

2007 NSDS PROFILE: CANADA
Information on National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS)
or its equivalent

Country	Canada
Strategy Title	No NSDS. At present there are 31 federal department and agency Sustainable Development Strategies for the period of 2007-2009.
NSDS Website	http://www.sdinfo.gc.ca/reports/en/sd_guide/toc.cfm
Coordinating Body (Name & Website)	Environment Canada provides guidance on the structure, format and priorities of Sustainable Development Strategies to all federal departments and agencies. There is also a working-level information sharing group, chaired by Environment Canada called the Interdepartmental Network on Sustainable Development Strategies, which has members from all federal departments and agencies that prepare SDSs.
Strategy Status	<input type="checkbox"/> NSDS being implemented <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Under development <input type="checkbox"/> No NSDS
Date Approved	N/A
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Additional information:	<p>Canada's Approach to Sustainable Development</p> <p>In following up on the commitment made at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 to develop a national sustainable development plan, the Government of Canada chose to focus its attention first on building an approach to sustainable development planning at the federal level of government, while recognizing that as a federal state the preparation of a truly National Sustainable Development Strategy in Canada would ultimately require a joint effort of the federal and provincial governments. The intent was to ensure the federal government had its own house in order as a first step.</p> <p>As a direct response to this challenge, the Government of Canada, through amendments to the <i>Auditor General Act</i> in 1995, established the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) within the Office of the Auditor General (OAG). The</p>

amendments to the *Auditor General Act* also required that federal Ministers prepare Sustainable Development Strategies (SDSs) outlining their departments' objectives and plans for action to further sustainable development, and that they update the Strategies at least once every three years. Departments prepared their first Strategies in 1997, with subsequent versions completed in early 2001, 2004 and late 2006.

Coordinating the Fourth Round

In advance of the 2006 strategies, Environment Canada led the development of a new, coordinated and more accountable approach to SD. It focused on the achievement of tangible and measurable outcomes by strengthening coherence and accountability across the SDS process. This new approach is outlined in the document titled *Coordinating the Fourth Round of Departmental Sustainable Development Strategies* that can be found at www.sdinfo.gc.ca along with all of the current SDSs.

As a result of this coordinated effort, all federal departments and agencies are now working together to support the achievement of six government-wide sustainable development goals – clean air, clean water, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable communities, sustainable development and use of natural resources, and governance for sustainable development.

The goals also include a focus on environmental stewardship in the government's own operations. Public Works and Government Services Canada, the Treasury Board Secretariat and Environment Canada worked to establish government-wide targets for all departments in three key areas – building energy, vehicle fleets, and green procurement.

Evaluation

Since the tabling of the first Strategies, departments have reported annually on their performance in implementing their commitments through their annual Departmental Performance Reports to Parliament. The Office of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development has also reported every year on the Government's performance on environment and sustainable development matters, with a particular focus each year on progress and challenges in implementing sustainable development strategies (the reports of the CESD can be found at www.oag-bvg.gc.ca).

Continued Improvement

Canada recognizes the need for strong coordination across departments to advance sustainable development and took a first step towards this with the work for the fourth round of SDSs. Environment Canada

continues to assess new approaches to sustainable development planning and reporting within the federal government.

Improved sustainability planning through a federal SDS could offer Canadians a longer-term view of federal efforts to maintain and improve our quality of life, provide improved context for decision making at all levels of government, support improved accountability, and support evaluation of progress made on the Government of Canada's environmental and sustainable development agenda.