

PART II, SECTION VIII INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT INTO DECISION MAKING

Introduction

Chapter 8 of Agenda 21 focuses on the need to integrate better environment and development considerations at the policy, planning, and management levels. This has been a growing priority in Canada for years.

Canadian governments recognize that an integrated approach to planning and decision making is necessary to achieve sustainable development. They understand this approach should reflect the visions and expectations of Canadians. This approach requires that decision makers seek out more opportunities to work with others in partnership and use the full range of suitable tools to accomplish the objectives of sustainable development.

In Canada, integrated decision-making processes have evolved considerably over the last few years. This section highlights the key steps taken toward integrated decision making by governments and the private sector in Canada.

Other sections of this report, particularly the section on strengthening the role of major groups, demonstrate that public involvement and consultation have become essential to this process. Sound science is another important element of Canada's approach to improved decision making related to the environment. The science for sustainable development section in last year's CSD report summarizes many of the major activities now under way.

Improved Decision Making at All Levels

Federal Government

In 1994, the federal government emphasized the need for an integrated approach to social, economic, environmental, and foreign policy in its Speech from the Throne. A series of recent legislative and policy initiatives have given practical meaning to this commitment.