

Canada is committed to building the link between human health and environmental sustainability. Current strategic priorities Canada would like to see emphasized include:

- **Controlling toxic substances in the environment.** Protecting the health of Canadians from the effects of environmental pollution means maintaining clean air, clean water and safe food.
- **Assessing and managing bio-regional health effects.** Environmental pollution issues are complex and require integrated solutions that combine the perspectives of health promotion and protection. Programs designed to meet these issues are based on risk assessment and risk management approaches. Partnerships are built on common objectives and sustained by commitments that are met.
- **Monitoring and controlling environmentally-related diseases.** Epidemiological and toxicological evidence indicate that cancer, poor reproductive health, problems in child development and asthma are major human health problems related to the environment. National surveillance programs for these problems are necessary to strengthen the national public health information infrastructure and to produce timely, reliable analyses that serve as the basis for decision making.
- **Creating a framework for health and the environment.** The overall goal of this initiative is to enable individual and collective action to improve human health by sustaining a healthy, diverse ecosystem and fostering healthy, active living and working conditions in all communities in Canada. The six main areas of activity under this strategy are: building alliances; public health policy; program and capacity development; knowledge development and information synthesis; support for community action; and public education and social marketing.

### *Indigenous Issues*

Many indigenous communities have a strong relationship to the environment as a source of support for cultural, spiritual and economic well-being; consequently they have a direct interest in the development of conservation and sustainable development strategies. Furthermore there is a growing interest in the potential contribution to such sustainable development strategies from indigenous traditional knowledge.

At the Special Session, Canada will voice its support for:

- **The involvement of indigenous people in the planning and implementation of sustainable development and conservation strategies.** This direction follows on the development of the Arctic Environmental Strategy, the formation of the Arctic