

The United States is not our only bilateral partner. We have a long history of co-operation with countries with whom we share environmental resources such as migratory species, as well as exchanges of science and technologies that apply to environmental protection. Environmental co-operation agreements with the Soviet Union, Mexico, Germany and the Netherlands are already in place. The Green Plan strengthens Canada's commitment to bilateral environmental relations, with special consideration accorded to developing countries and the countries of Eastern and Central Europe.

Through its Official Development Assistance (ODA) program, Canada supports environmental initiatives in the Third World. Poverty takes its toll on the environment, and involving developing countries in the search for equitable solutions to global environmental problems is crucial.

Environment has been a growing priority in Canada's aid efforts in recent years, as our thinking regarding sustainable development has taken shape. CIDA is working to revise its policy and implementing strategy on environment and development, based on the five key aspects of sustainable development — not only environmental, but also economic, social, political and cultural.

Canada has made substantial contributions to protecting or improving the environment in many parts of Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific, with CIDA focusing on institution-building, human resource development and support for non-governmental organizations. Canada financially supports developing country participation in important environmental conferences and negotiations, and contributes significantly to programs to help these countries improve their capabilities to undertake important scientific research and monitoring.

Environmental Indicators

Canada is working with its international partners to develop indicators of environmental quality and the state of natural resources. These indicators will help governments and businesses make decisions to protect the environment and conserve natural resources for future generations. As a result of an initiative by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney at the G-7 Paris Summit in 1989, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has developed environmental indicators to help decision-makers around the world develop strategies to promote sustainable development. At a meeting of OECD Environment Ministers in early 1991, a commitment was made to continue their development and systematic use.

At home, Canada has introduced a set of pilot environmental indicators and launched a study of natural resource accounts. These projects are part of the federal government's effort to prepare a draft environmental accounting framework to be in place by 1993.