

delicate ecosystem of Canada's Arctic regions will benefit from \$100 million spent over the next five years to reduce toxic contaminants and hazardous waste.

This is just the beginning: the Government of Canada intends to announce more than 100 Green Plan initiatives. In addition to the \$1.3 billion the government spends annually on the environment, the Green Plan will add another \$3 billion in new money over the next six years.

Long-term goals

One very important goal of the plan is to reduce smog-causing emissions by 40% by the year 2000. To speed things up even further, the Green Plan will set up an 'emission credit trading' programme, which will reward companies that reduce emissions ahead of schedule, while punishing those that lag behind.

The centrepiece of the Green Plan for land is waste management. The National Waste Reduction Plan, developed through co-operative efforts of federal and provincial governments, industry and environmental groups, will achieve a 50% reduction in solid waste by the year 2000.

Central to Canada's plan for the environment is to sustain the country's abundant natural resources. A sustainable forestry programme supported by Forestry Canada, in partnership with landowners and managers, will establish eight demonstration projects across the country. These models will be 'living laboratories of sustainable development at its best'. In addition a community-participation programme to plant 325 million trees across Canada over five years will help absorb carbon dioxide.

The Green Plan promises a new National Energy Efficiency Act, a potent tool to fight global warming. A target of eliminating ozone-depleting CFCs by 1997, and a national cap on the sulphur dioxide emission that cause acid rain (at no more than 3.2 million tonnes annually by the year 2000) are other key Green Plan goals.

Dr. Mostafa Tolba, Director of the United Nations Environmental Programme, has stated that Canada's Green Plan is a model for the whole world to study. Canada has certainly committed itself, through this ambitious plan for the preservation of the environment, to become a truly 'environmentally friendly' country.

Industry's Response: Alcan and Petro-Canada give their views

Two of Canada's largest corporations, Alcan Aluminium Ltd and Petro-Canada, have long-standing multi-million dollar environmental management programmes, including recycling.

environmental, health or safety function and a corporate policy which promotes the involvement of employees in its implementation.'

In Quebec alone, \$2.5 billion is being spent over 30 years on a programme that began in the mid 1980s to replace a certain type of Alcan smelter. The result will be a network of smelters with state-of-the-art environmental protection equipment as well as improved production efficiency. The first of these came into use in 1989.

Among processes to improve air and water quality is a new method of handling chemical-bearing 'red mud' left over when alumina is extracted from bauxite. Essentially, the process recycles the chemicals back into the alumina plant and allows more efficient disposal of the mud.

In the fabricating field as well, plants are constantly being upgraded to meet new environmental standards. Alcan has developed a number of technologies to recover aluminium and other reusable materials from dross, and a system which can recover and recycle up to 95% of the oil coolant carried in the fumes given off by rolling mills.

Aluminium recycling, particularly of used beverage cans, is a successful form of waste management and also saves costs. Remelting aluminium requires only five percent of energy used in an original smelting process. This year Alcan opened Britain's first plant capable of recycling up to 2.5 billion beverage cans a year. This is the first operation of its kind in Europe.

Alcan also funds environmental and recla-



Laterrière Works, Quebec, one of Alcan's 'new generation' aluminium smelters.

Says Jean Minville, Alcan's vice-president, environment: 'Concern for the environment is not a passing fad. It is a competitive necessity.' Michael Robertson, senior director of environmental affairs at Petro-Canada, comments: 'We have a strong team of 70 staff specialists with an

Photo courtesy of Alcan