The Environmental Management Committee continues to make progress in the on-going development and implementation of the EMS. Based on ISO 14000 criteria*, it focuses on 12 key environmental aspects: contaminated sites, fuel storage tanks, ozone-depleting substances, procurement, sustainable buildings, land-use management, water and wastewater, energy, solid waste management, emergency response, hazardous materials management, and vehicle fleet management. While fundamental to the effective greening of operations, such an EMS is particularly challenging when operating at 270 locations in 180 countries.

The two Departments are active participants in a number of interdepartmental committees that share information, develop tools, and work together on horizontal issues - all of which inform the application of SD principles. One horizontal issue of note is the development of a federal sustainable development strategy that could provide a framework for the SD work of all departments. We will continue to work with other departments and agencies to try to develop such a strategy in the near future as a first step in the development of a national strategy. Another significant horizontal initiative, Sustainable Development in Government Operations (SDGO), is also one in which the Departments are involved. It is currently focused on the adoption of common measurement and reporting methods interdepartmentally.

*More information on ISO 14000 criteria can be found in the Glossary

Challenges Related to the New Departmental Structures

As the structures of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of International Trade evolve, there will be challenges in:

- continuing to integrate SD into the separate Business Lines and Business Plans

- ongoing development and implementation of the Environmental Management System (EMS) as it applies to separate operations

- fulfilling all commitments in the Strategy including those that straddle the interests of both Departments

- developing an appropriate monitoring and reporting relationship to avoid unnecessary duplication