



Indian and Northern
Affairs Canada

Affaires indiennes
et du Nord Canada

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Framework



Canada 

Framework components are:

VISION AND OBJECTIVES: It is important that residents of the NWT share a common vision for environmental stewardship. Where do we want to go? How do we want to get there? These are questions that Northerners need to ask themselves and each other to come up with a collective answer.

LAND USE AND CONSERVATION

PLANNING: Land use plans help guide development and protect important ecological and cultural areas. They provide a context for both conservation and development. Protected areas are an important part of land use plans and community conservation plans.

BASELINE STUDIES AND LONG-TERM

MONITORING: Understanding baseline (pre-development) conditions and monitoring changes over time will help ensure that adverse effects are avoided or minimized. It will also help us determine which changes are caused by development and which changes are the result of natural variation.

RESEARCH: Environmental studies (e.g. determining why caribou numbers are falling) will increase our understanding of the environment, culture and economy, and improve our ability to make better decisions.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING,

ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW: Thorough examination of the potential effects of development proposals are essential to ensure that if a project proceeds, it does so with minimal negative environmental effects and maximum social benefits.

WHAT DOES THE FRAMEWORK INCLUDE?

The Framework recognizes that there are many components that must come together to make sure that the environment is protected, that communities thrive, and the economy is strong in the Northwest Territories.



REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT: Regulation involves rights issuance, land use permitting, water licensing, and/or harvest quotas. If a project receives permits to proceed, the terms of these permits (including land and water licences) are intended to ensure that related environmental effects are minimized, monitored carefully and that appropriate changes are made to the project as it proceeds. The rules are enforced by the responsible authorities.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT: Environmental and social information needs to be made available to all users in an understandable fashion. This will support good decision-making and help us to avoid studying the same thing over and over again, or missing areas that we need to study.

CAPACITY-BUILDING: Groups must have the people and finances to effectively participate in decision-making at all levels. Only in this way will decisions reflect the values and visions of the people affected.

COORDINATION: All participants must work together to implement the Framework. No one group is without responsibility; no one group has the sole responsibility. All of us have a role to play in ensuring the environment is protected and that we benefit from responsible economic development.

AUDIT AND REPORTING: Audits, including the NWT Environmental Audit, check on the health of the environment and the regulatory system. The results inform decision-makers on ways to improve operations.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP *Framework*

All Northerners have a responsibility to care for the land and water. In the Northwest Territories (NWT), a number of organizations play leadership roles in carrying out this shared responsibility, called “environmental stewardship”. These include Aboriginal governments, territorial and federal governments, co-management resource boards, regulatory boards, environmental non-government organizations, communities and industry.

WHAT IS IT?

The Environmental Stewardship Framework (ESF), previously known as the Cumulative Effects Assessment and Management Framework or CEAMF, was created in 2000 to support responsible economic development within the context of sound environmental stewardship. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada has worked with many partners over the years to develop unique made-in-the-North programs that focus on taking care of the environment in the NWT. The Framework is like a “big toolkit” that includes many different programs and initiatives that focus on environmental stewardship practices.

HOW IS IT IMPLEMENTED?

To help different organizations understand where they fit in and how they can be the most effective in implementing the Framework, the ESF Steering Committee provides guidance and advice in the form of the *Environmental Stewardship Framework Blueprint*. Organizations are encouraged to use the recommendations found in the Blueprint to guide both everyday activities and long-term planning; and to help fill in any gaps by working with other environmental stewards. The Blueprint is reviewed and updated annually to help evaluate progress. Managing who-does-what to help protect the environment is complex, and the Blueprint helps everyone keep track.

For more information, visit <http://nwt-tno.inac-ainc.gc.ca/index-eng.asp> or phone 867-669-2594.

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