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## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM - FRANCE

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### 5. Opportunities for Canada

France is a world leader in many sectors of critical importance to Canada - telecommunications, biotechnologies, agriculture, medical research and space, to name but a few. France wants to strengthen its S&T relations with Canada, and is particularly interested in benefiting from Canada's expertise in the following areas:

- French priority sectors, i.e., life sciences, genomics, infection diseases, food quality and safety, information and telecommunications technologies and in particular, educational technologies and fuel cells;
- existing university-private sector links;
- risk capital funds and our tax credit system;
- Canadian mechanisms for transferring and disseminating technology;
- means of promoting innovation, and in particular, creating innovative companies and researcher training programs at the university level;
- in 2000-2001, the FNS will promote new initiatives on natural disasters and water, two new sectors where co-operation could prove promising;
- In October 1999, the Conseil national du Développement des sciences humaines et sociales [National Council on the Development of Social Sciences], created in late 1998, released its first report, which recommends the creation of a network of social sciences centres. One of the key mandates will be joining international networks; there is an opportunity here;
- Canada is still a prime destination for young French researchers on post-doctoral fellowships. Canadian universities attract many more French students than French universities attract Canadian students.

France is participating in the construction of the European scientific community. The European Union's role in providing government support for research is growing as Europe's research and innovation policy continues to develop. France is the second highest contributor to and a major beneficiary of the EU's R&D budgets. French groups can act as facilitators, bringing Canadian partners into their teams to prepare proposals under the R&D Framework Program. Canadians can participate under the Agreement for Scientific Co-operation between Canada and the European Union. Discussions on the organization of European research will officially begin, under France's presidency of the European Union in the second quarter of 2000, and France's positions, which should be followed closely by the Embassy in Paris, will have an impact on the future of the R&D Framework Program.

The Canadian Embassy in Paris periodically organizes partnership workshops on specific themes in order to encourage the creation of teams to bid on EU calls to tender in accordance with the access rules of the Agreement for Scientific Co-operation between Canada and the European Union. Recent workshops addressed information technologies, the agri-food sector, biotechnologies and remote sensing.