



Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade

Ministère des Affaires étrangères
et du Commerce international

Appendices Agenda 2003

**A Sustainable
Development Strategy
for the Department of
Foreign Affairs and
International Trade**



Canada

Table of Contents

Introduction: Supplementary Documents	2
Appendix I: Assessing <i>Agenda 2000</i> , DFAIT's First Sustainable Development Strategy	3
I. Context: Assessing Results to Date	3
II. DFAIT's First Sustainable Development Strategy: <i>Agenda 2000</i>	3
III. Conclusion: Moving Forward	7
Appendix II: Defining the Goals—The Issue Scan	8
I. Context: The Issue Scan Process	8
II. Detailed Findings	11
III. Conclusion: Reviewing the Findings	22
Appendix III: Consultations	23
I. Context: Improving Consultations	23
II. Developing the Strategy: DFAIT's Consultation Process	23
III. Refining the Draft: Incorporating Public Concerns	26

Introduction: Supplementary Documents

The appendices which follow provide additional information on the reasoning and processes underlying the development of *Agenda 2003, A Sustainable Development Strategy for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade*.

- Appendix I, *Assessing Agenda 2000, DFAIT's First Sustainable Development Strategy* responds to the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development's requirement that all departments carry out a thorough assessment of their first strategy and incorporate the discussion into the second. The document assesses the results of the first strategy. It includes the perspective of the Commissioner, Consulting and Audit Canada, the Department's internal audit division, as well as those of participants at internal and external consultations.
- Appendix II, *Defining the Goals*, is what is commonly called an "issue scan." It aims to track the thinking processes and the reasoning that led to the goals, objectives and targets, and to the establishment of DFAIT's highest priority SD issues.
- Appendix III, *Consultations*, presents an overview of DFAIT's consultations process, outlining the initial planning in late 1999, internal and external consultations, the role of the Advisory Team and interdepartmental activities. The document not only sets out the process's numerous activities, but also clearly underlines the determining role of the consultations in preparing *Agenda 2003*.

Appendix I: Assessing Agenda 2000, DFAIT's First Sustainable Development Strategy

I. Context: Assessing Results to Date

Moving up the Learning Curve, the 1999 report of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, expressed three expectations. First, each department would carry out an assessment of its initial SD strategy and include the results in the second one. Second, they would strengthen the planning of their strategy, linking activities, impacts and priorities. Third, they would accelerate development of management systems to turn talk into action. In response to the first of these requirements, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) prepared this assessment of its first strategy, *Agenda 2000, A Sustainable Development Strategy for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade*. It is based on input from those who were involved in drafting and subsequently implementing it, on assessments and audits conducted by the Commissioner, Consulting and Audit Canada, and by the Office of the Inspector General at DFAIT. As well, participants at internal and external consultations were asked to comment on a draft assessment document.

Agenda 2000 was tabled in the House of Commons on December 10, 1997. The strategy was developed in accordance with the guidelines suggested in *A Guide to Green Government*, published in 1995. While each department was left to tailor the substance to reflect its own mandate and priorities, the Guide laid out common elements to be considered in preparing the first strategy, including: a departmental profile; an issue scan assessing the department's activities as related to SD; evidence of consultations; identification of goals, objectives and targets, including performance measurement benchmarks; an action plan; and the means of reporting on performance.

Departments were asked to not simply report on initiatives or actions already undertaken, but to examine their policies and operations through the lens of SD. How might SD be integrated more fully into their formulation and implementation? The first strategy would set in motion a cycle of planning, review and revision that would gradually move departments closer to meeting the federal government's SD objectives.

II. DFAIT's First Sustainable Development Strategy: Agenda 2000

The Department's first strategy, *Agenda 2000*, recognized that a change in direction takes time to achieve. A "committed investment of energy" is needed in order to reach goals. The objectives, issues and action plans were structured around the Department's three strategic objectives as defined in Canada's foreign policy statement, *Canada and the World*—economic growth and prosperity, building peace and security, Canadian values and culture—with the additional goal of greening government operations. Under these four objectives are some 55 action items, each with milestone indicators.

A. Preparing Agenda 2000: The Challenges

Planning a sustainable development strategy document presented difficulties for DFAIT and other policy departments. Formulating policy is a complex process involving many players. Political priorities, competing social issues, and economic issues often make the achievement of a policy target a slow and laborious process.

DFAIT is required to represent Canada's domestic departments abroad on issues that have an international dimension. However, the division between the domestic and international aspects is not always apparent and may lead to confusion as to the departmental responsibility. In terms of SD targets, it is important that this division of responsibility be clarified for accurate reporting to be carried out.

A second challenge lies in the fact that certain negotiations, particularly those involving international agencies where consensus is required, may be long and complex, making progress difficult to measure. Shifting political priorities, both at home and abroad, make long-term commitments hard. In areas where DFAIT has limited control, forecasting results is also challenging. And in many cases, the link between divisional activities and SD is simply not clear. For all these reasons, it is difficult for DFAIT to develop measurable SD targets and performance indicators.

B. *Assessing Agenda 2000: Results*

Of the 55 original actions envisaged in *Agenda 2000*, approximately 20 actions may be considered completed, work has been suspended on two, and the remainder are ongoing. The completed actions tend to be related to specific events or meetings that have now taken place. An example is promoting SD issues before UN Commissions or at conferences, including SD factors in agreements that have been negotiated, organizing conferences specifically concerned with SD, or preparing plans to incorporate SD objectives into an activity. The “ongoing” activities do not lend themselves as readily to a specific completion date, and their progress is therefore more difficult to judge¹.

1. *The Strengths of Agenda 2000*

Despite the complexities inherent in preparing a first SD strategy for DFAIT, *Agenda 2000* succeeded on several levels. *Agenda 2000* was a comprehensive document that represented a first attempt to discuss the Department’s unique international role in promoting SD. The drafting and the implementation process led to a new sensitization to SD issues in the Department, and was a significant first step in a long-term process.

Creating the strategy also led to the development of capabilities to implement the plan. The Environmental Services Division was able to use the document to raise awareness and develop policies, organize a systematic planning and reporting process and prepare guidelines for incorporating environmental considerations into Memoranda to Cabinet.

Consulting and Audit Canada, in its 1998 report, noted that the document reflected a broad-based consultation process that included internal staff, other government departments, other levels of government, Aboriginal peoples, NGOs, industry, the general public and educational institutions. It noted that DFAIT was among five organizations that consulted in at least seven of twelve categories. It also noted that the strategy had considered a wide range of issues, ranging from natural ecosystems, conservation, and the use of green products, to human health and poverty, covering 18 out of 23 possible categories.

The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development found that most departments, including DFAIT, met basic requirements, particularly in their description of departmental mandates and activities, in the consultation process, and in establishing goals and objectives. In fact, the departmental strategy conformed to roughly 60 per cent of the requirements as outlined in the *Auditor General Act* and *A Guide to Green Government*. DFAIT was also given credit for identifying a need for training and awareness, and for setting the context for the department’s planned SD activities. Mandates and key activities were well explained, relevant SD issues were identified, and goals and objectives were clearly laid out.

An internal departmental audit carried out in 1999 stressed that initial enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the program had been high. This enthusiasm resulted in an increased awareness of SD in the department and in the production of documentation, guidelines and reporting procedures.

¹ A comprehensive status report on the *Agenda 2000* action items is available upon request or can be found at <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/sustain/SustainDev/ProgressIndex-e.asp>

2. Areas for Improvement

Agenda 2000 was the Department's first attempt to articulate its SD commitments. As could be expected, some areas could have been improved. These were identified by the Department itself as well as by the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Consulting and Audit Canada, and DFAIT's Internal Audit Division.

a. The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development

The introduction of SD strategies was not intended to be a one-time activity, nor was it intended to be simply a descriptive exercise. Departments were expected to establish achievable targets and were to be rated on their success in meeting those targets. The Commissioner reported in 1998 on the quality of the strategies themselves and again in mid-1999 on their implementation.

In his 1998 review, the Commissioner stressed that SD strategies were intended to help departments take environmental, economic and social considerations into account in their policies, programs and operations in a more systematic way—"to turn sustainable development from words into action." The review found that most departments followed the proposed pattern and met basic requirements, particularly in describing departmental mandates and activities, carrying out consultations, and establishing goals and objectives. Nonetheless, there were two fundamental weaknesses:

- almost all departments failed to establish the clear and measurable targets that are deemed essential if the public and Parliament are to judge results; and
- many strategies simply restated the status quo, rather than committing to change, and fewer than half identified the specific changes that needed to be made in order to implement the strategy.

Six departments were selected for in-depth review, including DFAIT. They were chosen for two reasons: they represented a cross-section of the types of policy, program and operational activities carried out by the federal government, and their performance was critical to the success or failure of the SD effort across government.

The Commissioner felt that the six departments were not clear as to how their strategies would change what they do and how they do it. All identified a need for training and awareness plans, and five had a communications plan for their strategy. They did not, however, identify the resources needed to implement strategies. The Commissioner also noted that departments did not set priorities among issues and most did not assess social impacts.

The Commissioner repeatedly underlined the lack of measurable targets in the strategy documents. Targets focussed on the identification of activities or processes to be carried out (studies, conferences, and analyses) rather than on expected results, and initiatives were often defined in vague language. While all were committed to performance measurement, none provided details on responsibilities, practices and procedures for measuring performance, nor on processes for review.

DFAIT ranked 24th out of the 28 departments and agencies that submitted SD documents. The Departmental strategy conformed to roughly 60 per cent of the requirements as outlined in the *Auditor General Act* and *A Guide to Green Government*. The Commissioner noted, "Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada also used an internal process to identify issues relating to its mandate that have a sustainable development impact. The result was a set of general directions for actions, rather than an assessment of impacts or concerns."

In a summary review of the DFAIT strategy, the Commissioner noted the absence of a separate issue scan section, and the fact that objectives, goals and actions were not presented in any order of priority. And, once again, he noted that while some of the milestone indicators have a time period specified, “they are generally steps in some (often-complex) process, the expected results of which are not defined.”

In mid-1999, the Commissioner reported on the results achieved in implementing the SD strategies of all departments by that time. He reiterated the need for improvement in current reporting practices and for clearer targets and links between activities and objectives, noting that it is time to accelerate the development of management and control practices with respect to SD activities. He pointed out three weaknesses in the consultation process: limited feedback, limited coordination among departments, and limited involvement of senior management.

b. Consulting and Audit Canada

In April 1998, Consulting and Audit Canada produced *Sustainable Development Strategies: Summary of Federal Plans*, an analysis of the strategies tabled in December 1997. The analysts chose four areas for comparison: groups consulted; the types of problems described in the issue scan of each SD strategy; the objectives set to deal with the issues; and whether the organization outlined simple and relevant measures for performance.

Based on these four categories, the group’s analysis of DFAIT’s strategy was as follows:

- Groups consulted: DFAIT consulted eight groups out of the twelve categories listed, including internal staff, other government departments, other levels of government, Aboriginal peoples, NGOs, industry, the general public, and educational institutions. It did not consult other nations and international organizations, members of Parliament or special interest groups. DFAIT was among the five organizations that consulted in at least seven of the twelve categories.
- Categories of issues: the analysis took into account 23 general issues, ranging from natural ecosystems, conservation and use of green products, to human health, poverty, housing and management. DFAIT ranked high on the scale of breadth of issues discussed, scoring in 18 of the 23 categories. The Department did not discuss human health, housing, use of green products, ecosystem research or green citizenship/knowledge/training, presumably because it felt these topics were beyond its mandate.
- Objectives by category of issues: This area was analyzed by recording whether each organization set an objective for each category of issues discussed, and whether such objectives were specific and measured. Five grades were established, from “issue discussed, no objective set” to “specific and measured objectives.” DFAIT scored “0” with respect to specific and measured commitments in the objectives discussed. While DFAIT did not discuss green citizenship in its issue scan, it did put forward an objective in this category. In three cases—quantity and quality of water, efficient use of natural resources, and management—the issue was discussed, but no objective was set. And in the remaining 15 cases where the issue was discussed, an objective was set that was deemed not to be specific, measurable, or both.
- Performance measures were a problem for nearly all departments, and DFAIT was no exception. Measures were analyzed by determining whether a way to assess performance was stated for each category of issues, and whether these measures were simple and relevant. Of the 19 objectives set (18 issues discussed, plus one which had not been discussed), DFAIT scored as “objective set, no

performance measure specified” in 11, and as having set a performance measure that was not simple or relevant in the remaining eight. None of DFAIT’s objectives were considered to have a simple and relevant performance measure.

Consulting and Audit Canada suggested a number of ways to improve the SD strategies in a second round. These included: using clearer language; holding earlier consultations with more people; focussing on issues rather than processes; linking issues to program activities; setting measurable objectives; and specifying simple and relevant performance measures. The group concluded that the SD strategies succeeded in reflecting a new approach to SD, but that there was difficulty in identifying SD issues in general and those relevant to each department in particular. It also noted that most organizations identified processes as environmental issues, instead of as solutions to issues.

c. Internal Audit Division (SSIU)

In late 1999, DFAIT’s Audit Division (SIV) carried out an internal audit of the Environmental Services Division (AES) and the SD portfolio, focussing on the degree to which SD actions were clearly stated, implemented and reported on in the Department.

Despite progress made toward an increased awareness of SD in the Department, they noted weaknesses in “the clarity of the plans, integration of and compliance with the sustainable development policies and practices, and reporting on progress and results.” The team stressed that management should reaffirm its commitment to SD, clarify the mandate of AES, and integrate planning and progress reports into the Department’s formal planning and reporting process.

d. Departmental Experience

In the three years since *Agenda 2000* was developed, many of the points noted in the various reports and audits have become obvious to those in the Department responsible for implementing *Agenda 2000*. Devising appropriate performance indicators has proven to be difficult, for many of DFAIT’s activities are ongoing, rendering the results virtually impossible to quantify. Reporting on actions underway was also more complex than anticipated. In hindsight, it has become clear that *Agenda 2000* contained too many actions, requiring too many reporters. The follow-up process thus became both overly complex and extremely time-consuming for the division responsible.

III. Conclusion: Moving Forward

Given the complexity of DFAIT’s mandate, areas for improvement in the first strategy were to be expected. The development and implementation of a new and overarching policy framework is bound to proceed slowly and to need constant fine-tuning in the process. The weaknesses identified, however, do not negate the fact that as a result of *Agenda 2000*, the Department is more aware of SD issues and is attempting to integrate SD considerations into a wide variety of activities. *Agenda 2003* will take advantage of this momentum to further the SD agenda.

Appendix II: Defining the Goals—The Issue Scan

I. Context: The Issue Scan Process

A. Gathering the information

Given DFAIT's wide mandate, singling out a few selected goals was a challenge. However, it is critical to do so in order to make meaningful and visible progress on SD issues. DFAIT, therefore, decided to begin its issue scan by gaining a broad perspective on issues relevant to its current and future operations, inside and outside government, and by distilling from this a shorter and more concise list of goals and actions.

To begin the process, each SD Advisory Team member evaluated, updated and amended the issue scans that had been prepared for the first strategy. In addition, team members were asked to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the first strategy and comment on the issues. The Environmental Services Division held bilateral meetings with team members to discuss branch profiles.

In January 2000, a workshop was held. Participants from across the Department were asked to discuss four central topics to help direct the development of DFAIT's second strategy. The group was asked to: 1) assess *Agenda 2000*; 2) consider the meaning and interpretation of SD; 3) identify the major factors that will affect Canada and DFAIT operations; and 4) determine where DFAIT's current and future responsibilities and its external and internal challenges intersect, and suggest issues that DFAIT should focus on if substantial progress toward SD is to be made. The external issue scan yielded useful results, but it was clear at that stage that more work was needed before decisions could be reached on which issues should be priorities for DFAIT action. Participants received a report on the session's findings.

A discussion document based on the information gathered was prepared. It considered several elements vital to the eventual strategy: DFAIT's mandate to manage Canada's international relations, Canada's engagements on SD issues, and DFAIT's record in a variety of areas related to SD, such as peace building, WTO negotiations, and the Arctic Council. Also included were a brief assessment of *Agenda 2000*, and an overview of the issues that emerged from the internal workshop and northern consultations, including key issues today and thoughts on a vision for the future.

The discussion document served as the basis for the next phase in the issue scan process: a one-day external consultation held with representatives of organizations from outside the Department. Participants were asked to: 1) consider the issues addressed in the discussion document, including an analysis of the first strategy, and 2) look ahead to the next strategy and suggest additional issues that might be included. There was broad agreement that greater emphasis should be placed on the link between trade and sustainable development, human security, and the environment.

Participants were then asked for their views on three themes for the next strategy: choosing the top priorities for Canada in the international context; incorporating SD into the international trade agenda; and determining how DFAIT could work better with the public and private sectors to advance SD. The group concluded that there was considerable unexploited potential for DFAIT to move on SD issues, and that better communication and information on SD is needed. There was general consensus that DFAIT has a major role to play in this endeavour because it represents Canada on the world stage. Participants received a follow-up report on the consultations.

During this period, DFAIT took part in discussions held in the North to identify issues of particular concern to that region. At three two-day workshops in Whitehorse, Yellowknife, and Iqaluit in November 1999, topics were raised such as globalization and environmental responsibility, Aboriginal involvement in international fora on the environment and cultural programs. At further consultations held in Whitehorse, Yellowknife, and Iqaluit in June, Environment Canada presented material, on behalf of DFAIT, on international SD commitments to the North.

Also during this phase, the Advisory Team was asked to review “A Framework for Federal Sustainable Development Strategies,” (SDSs) developed by the Interdepartmental Network on SDSs. The framework, which includes indicators, principles, goals, objectives, tools and approaches and other considerations to guide departments in developing their SDSs, contributed a number of key elements to the DFAIT strategy. For example, the team noted that while DFAIT must develop international indicators, it also reflects the government’s general concern for partnerships and new technologies. In addition, many of the goals and objectives listed in the framework, such as furthering open trade regimes and ensuring renewable resource development, pertain to DFAIT.

The Department participated in the Leaders’ Forum in early April. There, DMs and other senior officials from a number of government departments and agencies, and representatives of the private sector, met to discuss the SD challenges and opportunities facing Canada in terms of eight major themes, including international issues. In preparation for this forum, DFAIT prepared a paper entitled “International Aspects of Sustainable Development,” which identified international issues with potential repercussions for SD. These were reflected in the leaders’ discussions, and in the final report, in which participants expressed their desire for a clear statement of goals and objectives, for more coordination of activities, and for greater Canadian involvement in the process.

Thorough review and consideration was given to the information gathered from the issue scan process. The material was analyzed and organized for further internal and external comment, with the goal of identifying elements that could form the basis of a workable and achievable strategy.

B. Reviewing the findings

When the information from all of the internal and external consultations was collected and examined, it became apparent that there was a high degree of consistency among participants. Several themes emerged:

- **Human security:** This is regarded as being of critical importance in ongoing attempts to promote SD. Whether focussed on peace-keeping and peace building or on issues relating to human rights, there can be no long-term SD without personal security.
- **Trade:** The Department, business and NGOs extensively analyzed trade policy, trade promotion and related topics. It was noted that many non-trade factors should be considered in trade agreements, including social and environmental implications. Trade is such an important factor in wealth distribution that without a comprehensive international policy there can be no true SD.
- **Environment:** Participants recognized that although environmental issues are largely managed as part of domestic policy, they know that the major international environmental concerns of the day—including climate change, biodiversity, and transboundary pollution— can be addressed only in concert with other countries.

- **The North:** Numerous issues related to northern development were discussed. The North requires not only sustainable economic development, but also sustainable cultural development, the participants concluded, with the most pressing current issue being environmental protection.
- **International Fora and DFAIT's commitments:** DFAIT's role in promoting SD in international fora was repeatedly emphasized. Without doubt, the most prominent upcoming forum for SD concerns is the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002. There was consensus that WSSD must be a success and that resources should be dedicated to making it so.
- **Leadership and Communication:** Participants called for more leadership from DFAIT, and for better communication, including ongoing consultations with the public and the creation of more effective information vehicles. They regard coordination among all players as critical, especially given the growing influence of non-governmental entities.
- **Greening operations:** This theme was discussed in terms of property and materiel management and as a concept governing many areas of activity. Enhancing training and awareness programs to educate employees with regard to SD, developing accurate performance indicators to reflect the business of the Department, integrating SD into the overall planning process, and engaging senior management support were seen as important steps in the greening process.

C. Narrowing the focus

Once themes had been identified, it was necessary to extract specific and manageable goals from the material. Deciding which suggestions and ideas to focus on proved difficult, given DFAIT's broad mandate and the wide range of possible activities from which to select. Several considerations guided the eventual choice:

- **Looking toward the future:** On the first strategies, the Commissioner for Sustainable Development commented that departments tended to focus on what they had already done, rather than on what they could do in the future. Many of the suggestions made during the consultations reflected work already ongoing in the Department. Rather than reiterating current actions, the Department tried to identify new ideas that would permit change.
- **Selecting achievable targets:** A second concern was to narrow the goals down to the point where clearly achievable objectives and targets could be developed. Experience with reporting on the first strategy and comments from outside observers made it clear that goals that are too general do not lead to measurable results. Participants made a number of good suggestions, but given resource restraints and other departmental priorities, DFAIT chose to focus on issues where it can be expected to make a difference.
- **Concentrating on DFAIT's mandate:** A third factor relates directly to DFAIT's mandate. DFAIT's "jurisdiction" may be seen to overlap with that of other government departments. The Department's joint efforts on behalf of SD must be better coordinated. It is also important for DFAIT to recognize where its limits lie, to ensure that it does not intervene inappropriately in the activities of another department, and to make progress on its own front.
- **Deciding where DFAIT can have the most direct influence internationally:** Finally, the "international" aspects of SD and DFAIT's role in this area were considered. In most of its international activities, DFAIT's interventions on SD are part of a long and slow process of raising awareness.

These are essential ongoing tasks, but they are not easily or quickly measured in terms of concrete results. As an example, Canada is now recognized for having played a major role in the land mines agreement—a critical human security accomplishment—but the process would not have been easy to measure or to plan in advance, owing to the number and variety of players and the lengthy, unpredictable negotiations. In the second strategy's goals, therefore, we have attempted to concentrate on areas where DFAIT does exert more control, and in so doing, to identify areas where we might reasonably expect to effect change.

II. Detailed Findings

A. Internal workshop in January

After providing its assessment of *Agenda 2000*, the group was asked to:

- consider the meaning and interpretation of SD;
- identify the major external trends, forces and factors that have an impact on Canada and the government and affect DFAIT's operations now and in the future; and
- attempt to determine the points where DFAIT's current and future responsibilities and its external and internal challenges intersect, as well as to suggest issues DFAIT should direct its energies in the coming few years if substantial progress toward SD is to be made.

1. The meaning and interpretation of sustainable development

- One participant commented that the Brundtland definition has been around since 1987, so why are we still defining SD? Another participant responded that if new definitions are needed it means the old ones are not clear and no longer work. A bridge is needed to close the gap between Brundtland and real life.
- One group defined SD as a learning process by which we give ourselves tools, policies and institutional arrangements to promote coherence, and learn to live within the carrying capacity of global ecosystem. The definition of "carrying capacity" was discussed.
- The elements defining SD—social, economic, environmental—cannot easily be separated or "stovepiped." They must be integrated. The challenge is to reconcile economic, social and environmental elements in an operational approach.
- One participant noted that SD is part of how one handles externalities and depends on what elements are taken into account, not just economics. The question is how we deal with these external factors—by regulation, or in some other way? How do we make SD operational?
- Participants commonly agreed that integrating the three elements is necessary for any operational definition.
- They also agreed that SD and strictly environmental concerns are not the same, but are often confused. In fact, all three elements play a role in SD.
- Some noted that we have few tools and instruments, such as incentives and regulations, to influence behaviour. Tools and instruments are needed to manage externalities.

- As DFAIT does not control the outcomes of some negotiations, some participants noted that all we could hope to exert was influence. Others disagreed, believing that DFAIT has more control than we realize.
- SD is not a “driver” in the Department in the same way that trade is, for example, except where greening of government is concerned. It was noted that we therefore tend to reaffirm the status quo.
- SD has either been ignored or people have remained unaware of it.
- It is hard to define a mandate with respect to SD. Domestic and international consistency is difficult when we are not responsible for domestic issues unless they have echoes on the world stage.
- As a policy, SD has had low visibility. It is one policy among many. SD is not considered a priority and its resources are allocated accordingly. It is regarded merely as a “greening” policy. Others also thought that we have adopted a reactive approach, and that the future demands a mix of reaction and pro-action that is both integrated and balanced.
- Some viewed SD as a management tool, with more senior management consultation and direction.
- Departments may need to coordinate with other departments (à la Team Canada).
- The Department’s activity overseas must balance economic and SD.
- Someone suggested that we need a common plan and debate in the Department on process. SD should be discussed more.
- In summary, the group agreed that:
- No one says current definitions are inaccurate and all agree that the integration of three elements is vital; this is not a debate on choosing among them.
- The problem is, how do we engage these definitions in the Department? How can we make progress on SD? What tools and instruments can we develop and use?

2. The major external trends, forces and factors that have an impact on Canada and the government and affect DFAIT’s operations now and in the future

External issues

These included:

- the many aspects of globalization: human security and human rights, transnational concerns such as trafficking in drugs and illegal migration, urbanization, conflicts and terrorism, the coherence of international institutions and their structure, increased interdependence, the impact of technology and the media;
- business and economic concerns, especially the relationship of trade to human rights, environment and labour;

- environmental concerns, whether they be “pure” concerns, such as climate change, water and air pollution, or “process” concerns about complying with existing obligations and managing the link between trade and the environment;
- social issues, such as the human security agenda, peacekeeping, peace-making, the plight of refugee and internally displaced persons, and international health and education issues; and
- political/governmental priorities with respect to many issues— trade promotion, investment, SD, overseas development assistance, crime and justice, Aboriginal peoples, and environment, to name but a few.

These lists offered a dynamic picture of change at the international level. From the discussion that followed, it was possible to isolate a number of themes:

- the ever-increasing importance of conflict management (prevention and resolution) through peace building and peacekeeping;
- the rapidly accelerating pace of change on every front and the increasingly complex nature of these changes;
- the critical importance of the Canada–U.S. relationship;
- the increasingly significant role of multilateral relations and regional/global activity;
- the growing influence of non-governmental actors such as NGOs, who are transforming positions and policies into “multi-stakeholder” issues; and
- the uncertainty with respect to the federal government’s role in such issues and concerns about the availability of resources to handle them.

3. The points where DFAIT’s current and future responsibilities and its external and internal challenges intersect, and issues DFAIT should focus on in the coming few years if substantial progress toward sustainable development is to be made

To respond effectively to issues driven by external forces, the Department must:

- accommodate civil society concerns about policies and activities and develop a new accountability regime;
- consider many non-trade factors in trade agreements, such as social and environmental implications; and
- take into account in policies and actions the desire for human security, including individual freedom and protection, removal of conflict, environmental protection and security.

Those issues driven by the ongoing delivery of policy mandates on which the Department will have to focus include:

- trade and economic policy development and links to associated issues (environment, labour, health, human rights); meeting SD objectives in trade, which means determining what specific aspects of SD relate to trade; and
- Canada's international role and influence, whether working through multilateral fora or through its bilateral relations.

In terms of internal mandates and process, the Department is expected to focus on:

- communicating its agenda to society at large, and selling our international agenda as an extension of our domestic one, with the goal of advancing Canada's interests. This requires planning communications strategies well to explain initiatives;
- getting together with those outside the Department, both to learn and to communicate; and
- delivering on actual priorities, and giving adequate resources to Canada's priorities. DFAIT must also show leadership and mobilize the resources of other government departments.

Internal organizational needs also require attention, depending on the corporate culture, capacity and governance of the organization. To make effective progress, the Department will have to consider:

- achieving a common understanding as to what SD means for DFAIT;
- enhancing training and awareness programs to educate employees in SD;
- developing good performance indicators to reflect the Department's business;
- integrating SD into the overall planning process;
- replicating best practices;
- developing conflict resolution mechanisms and tools;
- optimizing resources, both in terms of expertise and finances;
- getting the message out that many in the Department are already incorporating SD into their work; and
- engaging senior management support.

B. Discussion document

A discussion document based on the information gathered to date was then prepared. The document considered several elements vital to the eventual strategy:

- The scope of the consultation and DFAIT's mandate: managing Canada's relations with the governments and people of other nations, bilaterally and through the international organizations in which Canada is a member; providing consular services to Canadians abroad; helping the business community sell goods and services overseas; negotiating trade, investment, environmental and other international agreements; promoting our cultural industries and institutions internationally; and assisting in the overseas marketing efforts of Canada's educational institutions, among many other tasks;
- Canada's engagement in SD, including political commitment to the goals of the WSSD and involvement in issues such as biosafety, access to water resources, climate change, forest management, desertification, hazardous wastes, poverty alleviation, movement of refugees, threats to international health, and understanding sustainable production and sustainable consumption; Canada's engagement also includes participation in a number of international institutions, including the United Nations, that are concerned with SD; and
- DFAIT's record to date and the progress it has made toward achieving the goals and implementing the objectives outlined in *Agenda 2000*, including: playing a key role in reaching a treaty to ban land mines and in creating the International Criminal Court; working in the World Trade Organization to remove trade restrictions and distortions; and participating in the work of the Arctic Council, to cite but a few.

The document reviewed the assessment of *Agenda 2000* and outlined the key issues that emerged from the internal workshop and northern consultations. It also proposed a vision for DFAIT's future, to stimulate discussion.

C. External consultations

The discussion document then served as the basis for the next step in the issue scan process: a one-day external consultation held in March for representatives of 12 organizations from outside the Department. Participants were given two tasks:

- to consider the issues addressed in the discussion document, including an analysis of the first strategy, and
- to look ahead to the next strategy and suggest further issues to include.

In the first session, the facilitator asked the group to comment on:

- what they liked about the paper: the analysis, appraisal of the current situation, issues outlined, and the way forward;
- the issues and concerns outlined in the paper;
- suggestions for improvement; and
- the issue scan, adding their opinions on the scope of issues mentioned.

What they liked and what issues were significant to them

- Participants were pleased to see the government paying attention to SD issues, despite the perceived lack of leadership from the top down. They generally conceded that even small actions are better than no action. They expressed concern that Canadians should receive adequate credit for actions already underway, and that efforts should be made to communicate all of the “good work” being done.
- The group agreed that such issues as peace building and human security, northern issues and the Arctic Council, climate change and its relationship to trade, and the WTO, for example, are all relevant to SD.
- There was interest in affirming the connection between domestic policies and international policies.
- Support was also voiced for holding ongoing serious consultations and creating opportunities to bring society together.

How could the document be improved?

- Participants felt that the connection between trade and SD needs greater emphasis. They noted that trade experts are generally not SD experts and that more public input is vital to this discussion.
- Human security must be linked to SD; communication on such topics as health and welfare in international treaties needs to be improved.
- Environmental problems, including the migration of nuclear waste and the clean-up of environmental damage, must be solved.
- Equity for all citizens of the globe is a concern, to ensure all have their fair share of life’s basic requirements.

Issues specific to the North

- The far North needs economic stimulation. Participants suggested that considering the North as an emerging economy might help bring parties together and could motivate investment and activity there.
- In the Yukon, people have built up a co-management structure with government. The federal government has funded economic development, which has in turn destroyed the subsistence lifestyle. The result is a welfare-dependent, government-bound way of life:
 - Yukon needs an improved economy; it has lost its traditional way of life; and cultural preservation is vital.
- The biggest issue in the North is not SD—it is environmental protection. No one has come to grips with environmental science and how to integrate it with Aboriginal knowledge, thereby combining both traditional information and modern technology.

- Suggestions as to how the North might be revitalized included:
 - encouraging Canada to lead on northern and Aboriginal issues;
 - supporting maintenance of traditional knowledge, through making connections among indigenous peoples, for example; and
 - supporting the Arctic Council.
- The first strategy contains a problem: the various goals listed were considered to be largely separate from each other. The group advocated an approach that focusses on the interrelationship of these issues, targeting efforts to the most interdependent ones.
- The group emphasized that SD must be put on the political agenda in order for real change to take place. There was concern about “making it happen,” with participants wanting to see “hard-nosed” actions from the Department.
- It is vital to find sufficient financial and human resources to actually accomplish the strategy’s goals and make it credible.
- In our international dealings, with the OECD, CEC, WTO, FTAA, among other organizations, we must be seen to push the SD agenda consistently; we also need to improve our communications in this regard with institutions such as the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE), Communities Universities Research Alliances (CURA) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SHERC).

In the afternoon session, participants were asked to consider three questions:

- What do you see as the top five priorities for Canada in the international context? In the process of discussion, it became obvious that it was sometimes difficult to distinguish the problems from the solutions.

Problems included:

- traditional environmental issues such as:
 - climate change/ozone
 - demography/population/consumption patterns
 - biodiversity
 - transboundary pollution
 - fish stocks/ocean management
 - freshwater management
 - forestry/desertification

- more general social, cultural, or political/economic issues such as:
 - North–South issues
 - trade/environment/globalization
 - human rights
 - corruption
 - governance issues
 - illegal international trafficking

Solutions included:

- creating public awareness
- considering the integration/interdependence of issues; looking at interdependencies among conventions
- promoting peaceful co-existence/human security
- working to improve the functioning of UN organizations
- identifying short-term steps toward a larger solution
- working with Russia—planning ways of collaborating for the greater good
- How can SD be incorporated into the international trade promotion agenda? The suggestions covered three general areas: the philosophy behind our approach to international trade, practical steps toward sustainable trade, and our current international trade practices.
- The philosophy behind our approach to international trade

It was suggested that:

- “trade” be changed to “sustainable trade” and changes be made to some of the ways we do business now, which may be detrimental to SD goals;
- more emphasis be placed on developing codes of conduct for ethical practice;
- environmental reviews of trade agreements be conducted; and
- trade negotiators receive education as to the meaning of sustainable trade;
- Taking practical steps toward sustainable trade entails:
 - managing labelling and standards from an SD perspective and facilitating the development of national and international standards;

- implementing the “green” certification of exports;
- placing priority on environmentally friendly technology/goods/services;
- being sure not to promote or support trade in hazardous goods; and
- protecting our national right to regulate for SD.
- We must review our international practices:
 - less-developed countries should have fair access to the Canadian market;
 - country-specific strategies could be developed to address the needs of both Canada and poorer countries;
 - with respect to the North, Canada should urge the United States to reconsider the Marine Mammals Protection Act;
 - an examination of regional agreements might encourage expansion and a role for DFAIT; and
 - SDT should be linked to all other SD and environmental conventions, and vice versa.

In what ways could DFAIT work better with the public and private sectors to move the international SD agenda forward?

The public sector could:

- inform and involve the public;
- contact youth and youth agencies;
- provide bursaries for students;
- consult academics and the general public;
- use human resources, such as seniors, etc.;
- hold specific group consultations to feed into larger consultations and consult early, and make the consequences of consultations obvious in final policies;
- use existing mechanisms, but look at the need for new ones, such as developing Web sites, or a central federal repository for data;
 - coordinate activities among federal agencies;
 - develop DFAIT’s capacity to effect SD policy; and
 - participate in or support research and analysis of policy proposals.

The private sector could:

- encourage voluntary measures and the dissemination of best practices;
- increase DFAIT's emphasis on the economic consequences of SD; and to help them, DFAIT needs to better market the long-term advantages of SD;
- encourage a greater role for DFAIT in developing codes of conduct; and
- communicate information and promote education.

Other key points

- There is a need to gather evidence of proven positive economic results to convince businesses of the value of incorporating SD into their activities.
- An overall SD strategy is needed to render tools and mechanisms operational. For this to happen, a vision of cooperation is necessary. The northern SDS could serve as a model for interdepartmental cooperation.
- Information, communication, and education concerning best practices and codes of conduct are needed; what are other players doing? How are messages being transmitted, and what feedback is being received?
- Real integration of similar types of activities is vital; knowledge, education and awareness across government is needed.
- Other levels of government must be involved. When DFAIT signs an agreement, if other parts of the country have not been consulted, then the agreement has no significance. It is essential to consult before and debrief after.
- Assuming that SD is a core value of Canadian society, it should form part of the third pillar of Canadian foreign policy, which is the promotion of Canadian values and culture abroad, and therefore be part of the Department's role.
- From this perspective, DFAIT can legitimately promote SD values and practice as part of Canada's cultural values diplomacy.
- DFAIT should therefore proceed to take leadership on SD issues as part of its mandate.
- Institutional capacity must be strengthened and surveillance of other governments' strengths and weaknesses built in.
- In terms of process, the group repeatedly stressed that leadership, communication, accountability and coordination are needed, both within government and outside it. The group felt DFAIT could improve its working relationships with the public and private sectors to move the international SD agenda forward by informing and involving the public, holding specific group consultations to feed into larger consultations, and making the consequences of consultation obvious in its final policies.

- Participants felt DFAIT should be concerned with peace building and human security, the relationship between trade and SD, environmental problems, and northern issues. The need for an overall SD strategy to render tools and mechanisms operational was affirmed, as was the importance of gathering evidence of proven positive economic results to convince businesses of the value of incorporating SD into their activities.
- In general, it was felt that SD is a core value of Canadian society and, as such, should form part of the third pillar of Canadian foreign policy—the promotion of Canadian values and culture abroad.

D. Northern consultations

The issue scan process also incorporated comments and information identified at consultations in Whitehorse, Yellowknife and Iqaluit in November 1999. These included:

- globalization, environmental responsibility and the need for communication and better standards;
- Aboriginal involvement in international fora in environmental, product marketing and cultural programs;
- long-term sustainable international agreements on fishing in the northern oceans and lower Yukon River;
- bilateral relations between Greenland and Nunavut on marine mammal protection, economic development, trade facilitation and commercial fishing and wildlife management; and
- international whaling obligations under the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO).

E. The Interdepartmental Network on Sustainable Development Strategies: “A Framework for Federal Sustainable Development Strategies”

Consideration was also given to “A Framework for Federal Sustainable Development Strategies,” prepared by the Interdepartmental Network on Sustainable Development Strategies (INSDS) to guide departments in their SDS planning. The framework was designed to respond to comments by the Auditor General that departments were not working together on SD issues. Its purpose was to help departments identify horizontal issues as well as to reduce the likelihood of “consultation fatigue” among public stakeholders. Departments were free to use or adapt the framework when drafting their SD strategies.

The Deputy Ministers approved the framework. In March the SDS Advisory Team examined it with a view to assessing its usefulness in the development of DFAIT’s strategy. Overall, the document was seen as a useful adjunct in developing the next SDS, although not all of the sections applied fully to DFAIT’s mandate and circumstances. As an example, the group agreed that indicators such as the nature and scope of partnerships, trade in cultural goods and services, and use of new technologies may be of value for DFAIT, but that the Department would also need to establish its own indicators with an international focus. Many of the principles listed pertained to DFAIT, with the possible exceptions of “science and technology” and “precaution.” Shared goals and objectives relevant to DFAIT included supporting an open trade and investment regime domestically and internationally, ensuring that renewable resource development is sustainable, and protecting the health of Canadians and ecosystems through promotion and events abroad, among numerous others.

On the issue of integrated decision making, the group noted that the government could integrate SD through its ongoing activities, such as greening operations and adopting green procurement practices. As part of its mandate, DFAIT could also encourage others to make decisions that promote SD by showing leadership, integrating SD into policies on the international level and promoting SD abroad. As well, a number of tools and approaches were deemed relevant: information and education, engaging society through consultation, environmental assessments, strategic environmental assessments, partnerships, life cycle analysis and gender impact analysis. The group stressed the importance of horizontal initiatives, such as the northern SDS, climate change, children's issues and the socio-cultural aspects of SD.

Material from the framework was subsequently combined with information obtained from the issue scans, branch input, meetings with departmental representatives, and consultation findings to form the basis of the second strategy document.

F. Leaders' Forum, April 4, 2000

The issues identified in the internal and external consultations are again reflected in the report on the Leaders' Forum on Sustainable Development held in Ottawa on April 4, 2000. The forum aimed to bring together a group of government and non-government leaders to discuss Canada's SD challenges and opportunities. Participants expressed their desire for a clear statement of goals and objectives, for more coordination of activities, and for the greater involvement of Canadians in this process. Leadership, which involves Canadians through partnerships, and building an environmental infrastructure were among the many issues discussed.

Environmental concerns are increasingly international in scope, the participants noted, and issues cannot be resolved without considering horizontal challenges domestically and internationally. These include capacity, competitiveness and ideological issues and the different priorities of countries. There will be no SD until there is human security participants agreed. Economic concerns, such as the need to integrate financial flows and make more efficient use of ODA, are also paramount. Participants also stressed that we must improve efficiency in international organizations and enhance the role of civil society in international fora.

III. Conclusion: Reviewing the Findings

The information gathered throughout the issue scan process was subsequently reviewed, analyzed and organized for further internal and external comment. From this material, it was possible to distill a number of core elements to form the basis of DFAIT's second strategy. The six goals that were eventually chosen as a focus for *Agenda 2003*, and the targets and actions that were subsequently identified, are therefore firmly rooted in the concerns of a wide range of both governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals.

Appendix III: Consultations

I. Context: Improving Consultations

The past decade has seen increasing demand from organizations and individuals outside government for more information on public policy issues. Technology, faster communications, more open access to public information—all have created the expectation of public involvement. In 1995, *A Guide to Green Government* emphasized that Canadians would want to be consulted on decisions affecting their well-being and that, to be effective, SD strategies would have to reflect the perspectives of clients, partners and other interested parties on departmental priorities and ways to achieve them. Demonstrations, such as those at the WTO conference in Seattle in 1999 and at the conference on biosafety in Montreal in 2000, are but two signs of the public's desire to be part of the policy discussion. This desire shows no signs of abating.

In preparing the first round of strategies, departments consulted in a number of ways, both internally and externally, with varying degrees of success. The Commissioner's 1999 report on SD strategy consultations noted that several departments had used particularly effective practices, including:

- arranging pre-consultation activities, such as discussion with an internal advisory group;
- structuring thorough consultation plans;
- consulting early in the process;
- planning joint consultation activities with other departments;
- summarizing comments received; and
- providing feedback to participants on the results of the consultations.

The report also noted three key weaknesses: limited feedback to participants, limited coordination among departments, and limited involvement of senior management.

II. Developing the Strategy: DFAIT's Consultation Process

The consultation plan approved by Executive Committee in November 1999 included a series of activities designed to solicit opinion and information from as wide a cross-section of individuals both inside and outside the Department as possible, given resource and time constraints. The plan was designed to include the effective consultation practices identified in the Commissioner's report. The result was a process involving the following specific steps:

A. Advisory Team Appointed

In October 1999, Executive Committee named an Advisory Team of representatives from each group of bureaux to oversee the development of the second strategy, and appointed a senior manager to act as Chair. A timeline and consultation plan were also reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee.

B. Internal consultations

- **January 2000:**
 - Environmental Services Division (AES), which acted as the Secretariat for the development of the strategy, held bilateral meetings with Advisory Team members to discuss each branch profile, each bureau's SD input into the year's business plan, and the branch issue scans prepared for the first strategy. At the same time, a working assessment paper on *Agenda 2000* was begun based on the audits conducted by the Commissioner and other parties during the previous three years.
 - An internal consultation session was held with 22 representatives of the various branches and sectors in the Department. Participants had received the working assessment paper on *Agenda 2000* before the workshop, and at the session they were asked to:
 - comment on the assessment paper, as well as on how DFAIT had interpreted the meaning of SD to date;
 - consider external issues affecting DFAIT's operations now or in the future, and attempt to determine the points at which DFAIT's current and future responsibilities and its external and internal challenges intersect; and
 - suggest issues DFAIT would need to focus on and manage well over the next few years.
 - The information collected from the session was subsequently organized into a report and sent to all participants.
- **November 1999 through September 2000:** Ongoing bilateral discussions and Advisory Team meetings were held to incorporate broad departmental input into the strategy's development. As well, articles in the in-house newsletter and the internal messaging service encouraged personnel to become involved. Progress updates were provided to the Executive Committee in March and October, 2000.

C. External consultations

- **November 1999:** AES participated in three two-day workshops. At the workshop held in Whitehorse, non-federal participants numbered 33. At the one in Yellowknife, there were 41, with an additional 27 telephone interviews. In Iqaluit, non-federal participants numbered 37 with an additional 19 telephone interviews. These sessions came about as a result of extensive coordination and planning among departments.

In 1999, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) organized a Working Group. Participants included those departments who expressed interest in responding to a 1997 request from northerners for a federal SD strategy for the North that would combine the intentions of all departments into one strategy.

The three sessions in November aimed to:

- engage in discussions on departmental progress in achieving the first strategies' objectives relative to the North;
- investigate continued interest in the development of a federal SD strategy for the North;

- define a rationale, approach and some principles for such a strategy, if there was sufficient interest; and
- discuss six theme areas, in order to help formulate possible goals and objectives for the federal strategy and, at the same time, contribute to those of the individual departmental strategies. The theme areas focussed on: supporting and enhancing healthy human and northern environments; supporting the development of new governance systems and political restructuring in the North; promoting sustainable use of northern natural resources, helping to build sustainable communities in the North; and advocating and integrating SD in our international affairs.

These sessions involved federal personnel from six departments. DFAIT also represented the interests of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and Citizenship and Immigration (CIC). The outcome of these sessions are reflected in Appendix II, page 21.

- **March 2000:** A one-day workshop was held in Ottawa. Representatives from 12 organizations outside the Department attended. Material from the internal consultation and from the northern consultations was developed into a discussion paper that outlined DFAIT's mandate, its record on SD issues (including assessment of *Agenda 2000*), the key issues of the day, and thoughts on a vision for the future. Participants received the discussion paper prior to the consultation. They were asked to:
 - comment on the discussion paper;
 - focus on generating ideas for the next strategy. Themes for discussion included the top priorities for Canada in the international context, ways in which SD could be incorporated into the international trade promotion agenda, and how DFAIT could work better with the public and private sectors to move the international SD agenda forward. Again, the information from the session was collated into a report that was sent to all participants for feedback.
- **April 2000:** A one-day forum at the Deputy Minister/Assistant Deputy Minister level and senior corporate/NGO level was held in Ottawa. The forum brought together federal government and non-government leaders to discuss the SD challenges and opportunities facing Canada, and to consider how best to coordinate the government's SD efforts.
- **May/June 2000:** Two-day sessions were held in Yellowknife, Inuvik, Whitehorse and Rankin Inlet to further discuss ways in which northerners feel the SD agenda should be pushed forward. Participants numbered 38, 26, 41 and 36 respectively. An Environment Canada officer who lives in the North represented DFAIT in the discussions.
- **June 2000:** DFAIT, along with senior industry representatives from the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association's Environment and Forestry sections, as well as other senior government officials, participated in a Discussion Forum on SD in Ottawa. The forum's objective was to explore ways to work together to help Canada meet its SD agenda, thereby updating departmental strategies.
- **August 2000:** DFAIT presented its draft strategy in a workshop organized by the Canadian Environment Industry Association (CEIA) on "Coordinated Consultations for Sustainable Development." There were 36 participants from government departments and agencies and 26 from the CEIA.

- **August/September 2000:** The draft strategy was made available for public consultation by mail, e-mail, and through the Internet. Over 500 letters were sent out across Canada asking various interest groups and individuals if they would be interested in consulting on the Department's strategy via mail, e-mail or fax. Over 80 people requested a copy of the draft strategy and 30 provided comments. In addition, during the period when the strategy was posted on the SD Web site, user volume increased by 10 per cent. The provinces were also sent a copy of the draft for their approval.
- **Other consultations regarding Agenda 2003:** DFAIT undertook four consultations in September and October regarding one of the objectives outlined under Goal 2. Those consultations were intended to bring about a Canadian consensus on a framework for completing environmental assessments of trade agreements. The results of these sessions in Calgary, Vancouver, Victoria and Halifax, along with the material gleaned from the many people who offered their comments by mail, will lay the groundwork for the Goal 2 objective "to develop and implement environmental assessments of trade agreements."

Finally, DFAIT has undertaken more than eight consultations over the past two years in developing *The Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy*. The information gathered at those sessions played a significant part in developing the policy that was released in June 1999. Goal 5 outlines some of the SD objectives contained in this policy, particularly those identified by northerners in their discussions at the coordinated departmental consultations for the SD strategies held November 1999 and May/June 2000.

D. Interdepartmental cooperation

The Department:

- worked with the Interdepartmental Network on SDS to develop a common framework for strategies. The DFAIT Advisory Team devoted considerable time to reviewing "A Framework for Federal Sustainable Development Strategies" to determine which elements of the framework might be integrated into the next DFAIT SDS.
- participated in the interdepartmental SDS consultations in the North;
- sat on the design committee for the April 4 Leaders' Forum and co-led its international component;
- led the discussion on "Trade and Environment" at the June meeting of the interdepartmental DM level SD Coordinating Committee; and
- co-leads the interdepartmental committee meetings for the WSSD.

III. Refining the Draft: Incorporating Public Concerns

The draft strategy document, sent for review in August and September to those individuals and groups who had consulted earlier in the development process and to 500 others who were thought likely to be interested, elicited a wide range of comments. Where possible, the information was incorporated into the strategy, or was passed on to the appropriate division in the department for discussion purposes. Contributors received an acknowledgment of their input into the development process.

A. General Remarks

A number of the comments were general in nature and aimed at making the document more understandable to the public. For example, a clearer definition of SD and a better description of the role of the Commissioner for the Environment and Sustainable Development were requested, and were subsequently included. The definition of “stakeholders” was also clarified.

Other general comments dealt with DFAIT’s consultative process. One individual suggested that the government should not assume the responsibilities of the NGO community, and that the Department should focus instead on interests of specific interest to Canadians, such as boundary issues with the United States. A number of transboundary issues are indeed reflected in the final action plans. Another reviewer pointed out that the pivotal relationship between the Department and the provinces on SD issues should be made more apparent.

B. Goal-Specific Comments

Comments on the specific goals of the draft strategy were taken into account. As a result, the goals were subsequently rearranged and modified, as were the objectives and targets. The concerns of senior management and other feedback from within the Department were also factored into the revised document. Naturally, as the process evolved, some issues in the first draft were removed from the revised version, either because they were deemed to be too insignificant at this time or not measurable.

Goal 1. Improve mechanisms to ensure that sustainable development is an operating premise at DFAIT

The draft goal referred to “greening departmental operations with the development and implementation of an Environmental Management System.” One individual noted the need to look at the Department’s social and labour standards, as well as at its greening operations. Another questioned the absence of a stated commitment on the part of the Department to purchasing “green” goods, which would contribute significantly to SD at home and abroad. The lack of training programs on environmental assessment, and the need for evaluating the environmental consequences of grants and contributions were also noted. Internal consultations included comments on the need to maintain a sustainable workforce.

Owing in part to these comments, the goal was substantially broadened and extra emphasis was placed on training opportunities in more areas of SD. While SD social and labour issues are dealt with in the fourth objective, this first goal now includes a commitment to maintain a sustainable workforce within the Department.

Goal 2. Strengthen the linkages between trade and protection of the environment

This goal elicited a variety of pertinent comments from reviewers, many of whom expressed concern over aspects of the trade/environment relationship. One reviewer proposed that “investment” should be included with “trade.” Reviewers recommended greater emphasis on government/industry cooperation with respect to the domestic and international aspects of SD. They noted the lack of reference to the International Cooperation Commission and to the precautionary principle. Someone commented that DFAIT and CIDA might jointly develop norms on SD and capacity building, to be worked into decision making and foreign investment. The document now includes a suggestion that UNCTAD and/or UNIDO, as well as the CEC, be added to the list of those organizations interested in making progress on the environment through trade.

A number of people commented that a social perspective is needed in the trade/environment arena. The draft was revised to acknowledge this concern, making it clear that social issues are indeed extremely important, but that more study is required into ways of effectively incorporating them into decision making.

Some reviewers specifically questioned several of the objectives. In considering the environmental impact of trade liberalization during the negotiation of international trade agreements, one individual asked about the impact of existing and proposed trade policies on development. The person proposed that CIDA and DFAIT should work collaboratively on this issue. The revised objective of leading an interdepartmental framework initiative for an environmental assessment of international trade negotiations reflects this concern. Reviewers also expressed interest as to the SD impact of Canadian businesses outside Canada. As a result, corporate social responsibility is now a major objective under the goal of understanding the relationship between the three pillars of SD, underlining the Department's commitment to furthering its efforts in this area.

On the topic of voluntary labelling and certification programs, a number of points were raised. One reviewer suggested taking the multilateral elimination or reduction of tariffs on environmental goods a step further to encompass the elimination of all tariffs. Other comments concerned the promotion of Canada's certified forest products. Reviewers pointed out the need to encourage higher standards for EDC and suggested making EDC subject to CEAA. These suggestions have all been noted and, although they may not all appear in the final document, they have been referred to the divisions responsible for further discussion.

Goal 3. Promote sustainable development in international activities

The draft chart for this goal consisted of 23 proposals. Obviously, it was necessary to reduce the number of objectives and action plans. Someone suggested eliminating those which did not clearly illustrate the three aspects of SD, but this proved difficult to do. Nonetheless, the list has now been revised into seven overarching objectives, with 19 specific targets.

Certain issues, such as those related to invasive species and ballast water in the Great Lakes, and the 1995 Agreement on Straddling and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, have been included as commitments. A comment that mention should be made of Canada's current position on the Law of the Sea is now reflected in the narrative. Reference is also made to the issue of boundary water management under the *International Boundary Waters Treaty Act*, expressing one individual's concern that the sensitive issue of exporting Canada's water resources should be brought to the fore sooner rather than later. Reviewers applauded the inclusion of material on the Youth International Internship Program (YIIP). The program is no longer in the chart, but is now highlighted in the narrative.

Goal 4. Improve understanding of the relationship between the three pillars of sustainable development, in particular the interaction between human rights, human security, and sustainable development

Goal 4 is perhaps the most difficult one to turn into concrete action. Nor surprisingly, it raised a number of concerns among those reviewing the strategy. In terms of linkages, one individual felt that development decisions should first be assessed for their impact on the environment to test their sustainability, before economic or social/cultural impacts were examined. Others stressed that existing social development, human rights, and environmental agreements form a framework within which trade issues must be examined. One reviewer warned against adopting a linear approach to the linkage between social policies and demographic developments, at the risk of losing sight of other important factors, such as consumption/production and industrialization. Still others queried the wisdom of broadening SD beyond environmental concerns. On a practical note, one

reviewer questioned whether performance measures should be applied to targets under this goal. In general, reviewers recognized that SD as it is now defined must include economic, social and environmental elements working together, although the means to make this happen have yet to be developed and refined. The revised document reflects this reality.

Goal 5: Implement the sustainable development aspects of *The Northern Dimension of Canada's Foreign Policy*

Goal 5 did not elicit any comments from reviewers and remains substantially unchanged.

Goal 6: Prepare for Rio+10 Summit in 2002 so that Canadian sustainable development goals are met

There were few comments on this goal. However, one individual indicated that some mention should be made of the need to learn from the past. As a consequence, reference to WSSD has now been included in the narrative section. Other concerns reflected the desire to include specific subjects on the conference's agenda, such as the role of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety. This suggestion will be referred to the appropriate working group.

