Tourism Council Australia

A stronger voice for Tourism

22 October 1998

ESD Inquiry
Productivity Commission
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INQUIRY INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ECOLOGICALLY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BY COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Tourism Council Australia (TCA) is pleased to be able to provide a submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the implementation of ecologically sustainable development (ESD) by Commonwealth departments and agencies. TCA actively encourages the pursuit of sustainable tourism development within the Australian tourism industry and welcomes this Inquiry as part of an ongoing process to ensure Australia's future.

The Issues Paper states that a key focus of the inquiry is the integration of economic and environmental considerations by those Commonwealth departments and agencies with significant responsibility for ESD implementation, or whose activities directly impact on its achievement. It also states that the intention is to examine the scope for improving the incorporation of ESD into government policy formulation and decision making processes, and for monitoring' evaluating and reporting the implementation of ESD by departments and agencies, with the use of improved frameworks.

With this in mind TCA will:

provide an interpretation of ESD;

describe where the tourism sector fits within the National Strategy Ecologically Sustainable Development (NSESD);

outline how Commonwealth government departments and agencies have been tackling ESD in partnership with the tourism industry;

highlight problems with existing tourism policies and programs; and

make recommendations on how to improve the nature and level of implementation of ESD across Government departments and agencies with particular regard to tourism.

Ecologically Sustainable Development

TCA supports the principles and philosophies that underpin ecologically sustainable development,

"development which aims to meet the needs of Australians today, whole conserving our ecosystems for the benefit of future generations (COAG 1992a)".

More practically ESD will mean changes to our patterns of resource use, including improvements in the quality of our air, land and water, and in the development of new, environmental friendly products and processes (NSESD, 1992).

The NSESD states that 'in order to do this we need to develop ways of using those environmental resources which form the basis of our economy in a way which maintains and where possible improves our range, variety and quality. At the same time we need to develop industry and generate employment.'

TCA acknowledges that effective implementation of ESD in Australia requires participation from governments, business, industry and the community. The role of governments is thus not only to incorporate ESD principles in its own decision making, but also to set the framework within which the private sector can make decisions which are ecologically sustainable, and to set an example by demonstrating how ESD objectives can be pursued. A key challenge facing governments is therefore how best to incorporate and implement these principles and objectives in decision making and program implementation.

In facing this challenge it is important for Commonwealth departments and agencies to note that it is possible to make development and environmental protection compatible by following sustainable strategies and by re-orienting those areas of economic activity that are most damaging to the environment and its inhabitants. Tourism is one of these areas of economic activity.

The Tourism Sector

As stated in the Issues Paper, in recognition of the importance of sustainable development, the Commonwealth Government in 1992 released the NSESD (COAG 1992a) which proposed strategies for Commonwealth, State and local governments to address sustainable development issues. It incorporated a number of key industry sectors that rely heavily on natural resources including agriculture, manufacturing, mining, tourism and energy.

A report on the implementation of the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development 1993-1995 was released in July 1996. The chapter on tourism outlined a number of initiatives and programs that demonstrated how the Commonwealth governments' tourism strategies met with ESD principles over that period.

At this stage it is unclear whether the Government intends to update this report and release an update for 1996-1998 especially as this Inquiry has been asked undertake a similar task.

Given this situation and the prominence that tourism was given within the original NSESD, TCA believes that is important to highlight industry and Government partnerships which clearly demonstrate the implementation of ESD principles over this latest period.

ESD Implementation

As the peak tourism industry association representing the interests of more than 30,000 affiliated travel and tourism enterprises across Australia TCA is in close contact with many Commonwealth government departments and agencies.

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TCA's primary contact is with the Of fice of National Tourism (ONT) within the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) which has responsibility for the co-ordination of tourism policy and programs at a national level. However it should be noted chat the nature of tourism is such chat many other portfolios and their policies have a bearing on tourism industry development.

Policy development at TCA is therefore a direct result of consultations and negotiations with portfolios such as treasury, transport and regional development, immigration and multicultural affairs, foreign affairs and trade, environment, communication/arts and many other departments and agencies.

The ONT currency has no specific budgetary allocation for environment and is not responsible for the administration of any environment-related legislation, nor does it administer specific 'environment' programs. All activities, including tourism, within World Heritage Areas is the responsibility of Environment Australia or separate statutory authorities such as the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA). To date tourism has not been given a high priority within this department and there is virtually no budgetary allocation for work in the tourism sector.

Although ONT has no specific statutory obligation on the environment the National Action Plan for Tourism launched by the Australian Government in 1998 fortunately identifies the conservation and careful management of the environment as essential to the long-term viability of the tourism industry. To this end, ONT works closely with the tourism industry, research organisations, state/territory governments, and other relevant Commonwealth agencies to promote sustainable tourism development and has been internationally recognised for their efforts to date.

Since the last report on the implementation of the NSESD in 1996 TCA has been working closely with ONT on various environmental management projects chat aim to achieve ESD outcomes. Under ONT's former National Tourism Development Program TCA received funding for Stage 1 of a Best Practice Environmental Management Program specifically targeted at tourist attractions and accommodation providers and in dune 1998 received a further grant for' Stage 2 targeted at tour operators, travel agents and tour wholesalers.

The aim of this best practice program is to educate industry about the business benefits that accrue as a direct result of implementing environmental management practices. To date the program has made a substantial contribution towards changing corporate behaviour and attitudes within the tourism industry.

TCA and the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) which now falls within Environment Australia also received funding from ONT under the National Tourism Development Program to develop Best Practice Heritage Guidelines for the tourism industry. Another initiative aimed at increasing the sustainability of the tourism industry. The guidelines are currently being written and will look at management

practices and interpretation issues associated with natural and cultural heritage attractions.

Tourism Program Development

The funding obtained for these projects was a direct result of a Government program incorporating the principles of ESD as core selection criteria for projects. In addition to the aim of spreading economic benefits to regional Australia, the program highlighted the need to manage people in natural environments, build sustainable infrastructure, assist indigenous tourism development and promote industry coordination.

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This program has now been replaced with the Regional Tourism Program that aims to improve the capability of organisations, businesses and individuals to deliver higher quality tourism products and services in regional Australia. The guidelines which have been distributed to industry make no mention of ecologically sustainable development principles and therefore make it difficult for industry to obtain funding for projects specifically aimed at promoting sustainable tourism development within Australia.

This represents a definite shift away from sustainable tourism goals towards establishment and maintenance of economically viable businesses without regard to environmental considerations. This type of Government framework ultimately hinders private sector action and lessens the opportunity for businesses to demonstrate how ESD objectives can be pursued.

Given the prominence that tourism received in the NSESD it is alarming to see the significant downgrading of ESD initiatives and funding within the Office of National Tourism and the relative inaction of the tourism policy unit within Environment Australia. This situation will make it extremely difficult for significant gains to be made in the area of tourism and ESD over the coming years and equally as difficult to maintain an international reputation for best practice.

Recommendations

On a broader scale coming to terms with ESD principles, integrating them into government policy and achieving ESD outcomes is an ongoing process and requires commitment and action from all portfolios.

Commonwealth government departments and agencies need to work on developing strategies that translate these conceptual theories of what sustainable development means into practical ways of achieving it over time.

In the longer term the Government needs to look towards new types of activity, development and growth. This, in turn requires a close look at ethics, objectives, and forms of organisation, culture and communication. It is not an issue that can be dealt with in isolation from others.

With this in mind TCA makes the following broad recommendation.

As a starting point the Commonwealth Government needs to revitalise the ESD process through the accelerated implementation of the NSESD. This process was supported and developed in conjunction with industry sectors such as tourism and was a significant step in achieving the long-term goals of an ecologically sustainable future for Australia.

Part of this process will include:

- The establishment of a dedicated ESD Unit within Prime Minister and Cabinet to oversee implementation of ESD by all Commonwealth departments and agencies;
- The re-establishment of the Intergovernmental Committee for Ecologically Sustainable
- Development reporting to COAG;
- A review of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment that was signed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments in 1992 taking into account the new roles/responsibilities set out in Commonwealth Environmental Law Reform Process;
- An official review of the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development;
- An international review of the implementation of ESD by governments and agencies
- worldwide especially the 'Guide to Green Government' work being undertaken in Canada - See Attachment 1;
- The development of guidelines which translate concepts such as the precautionary principle; intergenerational equity, conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity; and

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improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms into practical policies and programs - See Attachment 2;

- A requirement that all Commonwealth government departments and agencies adopt procedures to assess the economic, environmental and social impacts of their activities. Such assessments should be made both before (ex ante) and after (ex post) decisions are made;
- The integration of ESD principles by way of environmental criteria into Government department and agency purchasing policies and practices;
- The integration of ESD principles into all Government department and agency program guidelines;
- The development of a suite of environmental performance indicators to assist in evaluating programs;
- The continuation of current provisions requiring assessment of the environmental and ESD implications of government actions;
- The continuation of ESD objectives being incorporated into legislation; and
- The inclusion of an account of how environmental issues associated with the programs and policies are considered in each department and agencies' decision making process within Annual Reports.

With regard to ESD and the Tourism Sector, TCA makes the following specific recommendations.

- Given that tourism in Australia is largely dependent on and a major user of natural resources and biodiversity, it is recommended that it be identified specifically as a sector in national policies that deal with biodiversity, conservation, ESD and the environment, where it is not already identified; Any national deliberations on the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity incorporate the tourism sector;
- A complete review of the Regional Tourism Program which is currently being administered by the Of fice of National Tourism with particular regard to the achievement of ESD outcomes;
- The establishment of a Tourism Working Group to produce a status report on how the tourism sector is implementing ESD principles, this would include Government departments, agencies and industry; and
- A review of the tourism policy function within Environment Australia and the linkages with the Of fice of National Tourism.

TCA trusts that this information provides the Commission with:

- adequate background on the history of ESD development since 1992;
- a perspective on where the where the tourism sector fits into this process;
- an outline of the progress made since the last review; and
- some recommendations on how Government policies/programs and processes can be altered to better reflect ESD principles.

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TCA is pleased to be able make this submission and would finally recommend, due to the complexity involved with the practical implementation of these concepts, that this Inquiry be the first step in a more detailed investigation.

If you have any queries relating to the information presented in this submission please contact Kate Pembroke Policy Adviser on (02) 9358 6055.

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A Guide to Green Government

ATTACHMENT 1

A Guide to Green Government

The purpose of the Guide is to present a framework that serves to guide and assist federal departments in the preparation of their sustainable development strategies.

The guide answers three questions:

What are we trying to achieve?
What are the key instruments?
How should we Do about it?

[Preface] [Introduction] [Pan I] [Part II] [Part III] [Appendix]

Please send any comments to Green Guide email address: *grngvt@ec.gc.ca*

This Internet version was designed and refined by Arthur Petch and Ann Marie Hume

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, <u>sustainable development</u> has become a key goal of public policy, within Canada and internationally. Individuals, businesses, voluntary groups, the scientific community and governments have been exploring how to transform sustainable development from a concept to a practical guide for action.

The Government of Canada believes that sustainable development is not only a desirable but an essential goal of public policy. Achieving sustainable development requires an approach to public policy that is comprehensive, integrated, open and accountable. It should also embody a commitment to continuous improvement.

- *Comprehensive:* Sustainable development is not the mandate of any single government department. All departments must become sustainable development departments, both in terms of their policies that influence the decisions of others, and in how they manage their internal operations.

- *Integrated:* The high quality of life that Canadians enjoy reflects the combination of its economic, environmental and social strengths. These are linked to one another, and government policy cannot focus on one component without regard to its impact on the others.

- *Open:* <u>Sustainable development</u> is a responsibility shared between governments and with Aboriginal people, the private sector, voluntary and community-based organizations, and individual Canadians. Through such partnerships, goals need to be set and respective roles determined for their achievement.

- *Accountable:* Shared responsibility for sustainable development also means that we must each define what we are going to do towards sustainable development - and we should be prepared to be held accountable for doing our part. We have to measure whether our individual and collective actions are delivering progress towards sustainable development.

- *Continuous Improvement:* Experience has shown that sustainable development is not a fixed state, and will not be achieved through a one-time effort. A step-by-step approach based on continuous, incremental improvement is required to make measurable progress towards sustainable development. Considerable work is already under way at all levels. We need to build on our experience and our growing understanding of the issues.

Amendments to the Auditor General Act establish the Commission of the Environment and Sustainable Development within the Office of the Auditor General of Canada. Within two years, Ministers will present their departments' sustainable development

strategies to Parliament. These strategies will outline each department's concrete goals and action plans for integrating <u>sustainable development</u> into their policies, programs and operations. They will be prepared in consultation with stakeholders, partners and clients.

Departmental strategies will provide the benchmarks against which progress towards sustainable development will be measured. As outlined in <u>Appendix 1,</u> the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development will use these to assess how well departments are doing in moving forward on sustainable development, by reviewing their progress in meeting <u>goals and targets</u> and in implementing action plans.

By taking this approach to sustainable development, the Government recognises that responsibility for sustainable development is shared across government and that each Minister is accountable for making measurable progress on sustainable development within the sphere of his/her mandate. Many federal departments have already made significant efforts to integrate sustainable development into their policy development, planning and decision-making.

The purpose of this paper is to present a framework that serves to guide and assist federal departments in the preparation of their sustainable development strategies. Any framework has to be a guide rather than a prescription. Federal departments differ greatly in their mandates, the resources they have available to pursue them, and the mechanisms that they use to involve their clients and stakeholders in their decision-making processes. They also differ in their ability to influence Canada's sustainable development prospects.

For these reasons, A *Guide to Green Government is* set out in broad terms, and meant to be interpreted and adapted by each department. It is not intended to limit the scope of departments' sustainable development strategies, but rather to ensure that there is a degree of coherence and consistency among them.

This Guide incorporates the Greening of Government Operations initiative recently undertaken by the federal government, which establishes guidelines for all federal departments to follow in order to integrate environmental considerations into their day-to-day operations.

A ***Guide to Green Government is presented in three chapters:***

1. ***<u>The Sustainable development Challenge - What are we trying to achieve?</u>***

This chapter focuses on the meaning of <u>sustainable development,</u> and presents a series of objectives that represent a more concrete expression of the concept. The chapter is intended to provide departments with a common starting point for the identification of concrete <u>coals and targets.</u>

## 2.	*Planning and Decision-Making for Sustainable Development - What are the key instruments?*

There are a range of instruments available for pursuing sustainable development. This chapter explores these tools and the issues that could be considered in designing the appropriate mix of tools for the achievement of departments' goals and targets.

## 3.	*Preparing a Sustainable Development Strategy - How should we go about it?*

This chapter presents the main elements that departments could consider as the basis for their departmental sustainable development strategies and suggests an approach to preparing them.

Sustainable Development Objectives

Translating the **core concepts of <u>sustainable</u>** development into more concrete terms is an important starting point in its implementation. The remainder of this chapter presents the types of objectives that figure most prominently in domestic and international efforts.

Sound environmental practices requires that the full range of sustainable development objectives - including environmental - are explicitly accounted for throughout the policy development process.

Task Force on Economic
Instruments and Disincentives to
Sound Environmental Practices, 1994

These objectives are not intended to limit the scope of departments' <u>sustainable development</u> strategies, but rather to serve as a common starting point in their preparation. Each department will use the lens of its own mandate when examining the concept of sustainable development and in developing the objectives and action plans that will underpin their strategies. Through this process, the objectives will be broadened to include a fuller range of economic, environmental and social considerations.

Sustaining Our Natural Resources - Sustainable Jobs, Communities and Industries

Much of Canada's wealth is based on its rich endowment of natural resources. For the many Canadians dependent on the natural resource sector, sustainable development of the resource base is linked not only to job security but also to a way of life that has supported their communities for decades. Thousands of Canadian communities and one in thirteen Canadians depend on a productive resource base and healthy ecosystems for their employment in the resource industries, tourism or recreation. More than one-quarter of Canada's trade is dependent on the resource sector.

- **Ensuring renewable resources development is sustainable.** <u>Renewable resources</u> development is sustainable if it remains within the capacity of the resource base to regenerate itself, and if it respects the integrity of ecosystems on which the resource depends. A strong natural resources sector can only be supported within the framework of sound ecological and environmental practices. Renewable resources should be managed on an integrated basis in recognition of the full range of their uses and values, including commodities production, habitat for wildlife, parks and wilderness. The National Forest Strategy, the update of the Agriculture-Environment Strategy, and the Ocean Management Strategy should provide important foundations for the sustainable management of renewable resources.

The Sustainable Development Challenge

Each generation is entitled to the interest on the natural capital, but the principal should be handed on unimpaired.

Canadian Commission *on Conservation, 1915*

- **Ensuring efficient use of non-renewable resources.** Other resources - minerals, oil, gas, and coal - are not renewable. But the role of these resources in a <u>sustainable development</u> strategy can be assured by sound policies which encourage efficient extraction and manufacturing processes and uses as well as by policies and programs which stimulate, where appropriate, recycling or the development of substitutes. Through implementation of its Program Review, for example, Natural Resources Canada will reorient energy policy from a traditional focus on supply to an increased emphasis on efficiency, alternative and renewable energy sources, the environment and sustainable development. The Whitehorse Mining Leadership Council Accord also sets a course towards sustainable development in the mining sector.

Protecting the Health of Canadians and of Ecosystems

Ecosystems receive the wastes produced by individuals' and communities' industrial, agricultural and other activities. Although the environment can absorb some waste, certain chemical residues can remain in ecosystems for years and can be found in the tissues of animals and plants - some of which we depend on for food. The challenge posed by <u>sustainable development</u> is to alter waste discharge characteristics and reduce quantities of waste to protect the environment and human health. This is best accomplished through application of pollution prevention methodology and recycling of products.

Preservation of unique and representative areas and species maintains the options and the flexibility for the future to respond to unforeseen and changing environmental conditions as well as social and economic demands. Further, where there are dangers to human and ecosystem health, due to both natural and human causes, it is critical that the individuals, communities, and industries affected be warned about the nature of the dangers so that mitigative actions can be taken.

- **Virtually eliminating <u>anthropogenic,</u> persistent, <u>bioaccumulative,</u> toxic substances.** Due to their long-term health and environmental implications, toxic, anthropogenic (human-made) substances that accumulate in the tissues of plants and animals, and that persist in the environment, should be managed to prevent their release into the environment, or phased-out, if containment is not possible. The <u>Toxic Substances Management Policy,</u> recently released by the federal government, sets out its approach for assessing and managing the risks associated with toxic substances.

- **Adopting a pollution prevention approach.** Preventing pollution and waste rather than dealing with their consequences after-the-fact, can make a significant contribution to environmental protection. Pollution prevention involves the use of processes, practices, materials or energy that avoid or minimize the creation of pollutants and waste and reduce overall risk to human health or the environment. The draft "Pollution Prevention: A Federal Strategy for Action" sets priorities for the federal government to internalize pollution prevention within Canadian society.

- **Protecting representative areas.** Protected spaces are home to many forms of plant and animal life, are the setting for many significant events in Canada's history, and are often a focal point for recreation and tourism activities. Representative areas are also important indicators of overall ecosystem health. Canada's objective is to protect a representative sample of each of the country's natural regions by the year 2000, to accelerate the protection of marine natural regions, and to accelerate the identification and protection of critical wildlife habitat. The federal government has also established the goal to protect and promote Canada's historical heritage.

- **Warning and responding.** Canada is vulnerable to natural disasters as severe as those experienced around the world. Landslides, tornadoes, forest fires, severe wind and hailstorms, floods and avalanches are examples of these significant geophysical and meteorological events. Also, despite developments in processes and approaches to prevent and to minimize the hazards associated with some human activities, accidents and unforeseen events do occur. Therefore, for both natural and human-caused disasters, an effective warning and adaptive response capability is critical for reducing their social and economic costs.

Over the past 20 years, worldwide natural disasters have caused 5300 billion in damage, affected the lives of 800 million people and killed an estimated 3 million people. Not only do these catastrophes bring tragic suffering, they also cause serious economic disruptions in developing and developed countries alike.

Human Activity and the Environment
Statistics Canada, 1994

Meeting Our International Obligations

Sustainable development is inherently an international concept. Canada's commitment to sustainable development is a complex challenge in an increasingly interdependent and integrated world. Due to the transboundary nature of many sustainable development issues, local issues often have international ramifications. Many of the issues that require cooperation among individuals, industry, and governments within Canada also require cooperation among nations. To resolve sustainable development issues such as climate change, ozone depletion, and resource conservation, Canada must work effectively with other countries towards common goals. Canada has led the international community in establishing such cooperation, and now must follow its own leadership with domestic action.

Bilateral and multilateral agreements are key means by which Canada can cooperate with other countries in resolving international <u>sustainable development</u> problems. Some of the key international agreements involve efforts in:

- **Protecting the ozone layer.** In 1987, recognizing the human health, environmental and economic implications of ozone depletion, 139 countries signed the Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances, which established a timetable for the reduction and elimination of specific ozone depleting substances. Canada has made real progress in phasing-out the production and use of ozone depleting substances, and those efforts must continue. However, the recovery of the ozone layer will take time.

- **Reducing greenhouse gas emissions.** Canada, along with over 150 nations, signed the Climate Change Convention in June 1992. The Convention requires developed countries to report on actions with the aim of returning their emissions of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by the end of the decade. Actions are underway federally and in all provinces to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Current projections indicate that with no further action, Canada's emissions in the year 2000 will be 13 percent higher than in 1990, contingent on underlying assumptions about energy prices and economic growth. The National Action Program on Climate Change will help to close the stabilization gap, by developing measures, carrying out economic analysis and working internationally. In order to continue to close the gap, Federal, Provincial and Territorial Environment and Energy Ministers have agreed to proceed with the development of options that will meet Canada's current commitment to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2000, and develop sustainable options to achieve further progress in the reduction of emissions by the year 2005.

- **Conserving biodiversity.** Biodiversity is **the** variety, richness, and complexity of life that exists within nature. Development is sustainable if it maintains this diversity. Some human activity is resulting in an unprecedented loss of biodiversity. Canada signed the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in June 1992 as part of the global response to this loss. The Canadian Biodiversity Strategy will set out the vision, goals, and strategic directions to guide the actions of governments and citizens in protecting Canada's vital interests and meeting its commitments under the Convention.

A number of other agreements exist or are being negotiated, including those on acid rain, the transboundary transportation of hazardous substances, environment and trade, forestry and the management of high-seas fisheries.

Promoting Equity

Sustainable development is an ethical principle. It incorporates a two-dimensional commitment to equity: between the current generation and those that will follow; and between the poor and the more affluent.

- **Ensuring a fair distribution of the costs and benefits between generations.** The question of inter-generational equity is one of the key aspects of <u>sustainable development</u> Sustainable development should not be achieved by simply passing the costs of human activity from one generation to another. Although it is not possible to predict with precision the likely interests of future generations, it is safe to assume that their needs will not be significantly less than our own. Sustainable development requires that future generations be able to benefit from the environment to the same degree as current generations.

- **Ensuring a fair distribution of the current costs and benefits of sustainable development.** The Brundtland Commission pointed to the inequitable distribution of wealth between the nations of North and South as a major barrier to achieving sustainable development. The aid, trade and debt policies of higher income countries should foster higher standards of living, without increasing pressure on global ecosystems. Domestically, the principal challenge is to extend the benefits of our economic prosperity and high quality of life to a broader segment of the population while maintaining the fundamental integrity of our ecosystems. Poverty, gender equity, unemployment, regional impacts, and the rights and responsibilities of First Nations are some of the key issues for Canada.

Problems such as environmental degradation and growing disparities between rich and poor affect human security around the world and are areas where Canada can make an effective contribution by promoting sustainable development through its program of development cooperation.

Canada in the World
Government of Canada, 1995

Improving Our Quality of Life and Well-being

The ultimate aim of development is to improve the quality of human life. People depend on their environment and on economic development to meet their basic needs and to improve their quality of life. Economic growth is an important component of development, and reviving growth through improved productivity is the primary focus of economic policy. Economic growth also provides the wealth to make investments in protecting the environment, supporting education, science and technology, and in maintaining the health and well-being of Canadians.

The challenge is not whether to grow but how to develop.

Canadian Choices for Transitions to Sustainability Project de Societe, 1994

- **Fostering improved productivity through environmental efficiency.** The Government's Jobs and Growth Agenda focuses on improved productivity - the efficiency with which people, capital, resources, and ideas are combined - as the key to providing Canadians with more job opportunities and greater income. Environmental efficiency is an important dimension of productivity. It means producing more with less - less resource inputs, less waste. Many environmental improvements, including better energy and water efficiency, waste minimization and pollution prevention are achieved by, or result in, the reduction of inputs, which translates into a reduction of costs.

- **Supporting innovation towards sustainable development.** The challenge is to design policies and programs that help to make measurable progress on the full range of sustainable development issues while stimulating innovation and competitiveness. This entails an emphasis on developing a predictable policy regime with longer-term time horizons, a focus on results, the use of flexible instruments to achieve them, and full consideration of the environmental and economic implications. It also requires the Government to direct available funds to promising new research and development initiatives, to foster and commercialize new technologies, and to seek out new domestic and global market opportunities. The Government's Jobs and Growth Agenda, Environmental Industries Strategy, and Science and Technology Review provide important policy context for innovation towards sustainable development.

- **Broadening measures of progress to include its non-monetary dimensions.** Achieving sustainable development involves adopting a broader view of progress that incorporates those elements that are critical to Canadians, their quality of life, their health and their well-being. Without systematic, accessible information, Canadians are unable to assess, predict and respond to their sustainable development challenges.

The Sustainable Development Challenge

http://www.doe.ca/grngvt/l _2_e. htm

Please send any comments to Green Guide email address: *grngvt@ec.gc ca*

ATTACHMENT 2

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