

CONCLUSION

Canada has made much progress toward achieving the goals of sustainable development. However, many challenges lie ahead. It is not simple to find a balance that best meets the needs of Canadians of today and those of tomorrow, as well as a balance that respects the needs of people around the world. There has, however, been an important level of commitment to partnerships in Canada as a vehicle for action. Major groups, governments, and individuals are working together for change. This process is evolving, and it already shows many signs of success.

One of those successes is the increasing awareness that many of the traditional assumptions about the relationship between human beings and their environment held by people in industrialized societies are counterproductive. Ecosystems and our ties to them are infinitely more complex than we could have imagined even a decade or two ago. The links between the quality of the environment and economic prosperity, whether in Canada or in developing countries, are becoming more obvious.

The shift to policies and practices that support sustainable development is affecting many aspects of life. It is affecting our relationships with other countries. Whether we consider the state of the fishery in the northwest Atlantic, the impacts of a depleted ozone layer, or the importance of sustainably managed forests, our ties to all other countries are increasingly affected by these same policies and practices. Canada looks forward to future opportunities to share with the Commission on Sustainable Development the progress we have made, the lessons we have learned, and the many challenges we face.