PART III, SECTION I PROTECTION OF THE ATMOSPHERE

Introduction

Chapter 9 of Agenda 21 identifies four broad program areas to protect atmospheric resources. The Canadian response is built on partnerships between governments, the private sector, communities, universities, and institutions.

Improving the Scientific Basis for Decision Making

Scientific research is essential for good decision making on atmospheric change issues. Examples of Canada's scientific work were discussed in detail in last year's Report of Canada to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), particularly in the science for sustainable development and the conservation of biological diversity sections.

Seven ecosystem management programs are under way (e.g., the Mackenzie Basin Impact Study and the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Basin Project) to provide insights into the adaptive capabilities of various ecosystems to atmospheric change and the impacts of these changes on a wide range of economic activities.

Internationally, Canada is active in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, hosting the Working Group III Technical Support Unit. The Canadian Climate Program Board oversees Canadian participation in the World Climate Programme, including the Global Climate Observing System. Canada as a member of the World Meteorological Organization is working very closely with China on technology transfer and training for their Global Atmospheric Watch Site on the Tibetan Plateau. Through the Canada–China Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperative Meteorological Matters, work on climate change and agricultural meteorology, including experiments in the South China Sea, is planned for the next two years.

The Canadian Global Change Program of the Royal Society of Canada links international activities such as the International Geosphere–Biosphere Programme and the Human Dimensions of Global Change. Canada also contributes to the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research, a hemispheric network of research centres.

Canada is assessing the progress made under its NO_x/VOC Management Plan and on the acid deposition objectives under the USA/Canada Air Quality Accord in order to examine the effectiveness of the respective control objectives. National urban air quality and wet deposition networks are augmented by provincial, municipal, and industry monitoring.