

a decrease. The latter is a reflection of recent downsizing and expenditure restraint in government. In the coming years, private-sector activities are expected to continue to be the main engine of growth in Canada's oceans sector.

CANADA'S OCEANS ACT AND INITIATIVES

The Oceans Act

On January 31, 1997, Canada's Oceans Act became law. The act positions Canada to move to a more integrated national oceans management approach based on sustainability, the precautionary approach, and the integration of activities occurring in and impacting on our oceans. The Oceans Act also sets the framework for an ecosystem approach to the management of Canada's oceans and oceans resources.

Canada is making significant progress toward sustainable management of oceans through a range of complementary initiatives, some of which have been facilitated by the Oceans Act. These are reforming and revitalizing traditional arrangements for oceans management with an approach that emphasizes responsibility, leadership, participation, coordination, and cooperation. The act further seeks to reduce redundant or fragmented management, to ensure the participation of key stakeholders, and to forge cross-sectoral linkages.

Initiated during the International Year of the Ocean and reflecting the principles of the Oceans Act, Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans, in partnership with Nova Scotia's Department of Education and Culture, developed a new grade 11 science credit course called Oceans 11. Oceans 11 is being designed to provide schools with the opportunity to utilize the expertise and experience of local fish harvesters, scientists, entrepreneurs, representatives from industry, and community leaders.

Canada's Oceans Strategy

In Canada, there are more than twenty federal government departments and agencies with some degree of responsibility for activities in or affecting the oceans. The Oceans Act calls for cooperation and collaboration in the oceans sector, led by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, including in the development and implementation of a national oceans management strategy.

During 1999, Canada will hold consultations with Canadians on this strategy, which will set out the guiding principles for Canada's oceans management into the next millennium. All of Canada's initiatives toward the conservation, protection, and sustainable use of its oceans and oceans resources will contribute to the development of this strategy. Significant progress to build capacity on oceans issues with a broad range of stakeholders has already been made.