

NAFTA AND THE ENVIRONMENT

During the NAFTA negotiations, how much attention was paid to protection of the Canadian environment?

The NAFTA includes more environmental provisions than any previous trade agreement.

The approach that the Government of Canada took in these negotiations had four main elements:

- Trade-related environmental issues, such as standards, were addressed directly in the negotiations;***
- Negotiators consulted closely with representatives of environmental organizations on the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) and the Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs);***
- The potential environmental effects of the NAFTA were reviewed by an interdepartmental committee. The review has now been made public; and***
- Canada intensified its bilateral and trilateral environmental co-operation. Last March, the government announced a \$1-million Green Plan initiative to fund technical assistance on environmental standards and enforcement in Mexico. In September, ministers of the environment of the three countries agreed to the creation of a formal North American Commission on the Environment.***

Both the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) have initiated, with Canada's strong support and active participation, detailed analyses of the relationship between trade and the environment.