

## THE ENVIRONMENT

*"The environment must become one of our major priorities as we prepare for the 21st century."*

Jean Chrétien  
PRIME MINISTER, 1996

Sustainable development means integrating social, economic and environmental goals. It is a matter of sharing ecological resources fairly within society and between generations.

Ensuring a healthy environment is a major foreign policy goal and Canada is committed to continue to play a key role in the international community. Solving environmental problems is one of the highest international priorities for Canadians. We are committed to protecting the long-term health and diversity of species, promoting energy efficiency and clean technologies, and sustainably managing our renewable resources for the benefit of future generations.

Canada is a leader on the issue of biodiversity, and was one of the first countries to ratify the Biological Diversity Convention. Montréal was chosen for the Permanent Secretariat of the Convention.



At UNCED in 1992, Canada played a strong role in developing the Forest Principles. Since then, Canada has launched the International Model Forest Program, the Montreal Criteria and Indicators Process, the Canada-Malaysia International Working Group on Forests and was an active participant in the Commission on Sustainable Development-sponsored Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF). At the recent United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly on the further implementation of Agenda 21, Canada assisted in the establishment of an Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. Canada will continue to advocate in that forum the need for a legally binding instrument on sustainable forest management.

Canada has also been a key actor in international ocean issues. Over the past three decades, Canada has provided approximately \$600 million worth of assistance to developing countries to help them sustainably develop their fisheries. Canada has also supported the development of an Ocean Charter that has now been endorsed by UNESCO, and was instrumental in securing the UN Agreement on Straddling Stocks and Highly Migratory Stocks. This agreement focuses on the conservation and sustainable utilization of fisheries resources.

Canada also played an active role in the negotiations leading to the Convention to Combat Desertification. Canada considers desertification to be both a developmental and environmental problem and is providing \$800 million in bilateral desertification-related programs, in addition to multilateral and partnership funding.

All of these measures are necessary if the international community and our international institutions are to keep pace with the evolution of global environmental problems.