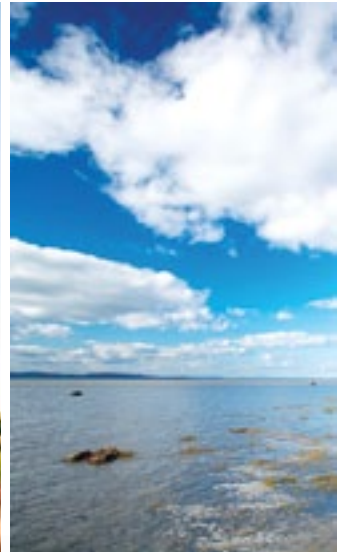




Canada Economic
Development
for Quebec Regions

Développement
économique Canada
pour les régions du Québec



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2011-2013

Updated – May 2012

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1.

AGENCY VISION concerning sustainable development

In the long term, Quebec's regions and communities will have increased their development capabilities, dynamism and prosperity in a significant, lasting manner for the benefit of their residents.





The notion of sustainable development refers to development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The *Federal Sustainable Development Act (FSDA)* and the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS), in which the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec (the Agency) participates, reflects the Government of Canada's commitment in that regard. The Agency therefore accepts the basic principle, set out in the FSDA, that "sustainable development is based on an ecologically efficient use of natural, social and economic resources and acknowledges the need to integrate environmental, economic and social factors in the making of all decisions by government."

Under the FSDA, the Agency has to prepare a sustainable development strategy (SDS) which includes the Agency's objectives and action plans, reflects its mandate and is consistent with the FSDS, contributing to the attainment of the latter's goals. This Departmental strategy is integrated with the annual Report on Plans and Priorities (RPP), and the Agency reports on it through the Departmental Performance Report (DPR).

On October 6, 2010, the Minister of the Environment announced the tabling of the new FSDS, which aims to render environmental decision-making more transparent to Canadians.

The FSDS replaces a system established in 1995 which asked each of the main federal departments and agencies to submit to Parliament its own individual sustainable development strategy.

The FSDS goals, targets and implementation strategies are organized on the basis of four priority themes:

- I.  [Addressing climate change and air quality](#)
- II.  [Maintaining water quality and availability](#)
- III.  [Protecting nature](#)
- IV.  [Shrinking the environmental footprint – Beginning with government](#)

In line with its mandate, the Agency undertakes under [Theme I](#) of the FSDS to:

Finance projects that would, among other things, help to optimize resource use, valuing residual resources, or contribute to eco-efficiency.¹

The Agency will thus foster industrial greening (e.g., eco-design, eco-efficiency, green energy sources, eco-building) in order to help enterprises meet new requirements (e.g., eco-certification), identify pathways for enhancing environmental performance, and seize emerging (green) sector market opportunities.

This commitment is consistent with the Agency's mandate to promote the long-term economic development of the regions of Quebec, paying special attention to regions where slow economic growth is prevalent or opportunities for productive employment are inadequate. Supporting the transition toward a greener economy which presents significant opportunities for growth and diversification for Quebec enterprises and communities enables the Agency to promote both economic development and respect for the environment.

The Agency is also involved in implementing [Theme IV](#) of the FSDS: *Shrinking the environmental footprint – Beginning with government*, which concerns greening of government operations.

¹ These are implementation strategies 1.1.29 and 2.1.17 of the FSDS. Implementation strategies are associated with each of the themes, goals and targets of the FSDS, and constitute the undertakings made by each of the departments for implementation of the FSDS. The Agency's undertaking to "finance projects that would, among other things, help to optimize resource use, valuing residual resources, or contribute to eco-efficiency" will contribute to attaining the following FSDS goals:

1. Reduce greenhouse gas emission levels to mitigate the severity and unavoidable impacts of climate change; and
2. Minimize the threats to air quality so that the air Canadians breathe is clean and supports healthy ecosystems.

2.

Sustainable development **DECISION-MAKING** at the Agency

2.1 Managing sustainable development

Under the FSDA, the Agency draws up a sustainable development strategy which contributes to its objectives while reflecting its mandate, is consistent with the FSDS and establishes links with the commitments made in its RPP.

Responsibility for managing sustainable development is shared among different committees and sectors.

DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Departmental Management Committee is responsible for collectively managing all Agency activities and advising the president on policy and management issues. All members of the Departmental Management Committee contribute to the implementation of the SDS by making the appropriate decisions. They play an active role in discussions concerning the yearly planning cycle for Agency activities and the preparation of the RPP, DPR and SDS.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Sustainable Development Committee assists the Departmental Management Committee, and comprises members from business offices and the Agency's different branches. The Sustainable Development Committee is involved in preparing the Agency's Sustainable Development Strategy, and its members promote the Strategy in their respective settings and contribute to its implementation.

POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

This Sector is responsible for preparing the SDS, in conjunction with the other sectors of the Agency. It has to integrate the commitments made in the SDS, particularly those stemming from the FSDS, into Agency policies and programs. It is also responsible for performance measurement, in particular related to the FSDS. It is thus mandated to integrate a systematic strategic environmental assessment process in the design stage of Agency programs, policies, initiatives and strategies, and to develop SDS-related tools.

In implementing the SDS, this Sector, and the Operations Sector, fulfils commitments with respect to the empowerment of Agency personnel concerning sustainable development (e.g., training). It works closely with a network of regional sustainable development representatives in the Agency's business offices.

To ensure consistent federal intervention with respect to sustainable development, the Sector ensures interdepartmental liaison, in particular with those departments participating in the FSDS. Thus, it takes part in committees of assistant deputy ministers and directors general, and the FSDS working group.

The Policy and Communications Sector works closely with the Agency's business offices and federal and provincial stakeholders with a view to facilitating partnerships and defining new opportunities for support for projects, particularly in the green energy sector.

The Communications Directorate of this Sector is responsible for conveying to Agency personnel any relevant information or activity concerning sustainable development, through its in-house newsletter or through leaflets summarizing the Agency's RPPs, DPRs or SDSs.

This Directorate also handles activities surrounding the announcement of sustainable development projects supported by the Agency, and is responsible for posting press releases, reports and the different editions of the SDS on the Internet.

Finally, the Communications Directorate supports awareness activities with respect to sound environmental practices for all Agency personnel.

OPERATIONS SECTOR

The Operations Sector is responsible for implementing Agency programs. It includes a network of business offices across Quebec, and actively contributes to implementation of the SDS. This Sector ensures the development and tracking of projects that contribute to sustainable development.

This Sector is responsible for applying the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* to all projects supported by the Agency. This environmental assessment process provides the Agency with the information it needs to make informed decisions on the projects submitted to it.

Finally, this Sector inputs information on projects that contribute to the FSDS into its grants and contributions management system.

CORPORATE SERVICES SECTOR

This Sector is responsible for meeting the targets for greening of Agency operations (Theme IV of the FSDS) and promoting sound environmental practices.

It is responsible for interdepartmental liaison concerning the greening of government operations, in particular with the Office of Greening Government Operations of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

This Sector is responsible for preparing the RPPs and DPRs, particularly in connection with the FSDS.

It also represents the Agency on the Federal Interdepartmental Group on Sustainable Development, which reports to the Quebec Federal Council.

2.2. Commitments on environmental assessment

2.2.1 Strategic environmental assessment

Pursuant to the [Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals](#), ministers expect that policy, plan and program proposals of departments and agencies will consider, when appropriate, potential environmental effects.

More specifically, ministers expect a strategic environmental assessment of a policy, plan or program proposal to be conducted when the following two conditions are met:

- 1. The proposal is submitted to an individual minister or Cabinet for approval; and**
- 2. Implementation of the proposal may result in important environmental effects, either positive or negative.**

Departments and agencies are also encouraged to conduct strategic environmental assessments for other policy, plan or program proposals when circumstances warrant.

The Agency will apply the [Guidelines for Implementing the Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals](#). The Agency will reinforce the application of strategic environmental assessments (SEAs), following the commitment in that regard made in the FSDS, by systematizing its SEA process and ensuring that environmental considerations are taken into account in the drafting of policies, plans and programs.

The Agency will continue to apply good practices associated with the reporting of SEA results, in line with FSDS goals and targets, thus ensuring transparent environmental decision-making.

The Agency conducted a strategic environmental assessment of its *Quebec Economic Development Programs*, in 2012, upon its creation, taking into account the FSDS. This assessment concluded that the implementation of this program was not likely to generate significant environmental impacts provided that:

- the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* is applied to measure the environmental effects of supported projects and ensure that, when necessary, appropriate mitigation measures are taken;
- measures are taken to assess the cumulative environmental effects of Agency-supported projects;
- in the event the cumulative environmental effects are significant, the Agency ensures that appropriate mitigation measures are taken.

In addition, the conclusions of the assessment recognized that:

- this program will have positive environmental effects, by supporting the implementation of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy. As part of this strategy, the Agency has committed to “finance projects that would, among other things, help to optimize resource use, value residual resources or contribute to eco-efficiency” to address climate change and air quality.
- this commitment will be implemented through the Agency’s Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Agency will pay special attention to the cumulative effects of projects by conducting regional assessments of cumulative effects² in association with each of its regional business offices. Regional implementation of this SDS will also be the subject of these assessments.

2.2.2 Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

The *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* ([CEAA](#)) is applied to all projects supported by the Agency to ensure that they are environmentally appropriate and meet CEAA requirements, including project impact mitigation measures.

² These regional assessments could be conducted by the Agency’s environmental assessment team. This will involve compiling the project assessments and observations made in each of the regions in order to have a more accurate idea of the projects’ potential for cumulative environmental effects and thus ensure more enlightened decision-making when future initiatives are drawn up or future projects supported.



3.

DETAILS ON STRATEGIES for implementation of the Agency’s commitment with respect to the FSDS

In line with its mandate and the FSDS, the Agency undertakes to finance projects that would, among other things, help to optimize resource use, valuing residual resources, or contribute to eco-efficiency.³

Under its mandate, the Agency commits to fostering industrial greening (e.g., eco-design, eco-efficiency, recycling, green energy sources, eco-building) in order to help enterprises meet new requirements (e.g., eco-certification), identify viable pathways for enhancing environmental performance, and seize emerging (green) sector market opportunities.

A. Agency Program Activity Architecture (PAA) for activities associated with the SDS

Strategic outcome	Program activity	Program sub-activity	Internal services
Quebec’s regions have a growing economy.	<i>Business Development</i>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Entrepreneurship Support</i> ■ <i>Business Performance</i> 	Governance and management support Resource management services Asset management services 

Agency intervention in line with the FSDS falls under the *Enterprise development* program activity.

³ These are implementation strategies [1.1.29](#) and [2.1.17](#) of the FSDS. They contribute to the following FSDS goals:
 1. *Reduce greenhouse gas emission levels to mitigate the severity and unavoidable impacts of climate change;* and
 2. *Minimize the threats to air quality so that the air Canadians breathe is clean and supports healthy ecosystems.*

B. Brief description of programs to which the SDS applies

The SDS will be implemented through the *Quebec Economic Development Program*.

The *Quebec Economic Development Program* (QEDP) supports the economic development of businesses and regions.

Through this program, the Agency promotes business development by helping to support entrepreneurship and business performance either directly or through support organizations.

More specifically, the Agency can support activities aiming to:

- [create or start a business](#)
- [plan a business succession](#)
- [improve a business productivity](#)
- [innovate, adopt a technology, or ensure technology transfer](#)
- [market or export](#)
- [structure a network](#)

The Agency supports the development of the potential of Quebec regions' economy by helping communities in their efforts to mobilize and generate investment in their regions.

More specifically, the Agency can support activities aiming to:

- [prepare a development strategy](#)
- [equip a region with a community economic facility](#)
- [promote a region](#)

The Agency also supports also economic activity in communities on an ad hoc basis to stabilize or strengthen their economies.

More specifically, the Agency contributes to...

- [strengthening of Quebec's forest economies](#)
- [economic development of official-language minority communities](#)
- [international cruise development](#)

Through this program, the Agency supports various projects contributing to sustainable development, such as:

- Enhancement of the value chain of the Quebec wind energy industry
 - [Research and development on wind energy in Nordic climates](#)
- Eco-certification of SMEs' products intended for export
 - [Wood products traceability](#)
- Support for biomass conversion for energy generation
 - [Bioproduct development](#)
 - [Biomethanation expertise and development](#)
 - [Energy pellet production](#)
- Support for innovation in the clean energy sector
 - [Manufacture and installation of hydrokinetic turbine prototypes](#)
 - [Construction of a solar panel plant](#)

C. Linkage between the Agency’s implementation strategy and FSDS targets

The Agency’s commitment to “finance projects that would, among other things, help to optimize resource use, valuing residual resources, or contribute to eco-efficiency” ties in with Theme I of the FSDS: *Addressing climate change and air quality*. Fulfilment of this undertaking should contribute to the attainment of FSDS targets 1.1 *Climate Change Mitigation* and 2.1 *Air Pollutants*. The Agency’s grants and contributions management system is adapted so as to collect information on projects contributing to the attainment of these goals.

D. Overview of performance expectations with respect to sustainable development

Strategic outcome: *Quebec’s regions have a growing economy*

Program activity: *Business development*

Program sub-activity: *Entrepreneurship support*

Targeted result	Performance indicator	Target	Contribution to an FSDS target
Businesses are started-up or transferred in a sustainable development perspective	Number of businesses that improve their performance in a sustainable development perspective ⁴	Maintained or increased number of projects supported and/or amount of contributions allocated	1.1 Target: Climate Change Mitigation 2.1 Target: Air Pollutants

Program activity: *Business development*

Program sub-activity: *Business performance*

Targeted result	Performance indicators	Target	Contribution to an FSDS target
Businesses improve their performance in a sustainable development perspective	Number of businesses that improve their performance in a sustainable development perspective ⁴	Maintained or increased number of projects supported and/or amount of contributions allocated	1.1 Target: Climate Change Mitigation 2.1 Target: Air Pollutants

⁴ For example, support to activities related to pollution prevention or energy eco-efficiency measures (enterprises supported which adopt technologies, integrate processes or acquire equipment that will help them reduce their use of a raw material (including water) or energy or reduce production of waste) including eco-certification, or activities related to the development or commercialization of environmental products, services and technologies.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES CONDUCTIVE TO SDS IMPLEMENTATION

In order to implement the SDS, the Agency will conduct the following activities:

Information (within the Agency)

Information and discussion sessions will be held on the measures provided for by the SDS.

Dissemination of information documents and tools concerning sustainable development

Production and/or dissemination of analyses and/or studies concerning greening of industry and emerging green sectors

Introduction of a community of practice⁵ leading to empowerment of Agency staff with respect to sustainable development and definition of eligible projects in line with the SDS

Dissemination of information concerning sustainable development on the Intranet and in the Agency's in-house newsletter

Co-ordination and liaison

Participation in committees of assistant deputy ministers and directors general, and the FSDS working group

Participation in meetings of the Federal Interdepartmental Group on Sustainable Development (FIGSD)

Reporting

Definition of performance measurement indicators (SDS) for determining which projects supported contribute to the FSDS

Preparing the RPPs and DPRs taking the FSDS into account

⁵ The community of practice would bring together representatives of each of the Agency's business offices. It would foster discussions on good practices contributing to implementation of the SDS.

Strategic environmental assessment (SEA)

Conducting an SEA when necessary pursuant to the *Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals*

Systematization of the SEA process by the Agency

Conducting a regional environmental assessment, by the Agency's environmental assessment team (Operations Sector), for each business office's territory, in order to obtain a more accurate idea of the potential for cumulative environmental effects of projects supported

Canadian Environmental Assessment Act

Application of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA) to projects supported by the Agency

Communications

Update the section concerning sustainable development on the Agency's Website

Program funding and delivery

Identification by the business offices of certain types of projects contributing to sustainable development

Establishment of partnerships, involving other stakeholders (federal and provincial), fostering support for projects contributing to sustainable development

4.

THEME IV OF THE SFDS: Shrinking the environmental footprint – Beginning with government

The Agency also undertakes to enhance the environmental performance of its operations by contributing to the attainment of five greening of government operations goals from the *Federal Sustainable Development Strategy*.

Surplus electronic and electrical equipment (EEE) goal

8.6 – TARGET: By March 31, 2014, each department will reuse or recycle all surplus electronic and electrical equipment (EEE) in an environmentally sound and secure manner.

Printing unit reduction goal

8.7 – TARGET: By March 31, 2013, the Agency will achieve an 8:1 average ratio of office employees to printing units.

Paper consumption goal

8.8 – TARGET: By March 31, 2014, the Agency will reduce internal paper consumption per office employee by 20%.

Green meeting goal

8.9 – TARGET: By March 31, 2012, the Agency will adopt a guide for greening meetings.

Green procurement goals

8.10 – TARGET: As of April 1, 2011, the Agency will establish at least three green procurement targets to reduce environmental impacts using SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound).

8.11 – TARGET: As of April 1, 2011, the Agency will establish SMART targets for training, employee performance evaluations, and management processes and controls, as they pertain to procurement decision-making.

[The additional tables on greening of government operations \(GGO\)](#) provide details concerning Agency intervention with respect to each of these goals. They are part of the Agency's RPP, and are intended for departments and agencies which undertake to comply with the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*, the *Policy on Green Procurement* and the *Policy Framework for Offsetting Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Major International Events*.

[Link to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy](#)