

Canada Case Study

Analysis of National Strategies for Sustainable Development

This document is one of 19 country case studies that form the knowledge base for a synthesis report entitled “National Strategies for Sustainable Development: Challenges, Approaches, and Innovations Based on a 19-country Analysis.” The synthesis report and country case studies are available electronically at:

<http://www.iisd.org/measure/capacity/sdsip.asp>

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Notice to Reader

Information in the country case studies was obtained primarily from publicly available sources (e.g., Internet and literature sources) and, where possible, was supplemented through interviews with government officials. The information was up-to-date as of May 2004. Every effort was made to ensure that official national sustainable development focal point contacts had the opportunity to provide feedback on the research, but such contacts were not successful in all cases. **This case study is in an unedited, working paper format.**

These case studies are made publicly available to add to the national sustainable development strategy knowledge base. The project’s research partners accept responsibility for any inaccuracies or omissions. The views expressed in this working paper do not necessarily represent the views of the funding partners.

The research partners welcome your comments on this country case study. Please e-mail comments to Darren Swanson at dswanson@iisd.ca.

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1 Introduction: Country Description

As the world's second largest country, Canada features wide variations in physiography, climate and the distribution of natural resources. Despite Canada's strong ties to both Britain and France, Canadian culture and its economy are heavily influenced by the United States of America, which is the destination for over 85% of Canada's exports (CIA, 2004). The North America Free Trade Agreement, signed between Canada, the USA and Mexico, has further integrated the North American economy, and has facilitated a freer exchange of most goods and services between the three nations. Canada's physical connection to the USA also means that both countries must work collaboratively in addressing cross-border environmental issues, such as air and water pollution, and the management of shared wildlife species.

Economy

Canada's economy is dominated by the services sector (71.2% of GDP), followed by industry (26.5%) and agriculture (2.3%) (CIA, 2004). Its key industries reflect the country's rich natural resource base, and include transportation equipment, chemicals, processed and unprocessed minerals, food products, wood and paper products, fish products, and petroleum and natural gas (CIA, 2004).

Canada's GDP reached \$934 billion (US) in 2002, positioning it as the world's 12th largest economy. Canada's GDP per capita of \$29,300US is the ninth highest in the world, and its GDP growth rate of 3.3% compares well to other OECD countries (CIA, 2004).

Canada's labour force comprises 16.4 million people (51% of the total population), and is distributed among occupations¹ in the services (74%), manufacturing (15%), construction (5%), agriculture (3%) and other (3%) sectors (CIA, 2004).

Society

Government

Canada is a parliamentary democracy with elected legislatures at the federal, provincial and territorial level. As a Commonwealth country, the Queen of the United Kingdom is Canada's Chief of State, and is represented at the federal level by the Governor General, and at the provincial level by ten lieutenant governors (Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia, 2004).

Canada is divided into 10 provinces and three territories, each with its own legislature and administration. Provinces have jurisdiction over social services, such as education and health; land and natural resources; and the regulation of economic activity. The central government maintains jurisdiction over such items as national defense, banking, navigation, fisheries, commerce, indigenous peoples affairs and international relations.

¹ Based on 2000 data.

Both levels of government have extensive taxation powers. Although each territory has legislative powers that are similar to those of the provinces, the federal government retains controls over most of the territories' land and natural resources (Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia, 2004).

Human Development

Canada's human development index (HDI) is 0.937 (UNDP 2003, p. 241). While this gives Canada the eighth highest HDI in the world, its world ranking has slipped relative to other countries over the past decade. Canada's human poverty index (HPI-2) of 12.2% ranks 12th among global leaders (UNDP 2003, p.248).

Canada compares favourably to other countries with respect to violent crime, as evidenced by its relatively low homicide rate of 1.6 per 100,000 (vs. 9.9 in the USA and 17.2 in Mexico) (Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia, 2004).

Environment

Canada's Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI) of 70.6 is the fourth highest in the world (Columbia University, 2004). Nonetheless, Canada faces some significant challenges: expanding urban environments and industrial development are encroaching on wildlands, and are contributing to increases in energy use and air and water pollution. Industrial emissions to air, water and land, represent significant sources of pollution in spite of advances in pollution control. In addition, urban and agricultural runoff threatens water quality in several areas.

In an effort to protect Canada's landscapes and remaining biodiversity, more than 12% of the country's wild areas have been protected as national and provincial parks, resource management zones, ecological reserves and other designations (i.e. conservation areas). Protection of Canada's environment is also regulated under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act (1999)*, an overarching piece of federal legislation that is slated for review beginning in 2004.

Note on sources

Information for this study was largely drawn from government online sources and other government documentation.

Key Indicators for Canada:

Indicator	Value
Human Development Index (and ranking)	0.937 (8 th)
Human Poverty Index (and ranking)	12.2% (12 th)
Environmental Sustainability Index	70.6 (4 th)
GHG Emissions per capita	22.2 tonnes CO ₂ e per capita (Environment Canada, 2003)
GDP and GDP per capita	\$934 billion (12 th); \$29,300 (9 th)

2 Content of the National Sustainable Development Strategy

The federal government has taken a unique approach to its management and governance of sustainable development. Rather than create a single, national strategy, Canada has assigned responsibility for sustainable development to individual government departments and agencies. This responsibility is laid out under the *Auditor General Act*, which requires twenty-five departments to submit to Parliament individual Sustainable Development Strategies (see Appendix B). It is important to recognise that the constitutional division of responsibilities gives the provinces at least as important a role in promoting sustainable development as the federal government. This case study focuses on the federal approach.

Strategy Content

In 1995, the Government released *A Guide to Green Government*, which outlines the federal government's expectations for the content of each Strategy, as well as the process for its development (Box 1). The *Guide* was signed by all Cabinet Ministers, and states that "achieving sustainable development requires an approach to public policy that is comprehensive, integrated, open and accountable." (Government of Canada, 1995).

A Guide to Green Government also outlines five key objectives with respect to sustainable development, which are intended to serve as a common starting point for departmental Strategies, and to serve as a foundation from which additional and more concrete commitments can be established. The five objectives are (Government of Canada, 1995):

- Sustaining natural resources: sustainable jobs, communities and industries;
- Protecting the health of Canadians and of ecosystems;
- Meeting international obligations;
- Promoting equity; and
- Improving quality of life and well-being

Box 1. Recommended Elements of Departmental Sustainable Development Strategies

(Government of Canada, 1995)

Departmental Profile

- Identification of what the department does and how it does it

Issue Scan

- Assessment of the department's activities in terms of their impact on sustainable development

Consultations

- The perspective of clients, partners and other stakeholders on departmental priorities for sustainable development and how to achieve them

Goals, Objectives and Targets

- Identification of the department's goals and objectives for sustainable development, including benchmarks it will use for measuring performance

Action Plan

- How the department will translate its sustainable development targets into measurable results, including specific policy, program, legislative, regulatory and operational changes

Each department included under the *Act* is required to submit a Strategy to Parliament every three years. The third round of Strategies was submitted in February 2004, and take into consideration several significant events that have occurred over the previous three years, including the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Canada's ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, and the Government's goal of 'getting the federal house in order.'

The departmental commitments, presented in the form of goals, objectives, targets and actions, constitute the bulk of each strategy. The commitments describe how each department intends to reduce the impacts of internal operations, as well as promote sustainable development through its policies and programs. Departments are encouraged to develop long-term as well as interim targets, with updates on progress provided every three years.

Despite the guidance provided by the Treasury Board Secretariat, departments and agencies that have been tabling SDSs have not consistently followed the recommended reporting format. Departments have had difficulty in identifying relevant and measurable commitments, and have often failed to demonstrate understanding of sustainable development in the context of their mandate. Later attempts to provide additional guidance on the development and content of sustainable development strategies have not been successful in remedying the relatively low level of buy-in from government departments. Furthermore, the federal government's most recent attempt to create a more coordinated approach to sustainable development appears to have hit an impasse, as the government was unable to move beyond a draft discussion document.

Coordination and Linkages with Other Strategies or Planning Processes

Linkage to Planning Process

To create linkages with the departmental planning process, departments are required to report on progress towards SDS commitments in their annual Departmental Performance Reports (DPRs). Separate from the SDS process, all departments are also required to publish an annual Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP). To date, few departments have fully integrated sustainable development commitments within their RPP; however, some departments in the most recent SDS reporting period have begun to make these linkages, recognizing the potential for both programmatic and administrative efficiencies.

Coordination Roles of Central Agencies, Departments and Institutions

Several central agencies share responsibility for horizontal coordination of government programs, including the Privy Council Office, the Treasury Board Secretariat, and the Department of Finance. However, these departments are not playing a strong role in coordinating SD activities, and for the most part do not have an explicit mandate to do so. Environment Canada is co-chairing (along with the Department of Natural Resources) the Deputy Minister-level Environment and Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee, and has the authority through its Minister to establish regulations related to the development and content of departmental sustainable development strategies. However, the Minister has yet to act on this authority to develop requirements for SDSs.

Other inter-departmental and inter-governmental organizations and institutions that inform and guide policy decisions with respect to sustainable development include:

- *The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment* – an intergovernmental forum for discussion of environmental issues of national and international concern
- *The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy* – an independent advisory body that provides decision makers, opinion leaders and the Canadian public with advice and recommendations for promoting sustainable development (NRTEE, 2004)
- *The Interdepartmental Network for Sustainable Development Strategies* – an interdepartmental forum to facilitate and guide development of departmental sustainable development strategies
- *The Sustainable Federal House in Order DG Committee* – interdepartmental committee which provides guidance with respect to ‘greening government’

In addition, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) in the Office of the Auditor General is given overall responsibility for reviewing SDS submissions, and for reporting to Parliament on the extent to which departments are implementing and achieving the goals and objectives laid out in their Sustainable Development Strategies.² Although the purpose of the CESD is not to coordinate the SDS process, the reports of the CESD have provided guidance to departments with respect to the content of the strategy, and to the overall approach to sustainable development at the departmental level. Many departments now look to the recommendations of these reports to guide the development of their strategy.

Horizontal Coordination: Cross-Cutting Themes

In an effort to encourage consistent reporting on sustainable development priorities, the federal government in 2000 established a set of cross-cutting themes in sustainable development, including (Environment Canada, 2002a):

- sustainable development in government operations;
- international aspects of sustainable development;
- a federal sustainable development strategy for the North;
- sustainable development and healthy Canadians;
- social and cultural aspects of sustainable development;
- productivity through eco-efficiency;
- sustainability in communities; and
- sustainable development knowledge, information, indicators and reporting.

While these themes had the potential to increase horizontal coordination through the sharing of resources and knowledge, few departments and agencies responded to these themes with substantive actions. However, a Memorandum of Understanding on Science

² For more information on the role of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, see Appendix B.

and Technology for Sustainable Development was signed among the five federal departments that play a key role in sustainable development. The MOU facilitates joint priority-setting, joint research initiatives, and has resulted in the creation of an SD information database and awareness campaign (Environment Canada, 2002a).

Other Sustainable Development Related Initiatives

At the provincial level, several provinces (e.g. Manitoba and Alberta) have created their own sustainable development strategies, and are supported by provincial institutions specifically mandated with ensuring sustainable development is an integral part of government operations and decision-making (see Appendix C). Other provinces and the territories have also undertaken initiatives to integrate sustainable development principles into their policies and programs, including:

- Quebec's *Green Plan* (initiated in 2003);
- Ontario's *Smart Growth* strategy; and
- British Columbia's Sustainability Principles and Sustainable Resource Management (SRM) planning.

In addition, municipal governments, and in particular those responsible for large metropolitan regions, are also integrating sustainable development considerations into programs and planning activities (e.g. those related to land use policy, taxation, transportation policy).

Integration of Sustainable Development Principles

The Government of Canada has demonstrated through public documents and Speeches from the Throne that it understands the importance of integrating social, environmental and economic considerations, as well as the importance of meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations. One of the key drivers for integrating sustainable development considerations into departmental plans and priorities is the *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*. The *Directive* requires that government departments and agencies incorporate environmental considerations (i.e. through Strategic Environmental Assessment) in their reviews of policy, plan and program proposals. As of January 1, 2004, departments and agencies are also required to prepare a public statement with respect to the results of a strategic environmental assessment, and are to report on both the positive and negative environmental effects of government proposals (Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, 2004). Despite this requirement, the quality of SEAs varies widely, and the lack of enforcement from central government has limited consistent application of SEA for government proposals.

At the departmental / agency level, the government has provided new mandates for Industry Canada and Natural Resources Canada that include sustainable development. However, it is not always clear how this commitment has been translated into action in terms of departmental priorities, or if there have been changes within business lines to accommodate sustainable development considerations. Nonetheless, outside of the process for developing sustainable development strategies, several departments have

incorporated sustainable development principles into sector-based policies, including:

- *The Agricultural Policy Framework;*
- *Canada's Global Partnership Program;*
- *Canada's Innovation Strategy;*
- *Canada's Ocean Strategy;*
- *Canada Making a Difference in the World: Policy Statement on Strengthening Aid Effectiveness;*
- *The Climate Change Plan for Canada;* and
- *Straight Ahead: A Vision for Transportation in Canada*
- *Canada's Species at Risk Act*

3 Institutional and Procedural Aspects of the National Sustainable Development Strategy

3.1 Development and Institutional Aspects

Drivers

Sustainable development rose to prominence in Canada as the result of a number of factors. First, the visit of the Brundtland Commission to Canada in 1986 influenced both public opinion and the attitudes of senior decision-makers. In response to the Commission's call that all governments promote sustainable development, the Canadian government presented a number of initiatives, including:

- A *Green Plan*, which outlined Canada's strategy for a cleaner environment, and included a five-year action plan and \$3 billion budget. The *Plan* was shaped through an extensive multi-stakeholder consultation process, and presented a process whereby environmental considerations could be incorporated into broader decision-making processes.
- The creation of a multi-stakeholder advisory committee to the Prime Minister, the National Round table on the Environment and the Economy;
- A research institution, the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

The formal driver for departmental strategies came in 1995 when amendments to the *Auditor General Act* created requirements for federal departments to table Sustainable Development Strategies in Parliament. The amendments also created the *Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD)*, who was charged with reviewing sustainable development strategies, and reporting to Parliament on the extent to which they have been implemented.

3.2 Participation Aspects

As part of the SDS development process, each department is required to conduct consultations with clients, partners and other stakeholders. The consultations are to be based on detailed issues scans completed by the department, and are intended to inform

the development of the strategy, and in particular the goals, objective, targets and action plans (Government of Canada, 1995). The *Guide to Green Government* also recommends that departments include in their strategy a description of the consultation process, a summary of input received, and a discussion of how stakeholder feedback has been taken into consideration in writing the SDS (For an example, see Box 2).

The Government also consults with stakeholders on specific issue areas. Canada has a strong history of public consultation, and frequently conducts extensive national consultations in support of the policy and regulatory development process.

3.3 Monitoring Aspects

The *Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development* plays a significant and important role in advancing the sustainable development agenda in Canada. The findings from the Commissioner's report have often led to direct responses by

departments and agencies, and the recommendations have been influential in determining the content and rigour of each round of SDSs. Each report is available to the public, and includes a discussion of both the positive and negative aspects of the SDSs, as well a broader discussion of the SDS process.

Despite the strength of the CESD, departments face little consequence for failing to comply with Treasury Board guidelines, or for failing to respond to the Commissioner's recommendations. With a lack of consistency in approach, as well as the absence of national-level indicators, it becomes even more difficult to form any conclusions with respect to the overall environmental impacts of discrete government initiatives.

At a broader level, various departments publish indicators to measure the state of the environment or environmental stressors at both the national and regional scales. These initiatives, however, are not well-integrated and do not provide a comprehensive picture

Box 3. Example of Feedback Received through SDS Consultations: Western Economic Diversification Canada

(Western Economic Diversification Canada, 2004)

Consultation with stakeholders is a key part of the Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) process...The purpose of this consultation is to obtain the views of key interested parties, including other governmental colleagues, associations, academia, and the general public, on WD's Sustainable Development Strategy 2003 (SDS 2003) priorities.

Respondents to the online consultation included internal WD officers, partners, Federal Councils and the general public. The comments largely consisted of observations and perspectives dependent on how the respondent is linked to the department. Rural-based organizations gave valuable insight of the rural migration and stress on traditional sectors, with an added strain on urban infrastructure.

Those in the management group commented on the procedures and favouritism shown to economic projects and observed that few projects are undertaken with economic outcomes as a secondary focus.

Other comments were on the importance of preserving land and water resources. The issue seems to be finding the balance between adopting innovation without sacrificing the land and water resources currently enjoyed in the West. It was suggested that a further emphasis be placed on encouraging industry to develop and adopt new environmental technologies to support innovation advancement.

Since the external consultation, the SD team within WD expanded the two goals presented for external consultation to four goals to more accurately reflect the goals of the SDS.

Box 4. Funding Mechanisms in support of the Climate Change Plan for Canada

Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) is a partnership between the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). It works to bring Canadian municipal governments together in efforts to improve environmental performance and quality of life by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from their operations and their communities as a whole. Under the initiative, communities set ambitious emissions reduction targets, develop action plans and monitor progress. PCP has been extremely successful, with 100 communities signed up across the country, including every capital in Canada. PCP communities represent nearly 50 percent of the Canadian population.

In addition, the Green Municipal Enabling Fund and the Green Municipal Investment Fund, managed by the FCM, have proven effective in stimulating community-based projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions across Canada. The Green Municipal Enabling Fund supports communities in developing their own innovation and climate change plans.

(Government of Canada, 2003a)

of Canada's environment or natural resources, a measure that Canada's large size and diversity makes particularly challenging. Nevertheless, Canada has started to develop a small set of sustainable development indicators to track national progress in several key areas. Since 2001, the Treasury Board has published *Canada's Performance* to provide information on the broader quality of life of Canadians on the basis of 20 economic, health, environmental and community indicators. Over time, the government will add societal indicators and themes and enhance performance information available on federal programs and initiatives. In 2004, the federal

budget committed \$15 million to support the annual reporting of four national environmental indicators. One of the challenges of this broader reporting will be to link federal SD activities to changes in economic, social and environmental indicators.

The House Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development also plays a review role with respect to SD. The Committee reviews government policy on a range of environment and sustainable development issues, and most recently provided advice related to issues such as water quality, migratory birds, national parks, the Kyoto Protocol, infrastructure, and biosafety.

3.4 Implementation Aspects and Specific Initiatives

Each department is responsible for developing the policies, programs, regulations and other instruments necessary to achieve sustainable development objectives of relevance to its mandate. To date, Canada has relied on a mix of instruments, including relatively "soft" instruments (e.g. awareness and education programs), market-based instruments, and relatively "hard" instruments (e.g. regulations).

The *Climate Change Plan for Canada* serves as a good example of a cross-cutting initiative. The Plan applies to all levels of government, as well as a wide range of Canadian industries, businesses and the public. The Plan includes specific, time-bound performance targets, as well as several broad-based objectives. To support action at the community level, several funding mechanisms have been developed, including *Partners for Climate Protection* and the *Green Municipal Enabling Fund* (see Box 3). The Plan

also calls for the adoption of targeted measures, including information, incentives, regulations and tax measures, as a means of achieving climate change objectives.

In addition, over the past ten years Canada has designed and implemented numerous voluntary programs aimed at improving environmental, social and economic performance within a wide range of sectors and issue areas. However, unlike other OECD jurisdictions, Canada remains reluctant to introduce environmental tax measures as a means of creating market signals to encourage directional behaviour. While some provincial and even municipal governments (e.g. Winnipeg) have adopted or proposed innovative taxation approaches, the federal government has not yet followed suit with similarly broad ecological fiscal reform strategies.

Nonetheless, Canada has developed some notable approaches for achieving sustainable development objectives, including:

- The introduction of a framework and criteria for Environmental Performance Agreements in 2001;
- Introduction of the Ecological Gifts Program – an tax incentive program designed encourage private landowners to donate land for conservation purposes
- Comprehensive agreements with northern aboriginal peoples to give them extensive advisory and decision-making powers over the management of northern land and resources
- Ongoing public and stakeholder consultation processes
- A directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Environment Canada's ecosystem initiatives, including the Atlantic Coastal Action Program; the St. Lawrence Action Plan Vision 2000; and Great Lakes 2000.

Box 5. Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals

One of the key drivers for integrating sustainable development considerations into departmental plans and priorities is the *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*. The *Directive* requires that government departments and agencies incorporate environmental considerations (i.e. through Strategic Environmental Assessment) in their reviews of policy, plan and program proposals. As of January 1, 2004, departments and agencies are also required to prepare a public statement with respect to the results of a strategic environmental assessment, and are to report on both the positive and negative environmental effects of government proposals (Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, 2004). Despite this requirement, SEAs are conducted sporadically, and the lack of enforcement from central government has limited consistent application of SEA for government proposals.

3.5 Summary of Canada's Departmental Sustainable Development Strategies

The table below summarizes Canada's sustainable development strategic initiatives.

Table 1: Summary of Canada's National Sustainable Development Strategy

Aspects	Summary
Content of SDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No National Sustainable Development Strategy; 25 federal departments and agencies are required to submit Sustainable Development Strategies every three years - Departmental strategies include environmental, social and economic commitments, as well as the organization's action plan for meeting these commitments. - No formal linkage with budget proposals. - Although not mandated, departmental Strategies are to incorporate commitments from existing sectoral strategies at the national and international level
Development Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under the <i>Auditor General Act</i>, departments are legally required to submit Sustainable Development Strategies every three years - Minister of the Environment, make regulations prescribing the form in which sustainable development strategies are to be prepared and the information required to be contained in them. - The Minister of the Environment has the authority to "make regulations prescribing the form in which sustainable development strategies are to be prepared and the information required to be contained in them" (Department of Justice, 2003). However, this authority has not yet been exercised. - Guidance on the development of SDSs is provided primarily by the Cabinet document <i>Guide to Green Government</i>, as well as the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Inter-Departmental Network on Sustainable Development Strategies (INSDS) provides a forum for departments to exchange ideas regarding SDS development and content - According to the <i>Guide to Green Government</i>, each department could consider completing an issues scan and public consultations with relevant stakeholders when developing their SDSs
Monitoring, Reporting and Adaptation Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each department included under the <i>Auditor General Act</i> is required to submit an SDS to Parliament every three years. - Progress towards achieving commitments in the SDS are to be reported annually in the Departmental Performance Report - The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) reviews the extent to which departments are implementing their SDSs, as well as progress made towards SDS commitments - There are currently no compliance mechanisms to ensure departments meet both internal objectives and respond to CESD recommendations
Implementation Aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each department is responsible for implementing and funding its individual Strategy - SDSs are posted online and available to the public - The Government of Canada hosts an SDInfo website with information

and links related to sustainable development in Canada

- Specific SD Initiatives***
- The Cabinet Directive requires that government departments complete an SEA for all policy and program proposals.
 - The Agricultural Policy Framework;
 - Canada's Global Partnership Program;
 - Canada's Innovation Strategy;
 - Canada's Ocean Strategy;
 - Canada Making a Difference in the World: Policy Statement on Strengthening Aid Effectiveness;
 - The Climate Change Plan for Canada; and
 - Straight Ahead: A Vision for Transportation in Canada.
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Appendix A: Government of Canada's Understanding of Sustainable Development

The Government of Canada believes that sustainable development is not only a desirable but an essential goal of public policy. Achieving sustainable development requires an approach to public policy that is comprehensive, integrated, open and accountable. It should also embody a commitment to continuous improvement.

- **Comprehensive:** Sustainable development is not the mandate of any single government department. All departments must become sustainable development departments, both in terms of their policies that influence the decisions of others, and in how they manage their internal operations.
- **Integrated:** The high quality of life that Canadians enjoy reflects the combination of its economic, environmental and social strengths. These are linked to one another, and government policy cannot focus on one component without regard to its impact on the others.
- **Open:** Sustainable development is a responsibility shared between governments and with Aboriginal people, the private sector, voluntary and community-based organizations, and individual Canadians. Through such partnerships, goals need to be set and respective roles determined for their achievement.
- **Accountable:** Shared responsibility for sustainable development also means that we must each define what we are going to do towards sustainable development — and we should be prepared to be held accountable for doing our part. We have to measure whether our individual and collective actions are delivering progress towards sustainable development.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Experience has shown that sustainable development is not a fixed state, and will not be achieved through a one-time effort. A step-by-step approach based on continuous, incremental improvement is required to make measurable progress towards sustainable development. Considerable work is already under way at all levels. We need to build on our experience and our growing understanding of the issues.

Source:

Government of Canada. (1995). "A Guide to Green Government." Available: http://www.sdinfo.gc.ca/reports/en/ggg/guide_b.cfm. (Accessed: 2004, March 1).

Appendix B: Amendments to the Auditor General Act

The amendments to the *Auditor General Act* formally incorporate the environment and sustainable development into the Act and enhance the auditing of the implementation of the government's sustainable development policies and practices. Specifically, the amendments:

- establish a Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development within the Office of the Auditor General;
- include a definition of sustainable development;
- explicitly include environmental effects among the considerations the Auditor General uses to determine the observations to be brought to the attention of Parliament;
- require Ministers to table in Parliament, within two years of the coming into force of the amendments, sustainable development strategies that include the department's objectives and plans of action to further sustainable development;
- require the sustainable development strategies to be updated at least every three years on a reasonable efforts basis and tabled in Parliament;
- authorize the Auditor General to forward petitions from the public on environmental matters to the responsible Ministers for reply;
- require the responsible Ministers to respond to the petitions within a specified time frame.

Role of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development

- The Commissioner will report directly to the Auditor General.
- The Commissioner will assist the Auditor General in carrying out his duties relating to the environment and sustainable development.
- The Commissioner will report annually to the House of Commons on anything related to the environmental aspects of sustainable development that the Commissioner considers should be brought to their attention. In particular, the Commissioner will monitor and report on the extent to which departments are implementing their sustainable development action plans and meeting their sustainable development goals.
- Further, the Commissioner will report annually to the House of Commons on the number, subject and status of petitions received by Ministers.

Source: Government of Canada. (1995). "A Guide to Green Government." Available: http://www.sdinfo.gc.ca/reports/en/ggg/guide_c_1.cfm. (Accessed: 2004, March 1)

Appendix c: Manitoba's Sustainable Development Act, 1998

- establishes the Manitoba Round Table for Sustainable Development for the purpose of promoting sustainable development in Manitoba and providing advice and recommendations to government;
- establishes the principles and guidelines of sustainable development;
- requires the government to have in place a Sustainable Development Strategy for Manitoba;
- provides for the preparation of component strategies whose purpose is to set out strategic plans for achieving sustainability in specific economic, environmental, resource, human health and social policy sectors;
- requires the government to adopt sustainability indicators and prepare a Provincial Sustainability Report based on the indicators every five years;
- requires the government to establish a provincial sustainable development code of practice for the public sector;
- requires the government to establish financial management guidelines for evaluating the sustainability of public sector activities;
- requires the government to establish sustainable development procurement guidelines and public sector procurement goals;
- requires annual reporting of progress by government departments;
- requires Crown corporations to adopt and implement financial management and procurement guidelines;
- requires the adoption of a financial management and procurement guideline regulation to govern local government(s), school divisions, universities, colleges and regional health authorities;
- provides the minister with the authority to: direct a public sector organization to undertake a review of its progress at implementing sustainable development; or, request the Provincial Auditor to undertake a review with the report being tabled in the legislature.

Source:

Government of Canada. (2002c) "Sustainable Development: A Canadian Perspective." Available: http://www.sdinfo.gc.ca/canadian_perspective/pg011_e.cfm. (Accessed 2004, 2 March).