



## Canada and the Arctic Council

- ❑ Canada played a significant role in establishing the Arctic Council and served as its chair from 1996 to 1998. The Council's other members are Denmark (including Greenland and the Faeroe Islands), Finland (chair from 2000 to 2002), Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States.
- ❑ International Indigenous people's organizations are "participants" in the Arctic Council, including the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the Arctic Athabaskan Council, the Gwich'in Council International, the Saami Council, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North and the Aleut International Association. The first three of these have significant Canadian membership.
- ❑ There are five working groups whose mandates are: sustainable development; Arctic monitoring and assessment; the conservation of Arctic flora and fauna; emergency prevention, preparedness and response; and the protection of the Arctic marine environment.
- ❑ The key circumpolar issues are environmental protection, climate change, contaminants, sustainable development, resource management, Arctic research and science, and trade development.
- ❑ Canada is committed to northern issues and circumpolar relations, and to the pursuit of domestic and foreign policies that will enhance sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal peoples and other northerners.
- ❑ Canada's current main priorities for the Arctic are:
  - promoting a more strategic approach to sustainable development;
  - improving the future for the children and youth of the Arctic;
  - inserting an Arctic dimension into the Rio+10 process;
  - building capacity;
  - sustaining support for the Indigenous permanent participants in the work of the Arctic Council.