

*Planning for  
a Sustainable  
Future*

# PROJET DE SOCIÉTÉ

**VOLUME 2 : REPORT OF  
THE VISION AND  
PROCESS COMMITTEE**

**TOWARD A NATIONAL  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
STRATEGY FOR CANADA**

**VOLUME 2 : RAPPORT DU  
COMITÉ DE LA VISION  
ET DU PROCESSUS**

**VERS UNE STRATÉGIE NATIONALE  
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE  
AU CANADA**

**THIRD NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS ASSEMBLY  
DECEMBER 16-17, 1993, OTTAWA, CANADA**

**TROISIÈME ASSEMBLÉE DES INTERVENANTS NATIONAUX  
LES 16 ET 17 DÉCEMBRE 1993 À OTTAWA, CANADA**



**Volume 1 :**

Overview of the Projet de Société  
Aperçu du Projet de Société

**Volume 2 :**

Report of the Vision and Process Committee  
Rapport du Comité de la vision et du processus

**Volume 3 :**

Report of the Document and Information  
Committee  
Rapport du Comité de la documentation et de  
l'information

**Volume 4 :**

Progress Report June - December, 1993  
Rapport progressif, Juin - décembre, 1993

**NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS  
WORKING GROUP / GROUPE DE  
TRAVAIL DES INTERVENANTS  
NATIONAUX**

**Ronald L. Doering, Chair/Président**

**Barry Sadler, Project Director/  
Directeur de projet**

Jamie Alley, CCME

Jean Arnold, NBED

David Bennett, CLC

Keith Bezanson, IDRC/CRDI

Harry Bombay, NAFA

Lynn Broughton, Forum for Sustainability

Theodora Carroll-Foster, IDRC/CRDI

Gordon Clifford, CAC/CVC

George Connell, NRTEE/TRNEE

Heather Creech, IISD/IIDD

John Dillon, BCNI

Lee Doney, BCRT

Charles Ferguson, INCO

Janine Ferretti, Pollution Probe

Gary Gallon, CEI/VACIE

George Greene, CIDA/SCDI

Arthur Hanson, IISD/IIDD

George Kowalski, DOE

Shirley Lewchuck, External Affairs/Affaires extérieures

Elizabeth Máy, Sierra Club

Sheldon McLeod, CCME

George Miller, Mining Association/Association minière

Beatrice Olivastrì, IISD/IIDD

Peter Padbury, CCIC/CCCI

Leone Pippard, CEA/CAE

Chester Reimer, ICC

Sarah Richardson, NRTEE/TRNEE

Sandy Scott, CCME

Mary Simon, ICC

Robert Slater, DOÉ

Hoger Street, DOÉ

Judith Swan, Oceans Institute

Susan Tanner, FOE

Kathy Thompson, FCM

Robert Valantin, IDRC/CRDI

Zonny Woods, IISD/IIDD

Miriam Wyman, WEED

*Planning for  
a Sustainable  
Future*

# PROJET DE SOCIÉTÉ

## **REPORT OF THE VISION AND PROCESS COMMITTEE**

Prepared for:  
Second National Stakeholders' Assembly  
June 3-4, 1993, Ottawa

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

The mandate of the Vision and Process Committee has been to develop a draft framework for a national sustainability plan for Canada, and a participatory process that elaborates and builds commitment for the framework.

The Vision and Process Committee has tried to answer the question: What can usefully and strategically be done to facilitate the transition to sustainability? While there is a great deal of work under way to move us toward sustainability, much of it is taking place in isolation. Many participants do not know what others are doing. Many opportunities for synergy are being overlooked, while there are key issues that can be resolved only if all sectors co-operate. Until these issues are addressed, we are unlikely to see significant progress in the move to sustainability.

We approached our tasks with a sense of excitement, of urgency, of commitment to the Rio Way, respect for the diversity of interests and approaches within the group. We tried to operate in a collaborative, consensus-building fashion that recognized the need to balance vision with practical, strategic, and effective action. We represented 14 sectors of Canadian society, each with different concerns, learning to work together.

We developed a draft framework for a sustainability plan for Canada and identified the processes needed to support its development. The draft framework should be seen as a table of contents or a compendium of plans, strategies and actions that are taking place across the nation; together, they will constitute a long-term sustainability strategy for Canada. It describes in a very general way the issues on which we need to build consensus across sectors. It will, undoubtedly, evolve over time.

The proposed planning process is an innovative, bottom-up, consensus-building process that will allow interested Canadians from all sectors of society to collaborate and co-ordinate their efforts to develop the necessary strategies, policies, and tools needed to move to sustainability. The proposed process has three parts:

- developing sector, community, and organizational sustainability strategies and plans;
- mobilizing the latent network of sustainability thinkers and doers to develop options and strategies to support sector and community processes;
- linking Canadian dialogue to the global discussion on sustainability.

The development of visions of a sustainable society and of appropriate strategies for making the transition are essential to facilitate the changes that lie ahead. Credible images of the future are a powerful motivating and co-ordinating force in society. Experience indicates that vision is best developed in a context where need and ability to influence behaviour coincide. In the Project, we have tried to design a set of interlinked processes to facilitate the development of a vision and of strategies in settings (sectors and communities) where people are able to influence and implement them. We have also made provisions for sharing across and among sectors.

We also carried out interviews with key thinkers and analyzed roadblocks to sustainability. Based on our findings, the document sets out issues and priorities for the long term, and identifies a number of short-term strategic actions to be undertaken by stakeholders to advance the long-term objectives and priorities.

As a network of networks and a multi-sectoral collaboration, the Projet is ideally suited to promote organization of information on sustainability; encourage constructive public dialogue; and mobilize Canadians to work toward achieving sustainability. The Projet can help anticipate problems, strategize, co-ordinate, and catalyze action in ways that facilitate this transition.

Recommendations: We ask you, stakeholders in Canada's Projet de Société, to accept the challenge implied in that very term, to make a commitment to sustainability for Canada, and to do this by:

- continuing the Projet de Société;
- endorsing, in principle, the draft sustainability planning framework and process;
- endorsing an action plan to:
  - develop the capacity to track work on sustainability;
  - establish Canada's sustainability research and action agenda;
  - develop a sustainability kit of best practices;
  - identify high-priority goals.
- endorsing the Projet's catalytic and convening role to address the following issues:
  - reduce jurisdictional overlap;
  - increase public awareness and participation;
  - document progress toward sustainability;
  - identify economic opportunities related to sustainability.
- endorsing continued support and resources for the Projet;
- endorsing continuation of a secretariat to support the Projet.

Accepting these recommendations will demonstrate the willingness of members to continue working toward sustainability for Canada, to undertake one or more of the priority actions, to work in the 'Rio Way', and to continue to report on our collective progress and achievements.

# VISION, ASPIRATIONS AND CHALLENGE

*"We recognize that humankind has not woven the web of life; we are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. Whatever befalls the earth befalls also the family on the earth."*

Women's Environment and  
Development Organization

In undertaking to carry out its mandate, members of the Vision and Process Committee struggled to articulate our vision of a sustainable society, as well as our hopes and aspirations for the *Projet de Société*. In doing so, we became aware that there is no single vision of sustainability and that there are many paths to reaching it.

We are convinced that we must make our way along these paths together. We believe that while different points of view within the group and in society are essential, the only way to arrive at innovative solutions is by building trust and collaborating across the country. Thus, it is necessary to invent new ways of working, to transcend institutional and disciplinary boundaries and seek innovative solutions that will affect the very heart of society.

## Our Vision

As human beings, we are part of a larger context, part of the environment. We share the Earth with a variety of other species and we are both dependent and interdependent. We recognize that human beings around the world have the same needs and hopes for themselves and their children:

- we need clean water, air, soil and food;
- we need safety from poverty and disease;
- we need respect, love, and a gentle touch;
- we need music, laughter, and the peace of prayer;
- we need social contact and a sense of community;
- we need a livelihood and a healthy economy;
- we need to learn and grow in understanding;
- we need the wonder and discipline of nature;
- we need work, rest, and celebration; and
- we need to become one with our Earth.

## **Our Aspirations and Hopes:**

Only the agricultural revolution five thousand years ago and the industrial revolution two centuries ago can compare to the transformation required to continue sustaining life on this planet.

The world is truly at a threshold. We can rise to the occasion or we can let growing social, economic, and ecological problems overwhelm us. Only by changing the way economic development proceeds can the world hope to meet the legitimate aspirations of current and future generations without overwhelming the ecological carrying capacity of the planet.

The challenges on the road to sustainability are complex and daunting, but they can be met. Innovative solutions based on integrative, holistic approaches can enable and empower groups and individuals to undertake necessary change. These solutions must be based on participation that is inclusive, transparent, and focused on consensus-building.

Nothing less than a total system-level response is adequate. Marginal or partial transformations of our planet's systems will not suffice. Our approach must acknowledge that the world's social, economic, biological, and natural systems are complex, inter-related, and interconnected.

The *Projet de Société* can seize this historic opportunity to promote and facilitate the required system-level response because it has a unique capacity to bring together different points of view and facilitate consensus-building.

## **The Challenge:**

We propose that the National Stakeholders accept the challenge implied in the term *Projet de Société*. Transforming Canada into a more sustainable society will take decades. Given today's political and economic realities, the task of developing strategies, policies, and tools to integrate environmental, social, and economic strategies will require wisdom and creativity from many sectors and perspectives. We propose that the National Stakeholders create mechanisms that will enable interested Canadians to work together to facilitate the transition to sustainability. No group can do it on its own -- the only way we will succeed is by working together.

## **SUSTAINABILITY? SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?**

*There is no single vision of sustainability. Although it will continue to mean different things to different people in different places, we know that national sustainability can be achieved only in the context of global sustainability. There is agreement on the need to "undo unsustainability". As we move from where we are now to where we would like to be, our personal and societal expectations of sustainability will develop and evolve. In the meantime, we value the creative tension between ideals and the existing situation, and the need to bridge them.*

*Sustainability is not just another phrase for environmental protection or management. It has economic, social, political, and cultural, as well as environmental, dimensions; these are interdependent in ways people have only begun to understand, and they are inextricably connected to our aspirations and visions for the kind of world we would like our children to inherit.*

*Sustainable development embodies the following principles:*

- *respect for nature and for the rights of future generations underpins all deliberations;*
- *all persons are able to participate in the transition to sustainability;*
- *the process is based on anticipation and prevention;*
- *issues related to sustainability are neither won nor lost: they must be resolved;*
- *informed decision-making takes into account the full costs of actions;*
- *the process takes into account social, inter-regional, and inter-generational equity;*
- *it is a dynamic learning process.*



# PLANNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

*"The world we have created today as a result of our thinking thus far has problems which cannot be solved by thinking the way we thought when we created them."*

Albert Einstein

In this section the Vision and Process Committee proposes a number of related activities which will facilitate the transition to sustainability. They consist of two essential elements: the first element is a general framework for a sustainability strategy and the second is a consensus-building process to elaborate and build commitment to the framework.

The draft framework should be seen as a table of contents or a compendium of plans, strategies, and actions that are taking place across the nation; together they will constitute a long-term sustainability strategy. It describes, in a very general way, the issues on which we need to build consensus across sectors. It will undoubtedly evolve over time.

The proposed process is a way to build consensus on the appropriate strategies and actions needed to facilitate the transition to sustainability. Both these elements are described below in more detail.

## Draft Framework for a Sustainable Future

### A. MISSION

The first section of the proposed framework is intended to affirm that there must be a movement toward a broad national consensus among the multitude of stakeholders on the assumptions, values, and rationale relevant to planning for sustainable development. This does not imply that there must be a single view of social, political, and economic doctrine. The sustainability planning process must, initially, be able to accommodate quite profound differences on many major policy issues, recognizing that we are striving for a more integrative and compelling vision of sustainability.

- ASPIRATIONS/VISION
- BASIC ASSUMPTIONS AND VALUES
  - new ways of thinking;
  - partnership and individual actions;
  - the new economics;
  - integration of environmental values in economic assessment;
  - inter-regional equity;

- inter-generational equity.
- CONTEXT
  - state of the environment;
  - limits/constraints;
  - opportunities;
  - rationale for change.

## **B. INSTRUMENTS OF CHANGE**

Issues of attitude, awareness, understanding, and capability are of such general and fundamental importance that they demand some special attention and concerted effort nationally, by Project stakeholders, as well as by governments.

- PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
  - building a culture of sustainability;
  - sustainability as a component of basic education;
  - consumer information;
  - employee training.
- INITIATING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE
  - inter-jurisdictional co-operation;
  - international institutions;
  - sustainability in decision-making.

## **C. TOOLS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

There is a group of social, economic, and technical instruments which are likely to prove to be indispensable in formulating and implementing strategies for sustainable development. There has already been much effort dedicated to developing and shaping these tools. There will be a good deal of trial and error as the tools are shared among stakeholder groups, and then applied, tested, and improved. These tasks can be completed by a combination of central and local initiatives. They include:

- methods of consultation and consensus-building;
- indicators of sustainability;
- sustainable development reporting;
- environmental cost accounting;
- sustainability auditing;
- building a sound science base;
- methods of assuring responsibility/accountability.

## **D. POLICY FIELDS**

This section identifies areas in which a strategy for sustainability must be developed, but is not a comprehensive list. In a typical policy field, a strategy for sustainability will not emerge from any one source, but will be a mosaic of contributions from local, regional, national, and even international sources. Multi-stakeholder groups cutting across governmental and non-governmental sectors should play a part at each of these levels.

- **POPULATION POLICY**
  - the carrying capacity of Canada and its regions and ecosystems;
  - immigration;
  - migration;
  - family planning/education.
  
- **LAND AND WATER RESOURCES POLICY**
  - principles of land-use planning;
  - principles of sustainability of water resources;
  - designated areas: ecosystem plans;
  - flora and fauna: biodiversity;
  - waste: solid and hazardous.

- AIR RESOURCES POLICY
  - climate change;
  - ozone layer depletion;
  - acid rain;
  - smog/ground-level ozone.
  
- INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY
  - education;
  - transportation;
  - communication.
  
- INTERNATIONAL/FOREIGN POLICY
  - trade and environment;
  - capacity building;
  - financing sustainable forms of development;
  - international law/treaties/conventions.
  
- ECONOMICS AND FINANCE POLICY
  
- RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY
  
- ENERGY POLICY
  
- TRANSPORTATION POLICY
  
- DEFENCE POLICY
  
- HEALTH POLICY
  
- SOCIAL POLICY

## **E. SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES AND PLANNING PREPARED BY STAKEHOLDERS**

Any group of people or any institution with an interest in and commitment to sustainability can participate and contribute meaningfully to the process. The sum of all planning efforts and all the resulting changes in attitude, policy, and practice will *be* the national strategy.

- GOVERNMENTS
  - federal;
  - provincial;
  - regional/local.
  
- COMMUNITIES
- INSTITUTIONS
- INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE \*
- VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS
- ABORIGINAL PEOPLES
- WOMEN
- YOUTH
- FAMILIES/INDIVIDUALS

**\* We have expanded the "industry and commerce" stakeholder set as an example of the next level of elaboration of the draft framework:**

- INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE
  - GENERAL KINDS OF INITIATIVES
    - building a corporate culture of sustainability;
    - environmental audits;
    - life-cycle management;
    - corporate environmental reporting;
    - pollution prevention;
    - innovation, technology, and competitiveness.

## ENERGY

## TRANSPORTATION

## RESOURCE INDUSTRIES

- agriculture;
- forestry;
- fisheries;
- mining.

## MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

- chemical;
- electronics;
- machinery.

## SERVICE INDUSTRIES

- tourism;
- communications;
- food/hospitality;
- construction;
- financial.

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

- engineering;
- accounting.

## **A Process to Facilitate the Transition to Sustainability**

One of the key functions of the Projet de Société is to structure complex information and sequence the dialogue on sustainability to build a consensus and a commitment to make the necessary changes. In this section we propose a sustainability planning process to accomplish this function. Some of the characteristics of that process are:

- Participation in the process is voluntary. It will have influence because it fulfills a need for cross-sector consensus-building and co-ordination in the transition to sustainability.
- It builds on what is already being done to promote sustainability in Canada.

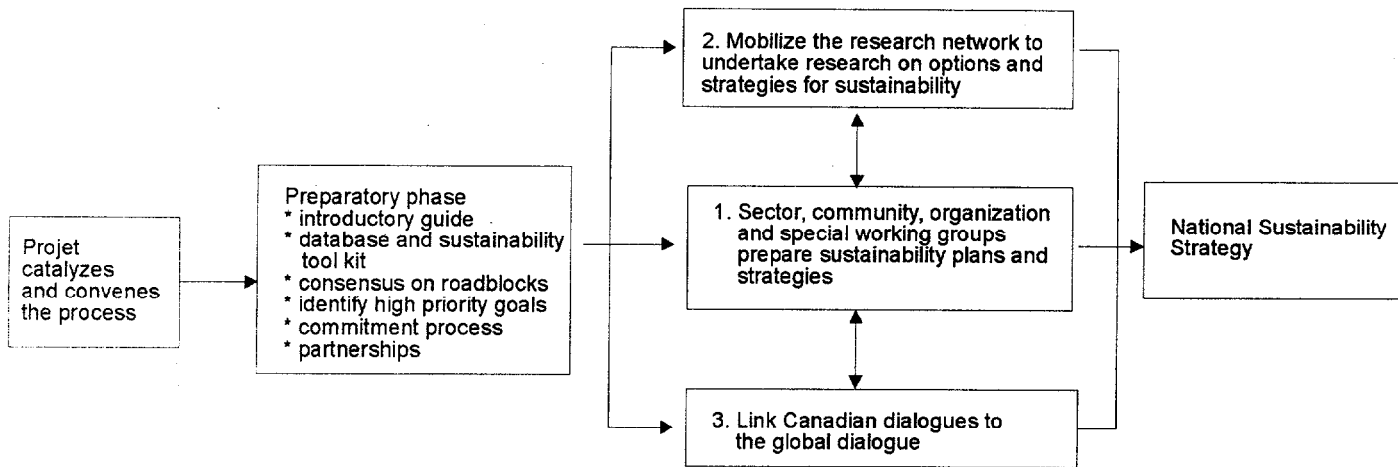
- The process is flexible so that sectors, communities, organizations, and specialized working groups at different stages in the transition to sustainability can usefully participate.
- The process attempts to integrate economic, social, and environmental concerns in a consensus-building process.
- While the proposed process has an end point, it is anticipated that it will set in place new institutions and processes, after the initial round, that will be self-sustaining.
- The process is inclusive, transparent, and accountable.

### **Elements in the Sustainability Planning Process**

To fill in the draft sustainability framework described in this chapter, we propose a process that comprises three parts:

- activities to encourage sectors, communities, and organizations to prepare sustainability plans that integrate economic, social, and environmental strategies. This voluntary process will build a consensus on national and provincial policies needed to facilitate the transition to sustainability;
- activities to mobilize the latent network of sustainable development thinkers and doers to develop options, strategies, and tools in support of sector and community plans;
- activities to link Canadian discussions on sustainability to the global dialogue. We need to know what other countries are doing and, on a few critical issues, we need to work with other countries to develop a global consensus on appropriate policies and strategies.

## Diagram 1 Overview of the Major Elements



Each of these three processes is linked with the others. Because it is unlikely that we could carry out any one of them in isolation, we are proposing an integrated set of activities that will complement and build on each other. The following is a description of each process.

### 1) Sector, Community, and Organizational Sustainability Plans

These are the core of the sustainability planning process: decentralized, flexible, and voluntary. They are not consultation processes but consensus-building processes for dealing with issues of deep concern to Canadians. They focus on jobs, competitive business opportunities, viable communities, and a healthy environment. In tackling these problems, Canadians have to think and act in new ways if they are to effect change.

After consulting with stakeholders and potential partners across the country, a working group would prepare an "introductory guide" describing the process, with material to assist sectors, communities, organizations, and special working groups to organize their own multi-stakeholder planning process as their contribution to the national strategy. The guide would include a statement of the challenge, an overview and rationale for the process, the sustainability planning framework, the sustainability tool kit, a number of alternative planning and visioning processes, examples of success stories, and lists of people who could act as resources.

There would be a formal "commitment process": Project staff and stakeholders would contact potential participants and get their commitment to participate. New participants would use the introductory guide to organize their own multi-stakeholder process.

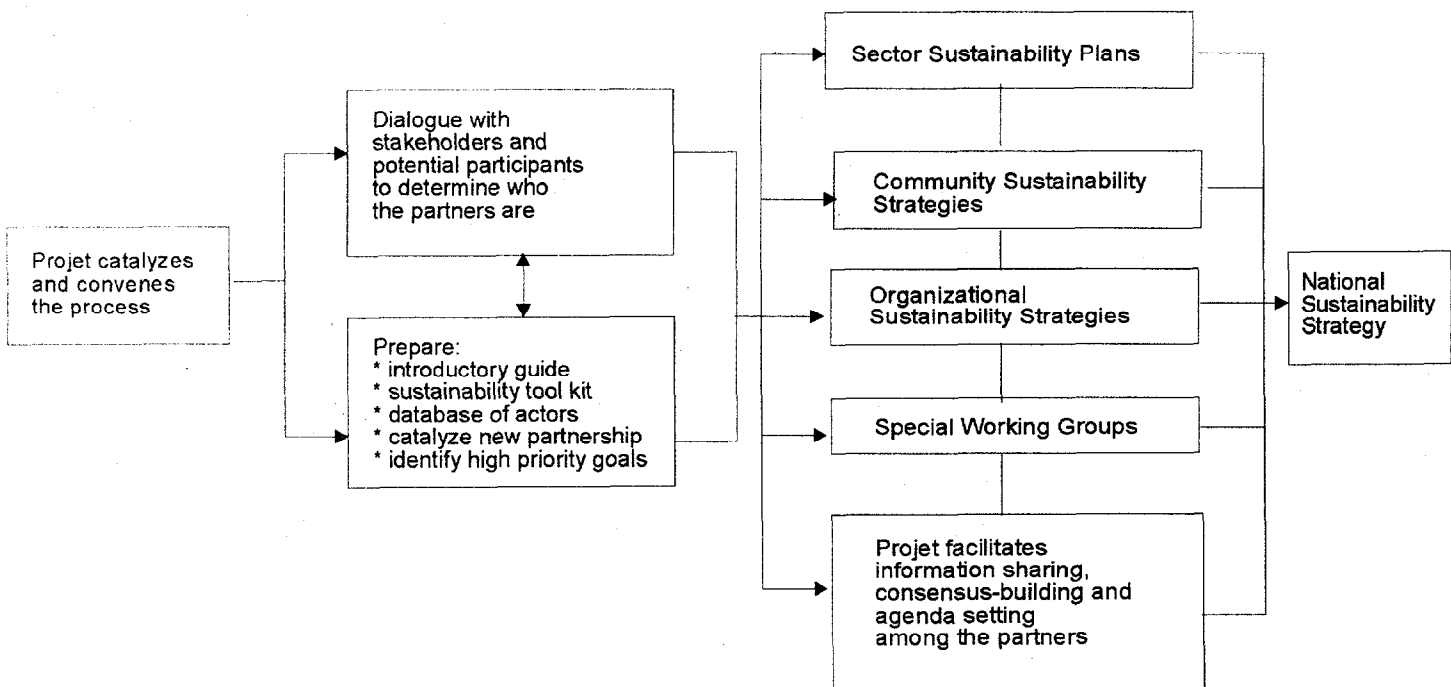
Once the sustainability planning process was under way, the secretariat, the stakeholders, the working groups, and the network of partners would work together in a variety of ways. This would facilitate information-sharing, networking, consensus-building, and agenda-setting across sectors and among partners.



A number of provinces, industrial sectors, and communities have already prepared sustainability strategies or plans. Where these exist, groups would be encouraged to contribute them for inclusion in the framework; to share their experience with others; and to assess the existing plan against the need to integrate economic, social, and environmental considerations advocated in the framework.

It is assumed that sector and community plans will raise public policy questions that cannot be solved directly by the groups involved. These "national" questions will require a broad, national political consensus before Canada can create an economic and social policy framework to facilitate the transition to sustainability. The dialogue on these national questions needs to take place within and between the sector and community planning processes and in a related national process.

**Diagram 2**  
**Steps in the Sustainability Planning Process**

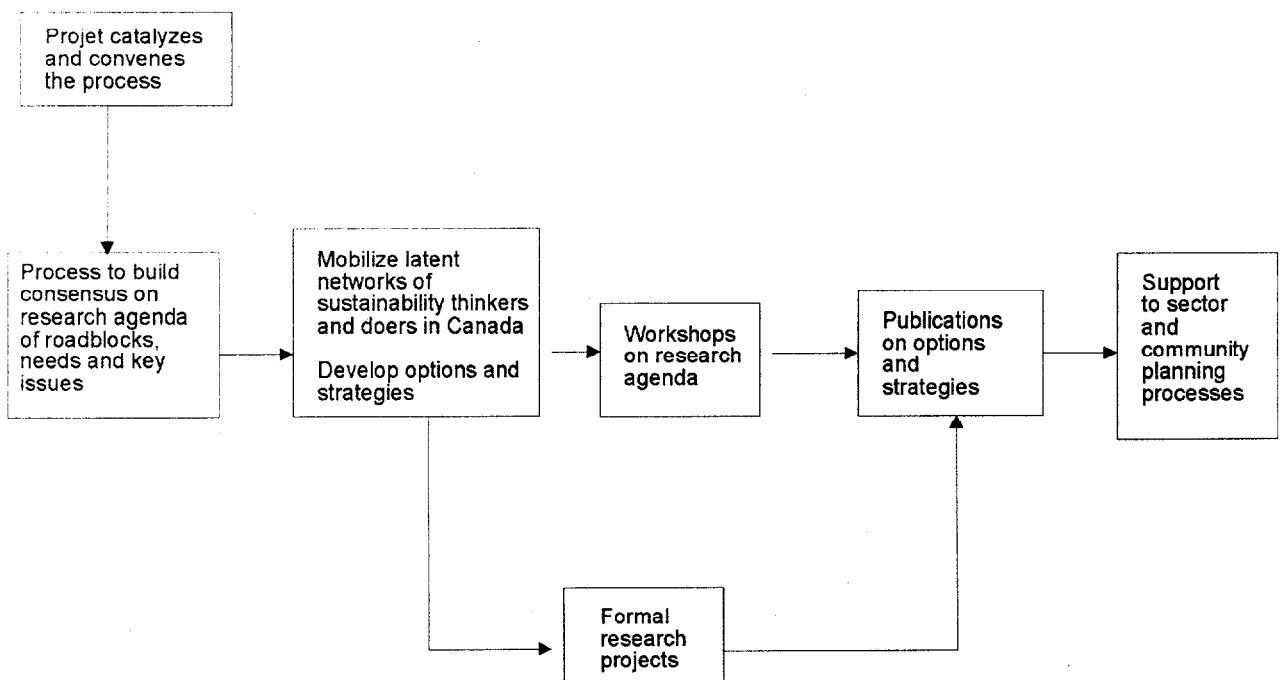


## 2) Research on Options and Strategies

The starting point for the *Projet de Société* was to develop a consensus across sectors on the issues currently blocking progress in the transition to sustainability. It is assumed that little progress will be made until we develop options, strategies, and tools to overcome roadblocks.

The sustainability planning process would mobilize the latent network of sustainability researchers and change agents to provide expertise on which the sector and community planning processes could draw. It is anticipated that the sustainability planning process would present this informal research network with a research agenda of needs, roadblocks, and national questions and ask them to develop options and transition strategies. With the research network, a series of workshops would be convened, and the best advice would be published and circulated. For some problems such as roadblocks and national questions, key concepts, policies, institutions, and tools must be invented to facilitate the transition to sustainability. We may want to establish more formal research projects to deal with these questions.

**Diagram 3**  
**Possible steps to mobilize the sustainability research network**



### **3) Linking Canadian Dialogue to Global Dialogue**

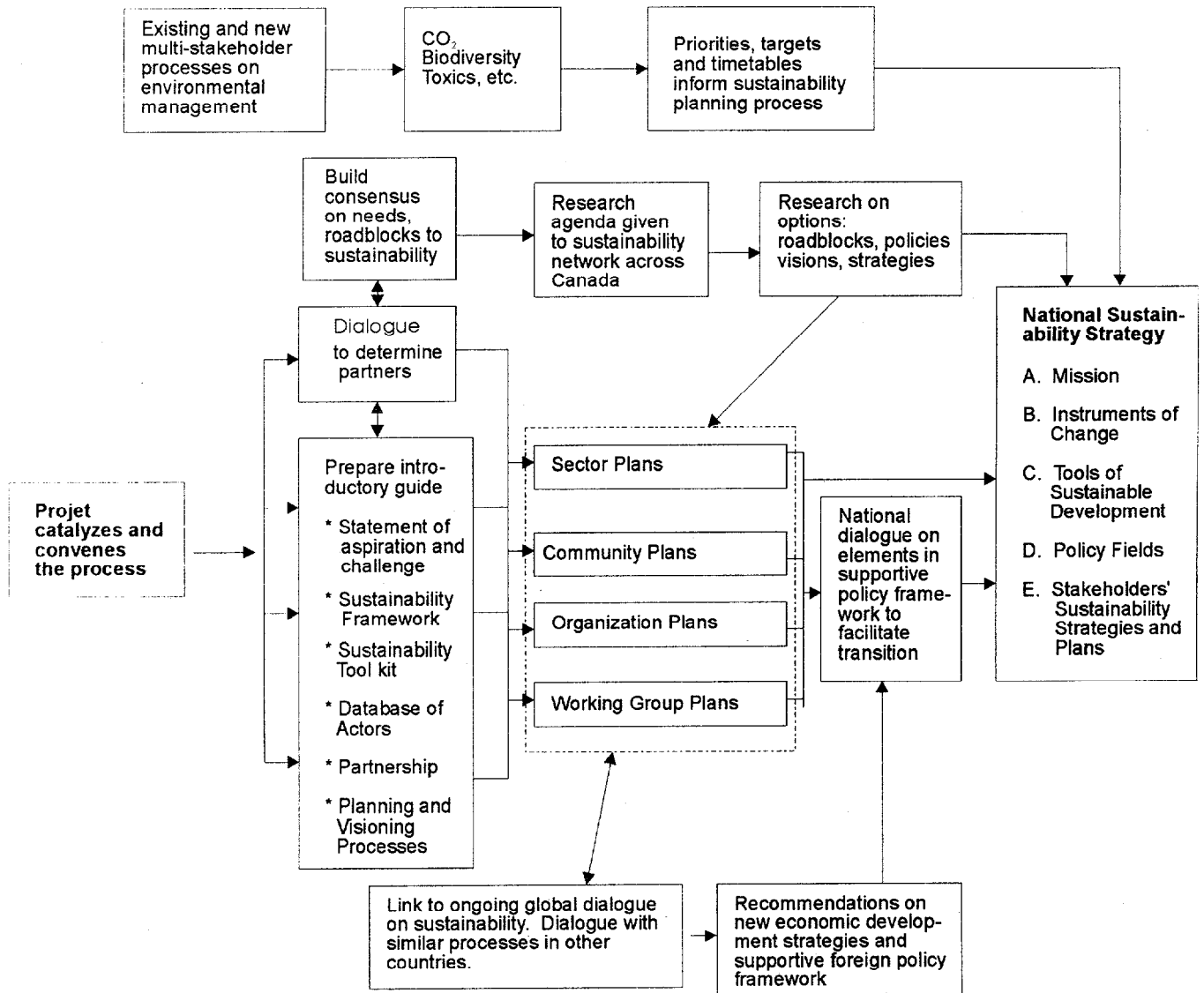
There are two compelling reasons why we should link the Project to the global dialogue on sustainability. First, sustainability can be achieved only on a global scale; if other countries increase their production of CO<sub>2</sub> or ozone, for example, the impact of Canadian efforts is reduced. Second, national economic and environmental decisions are increasingly being influenced by negotiations or decisions in international fora. Canadians have to work with people in other countries to invent the policies and strategies that are going to create an equitable, just, and sustainable world for all.

We propose that the participants in the Canadian process enter into a dialogue with similar processes in other countries (such as the Netherlands and the Philippines). For instance, representatives of Canadian communities, businesses, and NGOs working on a sector plan could meet with similar groups in other countries to identify supportive global policies. The results could help shape Canadian foreign policy, as well as our positions at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development and at the GATT.

### **4) Summary**

Three elements -- preparing sector and community processes, mobilizing the latent sustainability network to create options and solutions, and linking to the global dialogue -- would work together to create a consensus, a strategy, and a series of commitments which, together, would constitute a transition strategy for Canada.

**Diagram 4**  
**Conceptual Links Between Building Blocks in**  
**Sustainability Planning Process**



# ANALYSIS OF KEY ISSUES

## Introduction

*"... the story most worth telling in the last decade of the twentieth century has to do with the earth, and with the relationship to it of the one species that, while utterly reliant on it, has nonetheless seemed bent on, or perhaps just oblivious to, its destruction. If we're to give our endangered planet the time and space to heal, we must begin to see nature not just as a backdrop against which the human drama is enacted, but as an integral part of our lives, as something we must respond to, respect, actively care about."*

Sisters of the Earth

In the course of its deliberations on the draft framework and participatory process, the Vision and Process Committee undertook an exploration of obstacles inhibiting Canada's move towards sustainability. Roadblocks were identified based on the Committee members' own experiences, on reading material, and on interviews conducted with a number of people outside the Committee who have given the matter some thought. The roadblocks included:

- lack of public understanding;
- lack of political commitment;
- absence of sustainability criteria and methodologies;
- jurisdictional gridlock;
- inappropriate economic growth and consumption patterns;
- institutional and structural rigidities;
- fragmentation of educational processes;
- difficulty in inter-sectoral thinking;
- short-term time horizons;
- desire to hang onto the status quo;
- the reductionist nature of science;
- inadequate knowledge of ecosystems;
- lack of policy integration.

On careful examination, major categories of roadblocks and critical needs were identified, including those that clearly must be overcome in order to advance the transition to sustainability. In the course of this process, the Committee identified six key issue areas to

which the Projet -- as a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral network of networks -- could make a significant contribution.

For each area, and in consultation with the entire Working Group, the Committee identified possible actions that could be undertaken by the Projet; while extensive, the lists of possible actions are not comprehensive and do not include all possible activities that stakeholders could choose.

## Key Issues and Menu of Actions

The six key issue areas are:

1. To build public support and political will for the transition to sustainability:
  - by designing a process (or processes) that is broad, flexible, and educational; participatory, decentralized but cohesive; region/sector/industry specific but transferable; that has a capacity for cross-disciplinary research and option generating; that can integrate major social and economic policy agendas; that takes account of international/global links; that is iterative; that energizes individuals and mobilizes Canadian society; and that can deliver concrete action;
  - by promoting grass-roots awareness through education programs and demonstration projects, well-targeted messages, and by gathering, synthesizing, and disseminating information on sustainability;
  - by monitoring, assessing, and reporting on progress towards achieving sustainability;
  - by developing a common language on sustainability to facilitate discussion and understanding;
  - by recognizing, with an Order-of-Merit type of award, exemplary contributions to sustainability by individuals, organizations, politicians, and communities.
2. To create and support processes and institutions that facilitate the transition to sustainability:
  - by proposing mechanisms or strategies that promote inter-jurisdictional co-operation and reduce jurisdictional overlap and duplication, notably in the environmental regulatory field;
  - by proposing mechanisms to better integrate economic, environmental, and social considerations at the highest policy levels of the federal and provincial governments;
  - by encouraging the development of methodologies for environmental assessment of government policies, notably in the economic and trade areas, including and encouraging the use of sustainability indicators and environmental accounting;
  - by encouraging and promoting the development of sectoral, industry, and community sustainable development plans;

- by promoting and furthering the establishment of round tables at the community and sectoral levels.
3. To facilitate practical steps leading to sustainability, including the creations of the necessary vision, goals, methods, tools, indicators, and strategies:
- by articulating, promoting, and fostering consensus on visions and goals;
  - by organizing, sharing, and disseminating information, defining research needs, and facilitating development of research capacity and networking with respect to concepts, models, tools, indicators, and strategies for sustainable development;
  - by endorsing and co-ordinating the development of a sustainability guide (i.e., a directory/catalogue of state-of-the-art concepts, methodologies, and practices related to sustainability);
  - by fostering partnerships to develop concepts, tools, strategies, etc.;
  - by working with the media to develop communication strategies best suited to disseminating information and conveying messages about sustainability.
4. To encourage re-examination and redefinition of aspirations concerning personal, community, national, and global security:
- by articulating a vision of sustainability and by redefining and rethinking what is meant by security;
  - by considering how local communities, indigenous peoples, developing countries, and industrialized nations other than Canada foster a sense of security;
  - by fostering a positive atmosphere in which dialogue on sensitive, emotional, and difficult societal issues and choices can take place;
  - by reaching out, engaging other constituencies and major groups, and ensuring that directly affected and interested parties are adequately represented in the Project and in any subsequent follow-up ;
  - by explicitly including security on the agenda for public discussion and debate.
5. To foster the development of economic strategies to facilitate the transition to sustainability:
- by highlighting the complementary and mutually reinforcing nature of relationships among a clean, healthy environment, trade, and a prosperous economy;
  - by promoting job creation and economic opportunities generated by the move to sustainable development (e.g., environmental industries and the opportunities arising from the greening of consumer demand);

- by helping people in Canada understand the need to invest in labour and entrepreneurial retraining and in the development of new skills to take advantage of emerging markets and to create new ones;
  - by developing strategies and proposing mechanisms on the best ways to integrate economic, environmental, and social objectives and policies to further sustainable development;
  - by intervening to eliminate subsidies that support unsustainable development;
  - by supporting the greater use of economic instruments for environmental protection.
6. To generate a consensus on the core values of sustainability:
- by fostering dialogue to energize individuals and mobilize society, which will involve multi-stakeholder participation, using mechanisms and approaches that are experiential in character, build respect and trust, avoid confrontation, are non-adversarial;
  - by emphasizing and proposing approaches and mechanisms that are in keeping with the 'Rio Way': inclusive and transparent, enabling and empowering individuals and groups, and holding them accountable for their actions or the lack thereof;
  - by articulating and promoting shared values, beliefs, visions, and goals of sustainability.

## **PRIORITIES FOR PHASE II**

*"The sustainable state would make fewer demands on our environmental resources, and greater demands on our moral resources."*

Lester Brown

The Committee believes that, given the multiplicity of activities that the Project could undertake, it should be strategic in deciding which to pursue first. There are three paramount considerations:

- Activities that can promote a number of objectives simultaneously are preferable to those that further fewer objectives.
- It is important to focus first on building blocks that will initiate and energize the participatory process (described in the "framework" section), itself a necessary and fundamental step in developing and implementing a sustainability plan for Canada.
- It is imperative to have some tangible results while the participatory process and the sustainability plan are being developed and implemented.



It is especially important to maintain the momentum generated by the Brundtland Commission; by such national plans as the Green Plan; such international initiatives as UNCED; and to keep participants interested and engaged in the Project. Progress on sustainability cannot wait for the Process and Sustainability Plan, but must occur in tandem with it.

As a practical first step to initiating the development and implementation of a sustainability plan for Canada, National Stakeholders are asked to consider the following five building blocks for the Project's participatory process and the activities to be undertaken by the Project over the short and medium term:

## **1. Database**

The Project could develop, maintain, and update a database that identifies the stakeholders and what they are doing with respect to Agenda 21 and the conventions signed at Rio and, over time, with respect to the Project's own efforts. It would become a "catalogue of action" describing efforts across Canada that contribute to the transition to sustainability. IISD would be prepared to continue to do this as part of its ongoing communications work.

Such a database would provide the Project with tracking and reporting capacity; would engage and foster communications and networking; and would encourage greater cross-institutional co-operation and help forge partnerships.

## **2. Setting the Research and Action Agenda**

Both the Vision and Process Committee and the Document and Information Committee have, as part of their work over the last few months, considered and deliberated on the key needs and gaps that must be addressed if Canada is to move to sustainability. The work initiated by both committees needs to be continued and expanded, in order to identify research needs and articulate Canada's research agenda. The Project is well suited to providing the forum for identifying necessary research and action.

The research agenda identified by the Project would be undertaken by the individuals, groups and agencies best placed to carry it out and would subsequently be shared with the broader set of stakeholders.

Such an endeavour would promote greater networking among researchers; encourage further development of research capacity; promote cross-disciplinary research; increase the capacity to create strategies and to generate options; encourage development of methodologies to integrate economic, environmental, and social considerations and policies; and promote new thinking and new ideas.

## **3. Sustainability Tool Kit**

Using the draft framework described earlier, the Project could undertake to access, collect, and organize information on sustainability-related work now in progress (e.g., conservation and environmental strategies, green efforts in communities, sectoral efforts), and on new ways of proceeding towards sustainability (e.g., consensus decision-making, use of economic instruments, sustainability indicators). Using this information and resource material,

the Projet could co-ordinate the development of a sustainability tool kit, a catalogue of state-of-the-art tools and practices. It would also serve as a component of the introductory guide discussed earlier.

The Projet could play an important role in identifying and sharing best practices with respect to sustainability. It would act as a switchboard or reference point to make the tools widely available and would, where appropriate, be a catalyst for demonstrations and pilot projects using the tools.

By producing this kit, the Projet would contribute to the development of a common language on sustainability that would facilitate discussion and understanding. It would assess, report on, and endorse successful tools and practices; gather, synthesize, and disseminate information on new ideas and work; promote the "operationalization" of sustainable development; and promote sectoral, industry, and community-based sustainability plans.

#### **4. Identifying High Priority Goals**

Under normal circumstances the process of goal setting is very complex. Under the current economic circumstances it is even more constrained. There is a need to use scarce resources in the most effective way possible.

Initial conversations in the committee indicate that all stakeholders, including business and NGOs, think there may be considerable benefit in 1) identifying a small number of high-priority environmental goals that may be more central, or more strategic, in promoting the transition to sustainability, and then 2) trying to synchronize efforts across sectors to maximize the impact of limited financial and other resources in addressing these goals.

We propose that a multi-stakeholder task force be established in the context of the Projet to: 1) build consensus on a small number of high priority areas for action; 2) to work with all sectors to identify common goals and objectives in these high-priority areas; and 3) if possible to propose a program of joint actions to address these goals.

#### **5. Partnerships to Accelerate the Transition**

During its deliberations, the Committee identified actions that are of particular or vital interest to a number of stakeholders; these can and should be acted on immediately and need not await resolution of broader issues or development of the participatory process and sustainability plan for Canada. Indeed, they could help to resolve some critical or key roadblocks and thus facilitate the transition to sustainability.

Of particular importance at this point are:

- the need to streamline the inter-jurisdictional patchwork of environmental regulations, processes, and institutions that inhibit economic efficiency and the chance to attain environmental objectives;
- to increase public awareness and participation, particularly among Canadian youth and their parents, to act in ways that further sustainability;

- to search out, assess, and document creative efforts that are making a real difference in the way individuals, communities, and organizations operate;
- to develop Canadian capacity to take advantage of the market opportunities stemming from the transition to sustainability (e.g., promoting environmental industries and encouraging Canadian industry to take advantage of the greening of consumer demand).

One way to move on these specific issues would be for interested stakeholders to forge partnerships within the Project in order to create high-profile events and to carry out cutting-edge work in these areas.

Stakeholders working together would be mobilized and energized to resolve actual problems; provide a tangible demonstration of their determination to get practical results; promote greater inter-jurisdictional co-operation; foster cross-institutional co-operation; create a more suitable climate for dialogue; and promote a smoother transition to sustainability, economic opportunities, and the creation of jobs.

## **6. Recapitulation**

Stakeholders are asked to consider the following five-point priority work program for the short to medium term:

1. develop the capacity to identify and track participants and what they are doing;
2. establish Canada's research and action agenda;
3. develop a sustainability tool kit of best practices;
4. identify high-priority goals;
5. cement partnerships for short-term practical results.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

We recognize that participants are currently involved in activities related to sustainability, and encourage them to continue these efforts to move Canada in the right direction. The endeavours suggested here are intended to complement ongoing activities.

In addressing National Stakeholders, we ask you to make a commitment to sustainability for Canada, to undertake one or more of the priority action steps, by pledging to continue to work in the 'Rio Way', and to report back to the National Stakeholders group on your progress and achievements. We specifically ask that you endorse the following action plan to advance the Projet's long-term objectives:

- Continue the Projet de Société: This important multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral forum is essential to a collaborative follow-up on Canada's commitments at UNCED and to providing a national focal point for dialogue on sustainability in Canada. We encourage the Projet to undertake a significant outreach program to enlarge the range of stakeholder participants.

We recommend continuation of the Projet because, together, we can catalyze activity that will advance the transition to sustainability in Canada.

- Endorse, in principle, the draft sustainability planning framework and process: As outlined in this paper, these set the stage -- in policy and in action -- for sustainability in Canada.

We propose a broader consultation within and between stakeholders to further elaborate the draft framework and process. In parallel with this consultation, a working group of the Projet would, in the next phase, assemble an introductory guide for sectors, communities, and organizations, to assist them in developing their own sustainability strategies.

- Endorse the action plan: To start laying the groundwork for the Projet, a working group or groups would be established to:
  - continue to build the database and information tracking co-ordinated by IISD;
  - mobilize the latent network of sustainability thinkers and doers across Canada to undertake the work necessary for setting the research agenda for sustainability in Canada;
  - assist in developing the sustainability tool kit of best practices;
  - identify high-priority environmental goals that are instrumental to making the transition to sustainability.

- Endorse the catalytic and convening role of the Projet: Practical short-term results are essential to advancing the long-term goals and objectives of the Projet. We urge the National Stakeholders to establish task groups and to initiate short-term action in the following areas, which are particularly important at this time:
  - streamline the inter-jurisdictional patchwork of environmental regulations, processes, and institutions that inhibit economic efficiency and the ability to reach environmental objectives;
  - increase public awareness and participation, particularly among Canadian youth and their parents on the issue of sustainability;
  - search for, assess, and document creative efforts on the part of individuals, communities and organizations that further sustainability;
  - develop Canadian capacity to take advantage of the market opportunities stemming from the transition to sustainability.
  
- Endorse continuing resources and support for the Projet by:
  - giving the original agencies -- The National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, the International Development Research Centre, Environment Canada, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, and the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment -- the mandate to ensure that funding and infrastructure are available to support the Projet;
  - encouraging additional stakeholders to contribute staff, time, financial support, and contributions in kind to the Projet;
  - continuing support for NGO participation in decision-making and in the substantive work of the Projet.
  
- Endorse the continuation of a small secretariat to support the Projet; it could be housed in an existing institution or in the National Round Table, and would be a fluid, decentralized, and cross-sectoral "institution without walls." It would play a co-ordinating role with respect to working and task groups, and assist participants in initiating work related to the processes and draft framework, carrying out the activities of the Projet, and maintaining and expanding networks.
  
- As well, the Projet will require new resources from existing participating institutions and from others concerned about this process. We suggest that, to successfully implement the action plan, the first task undertaken after our June Assembly be to identify resources and commitments.

## ONLY A LITTLE PLANET

*The planet you're standing on  
looking out at the stars  
is the earth, the third planet from the sun*

*and the mildest  
and softest  
of the nine....*

*If you can stop, and let yourself look,  
let your eyes do  
what they do best,  
stop and let yourself see and see  
that everything is doing things  
to you  
as you do things to everything.*

*Then you know  
that although it is only a little planet  
it is hugely beautiful  
and surely the finest place in the world  
to be.*

*So watch it, look at it  
see what it's like  
to walk around on it.*

*It's small but it's beautiful  
it's small but it's fine  
like a rainbow,*

*like a bubble.*

Lawrence Collins

# **Annex I**

## **Members of the Vision and Process Committee**

Peter Padbury, CCIC

George Connell, NRTEE

Beatrice Olivastri, IISD

Theodora Carroll-Foster, IDRC

Sandy Scott, CCME

John Dillon, BCNI

Janine Ferretti, Pollution Probe

George Greene, CIDA

George Kowalski, DOE

Chester Reimer, ICC

Susan Tanner, FOE

Kathy Thompson, FCM

Zonny Woods, IISD

Myriam Wyman, WEED

**REPRESENTATIVES FROM OVER 50  
SECTORS OF CANADIAN SOCIETY  
PARTICIPATED IN THE FIRST AND SECOND  
NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER ASSEMBLIES.**

**THESE INCLUDED:** Sierra Club • Canadian Council on International Cooperation (CCIC) • Pollution Probe • B.C. Environment and Development Working Group • Canadian Peace Alliance • Canada World Youth • Inuit Tapirisat of Canada • Friends of the Earth (FOE) • Women and Environment, Education and Development • United Native Nations • Canadian Pulp and Paper Association • Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers • Mining Association of Canada • Business Council on National Issues (BCNI) • Assembly of First Nations • Indigenous Survival International • Fallsbrooke Centre • Federation of Canadian Municipalities • Oceans Institute of Canada • Canadian Participatory Committee for UNCED • Canadian Environment Network • Cultural Survival • United Nations Association of Canada • Transport 2000 • Union québécoise pour la conservation de la nature • Council of Forest Industries in B.C. • Canadian Chemical Producers • Native Women's Association of Canada • Canadian Petroleum Association • Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) • Canadian Manufacturer's Association • B.C. Round Table on Environment and Economy (BCRT) • Canadian Chamber of Commerce • Native Aboriginal Forestry Association (NAFA) • Canadian International Development Agency • Fisheries Council of Canada • Canadian Nature Federation • Canadian Healthy Communities Network • Greenprint • Canadian Environmental Industry Association • Shell Canada • Canadian Ecology Advocates • Ecology Action Centre • Toronto Board of Education • Canadian Bankers Association • National Anti-Poverty Association • Forum for Sustainability • seven federal government departments • six provincial government ministers • the five funding partners: The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) • Environment Canada (DOE) • the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) • the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) • the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE).

**DES REPRÉSENTANTS DE PLUS DE 50  
SECTEURS DE LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE  
ONT PARTICIPÉ À LA PREMIÈRE ET LA  
DEUXIÈME ASSEMBLÉE DES**

**INTERVENANTS NATIONAUX.** Sierra Club • Conseil canadien pour la coopération internationale (CCIC) • Pollution Probe • Groupe de travail sur l'environnement et le développement de la C.-B. • Alliance canadienne pour la paix • Jeunesse Canada Monde • Inuit Tapirisat du Canada • Les Ami(e)s de la Terre (FOE) • Women and Environment, Education and Development • United Native Nations • Association canadienne des producteurs de pâtes et papiers • Association canadienne des producteurs pétroliers • Association minière du Canada • Conseil canadien des chefs d'entreprises (BCNI) • Assemblée des premières nations • Indigenous Survival International • Fallsbrooke Centre • Fédération canadienne des municipalités • Institut canadien des océans • Comité de participation du Canada à la CNUED (CPCU) • Réseau canadien de l'environnement • Survie Culturelle (Canada) • Association canadienne pour les Nations Unies • Transport 2000 Canada • Union québécoise pour la conservation de la nature • Council of Forest Industries (C.-B.) • Association canadienne des fabricants de produits chimiques • Native Women's Association of Canada • Association pétrolière du Canada • Conférence circumpolaire inuit (ICC) • Association des manufacturiers canadiens • Table ronde sur l'environnement et l'économie de la C.-B. (BCRT) • Chambre de commerce du Canada • Association nationale de foresterie autochtone (NAFA) • Agence canadienne de développement international (CIDA) • Conseil canadien des pêches • Fédération canadienne de la nature • Réseau canadien des communautés en santé • Greenprint • Association canadienne des industries de l'environnement • Shell Canada • Citoyens pour l'amélioration de l'environnement • Ecology Action Centre • Toronto Board of Education • Association des banquiers canadiens • Organisation nationale d'anti-pauvreté • Forum pour un développement viable • sept ministères fédéraux • six ministres provinciaux et cinq partenaires de financement : Conseil canadien des ministres de l'environnement (CCME) • Environnement Canada (DOE) • Institut international du développement durable (IIDD) • Centre de recherches pour le développement international (CRDI) • Table ronde nationale sur l'environnement et l'économie (TRNEE).



**For more information on the Projet de Société,  
contact:**

1 Nicholas Street, Suite 1500 Ottawa,  
Ontario K1N 7B7  
(613) 992-7189  
fax (613) 992-7385

Available in English and French

*Printed on recycled paper*

**Pour de plus amples renseignements sur le  
Projet de Société, veuillez communiquer avec :**

1, rue Nicholas, bureau 1500 Ottawa,  
Ontario K1N 7B7  
(613) 992-7189  
fax (613) 992-7385

Disponible en français et anglais

*Imprimé sur du papier recyclé*

