

According to the Federal Policy on Land Use, land is the basis of national sovereignty, a primary factor in production of food and fibre, and its use as a determinant of the quality of life for present and future generations.

Forestry

- multiple use conflicts,
- impact of forest management practices on production and the environment, and
- inclusion of Aboriginal needs or interests in forest management.

Shore zone/Coastal zone

- impact of land sources of pollution,
- competing use of shore areas (aquaculture and recreation), and
- restriction of public access to the shore.

Urban

- planning and financing of hard services and infrastructure,
- protection of water supplies, and
- impact of urban-related development in rural areas (sprawl, ribbon development, nodes, and single lots).

Issues Common to All Categories

- present governance systems unable to identify and solve problems (or opportunities),
- lack of current data and measurable indicators of land use patterns and changes,
- inadequate valuation of common resources, and
- lack of integrated planning and communication.

This process is contributing to a discussion paper for national distribution. It will raise awareness of the sustainability of Canada's land resources in the search for workable answers. In support of this initiative, the federal government will reactivate the Interdepartmental Committee on Land. This will help harmonize land issues throughout the federal government. It also will update the Federal Policy on Land Use (1980). Similarly, First Ministers' Councils will more closely dovetail agendas to address the sustainability and integration of land resource issues.

Land Use Issues in Canada, Forum II, will be held in 1996. Issues to be discussed include multiple-use conflicts (policies and how to measure progress), governance of land, and indicators of land use change.

Combating Desertification and Drought

During the last year, Canada's primary focus has been on action related to the new United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Canada ratified the convention in early December 1995.

The federal government, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), is exploring various options for supporting the secretariat of the convention. This will build on the assistance provided to the interim secretariat over the last three years. In 1995-1996, Canada is providing \$200,000 to support a legal expert in the secretariat. It is