

The government incorporated sustainable development into the new mandates of its ministers of Industry, Agriculture and Agri-Food, and Natural Resources in 1994. Sustainable development has also been built into key statutes such as the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act, and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

The 1994 federal Task Force on Economic Instruments and Disincentives to Sound Environmental Practices was the first well-defined exercise to incorporate environmental considerations into a budget-making process in Canada. The 1995 federal budget addressed a number of the task force's short-term recommendations. Longer term proposals are now under study.

In 1995, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act came into force to integrate environmental considerations into all federal project planning. The Act requires that an environmental assessment be completed prior to substantive action on any federal project.

The government also introduced amendments to the Auditor General Act to establish a Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development. Within two years, all federal ministers will be required to present sustainable development strategies for their departments to Parliament. To assist departments in the preparation of these strategies, the federal government has released "A Guide to Green Government". It includes objectives, as well as policy and management tools, to aid the transition to sustainable development. It also notes that departmental sustainable development strategies must be comprehensive, results-oriented, and prepared in consultation with partners. Preparation and implementation of these departmental strategies will require innovation both in policy and management terms, and a commitment to continuous improvement. The Commissioner will present an annual report to Parliament on how well departments are doing in achieving their sustainable development goals.

Provincial and Territorial Governments

Nearly all provincial and territorial governments have, or are in the process of developing, sustainable development or conservation strategies. Each pursues its own approach to environment-economy integration.

Over the last two decades, all provinces and one territory have also established environmental assessment legislation. Most require public involvement and provide for an independent body to examine complex or high profile environmental assessments. Jurisdictions often provide for mediation and conflict resolution throughout the assessment process.

Provincial and territorial governments have also undertaken a number of other initiatives toward integrated decision making. Examples include the following:

- The Commission on Resources and Environment in British Columbia has been profiled in previous reports. It uses regional land use plans and public participation in

Round tables have become a way for all sectors of society and communities to address sustainable development issues. The Manitoba Department of Rural Development has encouraged the use of this process and sixty-two community round tables now involve half of the province's 202 municipalities.