Health Canada Santé Canada

# Health Canada

## 2019-20 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy

April 2019

Canada

**Health Canada is the Federal department responsible for helping Canadians maintain and improve their health, while respecting individual choices and circumstances.**

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To obtain additional information, please contact:

Health Canada
Address Locator 0900C2
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9
Tel.: 613-957-2991
Toll free: 1-866-225-0709
Fax: 613-941-5366
TTY: 1-800-465-7735
E-mail: publications@hc-sc.gc.ca

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*We are working – today and every day – to protect the health of our environment, and with it, the health of Canadians.*

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau 2016

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Section 1

# Context for the Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy

The 2016–19 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS) presents the Government of Canada's sustainable development goals and targets, as required by the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*. In keeping with the objectives of the Act to integrate environmental, social and economic considerations into decision-making, and make such decisions more transparent and accountable to Parliament, Health Canada supports reaching goals laid out in the FSDS through the activities described in the Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy (DSDS).

## Section 2

# Sustainable Development in Health Canada

Canadians are living longer and are some of the healthiest people in the world, enjoying more quality years in good health than ever before. Health Canada has a responsibility to continue to help Canadians maintain and improve their health by recognizing that human well-being cannot be sustained without a healthy environment. The Department has identified 50 performance indicators that either contribute to a goal or target identified in the 2016-19 FSDS or are specific program activities that are supportive of broader sustainability objectives. Health Canada's DSDS is aligned with five of the thirteen long-term goals identified in the FSDS:

- *Effective action on climate change*
- *Low-carbon government*
- *Clean drinking water*
- *Sustainable food*
- *Safe and healthy communities*

### *FSDS Goal: Effective action on climate change*

Climate change is a critical global problem that could affect future generations' ability to meet their basic needs. Adaptation, a key factor in addressing climate change, is about making smart, informed, forward-looking decisions. Health Canada's contributions to this goal focus on adaptation measures, such as heat alert and response systems that can help Canadians improve their resiliency to extreme heat.

> "…we need governments, industry and civil society reading from the same page – with governments front and centre driving the movement for climate action."
>
> António Guterres
> UN Secretary-General
> September 10, 2018

### *FSDS Goal: Low-carbon government*

Health Canada owns buildings and also leases space in additional facilities across the country which includes laboratories, offices, warehouses and other storage facilities. The Department also manages a fleet of vehicles, and procures goods and services in order to serve Canadians. The commitments under the low-carbon government goal outline the areas where Health Canada plans to focus in order to continue to reduce the environmental effects associated with the Department's physical operations and procurement decisions.

Specifically, Health Canada will take steps to 'green' its buildings, support the reduction of energy use in the Department's fleet and facilities, integrate environmental performance considerations into all aspects of the departmental procurement process, and promote employee engagement and awareness across a range of issues from sustainable travel practices to efficient water use and opportunities to reduce single-use plastics at meetings and events.

### *FSDS Goal: Clean drinking water*

Clean drinking water is essential for health, while polluted water can cause serious illness due to bacteria, viruses and other contaminants. Most drinking water advisories are issued as a precaution; however, they can indicate that water could be contaminated by microorganisms and needs to be boiled before use. The Department will continue to work with federal, provincial and territorial partners to

develop/update health-based drinking water quality guidelines and guidance documents for use by all jurisdictions in Canada to use as the basis for their own drinking water requirements.

### *FSDS Goal: Sustainable food*

Canadians need to have a safe and accessible food supply that is protected from pests, diseases and other health risks. To protect the health of Canadians and the environment, Health Canada continually assesses regulatory decisions and actions to keep pesticides at acceptable levels in food and water.

### *FSDS Goal: Safe and healthy communities*

Health Canada is committed to ensuring Canadians live in clean, safe environments that contribute to their health and well-being. Among other measures, this means improving air quality, protecting Canadians from harmful substances, and preventing environmental emergencies or mitigating their impacts if they do occur.

Exposure to high concentrations of air pollution, especially on a daily basis, is dangerous, and the health problems it causes impose economic costs from lost productivity, increased need for medical care, decreased quality of life, and premature death. Health Canada, along with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), works with the provinces and territories and other key stakeholders, to implement the Air Quality Management System (AQMS), a collaborative effort among governments in Canada to manage air quality. Health Canada provides the health basis and guidance for developing actions to reduce the health risks from outdoor air pollutants. The Department will continue to increase awareness and use of the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) among

individuals who are vulnerable to the health impacts of air pollution. In addition, work to

address health risks related to indoor air quality includes developing health assessments, conducting research, providing expertise, and preparing outreach campaigns to raise awareness about health risks. The Department also works with federal partners and provincial authorities to strengthen emergency preparedness in order to minimize the impacts on public

health, safety, property and the environment and provides human health advice to other federal departments that are cleaning up contaminated sites.

While chemicals are part of our everyday lives and provide many benefits, they can be harmful if not properly managed. Managing these substances, as well as assessing and cleaning up contaminated sites, protects our health and the environment, and benefits Canada's economy. Health Canada's work in this area spans across multiple programs. Health Canada continues to work with ECCC to implement the Chemicals Management Plan (CMP); the most recent phase was launched in May 2016. Health Canada continues to play a significant role in developing collaborative approaches to conducting joint pesticide reviews, promoting international regulatory alignment, and in accessing the best science available to support pre and post market regulatory decisions related to pesticides.

In addition, work related to the Canadian Health Measures Survey and the Northern Contaminants Program provide invaluable data and research for scientists, health and environment officials, and communities to help inform decisions and develop policies aimed at reducing exposure to chemicals and contaminants.

Health Canada is committed to providing regular updates to its DSDS in order to incorporate new decisions and actions as we monitor our progress and develop new approaches. This is the third DSDS under the 2016-19 FSDS. The Department provides periodic updates through the interactive FSDS e-strategy in addition to a more detailed account of progress through established departmental reporting processes.

## Section 3

# Commitments for Health Canada

***Effective action on climate change:*** *A low-carbon economy contributes to limiting global average temperature rise to well below two degrees Celsius and supports efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius*

Health Canada's contributions in this area align with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:


*By 2030, reduce Canada's total GHG emissions by 30% relative to 2005 emission levels*

## Departmental Action 1

Increase knowledge, capacity and tools to address climate change and health risks, including ways for Canadians to improve their resiliency to extreme heat, commonly called 'heat waves'.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Health Canada supports provinces/territories/ municipalities in implementing heat alert and response systems to protect the public from extreme heat events. Health Canada also supports the development and enhancement of real-time heat morbidity and mortality surveillance systems, disseminates heat health information to increase public awareness, and provides training to support the resiliency of Canadians to health risks arising from climate change. For example, identifying populations that are particularly vulnerable to extreme heat is an important consideration in developing heat-alert messaging and programs.


Since 2015, Health Canada has been working with the U.S. and Mexico to develop real-time surveillance systems to monitor the health impacts of extreme heat events in at-risk communities.

**Starting Point**
In 2016-17, 30% of health regions were implementing evidence-based adaptation measures to protect health from extreme heat.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2026, 80% of health regions will be implementing evidence-based adaptation measures to protect health from extreme heat.

In June 2018, Health Canada launched the new Climate Change and Health Adaptation Capacity Building Program to support the health sector in assessing the risks and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Projects assess climate change vulnerabilities, establish adaptation plans and evaluation strategies to protect the health of Canadians and support increasing climate resiliency of the health system.

## **Low-carbon government:** *The Government of Canada leads by example by making its operations low-carbon*

Health Canada's contributions in this area align with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:


*Reduce GHG emissions from federal government buildings and fleets by 40% below 2005 levels by 2030, with an aspiration to achieve this reduction by 2025*

### Departmental Action 1

Adopt and maintain approaches and activities that reduce Health Canada's energy use, where operationally feasible, and improve overall environmental performance of department-owned buildings.

#### *How Health Canada Contributes*

"Greener" buildings require less energy to operate, reduce emissions and pollutants, conserve water, generate less solid waste and have decreased operation and maintenance costs. By achieving an industry-recognized level of high environmental performance, Health Canada will reduce the demand for energy or switch to cleaner sources of energy leading to reductions in greenhouse gases (GHG).

By rapidly identifying, assessing and optimizing the technical and financial viability of potential clean energy projects, RETScreen technology will allow Health Canada to analyze data, forecast opportunities for GHG emission reductions, and plan effective reduction strategies.

**Starting Point**
Beginning in 2018-19, real property managers and functional heads responsible for new construction, leases or existing building operations have had clauses related to environmental considerations incorporated into their performance agreements.

**Performance Indicator**
Real property managers and functional heads responsible for new construction, leases or existing building operations will continue to have clauses related to environmental considerations incorporated into their performance agreements.

**Performance Indicator**
All applicable existing custodial building fit-ups, refits, major investments and new construction projects will achieve an industry-recognized level of high-environmental performance.

**Performance Indicator**
In 2019-20, Health Canada will begin to systematically use RETScreen technology to inform decisions related to building fit-ups, refits, major investments and new construction projects.

**Starting Point**
In 2017-18, Health Canada's GHG emissions from facilities that the Department owns and operates (n=7, 82,072 m²) were 18,773 t $CO^2$eq.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, Health Canada will report on its GHG emissions from custodial facilities:
- energy use intensity (MJ/m²)
- GHG emission intensity by floor space (kg $CO^2$eq/m²)
- density of use (workstations/m²)

The Greening Government Strategy lays out plans for federal departments and agencies to follow with the goal of becoming more environmentally sustainable. The "greening" of government operations will support Canada's sustainability goals already established under the Paris Agreement on climate change and in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change.

## Departmental Action 2

Support the reduction of energy use in Health Canada's fleet by selecting the smallest and most fuel-efficient vehicle to meet operational requirements, keeping vehicles properly maintained, and developing fleet infrastructure (e.g., charging stations).

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Actions that reduce the amount of fuel consumed for fleet operation or switch to less GHG intensive vehicles will contribute to GHG reductions. In 2018, Health Canada initiated the use of telematics in all departmental vehicles. These devices will allow for the collection of vehicle usage data that will identify opportunities to further optimize fleet efficiency.

**Starting Point**
In 2005-06, GHG emissions from Health Canada's fleet were 1,199 t $CO^2$eq with an overall fuel consumption rate of 517,397 GLE. Note: The 2005-06 baseline of GHG emissions from departmental fleet was 're-set' in 2018-19 to account for the permanent transfer of vehicles to another federal department. The re-set allows for accurate and transparent reporting going forward.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, Health Canada will reduce GHG emissions from fleet by 40% from the 2005-06 baseline and report on the following:
• Overall fuel consumption (GLE)
• GHG emissions (t $CO^2$eq)

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, a feasibility study regarding the deployment of electric vehicle charging stations at the Scarborough, Ontario laboratory will be completed.

**Starting Point**
In 2017-18, 14% of Health Canada's fleet purchases (5 of 36) were hybrid or Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV).
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 75% of new light-duty administrative fleet vehicles will be ZEV or hybrid, subject to operational requirements. All on-road vehicles that are not hybrid or ZEVs will require an approved exemption form, signed by the fleet manager, indicating the reason for right-sizing for operational needs and confirming that the right-sized vehicle is the most fuel efficient vehicle in their class available at the time of purchase and/or an alternative-fuel vehicle.

**Starting Point**
Since 2017-18, 100% of Health Canada's executive fleet purchases have been hybrid or ZEVs.
**Performance Indicator**
100% of new executive vehicle purchases will continue to be hybrid or ZEVs.

**Starting Point**
In 2018-19, Health Canada installed telematics devices in all departmental vehicles.
**Performance Indicator**
Beginning in 2019-20, Health Canada will analyze telematics data as a tool to effectively manage and 'right-size' the departmental fleet.

## Departmental Action 3

Encourage and facilitate the use of sustainable travel practices.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Increased awareness about sustainable travel practices could help to reduce the amount of business travel or encourage employees to consider less GHG-intensive modes of transportation.

**Starting Point**
In 2017-18, one of Health Canada's Branches in the National Capital Region (NCR) participated in a 12-week pilot project to use public transit to and from meetings. During the pilot, there were 126 trips using transit passes that resulted in a savings of over $1,400 in transportation costs and a significant reduction in GHG emissions.
**Performance Indicator**
Health Canada will work with the Centre for Greening Government at the Treasury Board Secretariat to facilitate the use of public transit by employees travelling to and from meetings in the NCR.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, prepare outreach and communication messages for employees to raise awareness about GHG emissions from air travel and highlight alternatives for consideration that could reduce the Department's environmental 'footprint'.

## Departmental Action 4

Promote environmental sustainability by integrating environmental performance considerations into departmental procurement process, including planning, acquisition, use and disposal, and ensuring there is the necessary training and awareness to support green procurement.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Green procurement incorporates environmental considerations into purchasing decisions and is expected to motivate suppliers to green their goods, services and supply chain. GHG reductions are one area of consideration in green procurement.

**Starting Point**
In 2013-14, 91% of Health Canada's specialists in procurement and materiel management completed training to support green procurement or had it included in their learning plan for completion within a year.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of specialists in procurement and materiel management will have completed the Canada School of Public Service green procurement course or equivalent, or have included it in their learning plan for completion within a year.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020 procurement training materials and reference guides for Cost Centre Managers and Cost Centre Administrators will be updated on an on-going basis to reflect the life cycle approach identified in the Greening Government Strategy, and to provide links to additional green procurement training, information and practices.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020 acquisition card training will be updated to include a section that provides best practices on green procurement.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020 the acquisition card newsletter will include a section that provides best practices on green procurement. This newsletter is sent to all cardholders and their managers.

**Starting Point**
Since 2013-14, all of Health Canada's common use documents residing in the Procurement and Contracting Intranet site for Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada have been vetted

as part of an annual review to ensure they include a ‘greening’ statement or directive, where applicable.

**Performance Indicator**

By March 31, 2020, 100% of procurement related documents, guides and tools posted on Health Canada’s intranet will have been reviewed and updated to reflect the green procurement objectives in the Government of Canada’s Greening Government Strategy, where applicable.

Greening considerations are systematically incorporated into Health Canada’s capital planning process and investment decisions related to fleet, IT, and laboratory equipment.

**Starting Point**

In 2013-14, 65% of Health Canada’s office supply purchases included consideration of environmental impacts. Note: This excludes purchases made using acquisition cards.

**Performance Indicator**

By March 31, 2020, 90% of office supply purchases will continue to include criteria to reduce the environmental impact associated with the production, acquisition, use, and/or disposal of the supplies.

**Starting Point**

In 2013-14, 64% of Health Canada’s information technology purchases included criteria to reduce their environmental impact. Note: This excludes laboratory and field equipment as well as purchases made using acquisition cards.

**Performance Indicator**

By March 31, 2020, 92% of information technology hardware purchases will continue to include criteria to reduce the environmental impact associated with the production, acquisition, use, and/or disposal of the equipment. Note: This is done is conjunction with Shared Services Canada as the IT procurement authority.

**Starting Point**

Since 2013-14, Health Canada has required that performance evaluations for procurement and materiel management managers include a discussion about how they supported and contributed to the Department’s green procurement practices.

**Performance Indicator**

By March, 31, 2020, 100% of performance evaluations for procurement and materiel management managers will continue to include a discussion about how they supported and contributed to the Department’s green procurement practices.

## Departmental Action 5

Promote environmental sustainability in line with the waste management elements of the Government of Canada’s Greening Government Strategy by reducing plastic waste.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Health Canada is taking steps to systematically incorporate “greening” considerations into departmental events and adopt a life-cycle approach to plastic. This includes identifying opportunities to eliminate or reduce single-use plastic through targeted promotional activities.

**Performance Indicator**
Develop and implement an internal communications plan designed to engage and inform employees about Government of Canada commitments for, and alternatives to, single-use plastic, especially when organizing meetings and events.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020 Health Canada will develop a departmental Policy on the Procurement and Use of Single-use Plastic.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, Health Canada will complete an inventory of single-use plastic in the Department in order to establish a baseline to help inform additional measures to reduce/eliminate single-use plastic.

## Departmental Action 6

Review programs and assets (buildings, fleet) to ensure that sources of GHG emissions are inventoried and that any impacts to climate change are quantified.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Factoring climate variability and change into policy, programs, and operations is one of the most important ways the government can adapt to a changing climate and is consistent with the government's risk management approach of enhancing the protection of public assets and resources and strengthening planning and decision-making.

**Starting Point**
Through the Health Canada Printer Reduction Strategy, the Department was able to reduce its printer ratio from 3:1 in 2010-11, to 8:1 in 2013-14.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, Health Canada will reassess the employee to printer ratio to ensure that the 8:1 ratio is maintained or improved and that corrective measures are put in place if needed.

**Performance Indicator**
Assets (buildings and fleet) will continue to be reviewed on an on-going basis to ensure that sources of GHG emissions are tracked and impacts to climate change are quantified. In 2019-20, there will

continue to be a particular focus on defining parameters for metrics (in addition to buildings and fleet) with other federal departments to allow for comparability.

## Departmental Action 7

Continue to incorporate climate change considerations into risk planning by including this element as part of the standard guidance/checklist to branches during the development of their risk snapshots, and business continuity planning in order to identify risks that could affect Health Canada's ability to deliver on its mandate and achieve its strategic outcomes.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Factoring climate variability and change into policy, programs, and operations is one of the most important ways the government can adapt to a changing climate and is consistent with the government's risk management approach of enhancing the protection of public assets and resources and strengthening planning and decision-making.

**Performance Indicator**
Plans related to the identification of risks and business continuity will integrate considerations of climate change impact mitigation and adaptation, where appropriate.

## ***Clean drinking water:*** *All Canadians have access to safe drinking water and, in particular, the significant challenges Indigenous communities face are addressed*

Health Canada's contributions in this area align with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:


*By March 31, 2019, 60% and by March 31, 2021 100% of the long-term drinking water advisories affecting First Nation drinking water systems financially supported by Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada are to be resolved.*

### Departmental Action 1

Develop/update health-based drinking water quality guidelines and guidance documents in collaboration with Federal/Provincial/ Territorial partners, intended for use by all jurisdictions in Canada as the basis for their drinking water requirements to help ensure the safety of drinking water in Canada.

#### *How Health Canada Contributes*

This target reflects part of the overall goal of clean drinking water for all Canadians. The drinking water quality guidelines are a key component of all drinking water quality programs across Canada, including those in place in First Nation communities.

**Starting Point**
In 2016-17, 100% of planned final water quality guidelines / guidance documents were endorsed through federal/provincial/territorial collaborative processes.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of planned final water quality guidelines/guidance documents will be endorsed through federal/provincial/territorial collaborative processes.

Health Canada also develops (upon request) health guidance for contaminants that have been detected in drinking water (for example from a spill event) that do not have formal drinking water guidelines and/or guidance; these are referred to as health-based reference values. In addition, Health Canada provides guidance to federal, provincial and territorial partners, including Indigenous Services Canada, as they adopt, implement and communicate the federal drinking water guidelines.

## ***Sustainable food:*** *Innovation and ingenuity contribute to a world-leading agricultural sector and food economy for the benefit of all Canadians*

Health Canada's contributions in this area align with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goal:

*Ensure safe and accessible food supply by mitigating risks to animal and plant resources from pests, diseases and other health hazards and prevent risks to health of Canadians*

### Departmental Action 1

Assess the extent to which regulatory decisions and actions are keeping pesticides at acceptable limits in order to protect the health of Canadians and the environment from risks associated with the use of pesticides.

#### *How Health Canada Contributes*

By measuring the effectiveness of regulatory decisions in limiting and/or reducing exposure to risks associated with pesticides Health Canada contributes to ensuring the food supply of Canadians is safe.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2023, 100% of registered pesticide levels do not exceed acceptable limits in food and water.

Canada's food guide recognizes the importance of reducing food waste. The annual value of lost and wasted food in Canada is roughly $31B. The way our food is produced, processed, distributed, and consumed—including food loss and food waste— can have environmental implications. Food waste is a contributor to landfill greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. Reducing food waste—by households, food manufactures and processors, farmers, and food retailers—can help make better use of natural resources and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

## ***Safe and healthy communities:*** *All Canadians live in clean, sustainable communities that contribute to their health and well-being*

Health Canada's contributions in this area align with the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals:


*Implement the Air Quality Management System to: Decrease the three-year average of particulate matter, nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds emissions from regulated and/or targeted sources to below the previous three-year average*

### Departmental Action 1

Raise awareness of the health impacts of air pollution and support actions to improve air quality through research, assessment of health risks, and analysis of health benefits to improve the health of Canadians.

#### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Health Canada science plays an important role in guiding actions to improve outdoor air quality under the Air Quality Management System, for which health is the key driver. The Department conducts research to evaluate Canadians' exposure to air pollution, to determine the relationship between exposure and human health and to find ways to reduce exposure to protect health. It also assesses the risks to health from specific pollutants and air pollutant sources, including industrial activities, modes of transportation and fuel types, and quantifies the health and economic benefits to be gained from improved air quality.

The science is made available to a wide range of stakeholders to inform which measures should be put in place to continue to decrease air pollutants, including those key pollutants which contribute to smog (particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, and volatile organic compounds). Health Canada science has also contributed to the global understanding of how air pollution impacts human health. For example, the Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort study has provided the largest study of the health effects of air pollution in the world. It has been used in the development of Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards and has been adopted into the Global Burden of Disease project, a global effort to measure and track the cause of poor health worldwide.

**Starting point**
Health Canada has completed comprehensive health risk assessments on fine particulate matter and ozone (key components of smog), nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide and on pollutants found in diesel and gasoline exhaust, and has used this information to guide the development of new Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of planned federal air quality health assessments, guidance documents, guidelines and standards will be published or distributed externally.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of planned knowledge transfer activities related to health impacts of air pollution will be completed.

A new Health Canada-led study suggests that nearly nine million premature deaths worldwide each year are due to poor air quality, making the impact on global mortality significantly greater than the four million premature deaths previously estimated.

## Departmental Action 2

Raise awareness of the health impacts of indoor air pollution and support improvements to indoor air quality through research, assessment of health risks, and the development of indoor air quality guidelines.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Canadians spend 90% of their time indoors, where they are exposed to many different pollutants, often at levels higher than outside. Health Canada guides actions by governments, public health professionals, building professionals and individual Canadians to reduce exposure to indoor air pollutants, in order to protect health. For example, the Department recently completed research on the effectiveness of exhaust fans in kitchens and garages on indoor air quality.

**Starting Point**
Health Canada has published a series of Residential Indoor Air Quality Guidelines, along with other guidance for Canadians on improving indoor air, including preventing dampness and mould, cleaning up after floods, protecting your family from carbon monoxide and ensuring good ventilation, available through Canada.ca.

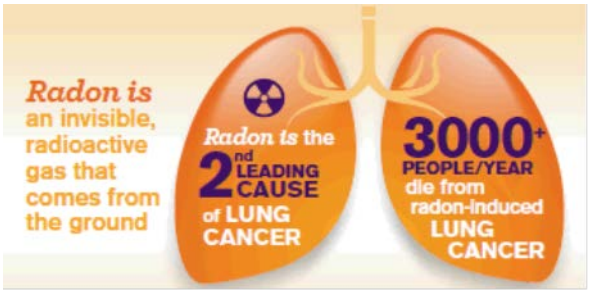
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of planned federal air quality health assessments, guidance documents, guidelines, and standards will be published or distributed externally.

## Departmental Action 3

Provide information to inform action and decision making related to indoor radon exposure.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Health Canada develops standards and regularly updates guidance documents, codes of practice and protocols to measure and mitigate radon in homes and workplaces. By working with private industry and key partners the Department validates methods for radon measurement and improved technologies to reduce the intrusion of radon soil gas into buildings.




Priority outreach activities, such as Radon Action Month in November, emphasize the importance of Canadians taking action to reduce radon exposure by testing and mitigating.

Updates and analysis of radon information from the Households and the Environment Survey, conducted by Statistics Canada, as well as data in the National Radon Database, enables Health Canada to identify and prioritize at-risk populations and to continue to tailor outreach and communication messages.

**Starting Point**
In 2016-17, 100% of targeted stakeholders from across Canada participated in education and awareness activities related to radon.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of stakeholders will have participated in radon education and awareness, and communication activities.

**Starting Point**
There has been an upward trend in the percentage of Canadians that are knowledgeable of radon. In 2013 it was 53%, and in 2015 it rose to 59%, according to the Households and the Environment Survey.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2021, 65%-70% of Canadians surveyed will be knowledgeable of radon.

**Starting Point**
There has been an upward trend in the percentage of Canadians that have tested for radon. In 2013 it was 5%, and in 2015 it was 6%, according to the Households and the Environment Survey.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2021, 8% of Canadians surveyed, have tested for radon.

## Departmental Action 4

Make environmental radiation data available to Canadians.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

The availability of environmental radioactivity surveillance data allows Canadians to view summaries of various environmental radioactivity level data from across Canada, improving access to and understanding of radioactivity exposure from natural and man-made sources. For example, following the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident in Japan, Health Canada used the monitoring networks and relationships with the international community to provide timely information to Canadians.

Fixed Point Surveillance station dose data is also posted in real-time to the European Radiological Data Exchange Platform (EURDEP), which allows Canadians and the international community to view various environmental radioactivity level data from across Canada, thereby improving access to, and understanding of, radioactivity exposure from natural and human-made sources.

**Starting Point**
In 2016-17, 100% of environmental radioactivity surveillance data was posted to the Health Canada website (3,600 new data points) and the Open Data Canada Web site (6,129 new data points). Since the fall of 2017, Canadians can view environmental radioactivity level data in near real-time on the EURDEP web site. This represents access to over 2.6 million new data points every year.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of environmental radiation data will be available to Canadians and stakeholders.

## Departmental Action 5

Collaborate with other federal partners and provincial authorities to strengthen nuclear emergency preparedness and response.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

By administering the Federal Nuclear Emergency Plan and collaborating with other federal partners and provincial authorities, Health Canada helps to ensure that Canada is prepared to manage the federal response to a nuclear emergency in order to minimize the impact on public health, safety, property and the environment. This preparation is done through a series of drills and exercises to test the response to various nuclear emergency scenarios in order to identify gaps so issues can be resolved prior to a real emergency situation.

**Starting Point**
In 2017-18, Health Canada conducted and/or participated in 22 exercises, drills and events, and met all defined objectives.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of planned nuclear emergency preparedness drills and exercises will have been completed.

*Implement the Air Quality Management System to increase the percentage of the Canadian population living in areas where measured outdoor concentrations are below the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards for fine particulate matter and ozone compared to the year 2000*

## Departmental Action 1

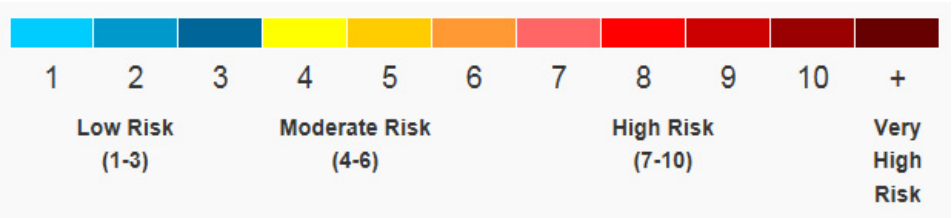
Provide Canadians with access to information that will enable them to take protective action to reduce impacts from air pollution.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) helps Canadians make decisions about how to protect their health by limiting short-term exposure to air pollution and adjusting their activity levels when there are increased levels of air pollution. The Index pays particular attention to people who are more vulnerable to the health impacts of air pollution and provides them with advice on how to protect their health during air quality levels associated with low, moderate, high and very high health risks.

For example, a recent Health Canada study found that areas other than major urban centres (including predominantly rural areas) were most likely to have more highly vulnerable populations. These areas are also more likely to have some of the highest exposures to ozone or fine particles. These results support a need of increased awareness of the AQHI in these areas.

**Starting Point**
80% of Canadians have access to the Air Quality Health Index, which is now available in all provinces and two territories. The focus now is on increasing awareness and use of the Air Quality Health Index among individuals who are more vulnerable to the health impacts of air pollution, building on the estimated 400,000 currently receiving Air Quality Health Index communications.
**Performance Indicator**
By December 31, 2019, one million sensitive individuals will be reached by Air Quality Health Index risk communications.



## Departmental Action 2

Work collaboratively with provinces, territories and stakeholders to develop and regularly update Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards to drive air quality improvements across the country.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Air quality management is an area of shared jurisdiction among federal and provincial/territorial governments. Health Canada, along with Environment and Climate Change Canada, will work with the provinces and territories and other key stakeholders, to implement the Air Quality Management System (AQMS).

The Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards are health and environment based objectives, which are meant to drive actions to improve air quality across Canada under the AQMS. They also provide a framework for public reporting on changes in air quality over time to measure performance. Under the AQMS, governments agreed to review the standards every five years, and update as needed to meet the goal of continuous improvement in air quality. Health Canada co-leads and provides health guidance to the multi-stakeholder group which develops recommended standards to be considered by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.

**Starting Point**

New Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards for fine particulate matter, ground-level ozone, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide have been endorsed by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment and issued as federal objectives under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999*. The federal, provincial and territorial governments also agreed to review and revise the standards every five years, as necessary, in order to support the goal of continuous improvement in air quality.

**Performance Indicator**

By March 31, 2020, a recommendation on a revised Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standard for fine particulate matter will be sent to the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment for consideration.

Health Canada partners with The Weather Network to promote the AQHI on its various platforms. Close to a million viewers a month are reached through cable and satellite television.

## Departmental Action 3

Assess proposed actions to reduce air pollution for health benefits using the Air Quality Benefits Assessment Tool.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

The Air Quality Benefits Assessment Tool is a computer model that estimates the human health impacts from changes in air quality. Health Canada uses it to calculate the potential health benefits to be gained from proposed regulations, or other actions, that are meant to improve air quality. This allows for a comparison of the cost and benefits of proposed actions under the Air Quality Management System, to help find the most efficient ways to improve air quality.

**Starting Point**
The Air Quality Benefits Assessment Tool has been used to support the development of regulations to reduce air pollutants from, for example, vehicles, coal-fired electricity generation and industry, by quantifying the health benefits to be gained so they can be compared to the costs of implementation. It has also been used to estimate the impacts of changes in air quality over time and due to wildfires.
**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of requested health benefit analyses will be provided to the requesting federal department within the established deadline.

*By 2020, address the 4,300 substances identified as priorities for action under the Chemicals Management Plan*

## Departmental Action 1

Assess and manage, where appropriate, the potential health risks associated with chemical substances.

### *How Health Canada contributes*

The Chemicals Management Plan (CMP) is a Government of Canada initiative aimed at reducing the risks posed by chemicals to Canadians and their environment. The third phase of the CMP, launched in May 2016, will address the remaining 1,550 priority chemicals out of the original 4,363 chemicals identified as priorities during the categorization.

In addition, all new substances for which notifications are received, as well as prioritized substances on the Revised In Commerce List, are addressed as part of the CMP.

**Starting Point**
In 2016-17, risk assessments (draft and final) for approximately 1,524 substances were published,

representing 86% of the annual target and reaching approximately 64% of the overall program target of 4,363.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of substances will be assessed within prescribed timelines (Existing Substances - Annual Target).

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2021, 100% of substances will be assessed within prescribed timelines (Existing Substances - Program Target).

**Starting Point**
In 2017, 99% of risk assessments were completed on new substance notifications within prescribed timelines.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of substances will be assessed within prescribed timelines (New Substances).

**Starting Point**
In 2017, 74% of risk management actions for existing substances were taken within prescribed timelines.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of actions will be taken in a timely manner to protect the health of Canadians from substances found to be a risk to human health (Risk Management, Existing Substances).

**Starting Point**
In 2017, 100% of risk management actions for new substances were taken within prescribed timelines.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of actions will be taken in a timely manner to protect the health of Canadians from substances found to be a risk to human health (Risk Management, New Substances).

**Starting Point**
In 2017, 100% of planned risk assessments were completed on prioritized substances on the Revised In Commerce List.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 100% of substances will be assessed within prescribed timelines (Revised In Commerce List).

## Departmental Action 2

Release the Fifth Report on Human Biomonitoring of Environmental Chemicals in Canada, which presents national biomonitoring data on the Canadian population's exposure to chemicals collected as part of the Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS).

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

The Fifth Report on Human Biomonitoring of Environmental Chemicals in Canada will provide new data for scientists and health and environment officials to use in assessing exposure to environmental chemicals and

in developing and assessing policies aimed at reducing exposure to toxic chemicals for the protection of the health of Canadians.

The national data have been and will continue to be used to support research, to track trends in levels of chemicals in Canadians over time, and to assess the risk of environmental chemical exposures to the Canadian population.

**Starting Point**
The first report on human biomonitoring was released in 2010-11 with data from cycle 1 (2007-09) of the Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS). Since then a report has been released with each cycle of data: the second report was released in 2013-14; the third report in 2015-16; and the fourth report in 2017-18. Data from the first three cycles were made available on the Open Government portal in 2016-17, and the data from the fourth cycle was added in 2017-18.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, the Fifth Report on Human Biomonitoring of Environmental Chemicals in Canada will be released and made available through the Open Government portal.

## Departmental Action 3

Provide funding for research studies to monitor contaminant levels in wildlife and people in the Canadian North.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

The overall objective of the Northern Contaminants Program (NCP) is to reduce and, where possible, eliminate contaminants from the Arctic environment while providing information to Northerners about contaminants in traditional/country foods to make informed decisions about their food use. Findings from research studies are used to influence the development and implementation of international/global agreements to reduce and/or eliminate the production, use and release of contaminating substances into the environment. Research and monitoring also form the basis for assessing risks to human health associated with contaminants in traditional/country foods. This information is used by national and regional health authorities to develop dietary advice to Northerners, particularly those who are dependent on marine mammals and fish as an important part of their diets. NCP-funded research provides data to address risk assessment and risk management of CMP substances.

**Starting Point**
The first Health Canada co-funded research study to monitor contaminant levels in wildlife and people in the Canadian North was in 2007. Since that time, 83 research studies have been co-funded to conduct this type of human health research.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, funding will have been provided for research studies that monitor contaminant levels in wildlife and people in the Canadian north.

For the first time in 2018-19, a Yukon-based project was included in the human biomonitoring studies. The study entitled, “Yukon Contaminant Biomonitoring: Old Crow”, was funded to address concerns about the safety of wild foods.

## Departmental Action 4

Determine that regulated pesticides meet current scientific standards with respect to health and the environment by completing re-evaluations of registered pesticides that are listed in the Re-evaluation Work Plan. The Work Plan ensures that registered pesticide reviews are initiated every 15 years using current science information.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

By re-evaluating older pesticides against current health and environmental standards, Health Canada verifies the continued acceptability of registered pesticides. In addition, when alerted to potential issues, a special review may be conducted to determine continued acceptability. When a pesticide is found to have unacceptable risks, Health Canada is responsible for taking action to protect human health and the environment (e.g., cancellation of products, label changes, and voluntary withdrawals).

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 80% of actions are taken in a timely manner to protect the health of Canadians from pesticides found to be a risk to human health and the environment. Policy on Cancellations and Amendments Following Re-evaluation and Special Review.

## Departmental Action 5

Determine that regulated pesticides meet current scientific standards with respect to health and the environment.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Regulated pesticides are determined to meet current scientific standards with respect to health and the environment. Through the post-market review of registered pesticides, Health Canada manages risk by staying up-to-date with current science and applying it to pesticides that are available in the marketplace.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 80% of registered pesticides meet current scientific standards.

## Departmental Action 6

Influence international regulatory approaches by developing and adapting policies and regulatory approaches related to pesticides from work plans in collaboration with international partners.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

By working closely with international partners, Health Canada is able to influence the policies and approaches of regulatory partners as a means to further protect Canadians from potential risks associated with pesticides in an increasingly globalized trading environment.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2022, 80% of policies and regulatory approaches from work plans[1] are adapted by or developed with international partners.

[1] Work plans are developed regularly for performance measurement purposes

## Departmental Action 7

Provide human health advice to other federal departments that are responsible for assessing and remediating contaminated sites.

### *How Health Canada Contributes*

Under the Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan (FCSAP), Health Canada serves as one of the Expert Support Departments by providing guidance, guideline development, training and advice on human health issues as they relate to the risks associated from exposure to various contaminants, found on federal lands, in the air, water, soil, sediment, dust and country foods.

This support allows for scientifically sound, and evidence-based risk management decision-making by departments that are managing and/or remediating contaminated sites.

**Starting Point**
Since 2016-17, 100% of health expertise responses have been delivered to custodial departments within the FCSAP timelines.

**Performance Indicator**
By March 31, 2020, 90% of health expertise responses will have been delivered to custodial departments within prescribed timelines established by the FCSAP Secretariat.

Section 4

# Integrating Sustainable Development

At Health Canada the successful integration of sustainable development into policies, plans and programs is supported by the use of analytical techniques and management practices that consider and incorporate environmental, social and economic objectives with the aim of preserving similar benefits for future generations.

The analytical techniques most commonly identified and used to inform decision-making and to manage risk include: cost-benefit analysis; workshops; risk assessment; advisory committees; and literature and case analysis. Risk management is embedded into Health Canada's evidence-based decision-making processes and provides reasonable assurance that policy objectives and desired outcomes will be achieved.

Health Canada's Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) Champion of Sustainable Development plays an important oversight and communication role regarding the Department's sustainable development commitments, as well as the application of Health Canada's Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) policy. Outreach to ADM colleagues and employees helps to facilitate dialogue within the Department and identify potential improvements to sustainable development and SEA process and practices. Information about Health Canada's role in sustainable development, as well as tools and guidance related to SEA, are available to departmental employees.

Health Canada has a coordinator for SEA that provides guidance to proposal leads about the application of the SEA process and requirements of the Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals. Health Canada’s SEA Policy defines a proposal as a Memorandum to Cabinet, a Treasury Board Submission, a regulatory proposal, memoranda to the Minister that are seeking concurrence, and any other strategic document seeking Ministerial or Cabinet approval.

A series of questions prompt the proposal lead to consider if their proposal has potential positive, negative or uncertain impacts on FSDS goals and targets; this part of the process results in the completion of a Preliminary Scan. The departmental SEA coordinator helps to play a challenge function to ensure that the assessment of potential environmental impacts is comprehensive and robust and that full consideration is given to potential direct and indirect environmental impacts. If the Preliminary Scan indicates that the proposal is likely to have a positive or negative impact on the environment, or if the impact is uncertain, a Detailed Analysis is required.

Public statements on the results of Health Canada's assessments are prepared when an initiative that has undergone a Detailed Analysis is announced. The purpose of the public statement is to demonstrate that the environmental effects, including the impacts on achieving the FSDS goals and targets, of the approved policy, plan or program have been considered during proposal development and decision making.

Compliance with Health Canada's SEA Policy is reported to the Executive Committee, which is Chaired by the Deputy Minister and attended by Assistant Deputy Ministers. This forum helps to identify potential challenges, implement corrective measures and ensure on-going engagement with senior managers across the Department. Annual compliance reporting is also included in the Departmental Results Report, outlining the number of proposals that were reviewed within the fiscal year.

The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD) tabled the audit report on the SEA practices of 26 federal departments in fall 2018. This was the fourth time that Health Canada was audited and the Department was one of 17 departments that was found to be compliant with the Cabinet Directive. The CESD also found that the Department had met previous commitments to strengthen its SEA practices. Although the audit results are encouraging, Health Canada continues to review and update its SEA tools and process to ensure consistent improvements.

The Department offers various forums for SEA training. An on-line course is available to all departmental employees to provide information on Health Canada's SEA policy, the Cabinet Directive, and roles and responsibilities of the parties involved. In addition, an in-class course is offered annually, and includes case studies and scenarios relevant to the Health Canada context that aim to generate discussion and to enable participants to apply what they have learned through the on-line course. Health Canada's Office of Sustainable Development provides targeted training sessions to key groups across the Department to respond to specific questions. Employees are encouraged to incorporate SEA training opportunities into their Learning Plans as part of their Performance Management Agreements.

Health Canada will continue to ensure that the SEA process includes an analysis of the impacts of proposals on the environment, including on FSDS goals and targets.