



Government  
of Canada

Gouvernement  
du Canada



# Government of Canada **TAKES ACTION** SAFEGUARDING CANADA'S ENVIRONMENT

The Government of Canada is committed to protecting our rich, natural heritage. Across a range of issues, from climate change, to air quality, to the conservation of our water and protecting Canadians from harmful chemicals, we are delivering results for Canadians.

## **Protecting Land, Wildlife, and Water**

The government has a remarkable record of achievement regarding conservation and biodiversity. Ongoing action under the Natural Areas Conservation Plan and Environment Canada's close collaboration with the Nature Conservancy of Canada has resulted in the protection of 369,000 hectares of private land, including habitat for 160 species at risk.

In 2013, the Government of Canada committed to deliver a new National Conservation Plan (NCP). The NCP is intended to align and bolster conservation efforts across Canada, including on working landscapes (e.g., agricultural land, sites of resource extraction, and forests). The input of key partners and stakeholders has contributed to developing the draft NCP.

Since 2006, the Government of Canada has added 4.9 million hectares to Parks Canada's network of federal protected areas, which is comparable to the size of Costa Rica. These additions include the expansion of Nahanni National Park Reserve, one of the planet's first World Heritage Sites; the creation of Nááts'ihch'oh National Park Reserve to protect the headwaters of the South Nahanni River; and the protection of Nova Scotia's Sable Island and its iconic horses and sand dune complexes in a national park reserve. The

government has also taken action that could protect up to an additional 11,220,600 hectares, an area roughly a third of the size of Poland, which will result in an overall increase of more than 58 per cent in the total land and water under Parks Canada's stewardship. This includes withdrawing lands in the Northwest Territories for the proposed Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve, and launching negotiations for a national park on Nunavut's Bathurst Island and a national park reserve in the Mealy Mountains of Labrador. The government also invested \$143.7 million over 10 years and \$7.6 million ongoing to create Canada's first national urban park in the Rouge Valley of Toronto.

Through the release of the final Recovery Strategy for the Woodland Caribou Boreal population in 2012, the government aims to achieve self-sustaining local populations in all boreal caribou ranges throughout Canada. We also issued an Emergency Protection Order in December 2013 to protect the Greater Sage-Grouse, a species in severe decline in Canada. This order will help to avoid local extinction of the Greater Sage-Grouse from Canada, and will help to stabilize the populations and reduce imminent threats. Moreover, we are investing \$50 million over two years to protect wildlife species at risk, as announced in the Economic Action Plan 2012.

The Government of Canada is taking further measures to ensure that it has a world-class tanker safety system for shipping oil and liquefied natural gas safely through Canada's waterways before any major new energy export facilities become operational. New measures



Canada



will strengthen Canada's current system, including increased tanker inspections, new and modified aids to navigation, and the establishment of a Canadian Coast Guard Incident Command System, which will allow it to respond more effectively to an incident and integrate its operations with key partners. The Government has also introduced the *Safeguarding Canada's Seas and Skies Act* and a new expert panel to review Canada's current tanker safety and propose measures to strengthen it.

### **Safeguarding Water Resources**

The government has a solid record safeguarding Canada's water resources. Our collaboration with the United States led to an enhanced and renewed Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement in 2012, adding new provisions to address issues like aquatic invasive species, habitat conservation, and the effects of climate change. We are investing in the restoration of the ecological health of Lake Simcoe and South-eastern Georgian Bay, and through the Randle Reef Clean-up Project we are remediating contaminated sediment in the Hamilton Harbour. Additionally, the Great Lakes Nutrient Initiative is focused on addressing the complex problems of recurrent toxic and nuisance algae and near shore water quality. We also commenced the second phase of the Lake Winnipeg Basin Initiative, designed to support the clean-up and long-term sustainability of this area, and renewed the St. Lawrence Action Plan, which is focused on improved water quality, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable use.

### **Taking Action on Air Pollution**

Air quality in Canada has shown continuous improvement for the last two decades, with emissions of pollutants such as mercury and cadmium decreasing by approximately 90 per cent. The implementation of various programs and policies has contributed to these air quality improvements. During the past two decades, the progressive introduction of cleaner vehicles, engines, and fuels to meet federal regulatory requirements has resulted in important reductions of various smog-forming air pollutants from mobile sources.

Canada's new *Air Quality Management System*, developed in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, industry, and health and environmental non-governmental organizations, provides a coherent Canada-wide approach that will ensure air quality benefits for all Canadians. As part of implementing the

new system, we have published new outdoor air quality standards. We are also developing measures to put in place industrial emission requirements to reduce the air pollutant emissions from major industrial sources, which will contribute to achieving the air quality standards.

The transboundary flow of air pollutants is another key source of pollution in Canada. The *Canada-U.S. Air Quality Agreement* has achieved significant reductions in air pollutant emissions on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border. Internationally, Canada signed a new global, legally-binding treaty that sets out a strong framework for reducing global atmospheric emissions of mercury.

### **Strengthening Environmental Protection**

With the new *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* we are providing greater certainty for industry at the same time as increasing penalties in order to ensure compliance. This allows our natural resources to be developed in a responsible and timely way.

Our highly effective Chemicals Management Plan is an example of our commitment to be a world class regulator, and has been internationally recognized, including by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Our *Environmental Enforcement Act*, once fully implemented, will strengthen existing environmental laws by establishing minimum fines, increasing maximum fines, and directing fines to the Environmental Damages Fund which supports restoration projects. The Act introduces a new fine regime that will reflect more accurately the seriousness of environmental offences.

Canada is also strengthening its environmental protection by:

- Increasing National Energy Board inspections of oil and gas pipelines by 50 per cent annually to improve pipeline safety across Canada;
- Doubling the number of comprehensive audits of oil and gas pipelines to identify potential safety issues before they occur;
- New enforceable environmental assessment decision statements to ensure that resource and other economic projects comply with required mitigation measures to protect the environment;

- New administrative monetary penalties are being introduced for violations of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*, the *Nuclear Safety and Control Act*, and the *National Energy Board Act* to help ensure compliance. Companies that violate Canada's environmental laws can now face new financial penalties; and
- The Government of Canada is conducting a review of industry reporting through the National Pollutant Release Inventory.

### Making Progress on Climate Change

The government is committed to addressing the global challenge of climate change, and has followed through on that commitment with concrete action.

Our greenhouse gas (GHG) regulations will significantly reduce emissions from cars and light trucks. Our new regulations will see 2025 passenger vehicles and light trucks emit about half as many GHGs as 2008 models.

Canada's heavy-duty vehicle regulations establish stringent standards for 2014 to 2018 model-year heavy-duty vehicles such as full-size pick-ups, semi-trucks, garbage trucks and buses. As a result of these regulations, GHG emissions from 2018 model-year heavy-duty vehicles will be reduced by up to 23 per cent.

Canada has also introduced regulations that will significantly reduce emissions from coal-fired electricity. In fact, Canada is the first major coal user to ban construction of traditional coal-fired electricity generation units. In the first 21 years, our new coal regulations are expected to result in a cumulative reduction in GHG emissions of about 214 megatonnes, equivalent to removing some 2.6 million personal vehicles from the road per year over this period.

Thanks to the collective actions taken by Canadian governments, consumers, and businesses since 2005 there has already been a significant reduction in GHG emissions. Canada's GHG emissions in 2020 are projected to be 128 megatonnes (Mt) less than under a scenario where consumers, businesses and governments had taken no action to reduce emissions since 2005. In addition, emissions intensity (emissions per dollar of GDP) has shown an average annual decline

since 1990, a trend that is projected to continue through 2020. Emissions per capita (tonnes per person) have also been decreasing significantly since 2005 and are projected to be even lower by 2020.

In addition to the action already taken, Canada continues to work with provinces to reduce emissions from the oil and gas sectors while ensuring Canadian companies remain competitive.

Internationally, Canada is actively participating in negotiations towards a single, new international climate change agreement that includes meaningful commitments by all major emitters. Canada has fully delivered on its fast-start financing commitment by providing \$1.2 billion over 2010-2012, our largest ever contribution to international climate change finance. This funding is now supporting a range of climate change projects in over 60 developing countries. Under its Chairmanship of the Arctic Council, Canada is advancing the development of a new arrangement on black carbon and methane to address this pressing environmental issue in the Arctic. In addition, Canada is proud to be a lead partner in the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) to reduce short-lived climate pollutants, which are potent global warmers and dangerous air pollutants.

The Government of Canada renewed and expanded its focus on adaptation by investing \$148.8 million over five years in ten adaptation programs and adopting the Federal Adaptation Policy Framework (2011) to help bring climate change issues into the mainstream of federal decision-making.

#### For more information visit:

Website: [www.ec.gc.ca](http://www.ec.gc.ca)

Twitter: [twitter.com/environmentca](https://twitter.com/environmentca)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/environmentcan](https://www.facebook.com/environmentcan)