the time that the 2000 Strategy was written, this short-term focus was perhaps necessary given the limited staffing and resources available and the uncertainty in WD's departmental funding on an annual basis.

While long-term goals were not an explicit expectation on the part of the Commissioner for the 2000 strategies, this focus on the short-term activities and outputs limits the identification – and thus, the extent and significance – of long-term impacts (i.e.,

outcomes). To meet the Commissioner's expectations for the 2003 strategies, WD needs to identify both the short-term outcomes and the long-term impacts of sustainable development activities.

Goal 3, which is comprised of activities and measures around "greening" internal operations, seems to be more of a response to the Commissioner's report *Greening Government Operations: When Will the Government Measure Up?* than an area in which WD can have a significant impact, given the department's relatively small size. This may have been the result of not fully identifying WD's sustainable development impacts in the issue scan that was conducted as part of the development of the WD SDS 2000. Specifically, the list of environmental aspects and impacts outlined in Table 2 in the WD SDS 2000 (i.e., the issue scan) is typical to most organizations in that it addresses issues such as procurement and waste management. Thus, not surprisingly, the numerous activities planned for Goal 3 include increasing recycling, green procurement, and energy conservation at WD. While important, these activities are representative of today's status quo and do not reflect a strategic direction by WD to advance sustainable development. In contrast, the activities around increasing employee awareness of WD's sustainable development strategy do represent commitments to change the sustainable development culture at WD. However, the impact of the shortcomings of the issue scan is that the 2000 Strategy is not fully informed by the issues unique to WD and thus, does not address the Commissioner's expectation of a strategic document that outlines a plan for meaningful change.

Other strengths of the WD SDS 2000

Based on an examination of the WD SDS 2000, other strengths related to CESD expectations include:

- The **departmental profile** which outlined how sustainable development was already incorporated into a number of service partnerships, targeted business services, capital services, information services, strategic initiatives, and national and legacy programs. This profile also proposed a long-term plan (but at a broad-level perspective) for delivering its mandate and areas where changes are needed.
- The **evaluation** of the 1997 WD SDS included a summary of areas needing improvement and how to address deficiencies.
- The **consultations** within WD, with WD partners and industry stakeholders, and with other federal departments. Following the first round of consultations with WD staff, partners and industry stakeholders, participants were asked to provide

comments on a draft version of the WD SDS 2000, thus receiving feedback on their initial input.

Comprehensiveness and measurability of the action plan

WD developed an action plan for the WD SDS 2000, complete with detailed goals, objectives, actions, performance indicators, targets and baselines, as well as a description of progress achieved towards completion of actions and the individuals responsible for their completion. Our review of WD's *Action Plan Details* in comparison to the monitoring and evaluation requirements outlined by the Treasury Board Secretariat revealed that the goals and objectives were generally expressed in a coherent manner. Several performance indicators were also clear and measurable; however, as supported by the interviews conducted as part of the present evaluation, measurability sometimes turned out to be problematic in practice, making it difficult to assess whether targets were met.

Throughout the *Action Plan Details*, similar problems repeatedly arise in the definition, measurability and comprehensiveness of the various components. Thus, rather than commenting on each component in the following sections of the report, a key example of a design strength or an area for improvement is highlighted within each goal. The intent of this process is to compile a list of lessons learned that can be used to inform the action plan for WD's SDS 2003. Because the intent of this section is to provide a learning opportunity and direction for WD in preparing its action plan for SDS 2003, WD's SDS 2000 *Action Plan Details* are compared with the Treasury Board Secretariat's most recent guide for developing performance measurement frameworks. It is important to note that this *Guide for the Development of Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks* came out after WD proposed its SDS 2000.

Goal 1: To facilitate the integration of sustainable development into the business practices of SMEs in Western Canada through our network partners

From the WD SDS 2000 *Action Plan Details*:

	Performance Indicator 1.1.1: # and % of WCBSN members who have access to the WD sustainable development information package
Objective 1.1: To provide our network partners and Western SMEs with information on the practical application of sustainable development.	**Performance Indicator 1.1.2:** # users who access WD sustainable development information package
	Performance Indicator 1.1.3: # and % of WCBSN members who are using the sustainable development information package in their delivery of services

Because the CESD expects the 2003 sustainable development strategies that will be developed by all required federal departments to be more results-oriented than was previously the case, WD's SDS 2000 *Action Plan Details* were compared with the Treasury Board Secretariat's *Guide for the Development of Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks (RMAFs).* The RMAF guide provides a detailed approach to developing a framework that links the activities to their anticipated

As outlined in TBS's *Guide for the Development of RMAFs*:

Activities (or Actions): What are the key activities that staff are engaged in under the Strategy? What are the key activities intended to contribute to the achievement of outcomes?
Outputs: What demonstrates that the activities have been undertaken?
Immediate outcomes (or Objectives): What are the short-term outcomes that stem from the activities and outputs?
Intermediate outcomes (or Objectives): What are the next links in the chain of outcomes that occur? (Medium-term.)
Final outcomes (or Goals): What are the final outcomes of the Strategy or why are the activities being engaged in? (Long-term and subject to influences beyond the Strategy.)
Performance indicators: Was the output produced? Was the outcome achieved? Can be quantitative or qualitative. Identify the data source and collection method; the timing and frequency of the data collection; and the responsibility for measurement.

outcomes, along with an approach to measure progress made towards the achievement of these outcomes.

The comparison of the *Action Plan Details* to the RMAF guide suggests that Goals 1 and 2, as stated, can perhaps be more accurately described as objectives ("immediate and intermediate outcomes" in the most recent federal government terminology in the context of results-based management), since they are relatively specific, narrow in focus, and

essentially met within a short time frame. Furthermore, the objectives specified in WD's SDS 2000 for Goals 1 and 2 are, in essence, outputs, or the immediate results of activities in which WD engages. For example, Objective 1.1 – *to provide our network partners and Western SMEs with information on the practical application of sustainable development* – reflects the output that can be produced when WD implements an online sustainable development information package. As written, the WD SDS 2000 does not specify the impacts (i.e., outcomes) that WD expects as a result of engaging in sustainable development activities.

The actions ("activities" in the most recent terminology) set out to achieve the output of providing information were logical, yet there are five actions listed and only three performance indicators. To monitor the ongoing progress of the Strategy, performance indicators are required to measure completion of activities. Thus, under Goal 1, performance indicators are needed to measure whether the information package was distributed to WCSBN and SMEs and whether it was received. To measure the number of businesses that actually access the package, it would be preferable to count the number that download the sustainable development information package.

The last two specified actions – *document the number of WCBSN members who have received the sustainable development info package* and *survey 100% of WCBSN members to determine use of package* – are actually forms of measurement and thus, should not be listed as activities.

From the WD SDS 2000 *Action Plan Details:*

Actions for Objective 1.1:

- Develop an outline for the sustainable development information package, include learning outcomes and tracking process, decide on media to use (Web, presentations, orientation sessions, etc)
- Develop a sustainable development information package that can be modified to meet the needs of the target audience(s) and customize to needs of WCBSN and SME delivery
- Provide and promote access to sustainable development info package to WCBSN members and SMEs
- Document the number of WCBSN members who have received the sustainable development info package
- Survey 100% of WCBSN members to determine use of package

The third indicator – *number and percentage of WCBSN members who are using the sustainable development information package in their delivery of services* – is a good example of a performance indicator that measures an immediate outcome of increased use of the information package. The *Action Plan Details* indicated that WD was unable to measure the use of the information package because interviews would be too costly; however, there may be other equally informative approaches, such as through ongoing dialogues with network members. Though this informal process would not gather

systematic, quantifiable information, it would still provide information on the reach of the Strategy and valuable ideas for improving the sustainable development information package and insight into its continued relevance for these industry groups.

That said, since the measurement of outcomes is complex, and typically requires extensive data collection (such as surveys) and the triangulation of information from a number of data sources, it is usually reserved for periodic evaluations. However, at an early stage during the development of the Strategy, it is crucial that indicators are detailed to measure both the ongoing performance of the Strategy (i.e., activities) as well as the progress towards the achievement of outcomes. With this information in hand, managers can be reassured that outcomes are unfolding as expected, or at least be notified that planned results are not occurring.

Goal 2: To integrate sustainable development into the programs, services and activities that we deliver directly and in partnership

From the WD SDS 2000 *Action Plan Details*:

Objective 2.1: To support projects that promote sustainable development principles, practices and technologies, directly or in partnership with others.	**Performance Indicator 2.1.1:** # of projects that support sustainable development and the $ value of WD funding approved
Objective 2.2: To implement strategic environmental assessment (SEA) process for all new program and policy initiatives.	**Performance Indicator 2.2.1:** % of new programs assessed under the modified SEA process

There are many examples of WD projects that incorporate sustainable development principles. Since 1995, WD has provided assistance to small- and medium-sized businesses; community economic development; and access to information and capital to key Western growth industries and under-serviced groups including youth, women, Aboriginal entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs with physical challenges (WD SDS 2000). For example, under the Community Futures program, WD provides operating and investment funds to 90 Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs). These CFDCs often promote sustainable development principles and practices in the services they provide in non-metropolitan communities across Western Canada. As another example, under the Western Diversification Program (WDP), support was provided to the Winnipeg-based International Institute for Sustainable Development.

WD's extensive involvement in providing services that promote economic sustainable development – and in funding programs that in turn, promote the social and

environmental areas – appears to indicate that WD had begun to make the shift to sustainable development prior to tabling its strategies in Parliament. While these efforts are commendable in their own right, the strategies are intended to change the way federal departments deliver their mandate. That is, in the spirit of the sustainable development strategies, the Commissioner expects departments to go beyond measuring what they already do. It is hoped that departments will be innovative, and ponder ways to change the way they do business to reflect that they are incorporating sustainable development.

In the interviews, some respondents expressed that they are already thinking in these broader terms. For example, one suggestion was that several project officers be given a budget and the freedom to independently develop sustainable development projects. The idea is to see how far sustainable development can go, and into which areas WD can potentially expand.

> *I think WD's real opportunity for making an impact lies in the second set of targets. 2.1 talks about projects funded by WD for sustainable development... WD has a big opportunity to influence these projects and promote sustainable development. Or at the very least, WD has the power to insist that projects have no negative impact before they provide funding.*

When examined in light of the Commissioner's expectations, Goal 2 and its associated objectives and activities in the WD SDS 2000 does not represent a commitment by WD to *change* its delivery of programs and services to advance sustainable development. To produce a commitment that would meet these expectations, WD would need to identify opportunities for policy development which further support programs and services that incorporate sustainable development. Such opportunities may be identified through an issue scan that culminates, for example, in the identification of a need to set a policy that encourages WD to partner or fund organizations that have established an Environmental Management System (EMS), or that demonstrate sustainable development in their funding applications. If WD identified the need for such a policy in its issue scan, then a series of activities relevant to the accomplishment of this objective could be initiated.

It should be noted that some objectives and activities under Goals 1 and 3 are strategic in the sense that they appear to be activities in which WD would not have engaged without the Strategy. For example, under Goal 1, WD strives to provide its network partners and Western SMEs with information on the practical application of sustainable development.

Goal 3: To foster a sustainable development culture within WD

From the WD SDS 2000 *Action Plan Details*:

Objective 3.1: To make employees aware of the SDS and the objectives and targets.	**Performance Indicator 3.1.1:** # and % of employees who receive a sustainable development orientation package	**Baseline Information - Objective 3.1:** Determine total number of WD employees, deciding whether to include part-time staff, contractors, workers, etc. This is a new package so at the time of program initiation the baseline was 0.
Objective 3.2: To communicate progress on the WD SDS to employees on a regular basis.	**Performance Indicator 3.2.1:** # of best practices and case studies addressing sustainable development generated	**Baseline Information - Objective 3.2:** Measure the number of best practices and case studies developed for FY 2000/01 and use this as the base year.
Objective 3.3: To encourage the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, recycling) and implement recycling programs in WD facilities.	**Performance Indicator 3.3.1:** Number and type of 3R activities or internal "Best Practices" implemented at WD facilities.	**Baseline Information - Objective 3.3:** Determine the number of 3R activities and "Best Practices" in place in FY 2000/01 and use this as the base year.
Objective 3.4: To increase green procurement within WD.	**Performance Indicator 3.4.1:** # of people with procurement responsibilities who have received green procurement training	**Baseline Information - Objective 3.4:** Identify individuals with procurement responsibilities. In order to track % of people with procurement responsibilities who have received training, the total number of individuals with procurement responsibilities needs to be determined. Determine current number of WD contractual agreements as of March 31, 2001, which already include green specifications.
	Performance Indicator 3.4.1: # of contractual agreements that include green specifications	
Objective 3.5: To increase energy conservation in WD facilities.	**Performance Indicator 3.5.1:** % of all new office equipment purchased/leased that are energy efficient models	**Baseline Information - Objective 3.5:** Baseline period to define total number of "new equipment" purchased from April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002. Collection and management of data on procurement of energy-efficient models of office equipment to begin on or before March 31, 2002.

Many activities have been undertaken to date for Goal 3. Unfortunately, because most of the performance indicators and targets do not complement the activities and objectives, it is difficult to assess the extent to which activities have been completed and the extent to which efforts have had an impact.

As an example, for the first objective – *to make employees aware of the SDS and the objectives and targets* – the performance indicator is to measure the *number and percentage of employees who receive a sustainable development orientation package*. However, to measure a result, the performance indicator should be something more along the lines of measuring the level and extent of awareness of sustainable development among WD staff. Following this line of thinking, the baseline – which would then be a measure of the current level and extent of sustainable development awareness among employees – can be measured prior to the distribution of the sustainable development information package, and then measured again after the distribution. Of course, since this is a measure of an immediate outcome, this could be done as part of a future evaluation instead of as part of the ongoing performance measurement of the Strategy.

Another example is related to Objective 3.5 – *to increase energy conservation in WD facilities*. Only one indicator/target – that *80% of all new office equipment purchased/leased by March 31, 2002 will be energy efficient models* – is specified for four activities. As mentioned previously under Goal 1, it is preferred that performance indicators be established for each activity as well as for each objective (i.e., outcome) so that performance monitoring is more transparent. Furthermore, it may be necessary to develop more than one performance indicator for each outcome. The reason for developing more than one indicator related to an outcome is that it is not always easy to attribute outcomes to a specific activity since, by definition, we do not control outcomes but rather seek to influence their occurrence by carrying out certain and related activities (Mayne, 2003).

4.2   Success of the Strategy

This section addresses the questions:

- To what extent has the SDS been implemented as designed?
- What progress has been made toward the achievement of intended goals?

The purpose of this is to understand what elements of SDS 2000 should be continued in the next strategy, as well as what challenges WD faced during the implementation of SDS 2000.

During the period of implementation of WD's SDS 2000, WD completed many actions with relatively little staff time formally dedicated to the file and virtually no operations and

management (O & M) resources formally allocated (though O & M dollars were spent on sustainable development activities). One SDIT member noted *there is usually more of "me" per department. In a number of counterpart (federal) departments… their lead group can consist of 5 to 10 people, and all of those individuals have the same job that I do.* WD is smaller than most federal departments, and obviously will have less staff time to contribute. Despite this constraint, progress was made toward goals, and this section highlights the successes and challenges associated with the implementation of the Strategy.

Progress toward major commitments

WD made three major commitments in SDS 2000 in accordance with CESD requirements. These were:

1. Implementation of SDS using an ISO 14001-based EMS;
2. Development of a performance measurement framework; and
3. Participation of WD senior management.

WD did attempt to meet these commitments, although there were various challenges associated with each, as outlined below.

Implementation using an Environmental Management System

An EMS was developed in tandem with the WD SDS 2000, and is now being operationalized. The content of the EMS closely follows what is to be done during WD's SDS 2000, but implementing an EMS in the organization may have been too ambitious given the learning curve associated with this process.

According to industry experts, a government EMS should address three major activities (Thompson & Kirkland, 2000): "Greening" internal operations, development of policy that has a positive effect on the environment (including the removal of policies that have a negative effect), and exerting a positive influence over the businesses or agencies that are being governed. Based on a review of WD's EMS, it appears as though "greening" internal operations and exerting a positive influence over external organizations has been addressed. WD's SDS 2000 was instrumental in making progress toward meeting these goals: First, the Green Team has spent considerable effort reducing the impacts of internal operations through the promotion of recycling and green procurement. Second, as has been mentioned, two goals of the WD SDS 2000 were centered on promoting sustainability to external stakeholders, and a key activity has been the development of

an on-line learning tool to improve awareness of opportunities for sustainable development.

The second activity that should be addressed by a government EMS – identifying and developing policy that benefits the environment – has been partially completed. A full issue scan has not been done specifically for potential departmental impacts, although a basic list of issues common to most organizations was identified in WD's SDS 2000 and in the EMS. Specifically, the list of environmental aspects and impacts noted in WD's issue scan addresses areas such as procurement and waste management. The findings of this issue scan are reflected in the activities planned for Goal 3, namely recycling, green procurement, and energy conservation at WD. These activities are representative of today's status quo and do not reflect a strategic direction by WD to advance sustainable development. In contrast, the activities around increasing employee awareness of WD's sustainable development strategy do represent commitments to change the sustainable development culture at WD, and are thus, strategic in nature.

In order to gain a full understanding of how WD can have an impact on sustainability and develop related policy, a more complete identification of potential impacts must be conducted. This should include a review of how WD policy impacts economic, environmental and social sustainability. The Global Reporting Initiative is an organization dedicated to developing standards for sustainability reporting. They suggest that organizations describe how their policies impact economic, environmental and social sustainability to look for opportunities to develop policies that have a positive impact (Global Reporting Initiative, 2002). For example, a policy could be developed that encourages all new partners to have an EMS in place. This would be an incentive for organizations that want to work with WD to develop an EMS, and would be a mechanism to promote responsible practices to its partner organizations.

It should be noted that other federal departments have also struggled with meeting EMS requirements; a report from the CESD noted that only four out of 16 federal departments with an EMS are functional and able to meet their EMS commitments (Thompson & Kirkland, 2000).

Performance Measurement Framework

The Performance Measurement Framework was the action plan associated with WD's SDS 2000. As has been discussed in the present report, WD made considerable effort to measure progress toward actions, but there were few measurements for the outcomes of those actions. Specifically, the WD SDS 2000 specifies few impacts (i.e., outcomes)

that WD expects as a result of engaging in sustainable development activities. Ongoing measurement of outputs and periodic measurement of outcomes would enable WD to gauge which activities are worthwhile. To enable the performance monitoring of a program, it is often helpful to develop a logic model or results chain that schematically describes how the activities undertaken will produce outputs, and how these outputs in turn, will contribute toward the occurrence of the hoped for outcomes.

Outcomes can be difficult to measure, especially for a complex concept like sustainable development. Furthermore, links between outputs and various levels of outcomes can be difficult to establish, and being accountable for specific numerical outcomes is often not realistic or useful (Mayne, 2003). In the *Action Plan Details* of the WD SDS 2000, quantitative measures were established for outputs and outcomes, and many turned out to be inappropriate or infeasible. In the absence of effective quantitative measures, it has been suggested earlier in the present report that information be gathered through informal conversations with network partners and employees about the visibility and impact of activities as one measure of their success. These alternative approaches may help to address the constraints faced by WD in allocating very limited resources to the ongoing performance monitoring of the Strategy.

Management's Role in Sustainable Development

In *Moving Up the Learning Curve,* the Commissioner emphasized the need for federal departments to address the *limited involvement of senior management* in their 2000 strategies. In response to this, WD noted that senior management would commit to *review the SDS on a regular basis, to recognize achievements and to initiate corrective action as required* (WD SDS 2000).

Evidence and Visibility of Management's Role in Sustainable Development

Senior managers that were interviewed were generally supportive of the sustainable development file. They indicated that sustainable development was one of many priorities for the department. Sustainable development was being discussed during executive meetings, and managers were also thinking about the long-term outcomes when making decisions for WD.

> *I am cautious about having another priority that we have to incorporate into our activities, but I think sustainable development is a permanent long-term structure for our decision-making that we have already embraced* (**Manager**).

In terms of financial support, senior managers that were interviewed mentioned there would be little resistance to spending money on initiatives or looking for initiatives that support sustainable development, as it is a government priority. Green Team and SDIT members confirmed that money has always been made available for initiatives relating to sustainable development. Furthermore, project officers had been encouraged to support projects that relate to sustainable development. While it is positive that money is generally available to fund sustainable development initiatives (both internal and external), there was no committed budget.

While senior executives have expressed that they are supportive of sustainable development initiatives, this was not necessarily being conveyed to other employees: *At the very top level, senior executives are promoting things to upper management… but they are not part of day-to-day operations* (SDIT member). Green Team and SDIT members reported that their activities often went unnoticed, and that they were frustrated by a lack of feedback on their progress: *We are given the responsibility for the SDS, but we never get the feedback to say that this is what the Department wants* (Green Team member).

Based on interview responses from officers, managers and the senior executive, it appears that at the managerial level, support for sustainable development activities varies among individuals. During interviews with Green Team and SDIT members, it was conveyed that individual managers had different levels of enthusiasm for sustainable development: *Generally, there is not a lot of visibility or even discussion about sustainable development as a top priority for WD. There are reports, and managers verbally support it, but they are not very active* (Green Team member).

One support mechanism that was identified was whether managers encouraged employees to spend time working on the sustainable development file. Green Team and SDIT members reported some evidence of support in this regard, but few were given dedicated time or felt that they could approach their managers about sustainable development issues. In some cases, team members noted that their managers were not willing to give them time to work on the file (i.e., by relieving them of other responsibilities).

Another issue was that managers were sometimes unwilling to support Green Team members when they attempted to initiate change in office operations. Green Team members, in particular, reported several examples of "greening" activities they wanted to implement in their offices but could not. One specific example was changing the default on printers from single-sided printing to double-sided printing. In some regions, this was

done, but other regions reported that they were unable to make this change due to their lack of authority within the department. This is a learning opportunity for WD; recognition of this issue means

> *We tried to discourage colored brochures, but we are not in a position to make that a policy. We need someone in a higher level to say this is actually going to be put in place* (**Green Team member**).

that WD can seek out policy options for ensuring that green procedures can be put in place. This might be as simple as implementing a policy that requires managers to implement best practices for green operations.

When asked why they thought managers may not be supporting sustainable development, Green Team, SDIT members and project officers suggested the following reasons:

- Activities relating to the sustainable development file were not always communicated well to the rest of the department. …*activities are not a priority for managers. I think that might be because they are not aware of our activities. We send out information, but we don't want to inundate people* (Green Team member).
- Managers are accountable for other priorities. *[Managers] are focusing on other activities. Their accountability and business plan does not include sustainable development, so there is no mechanism for support* (Green Team member).
- Managers are often solving day-to-day problems and may not have enough time to visibly support new initiatives. *Managers are trying to make things run smoothly. They are dealing with crisis* (SDIT member).

Visible support for initiatives is seen as critical to the success of the Strategy. Green Team and SDIT members alike noted that as managers become more visibly supportive of the sustainable development file, the file will gain recognition and, in turn, employees will be more willing to strive for excellence in this area.

> *If we could get more management people on board, their activities will spill overboard and employees would take part as well* (**Green Team member**).

Extent of goal achievement

As has been discussed, problems with measurement have limited how well WD can quantify successes; however, this section highlights some of the progress that has been made toward specific goals.

Goal 1: To facilitate the integration of sustainable development into business practices of SMEs in Western Canada through our network partners

The main activity undertaken for this goal was to develop and distribute an on-line learning tool for staff, network partners, and Western SMEs. While the tool was successfully disseminated to WD staff and network partners, the extent to which the sustainable development message has been put into practice as intended has not been measured. The tool specific to SMEs is planned for Fall 2003.

In addition to activities specified in the WD SDS 2000 *Action Plan Details*, WD has also contributed to integrating sustainable development into the practices of Western SMEs through dissemination of best practices. The Green Team also reported that they helped to develop a website with a Community Futures group that outlined best "green" practices for SMEs.

Goal 2: To integrate sustainable development into programs, services and activities WD delivers

Objective 2.1 was *to support projects that promote sustainable development principles, practices and technologies, directly or in partnership with others* (WD SDS 2000), and there is evidence that this is being done. In the interviews, project officers noted that they tried to improve the long-term benefits of every project that they fund. *When we first look at a proposal, we see if it addresses any level of sustainable development, particularly at the community economic level. Then we look at whether it has any environmental or social impacts. Through discussions… we try to determine if other options are viable or will deliver better environmental or social benefits* (SDIT member). This case-by-case approach seems to have a positive impact, as each project can be assessed for what it can contribute to sustainability.

However, it is unclear whether the progress toward integrating sustainable development in projects can be attributed to the Strategy. Project officers who noted that they were actively seeking to fund projects that had a sustainable development component were sometimes unaware of the Strategy. *It is fair to say that the Strategy is not a major part of our decision-making. We have moved beyond that into our corporate culture, in our own activities and daily operations. I suspect that a lot of people who may say that they are not aware of the Strategy are still operating in a way that supports sustainable development* (Manager). This speaks to the need for WD to account for their current practices that already incorporate sustainable development in future strategies, and find opportunities to capitalize on the way projects are currently funded.

One way that WD could make a greater contribution to sustainable development is to ensure that there is a common understanding among project officers of what a sustainable development project looks like. In the interviews, varying definitions of sustainable development for WD were presented. Some mentioned that very little of what WD funds is related to sustainable development while others claimed that all projects have some sustainable development implications. Further, some project officers stated that WD's projects could have no benefit for the environment yet could have a big impact on social sustainability while other project officers said that WD was making inroads for partnerships and projects relating to environmental

> *For me sustainability means long term. A project should have long-term benefits.* **(Project Officer)**
>
> *I have seen projects classified differently. People will look at a project that helps the economics of a community and that is as far as they would define a project as sustainable, but they fail to look at the environmental nature of the project even though it might have a negative impact. Right now, they are not looking at the whole picture (*SDIT member**).**
>
> *Not only do I think it fits, I think it should become the WD mandate. I think it should be promoting environmental technologies, climate change related projects, promoting the development of environmental industries and it could be doing more along the lines of greening government operations.* **(Project Officer).**
>
> *As I understand SD, it is development that doesn't compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It is taking into account social, environmental and economic factors, as well as how our individual impacts affect the larger picture. We can't be all things to all people; there is a concern that we should only be focusing on economic.* **(Project Officer).**

sustainability. Having a common vision and understanding for sustainable development among project officers would ensure that all projects are viewed through a sustainable development lens.

In addition, there remains a challenge in finding suitable indicators and measurements to quantify the gains that have been made toward funding projects with a sustainable development component. While steps have been made to identify those projects that contribute to

> *There are all kinds of ways our projects can have a sustainable development impact. Some are more economic, some are more environmental and some are social. To have rigid criteria that says it has to be one thing or another would be very limiting* **(Manager).**

sustainable development, such as the categorization system found in the GX database, there may be more appropriate indicators and associated measures that could be used other than simply counting (activity/output measurement) the number of projects or dollars that have been dedicated to sustainable development.

The difficulty in identifying suitable indicators and measurements to quantify any gains that may have been made is because sustainable development is a complex concept and difficult to quantify in this context. For example, dollar figures do not have a direct relation to the sustainable outcomes of a project. One possible solution here would be to supplement the quantitative information being collected with qualitative information gathered from case studies. These case studies would highlight examples of some of the long-term outcomes associated with the various projects in question.

I am a believer in changing the corporate culture by celebrating success, educating our employees and demonstrating some logic behind the way we want to make decisions. I am not a believer in a system where we have to fill out a form to assess what a sustainable development project is. We have to move beyond a paper exercise and allow our employees to be able to assess what sustainable development is and it will color how they make their decisions (**Manager**).

Goal 3: To foster a sustainable development culture within WD

This goal had the greatest number of actions and objectives associated with it, and a substantial effort was made to ensure that WD was following best practices for "greening" internal operations. Green Team and SDIT members noted that Green Team activities for this goal (such as the WEDNA poster) were the most important because they helped raise the profile of sustainable development within the department and encouraged employees to think about sustainable development issues.

One of the major thrusts for this goal was to examine ways to reduce energy consumption and waste production in WD offices. Although recycling was encouraged to reduce waste, Green Team members found that they often had little control over building operations. For example, in one office, a Green Team member reported that they were unable to control their light switches, as the building that they were in had automatic timers.

While "greening" activities are an important aspect of fostering a sustainable development culture, more needs to be done. The steps taken within WD towards computer-based training (e.g., the on-line sustainable development tool) are a promising start; however, for future efforts, it may be effective to emphasize how individuals can incorporate sustainable

We are right on track, but I don't think we have really tackled culture. We have done the mechanical things like buying efficient equipment, but we haven't really generated a sustainable development culture (**Green Team member**).

development into their daily job activities. Specifically, the development of a common understanding of sustainable development among project officers would help to ensure that the categorization of projects as sustainable development in the GX database is uniform, and opportunities to improve the sustainability of a project are maximized.

4.3   Effectiveness

In this section, partnerships and the structure of the Green Team and the SDIT are examined to address:
- Was this the most effective way to deliver SDS 2000?

Several mechanisms were used to deliver WD's SDS 2000, primarily through partnerships and through the Green Team and SDIT. Overall, the idea of having an internal and an external team appears to complement the delivery of the Strategy. Partnerships are crucial in the effective delivery of WD's SDS 2000; however, a challenge in the future will be to recognize and measure these collaborations.

Use of partnerships in delivering WD's SDS 2000

Over the last several years, WD has developed many partnerships by funding projects and extending their reach through the Western Canadian Business Services Network (WCBSN) and other partners. Many of WD's programs and services are delivered through partnerships, both formal through the WCBSN, and informal. Because of the high volume of contacts with organizations external to the federal government, WD has the potential to have a big impact, and there are examples where partnerships have been well used to help further sustainable development initiatives.

Partnerships Addressing the Three Major Areas of Sustainable Development

WD is an economic organization by nature; part of WD's mandate is to *promote the development and diversification of the Western Canadian economy,* and at first glance, most of WD's partnerships appear to be promoting mainly economic sustainability. However, SDIT members were able to provide several examples of how partnerships that were developed to diversify the economy have also contributed positively to environmental and social sustainability.

Under the Innovation business pillar, Fuel Cells Canada was given developmental support as part of WD's commitment to advance fuel cell technology. Expanding the understanding of alternative energy sources may prove to have a positive environmental benefit. SDIT members also noted that other partnerships with environmental and industry organizations have been initiated to discuss future directions for projects that will support sustainable development.

> *We've developed an understanding of good partnerships with groups like Environmental Industry Association. We have used them to discuss what is coming down the pipeline, and they are a good sounding board for sustainable development activities* (SDIT member).

WD has also developed partnerships that promote social sustainability, and further opportunities have been provided by the development of the Sustainable Communities pillar. An example is the Vancouver Agreement, where partnerships with municipal and provincial and other federal organizations have been developed to address issues in Vancouver's downtown east side. Several interview respondents cited this as a good example of how WD is helping to further sustainable social structures through building capacity for different levels of government to work together, providing opportunities for building skills, and addressing issues of poverty in a very troubled region.

Recognition of Partnerships

While there are many positive partnerships that are advancing sustainable development practices in the West, they are not explicitly tied to WD's SDS 2000. In many respects, WD was already promoting sustainable development in economic, environmental and social areas, but it is not being formally recognized as such. In order to highlight these advances to the Commissioner, these partnerships need to be recognized, recorded and measured and further opportunities for promoting sustainable development through partnerships need to be sought. One SDIT member pointed out that opportunities for improving the social sustainability of a project could be as simple as having project officers request that a certain percentage of the workforce for a project be of Aboriginal ancestry in a region where unemployment is high for that population. While the project would remain fundamentally the same, there is a value-added dimension of social sustainability.

Use of teams to deliver the Strategy

A second mechanism that was developed specifically for delivering the Strategy was the formation of the Green Team and the Sustainable Development Implementation Team

(SDIT). These groups are largely responsible for delivering WD's SDS 2000. This team structure was struck shortly after the development of SDS 2000, when WD recognized that the Strategy was comprised of internal and external goals. They felt that the Strategy could be delivered more efficiently if there was a specific team for internal "greening" (the Green Team) and one that could focus on developing sustainable development externally (SDIT). This is positive given the nature of WD and its partnerships with other organizations.

Green Team

The Green Team is mainly responsible for "greening" internal operations, and thus, has been charged with delivering the activities set out in the third goal of the Strategy (which is to foster a sustainable development culture). To date, this has been primarily achieved through looking at means for "green" procurement of office supplies, facilitating recycling in the office, and other activities that promote awareness of sustainable development within the department.

Members on the team are primarily officers who are responsible for procurement and administrative office operations in their regional offices. This structure reflects an attempt to ensure that the people who are on the team are in a position to have an impact on increasing the amount of "green" office supplies that are purchased. However, in practice, this was not always the case as several members noted that they are not in a position of authority to change things in their office.

One of the Green Team's greatest attributes is the dedication of the employees who are on the team. Team members are for the most part volunteering their time because their sustainable development duties are not in their work plans that are attached to their job descriptions. For those who did not have sustainable development written into their work plan, the amount of time they were able to spend on the file was affected by the amount of support received from their manager. Despite not having much of their work time allocated to the sustainable development file, team members took on a number of activities and were willing to volunteer to get many things done. Most of the action items specified in WD's SDS 2000 were addressed to some extent.

> *It would be nice to devote a bit more time to the GT. This is not in our job descriptions, but it is an important file and we should be dedicating more time to it. I try to fit it in when I can because I realize the importance of it* (GT member).

A major issue for Green Team members was the absence of a dedicated operations and management (O & M) budget with which to deliver their activities. Procurement is a part

of regional budgets and it was sometimes difficult to justify spending extra dollars on "green" items. For other department-wide activities such as purchasing new recycle bins, Green Team members reported that the lack of an allocated O & M budget made it difficult to plan activities and put limits on what they felt they could achieve. However, at the executive level, there was no identified resistance to spending O & M money on initiatives though it was also unlikely that an O & M budget would be allocated to the Green Team without a budget proposal.

Sustainable Development Implementation Team

SDIT members are from diverse roles. Many are business officers or project officers that work with external partners to develop projects. As with the Green Team, SDIT members are in a position to affect change in their regions, but for SDIT, the focus is on working with partners rather than on internal "greening".

The SDIT team contributed a great deal toward relaying the message about sustainable development to partners and SMEs. However, some SDIT members commented that the rate of change might be slow. *I think what is happening is that we are seeing a lot more education. We are giving [SMEs] the tools and the*

> *We are absolutely seeking out funded projects that contribute to sustainable development. We started from an extremely low level of environmental projects… but as we put the word out there (that we were interested in projects that have a sustainable development focus) we are getting more environmental proposals as well* (SDIT member).

knowledge to understand sustainable development. I think we are progressing, but it is a slow progression (SDIT member). In addition, SDIT members noted a change in how projects were being funded over the last several years. They were not sure whether this was attributable to the Strategy, but noted that project officers were now more likely to consider environmental and social impacts in addition to economic impacts.

While progress is being made in promoting sustainable development externally – for example, through the development and distribution of the on-line learning tool – this progress has not been as strategic or as advanced as expected by the CESD. Furthermore, the Terms of Reference for SDIT appears to need clarification as several members reported that they were confused about their duties and responsibilities. *It would be good to make sure everyone knows what is expected. We get lots of e-mails, but I don't know which ones are essential for me to respond to. My time is limited, and it would be better if there were more direction* (SDIT member). The SDIT team is made up of a number of individuals who have a great deal of knowledge about sustainable

development, either from having learned through WD or from past experience, and having more targeted activities and responsibilities could harness each individual's talents.

In addition, most SDIT members do not have their roles or responsibilities for sustainable development written into their work plan that is attached to their job description, and this has had a serious impact on what they can achieve. As employees are accountable for a number of other duties, sustainable development is sometimes pushed aside in favor of these other responsibilities.

> *I was spending about 25-30% of my time on the [SD] file initially, although in the last few months within our unit there were some other employees who left… I have had to take over some of their responsibilities so I have been spending maybe 5-10%* (**SDIT member**).

5.0   LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This section addresses what has been learned during the development and implementation of SDS 2000:

- What has worked well and what has not worked well?
- What are the recommendations for change and improvement?

The SDS evaluation was undertaken for two purposes: To provide senior management with an independent assessment of the 2000 Strategy's relevance, success and effectiveness, and to provide considerations for the development of WD's SDS 2003. The following section outlines the key findings and their respective recommendations for each of the three areas of focus. Overall, the present evaluation revealed several learning opportunities for WD to use as a springboard for the WD SDS 2003.

Relevance

Relevance is confirmed if a program or initiative demonstrates that it addresses a verified need. Since WD is required by legislation to prepare a sustainable development strategy, the question of determining need was slightly refocused for the present evaluation. Thus, relevance was assessed in terms of the extent to which WD's SDS 2000 met the expectations of the Commissioner – specifically, the strategic focus, the identified goals, and the comprehensiveness and measurability of the plan – and whether the Strategy complemented WD's mandate and culture.

In broad terms, it can be said that the WD SDS 2000 provides a good basis for the development of the 2003 Strategy. In particular, an examination of relevant documents revealed that the WD's SDS 2000 was strong in terms of the departmental profile, the "natural" fit with WD's mandate and culture, and the focus on external sustainable development opportunities in addition to the typical internal "greening" activities. Furthermore, the format of WD's SDS 2000 met the overall expectations of the Commissioner in the sense that the Strategy included the components that were outlined in *A Guide to Green Government*.

However, four fundamental deficiencies were also noted:

- The lack of an issue scan that would identify sustainable development issues unique to WD;
- The short-term nature and general lack of a strategic perspective of the WD SDS 2000;
- Goals, outcomes/objectives, outputs, activities and their associated performance indicators and targets were often defined at a level inconsistent with the specifications outlined by the Treasury Board Secretariat; and
- The "immeasurability" of many components of the *Action Plan Details*.

The majority of the activities outlined in WD's SDS 2000 were related to internal "greening" operations, which is an area where WD will not likely have a significant impact when compared to larger federal departments and agencies. Although an issue scan was conducted during the development of the WD SDS 2000, the list of environmental aspects and impacts outlined in Table 2 of the WD SDS 2000 is typical to that of most organizations in that it addresses issues such as procurement and waste management. Thus, the numerous activities planned for Goal 3 that were based on this issue scan are representative of the status quo and do not reflect a strategic direction by WD to advance sustainable development. The impact of the shortcomings of the issue scan is that the Strategy is not fully informed by the sustainable development areas unique to WD.

Recommendation #1: In writing the 2003 SDS, it is recommended that WD conduct an issue scan that will identify areas where WD can have the biggest impact on sustainable development. Specific examples of sustainable development policies and practices for government have been outlined in the Global Reporting Initiative and could be explored.

Although compatible with the mandate and measurable in theory, the WD SDS 2000 goals and objectives are short-term in focus. While long-term goals were not an explicit expectation from the Commissioner for the 2000 Strategy, this focus on the short-term limits the identification – and thus, the extent and significance – of long-term impacts. The CESD now expects for SDS 2003 that longer-term goals be set, and that departments will work towards goals over a number of consecutive sustainable development strategies.

It appears that part of the reason for the short-term focus may have been out of necessity, given the limited resources available for sustainable development activities and the uncertainty in the department at the time. However, a review of the Strategy also revealed confusion in the definitions of goals, objectives, activities and performance indicators. Furthermore, not all activities had associated measures to track activity completion and the focus on quantitative measures sometimes led to an inappropriate and often too rigid measurement being imposed. And finally, measurement of the progress on activities as defined in the WD SDS 2000 was sometimes not feasible in practice, due to a lack of capable databases and too few human resources in place.

Since the WD SDS 2000 was written, several advances and clarifications have been made by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) in the area of managing for results. For example, the TBS's *Guide for the Development of Results-based Management and Accountability Frameworks* suggests developing a logic model or results chain that outlines how a set of activities is expected to lead to the intended outcomes. Going through this process should help to clarify the distinction among activities, outputs, immediate and intermediate outcomes, and goals, and thus, the reasons why the focus of the WD SDS 2000 is considered to be relatively short-term.

Recommendation #2: It is recommended that when writing the SDS 2003, documents written by the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) on the development of a RMAF be consulted along with the Commissioner's expectations for the third round of strategies. In particular, it is recommended that WD focus on the following when writing SDS 2003:

- **Developing a logic model or results chain as a means of ensuring that a long-term focus is explicit;**
- **Defining goals, outcomes/objectives, outputs, activities and their associated performance indicators and targets in adherence to TBS specifications; and**

- **Ensuring that outputs <u>and</u> outcomes are measured, that qualitative measures are considered (especially for outcomes), and that ongoing measurement is feasible given the limited resources available within WD to dedicate to the performance monitoring of sustainable development.**

Success

In the present evaluation, success of the WD SDS 2000 was examined in two ways: (1) Assessing whether the Strategy was implemented as designed; and (2) assessing the progress made toward the achievement of intended goals.

WD made progress toward their major commitments from SDS 2000 in the absence of committed operational funding for sustainable development. First, WD managed to develop an EMS, although it has not been fully implemented. A full issue scan will aid in the further development of this framework.

Second, the commitment to have senior management participate in the development and implementation of WD's SDS 2000 was addressed. Senior managers that were interviewed were generally supportive of the sustainable development file. Sustainable development is being discussed during executive meetings, and managers are also thinking about the long-term outcomes when making decisions for WD.

Formal recognition could address several of the issues that WD faced with regard to the sustainable development file, such as the feeling of frustration expressed by Green Team and SDIT officers that their activities often went unnoticed. First of all, formal recognition for sustainable development initiatives from management could improve the visibility of management's role in the sustainable development file, as well as increase the visibility of the sustainable development file to other WD employees. It would also be a mechanism for providing positive feedback to employees working on the file, letting them know when their efforts are on track.

Recommendation #3: It is recommended that managerial support for sustainable development be expressed through recognition for sustainable development initiatives. Recognition could be achieved in a number of ways, including in private (such as in a performance review) or in public (such as in a newsletter).

Overall, during the period of implementation of WD's SDS 2000, WD completed many actions with relatively little staff time dedicated to the file and virtually no O & M resources allocated (though O & M dollars were spent on sustainable development

activities). For example, the development of the on-line sustainable development learning tool and the WEDNA poster were major activities implemented as part of the WD SDS 2000. However, assessing the extent of progress made toward the achievement of intended goals was hampered by problems with measurement. Furthermore, there are a number of activities in which WD was engaging prior to the sustainable development strategies that support WD's sustainable development goals, such as the Community Futures program.

While some best practices surrounding "greening" operations were identified early in WD's SDS 2000, WD has not taken full account of what they are doing in terms of sustainable development. If this were done, WD's SDS could highlight these successes in reports to WD staff and partners as well as to the Commissioner. This information could also be helpful in fulfilling the requirements for the EMS, which was a major commitment in the WD SDS 2000. Finally, an inventory of current sustainable development practices and policies could be used as a basis for identifying best practices and as a springboard for developing related sustainable development policy. The development of related policy will meet the requirements of the CESD for a strategic document, and will aid in determining future directions for sustainable development in the department, as well as in Western Canada.

Recommendation #4: It is recommended that an inventory of current practices and projects that are related to sustainable development be compiled and used to inform WD staff and partners, the Commissioner, and future directions for WD's sustainable development strategies. It is further recommended that this inventory and any resulting identification of best practices or formulation of policies be disseminated through WD's public website as well as through internal mechanisms, such as newsletters.

Effectiveness

Mechanisms used to deliver the Strategy, specifically partnerships and the two teams developed to implement the WD SDS 2000, were examined for their effectiveness. Effectiveness could not be assessed in the traditional sense due to the unique nature of the Strategy. Specifically, the Strategy is legislated so an analysis aimed at examining the costs associated with engaging in sustainable development activities as opposed to those in another program was determined to be a moot point. In addition, there was no budget allocated to sustainable development activities so leverage could not be quantified. Consequently, our focus was on whether the method used for delivery was sufficient to meet its goals.

Partnerships are crucial in the effective delivery of WD's SDS 2000 and some have been well used to promote economic, social and environmental sustainability (e.g., partnerships built for the Vancouver Agreement and with Fuel Cells Canada, respectively). However, these have not been quantified as part of the Strategy. Thus, as indicated previously for WD's support of funded projects, a challenge in the future will be to recognize and measure these collaborations.

Overall, the idea of having an internal and an external team appears to complement the delivery of the Strategy. The Green Team appears to have been effective in implementing best "greening" practices in WD offices. Examples include buying new recycle bins for all offices, encouraging energy efficiency and waste reduction in the office and sending out "green tips" via e-mail to all WD employees. Their challenge now is to maintain best practices and further develop a sustainable development culture. However, because of the Green Team's many accomplishments and the need for WD to focus its major efforts on advancing sustainable development where it can have the biggest impact (i.e., externally), there does not appear to be a compelling reason to write sustainable development responsibilities into the work plan of Green Team members. In fact, it appears that the more effective way to address the issues noted by the Green Team may be to develop departmental policies around "green" operations.

The SDIT contributed a great deal toward relaying the message about sustainable development to partners and SMEs. However, some SDIT members commented that the rate of change might be slow. In addition, SDIT members have noted a change in how projects were being funded over the last several years, although they are generally unsure of whether this was attributable to the Strategy.

While progress is being made in promoting sustainable development externally – for example, through the development and distribution of the on-line learning tool – this progress has not been as strategic or as advanced as expected by the CESD. The structure of the SDIT could be changed to be more efficient in their delivery of activities. In particular, issues around slow progress, limited focused efforts, and limited accountability are imperative to address since the SDIT is responsible for delivering the message to external partners, an area where WD can potentially have a substantial impact on sustainable development.

Recommendation #5: It is recommended that SDIT members have the sustainable development file written into their work plan that is attached to their job description, and thus, be accountable for completing designated activities related

to the sustainable development strategy. It is further recommended that SDIT members receive training in sustainable development, and be responsible for the communication of the Strategy within their region.

Opportunities for integrating sustainable development at WD

The recommendations that have been identified are opportunities to integrate the Strategy into business practices of WD. A full issue scan and inventory of current policies and practices will help to identify opportunities to develop policy and further sustainable development principles, particularly in the area of the delivery of programs and services through partners. This will also help to produce a more strategic document, as required by the CESD.

Targeted training of staff on how sustainable development can be a part of their daily job activities will expand the number of decisions that take sustainable development into account, whether they be procurement, funding projects or developing partnerships. While the project funding process already identifies long-term outcomes that highlight best practices, project officers will be encouraged to find innovative ways to embed sustainable development into all projects. Managerial recognition for sustainable development would also further the integration of sustainable development into programs and services, as it would provide incentive for project officers.

APPENDIX A:

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Western Economic Diversification Canada
Diversification de l'économie de l'Ouest Canada

Canada

Audit and Evaluation

Terms of Reference

Evaluation of WD's
Sustainable Development Strategy
2000-2004

2003-06-02

Table of Contents

Title

Evaluation of WD's Sustainable Development Strategy 2000-2004

Project Authority

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Director, Audit and Evaluation

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The Project Authority will closely manage the evaluation work performed by the individual or firm contracted by Western Economic Diversification (WD) to conduct the evaluation.

Purpose

The evaluation is expected to deliver timely, useful, relevant and credible information on the continued relevance of the department's integration of sustainable development into policies and programs, the impacts they are producing and the opportunities for advancing the strategy as a departmental priority. The evaluation is expected to produce timely and pertinent findings that managers and other stakeholders can use with confidence in developing the SDS 2003.

The purpose of the evaluation project is to provide senior management with an independent examination and assessment of the SDS 2000, advising on its relevance, success and effectiveness. It also is a requirement by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to evaluate the effectiveness of the past strategy to strength the development of a new strategy.

Objectives of the Evaluation

The evaluation is to assess whether WD met its obligations to SDS 2000 and provide considerations for the development of SDS 2003. The Sustainable Development Implementation Team (SDIT) requires an objective perspective to identify gaps in

meeting obligations and what can be learned through the process of SDS 2000 towards the development of SDS 2003.

Scope of the Evaluation

Sustainable Development Strategies (SDS) are expected be incorporated into departments activities, be considered in decision-making processes, and included in program delivery. With the expectations from the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) to advance the priority to implement change, looking backwards is an important step in understanding how far we have come and what needs to be done in order to move forward.

SD is achieving the balance between economic, social, and environmental developments that contribute to a better quality of life. The achievement is seen in broad outcomes (or ultimate benefits) of positive changes in economic growth and job creation; sustainable, self-reliant communities; the development and diversification of local economies; healthy vibrant communities, and safeguarding the natural resources and environment currently enjoyed by all Western Canadians.

The scope of this evaluation shall encompass the relevance, success and effectiveness of WD's SDS 2000.

The Relevance and Success of SDS 2000

The relevance of WD's SDS 2000 is to determine whether the strategy was successfully implemented and the outcomes achieved. The strategy's success will be determined by the following questions:

   (a) were the goals and targets developed clear and measurable,
   (b) were the targets worthwhile pursuing, too ambitious/not ambitious enough,
   (c) were the targets met, why or why not,
   (d) what were the outcomes and/or barriers
   (e) what has the department learned, and
   (f) what needs to be addressed in SDS 2003?

Cost Effectiveness of SDS 2000

Cost-effectiveness issues revolve around whether the most appropriate and efficient means were being used to achieve SDS objectives - particularly relative to alternative horizontal activities of relevant priority to WD and its partners.

Managing the Evaluation

Responsibilities

The Project Authority together with the Director(s) responsible for SDS 2000 will co-chair and decide on the direction for the evaluation. The Project Authority is responsible for directing and managing the execution of the evaluation in accordance with WD's approved Policy on Evaluation and the TB Evaluation Policy.

Standards

The evaluation of the SDS 2000 will conform to the current Evaluation Policy published by the Treasury Board of Canada and the evaluation standards contained therein.

Resources

Resources for this project will be provided through Audit and Evaluation by contracting the evaluation out to an individual(s) or firm with appropriate evaluation knowledge and experience. As time is of the essence in this project, A&E may provide additional internal resources as required and warranted.

Ideally, the individual or firm contracted will:

- Have knowledge of the subject matter, including: SDS in general; WD's structure and mandate; and the Government of Canada's priority to SD;
- Be able to provide equivalent services in both official languages during the project;
- Have past experience in conducting evaluations in the federal government environment that include elements of shared jurisdictional responsibility;
- Be familiar with client consultation and interviewing techniques;
- Have good communication skills;
- Be expected to work within the time constraints set for the contract; and
- Develop and submit an appropriate work plan for the evaluation.

An individual or firm meeting the requirements stated under the Terms of Reference will be selected from the Standing Offer list compiled by Audit and Evaluation.

Methodology

Methodology will be based on examination of the SDS 2000 goals, targets and the achieved outcomes. They will be measured based on being completed initiatives. The number of regions impacted, and expected follow up. Officers of the Sustainable Development Implementation Team (SDIT) and the Green Team may be interviewed on their views of the successfulness of SDS 2000.

Time Frame

The evaluation will be initiated at the beginning of the second quarter of FY 2003-2004 and will be completed by the beginning of the third quarter of FY 2003-2004. WD expects the evaluation to commence in mid June, with a fieldwork report to be delivered by early-August 2003 and a final evaluation report to be delivered by early September.

The time frame covered by the evaluation will be the period of April 2000 to present.

Reporting

Formal reporting occurs in three stages: a fieldwork presentation and report (in presentation format), a Draft Evaluation Report and lastly a Final Evaluation Report. The fieldwork presentation will be made to SDIT, the Green team, and to the Director (s) responsible for SDS 2000, to ensure that findings and preliminary conclusions are factually correct.

The Final Evaluation Report will be based on the Draft Evaluation Report and include consideration of the comments made on the draft report. The Final Evaluation Report will also be provided to A&E, and then distributed to program management and DAEC for approval and preparation of the management response and action plan. Final Evaluation Report (once approved, ATIP-cleared and translated) will be shared publicly in keeping with TB's Evaluation Policy.

Background to SDS 2000

The commitment to create a Sustainable Development Strategy dates back to 1990, formalized in law in December 1995 with amendments to the *Auditor General Act*, creating the position of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) within the Auditor General's office. It also resulted in the requirement to develop and table a Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) in Parliament. Each department's SDS must demonstrate how the department will incorporate sustainable development principles and practices into its policies, programs and operations. An updated SDS must be tabled every three years and annual progress reports are required within the Departmental Performance Report.

The WD SDS 2000 contained several targets that were used to assess progress within WD, with our partners and through program delivery. Equally important were three fundamental commitments that improved the effectiveness of the strategy. WD made the following major commitments in this SDS:
- Implementation of WD's SDS using an ISO 14001-based EMS
- Development of a Performance Measurement Framework
- Participation of WD Senior Management

APPENDIX B:

INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interview Guide – Green Team

Respondent: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Interviewer: _____

Hi, my name is _____ and I am working with Barrington Research Group, Inc. We have been contracted by Western Economic Diversification to provide an evaluation of SDS 2000 and determine possible directions for SDS 2003. This interview will last about one hour, and any information you give me will remain strictly confidential. The results of the interviews will be reported in summary fashion only, and individuals will not be identified. Your cooperation is voluntary, and you may refuse to answer any question or end the interview at any time.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. What is your role within WD?

2. What is your role with regard to Sustainable Development? How does this affect your WD responsibilities outside of GT?

3. How long have you been working on the Sustainable Development file? How did you become involved with GT? *(Were you asked to be involved/volunteered/inherited position?)*

4. What percentage of your time do you spend on SD activities?

5. Did you replace anyone on the sustainable development file? If yes, who?

Background and Understanding of WD's SDS 2000

6. What is your understanding of the sustainable development within WD? *(What does sustainable development at WD mean to you?)*

Activities and Goals of SDS 2000

7. Were you able to deliver the activities (outputs) that you set out to do? If not, which activities were affected?

   b) Did the Green Team encounter any barriers to the implementation of SDS 2000? What were they? *(e.g., human resource problems, infrastructure, inconsistency between activities and goals, ineffective partnerships, lack of management support, budgetary problems)*

8. Do you think the Green Team's activities have been appropriate/sufficient in terms of the goals you were trying to achieve? Were the activities too ambitious/not ambitious enough?

   b) Did you see the linkages between activities and the goals?

   c) In your opinion, were there any activities that were key in accomplishing these goals?

   d) Should any activities be continued in SDS 2003?

9. What progress are you making toward achieving the goal of fostering a sustainable development culture within WD? (e.g., Do you think staff "buy in" to activities that the Green Team has implemented?)

Management

10. Do you think the Green Team is "effective" in terms of management? How would you improve its effectiveness? *(How do tasks get accomplished? If something is not accomplished is anyone accountable?)*

11. Is progress on sustainable development monitored or measured? How (or why not?) *(Do you have targets, dates, baselines, databases, accountability?)*

12. Do you think that SD is a priority for managers in your region? What kind of management support is received for SD?

Relevance of SDS 2000 to Mandate

13. I would like to discuss the relevance of SDS 2000 to WD's mandate. Have your SD accomplishments helped to fulfill the WD mandate? How?

WD's mandate is to:

- Promote the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy;

- Coordinate federal economic activities in the West; and

- Reflect western Canadian interests in national decision-making.

14. How do you think SDS complements (or fails to complement) WD's priorities? How can it be better integrated?

Future Directions for SDS

15. Is there any success and/or challenge of SDS 2000 that really stands out in your mind that you want to comment on?

16. Do you have any suggestions for improvement for the SDS 2003?

Thank you for your time!

Interview Guide – Sustainable Development Implementation Team (SDIT)

Respondent: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Interviewer: _____

Hi, my name is _____ and I am working with Barrington Research Group, Inc. We have been contracted by Western Economic Diversification to provide an evaluation of SDS 2000 and determine possible directions for SDS 2003. This interview will last about one hour, and any information you give me will remain strictly confidential. The results of the interviews will be reported in summary fashion only, and individuals will not be identified. Your cooperation is voluntary, and you may refuse to answer any question or end the interview at any time.

Roles and Responsibilities

1.   What is your role within WD?

2.   What is your role with regard to Sustainable Development? How does this affect your WD responsibilities outside of SDIT?

3.   How long have you been working on the Sustainable Development file? How did you become involved with SDIT? *(Were you asked to be involved/volunteered/inherited position?)*

4.   What percentage of your time do you spend on SD activities?

5.   Did you replace anyone on the sustainable development file? If yes, who?

Background and Understanding of WD's SDS 2000

6.   What is your understanding of the sustainable development within WD? *(What does sustainable development at WD mean to you?)*

Activities and Goals of SDS 2000

7.   a) Were you able to deliver the activities (outputs) that you set out to do? If not, which activities were affected?

     b) Did the SDIT encounter any barriers to the implementation of SDS 2000? What were they? *(e.g., human resource problems, infrastructure, inconsistency between activities and goals, ineffective partnerships, lack of management support, budgetary problems)*

8.   a) Do you think SDIT's activities have been appropriate/sufficient in terms of the goals you were trying to achieve? Were the activities too ambitious/not ambitious enough?

     b) Did you see the linkages between activities and the goals?

     c) In your opinion, were there any activities that were key in accomplishing these goals?

d) Should any activities be continued in SDS 2003?

9. What progress are you making toward achieving the goal of:

a)   Facilitating integration of sustainable development into the business practices of SMEs in Western Canada through network partners?

b)   Integrating sustainable development into programs, services and activities that you deliver?

10. How do you assess whether a project is related to SD? Do you actively seek to fund projects with an SD component? (If "no", Why not? / If "yes", Give us an example.) Have you seen SDS implemented in funded projects? Give an example.

11. At a broad level we are trying to assess how the current approach to funding projects is or is not contributing to SDS 2000 in terms of "SD outcomes" of the funded projects. Do you have any comments on how the funded projects can contribute to SDS 2000?

12. To what extent do you think WD has been successful in developing partnerships with others leading SD initiatives? With whom? *(e.g., network, business, federal?)*

Management

13. Do you think SDIT is "effective" in terms of management? How would you improve its effectiveness? *(How do tasks get accomplished? If something is not accomplished is anyone accountable?)*

14. Is progress on sustainable development monitored or measured? How (or why not?) *(Do you have targets, dates, baselines, databases, accountability?)*

15. Do you think that SD is a priority for managers in your region? What kind of management support is received for SD?

Relevance of SDS 2000 to Mandate

16. I would like to discuss the relevance of SDS 2000 to WD's mandate. Have your SD accomplishments helped to fulfill the WD mandate? How?

WD's mandate is to:

- Promote the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy;

- Coordinate federal economic activities in the West; and

- Reflect western Canadian interests in national decision-making.

17. How do you think SDS complements (or fails to complement) WD's priorities? How can it be better integrated?

Future Directions for SDS

18. Is there any success and/or challenge of SDS 2000 that really stands out in your mind that you want to comment on?

19. Do you have any suggestions for improvement for the SDS 2003?

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX C:

EVALUATION TEAM BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Gail V. Barrington, PhD, CMC   **Project Director**

Dr. Gail Barrington established Barrington Research Group, Inc. in 1985 and since then, has shepherded it from a sole proprietorship to an incorporated company with over 20 employees and associates. She has personally conducted or managed over 100 evaluation studies, many of a complex nature.

Key studies include the evaluation of the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (Health Canada 1995-2004), the evaluation of the HIV/AIDS Initiative for Young Adults (Alberta Health & Wellness 1993-1998), the Evaluation of the Peer Counselling Program at Alberta Safe House (The Muttart Foundation 1993-1996), and the Integrated Services Review, Yellowhead School Division No. 12 (The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities/Alberta Learning 1991). This latter study won the 1992 Annual Evaluation Report Awards Competition, Division H, American Educational Research Association. Since 1995, she has been the National Evaluator for the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program, a holistic, community-based program for high-risk pregnant women funded by the Population and Public Health Branch of Health Canada. This study has been described in The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation as an exemplary evaluation that clearly demonstrates that an empowerment approach can be equally successful in the evaluation of important large-scale innovative programs intended to lead system-wide change. There are approximately 200 local projects currently participating in this evaluation.

Gail is the author of a chapter in the book entitled Independent Consulting for Evaluators published by Sage and has written a number of articles on program evaluation. Her most recent articles include *Empowerment Goes Large Scale: The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Experience* in The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation (Special Issue. 1999. pp. 179-192) and *When Management Changes: Advice for a Young Evaluator*, an Ethical Challenges Commentary in the American Journal of Evaluation (20(2), 1999). She is currently preparing several entries on consulting for the Evaluation Encyclopedia, edited by Sandra Matheson, to be published by Sage Publications in 2004. A brief biography of Gail's career will also appear in the Encyclopedia. Gail is a member of the AEA Ethics Committee and is currently reviewing the AEA Guiding Principles. A long-standing member of the Canadian Evaluation Society, she co-chaired the annual CES conference in Banff, Alberta in May 2001.

She has a Doctorate in Educational Administration from the University of Alberta, 1981, a MA in English Literature from Carleton University (1971) and a BA in English Literature from McGill University (1967). She is a certified teacher and is also an adult educator. She taught for many years at Grant MacEwan Community College in Edmonton as well as in the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary. Gail has been a Certified Management Consultant since 1988. In 1994 she was nominated for the Canadian Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

Laura N. L'Heureux, MA   Project Manager

Laura has provided program evaluation and applied research services since 1996 to various organizations, working with employees, students and university faculty, as well as diverse Aboriginal, immigrant and refugee groups. Prior to joining Barrington Research Group, her work as an independent researcher included a province-wide service needs assessment of recent immigrants and refugees for Saskatchewan Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs; a needs assessment of faculty, staff and students at the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) to identify issues related to computing and networking on Campus; work with the U of S Senior Employment Equity Working Committee to develop an inventory of equity and diversity initiatives; and a needs assessment/satisfaction survey of graduates from the College of Arts and Science at the U of S.

Laura joined Barrington Research Group in April of 2002 to serve as principal researcher, senior writer and project manager for the midterm evaluation of Health Canada's national Hepatitis C Prevention, Support and Research Program. This large study involved a synthesis of qualitative and quantitative data that was collected through interviews, surveys, program documents, and seven case studies across Canada.

Laura holds a BA (Honours) in Psychology (1996) and a MA in Applied Social Psychology (2002), both from the University of Saskatchewan. Her graduate training focused on skills in theory-based program evaluation and applied research, including survey design, interviewing techniques, multivariate statistics, measurement theory, and social and organizational psychology. In addition to her evaluation and research work, Laura has developed facilitation and training skills in the areas of leadership, conflict management, organizational development, and diversity management. Laura is currently Vice President of the Alberta Chapter of the Canadian Evaluation Society (member since 1998) and volunteers for the professional development team of the Canadian Association of Management Consultants (member since 2002), and is working towards her designation as a Certified Management Consultant.

Jennifer L. Chandler, BA (Honours)   Research Assistant

Since 1999, Jennifer has worked as a research assistant on a number of projects, affording her opportunities to interact and collaborate with government organizations, university faculty, and various industry representatives. This experience includes developing a transportation planning survey for the City of Calgary, and providing direction to development professionals around defining and measuring "capacity building" for a multidisciplinary capacity building project in Tibet. Jennifer worked as Research Assistant with Barrington Research Group on the mid-term evaluation of Health Canada's national Hepatitis C Prevention, Support and Research Program. In that project she conducted extensive document reviews, organized and conducted stakeholder interviews, and analyzed data. She is currently working toward her Masters of Environmental Science in the Faculty of Environmental Design at the University of Calgary, a program that focuses on interdisciplinary applied research for solving environmental problems. Her current research is focussing on public participation in endangered species planning recovery, and finding ways to minimize conflict during the planning process.