Canada has been a country with an excellent scientific record. Its five Nobel prizes in the physical and biological sciences bear witness to it. An excellent educational system has produced a solid scientific and engineering base which together with good entrepreneurship has given rise to a highly developed biotechnology. Its research and development system, as opposed to that of Spain, was well established with the arrival of the new biotechnology in the mid-70s. This allowed a fast response to the increasingly evident importance of those technologies. This section will give an overview of the activities in conjunction with biotechnology of the Canadian Government. A brief description of the National Research Council and some of the public centres associated with it involved in the development of biotechnology follows. A section on Canadian human resources in R&D, biotechnological industries, and Intellectual property in Canada will be commented upon.

A. GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC POLICY

In 1983 the federal government of Canada formally considered biotechnology a national priority for economic growth. Identifying seven strategically important areas. These were:

1. Aquaculture
2. Forestry
3. Human and animal health care
4. Plant strain development
5. Nitrogen fixation
6. Mineral leaching and metal recovery
7. Cellulose utilization and waste treatment

These areas were felt to satisfy the resource- rich and advanced industrial nature of the Canadian economy. The above objectives were to be implemented by the following measures:

A. Creation of the National Biotechnology Advisory Committee (NBAC) to advise and evaluate the progress.

B. Establishment of networks to develop and promote links between research institutions and users.

C. Creation of an interministerial committee

The NBAC is appointed by the Minister of Science and provides advice to him. Representatives from the private sector, universities, and government form the 24-member committee. The major areas for advice include: