

PART III, SECTION II

INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF LAND RESOURCES

Introduction

Chapter 10 of Agenda 21 calls on countries to improve land use planning, policies, and practices in order to reflect sustainable development objectives.

Ownership patterns have a profound impact on land use planning in Canada. Canada has 9.2 million square kilometres of land and 0.76 million square kilometres of freshwater. While 90 percent of the land is under government ownership, privately held lands are home to virtually all of Canada's population and most of its economic activity.

As with many activities, federal and provincial/territorial governments all have roles in land use and management. Except for the federally controlled lands, the provinces have constitutional authority over land use law and policies. Much of that power is delegated to municipalities, which set local land use rules and priorities, although provinces may coordinate land use activities among municipalities. Provinces and territories also manage their own lands.

The federal government manages its own lands and develops land use policy in areas within its exclusive jurisdiction, such as national parks.

In Canada, there is still a gap between the ecological role of land and the customary cultural/economic perception of it. Issues of competition and conflict arise, because, simply put, different people seek different benefits from the same area of land. Canadian governments are taking many steps to address this challenge.

Land Use Planning

A strategic approach to land use planning is emerging across Canada. This approach attempts to assess land use choices from a broadly based, comprehensive, and long-term