

integrity of ecosystems and involving a wider range of stakeholders in decision making. While the pace varies across sectors, natural resource management is moving toward the adoption of natural boundaries defined by ecological characteristics rather than by political boundaries. This is illustrated in Canada's approach to **land** use planning and management (see feature on land).

Canada continues to build on its national and international commitments to sustainably develop its **forests**. A new five-year (1998–2003) national forest strategy was unveiled in May 1998, aimed at bringing together the ecological, economic, and social aspects of forest conservation and use. *Sustainable Forests: A Canadian Commitment* is a collective attempt to develop a workable formula that reconciles the range of expectations placed on the forest and forest managers. The document is the result of extensive public consultations and provides a framework to guide the policies and actions of Canada's forest community. It sets out 9 strategic directions, 31 objectives, and 121 commitments to action. Initiatives include efforts to complete an ecological classification of forest lands; broaden the scope of forest inventories to a wide range of forest values; and complete a network of protected areas that are representative of Canada's forests. In addition, greater attention will be paid to such issues as Aboriginal forestry, measuring on-the-ground changes, mid-career training, and forests on private land. (For more information on sustainable forest management, refer to Monograph No. 9 in this series.)

The **minerals and metals** industry is a key contributor to the Canadian economy. Canada is one of the world's largest exporters of minerals and metals products. The exploration, development, production, use, re-use, recycling, and disposal of minerals and metals inevitably involve the need to integrate environmental, economic, and social considerations in decision making. The *Minerals and Metals Policy of the Government of Canada: Partnerships for Sustainable Development*, published in 1996, takes a broad approach to sustainable development, with an emphasis on life-cycle management, risk assessment and management, the safe use principle, and the recycling of minerals and metals. Stakeholder involvement and the development of international networks are helping to accelerate the implementation of sustainable development in the minerals and metals sector both in Canada and around the world. (For more information on minerals and metals, refer to Monograph No. 10 in this series.)

Agriculture depends on the integrity of ecosystems, including the quality of soil, air, and water. While Canadian farmers have long been involved in soil and water conservation and other stewardship

Okotoks

The community of Okotoks in Alberta has developed a plan to limit its size to 25 000 people. This decision is based on the ability of its river to provide potable water for that population and on the ability of the community to return water to the river without the need for massive regional water purification systems. Within this growth limit, Okotoks is developing complementary building strategies to eliminate or reduce further negative impacts on other aspects of its ecosystem.

Resource Advisory Process

In the Resource Advisory Process, selected academics, resource harvesters, First Nations, and public interest groups are invited to join science experts from the federal government in the evaluation of the state of fish stocks and marine ecosystems. These participants have full privileges to contribute knowledge and experience, review other information and analyses, and help form consensus advice on sustainable resource harvests. In many marine fisheries, the fishing industry has established formal associations where they contribute to the costs of special scientific research projects, chosen, designed, and conducted collaboratively by industry and government.