

Canada in the World - Issues in Focus

The Government's Foreign Policy Statement and its response to the recommendations of the Special Joint Parliamentary Committee reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy cover a number of issues that involve the environment and sustainable development.

Towards the Sustainable Use of Forests

Forests play a critical role in the environment and are an important contributor to the economic well-being of Canada and of many other countries. The Government's Statement reaffirms our commitment to internationally agreed rules on sustainable forest management, ideally through an International Convention on Forests.

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We are entering a new phase in international relations and Canadian foreign policy. We face many challenges, but we are building from a foundation of strength. We have strong values, strong institutions, strong traditions and a committed and knowledgeable public.

Canadians have every reason to be optimistic as to their future. The Government is confident that Canada will continue to do its fair share for the world, and that the community of nations will continue to look to Canada for our unique contribution to global governance.

Canada in the World, Government Statement, p. 51

Such rules would provide a standard against which consumers, producers and governments could measure forest practices. They would also help us support developing countries' efforts to manage their own forests more effectively.

Protection of the Arctic

Protection of the Arctic environment has become a focal point of Canadian foreign policy and is given prominence in *Canada in the World*. The Statement stresses the importance of international co-operation among circumpolar countries. All Arctic countries share a desire to protect their fragile environment and to develop sustainable economies for northern peoples. The Statement reiterates Canada's efforts for an Arctic Council with the powers to deal with the issues facing the Arctic.


Canada also recognizes that many of the pressing environmental threats to the Arctic have distant sources and causes. Our work on issues such as climate change, the long-range transport of air-borne pollutants and the dumping of low-level radioactive waste will continue to take into account the impact of these issues on the Arctic.

Preserving the World's Fisheries

Fisheries are under pressure around the world. The virtual closure of the fishery for most commercial species off the coast of Atlantic Canada has had a devastating effect on more than 400 communities in that region. *Canada in the World* emphasizes that Canada is concentrating its

efforts on the establishment of internationally agreed rules for the sustainable management of high-seas fishing that will recognize the special interests of all coastal states, including Canada.

Implementing such agreements requires better operational and institutional mechanisms in institutions such as the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization; Canada will continue to promote such concrete steps toward sustainable development.

Canada is also ready to work with developing countries on their fisheries needs. The Government has indicated that technical co-operation in managing ocean resources will be an element of its environmental focus in Canada's development assistance program. 

GLOBAL AGENDA is published to promote understanding of Canada's foreign policy and international environmental issues.

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