

Vision for a Sustainable Future

The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of International Trade have a vision of a sustainable future in which sustainable development is an overarching objective of Canadian foreign policy.

A sustainable world is prosperous, safe, secure, and environmentally healthy with resource levels maintained for future generations. A sustainable world is socially just and culturally tolerant, where diversity is embraced and fundamental human rights are enjoyed by all.

A sustainable world seeks innovative, multilateral approaches to resolve political, trade, environmental and social issues.

To achieve this vision of a sustainable future, the two Departments must apply a coherent and principled approach to policy development and implementation, fostering the integration of economic, social and environmental considerations into all areas of decision making. In seeking creative and collective solutions to global challenges, the two Departments must work closely with other federal departments and agencies, provincial and territorial governments, and with Canadian society to ensure that Canada's values, interests and aspirations are appropriately taken into account when developing effective international strategies.

Sustainable Development (SD)

Sustainable Development is widely defined as a way of thinking and behaving that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Our Common Future, World Commission of Environment and Development (1987)

The ultimate goal of SD is the advancement of life within the carrying capacity of the environment and at no expense to future generations. It is based on the logic that as a society works toward progress, its initiatives are more likely to be sustainable if they are based on integrated decision making that acknowledges the interdependent linkages between economic growth, social development and environmental protection. It assesses not only the immediate but the long-term impacts of one on the other, seeks resolution of conflicting views, mitigates any negative impacts and, ultimately, indicates the best way forward for a sustained result.

Supporting text used by the two Departments