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## Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy 2011-2012 - Performance

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is committed to the implementation of Canada's [Federal Sustainable Development Strategy](#), which was tabled in Parliament on October 6, 2010 by the Minister of the Environment. The Federal Sustainable Development Strategy will strengthen the way in which the Government of Canada promotes environmental sustainability, and it makes important improvements to the transparency and accountability of environmental decision-making. Complete details on the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy can be found by selecting the above link to Environment Canada's website.

In accordance with Section 11 of the [Federal Sustainable Development Act \(2008\)](#), DFO has prepared a Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy containing objectives and plans for the Department that complies with and contributes to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, appropriate to DFO's mandate. The departmental strategy is shared with Canadians through this website and through the information provided in DFO's Reports on Plans and Priorities and Departmental Performance Reports that are tabled in Canada's Parliament annually.

### Performance

The information provided on this website is supported by the 2012 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Progress Report. State of the environment indicators presented in Departmental Performance Reports and Strategy Progress Reports demonstrate the Government of Canada's progress towards the Strategy's environmental objectives and sustainable development goals and targets. These indicators track progress on measures of environmental and socioeconomic issues at broad outcome levels.

This website outlines departmental implementation strategies and corresponding performance information applicable over the intermediate and immediate timeframe. Generally, progress toward a broad outcome is not always directly attributed to any one factor such as a government program or policy, however, the link between the broad outcome and government actions can be demonstrated, documented and made transparent. Moving from the implementation strategy performance measure to the state of the environment measure (indicator), the direct attribution to any one factor is reduced - nonetheless, the logical links between government programs and policies and broad outcomes remain.

Please consult the [Departmental Performance Report 2011-12](#) for associated information on DFO's Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy.

### Our Vision

The Department's vision is:

*To advance sustainable aquatic ecosystems and support safe and secure Canadian waters while fostering economic prosperity across maritime sectors and fisheries.*

## Departmental Decision Making and Sustainable Development

### Managing Sustainable Development

According to the *Federal Sustainable Development Act* "The Government of Canada accepts the basic principle 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." The Federal Sustainable Development Strategy builds on this foundation by emphasizing accountability and transparency on managing sustainable development at the federal level through an integrated approach, establishing clear links to expenditure management, and putting the mechanisms and processes in place to monitor, track and report on departmental and government-wide progress.

Sustainable development is the lens through which DFO undertakes its business and plays an important role in decision-making on policy, plans and programs. The Department's work is guided by three key pieces of legislation:

- The [Oceans Act](#) entrusts the Minister with leading integrated oceans management and providing coast guard and hydrographic services.
- The [Fisheries Act](#) gives the Minister responsibility for the management of fisheries, habitat, and aquaculture.
- The [Species at Risk Act](#) gives the Minister responsibilities associated with the management of aquatic species at risk

Key challenges in managing Canada's oceans and freshwater include oceans health, loss of marine habitat, declining biodiversity, growing demands for access to ocean resources, and regulatory and jurisdictional complexities. Precautionary and ecosystem approaches support resource sustainability and economic prosperity for commercial, Aboriginal, and recreational fish harvesters and communities with the common goal of a sustainable, economically viable, internationally competitive industry. DFO continues to work with others to develop recovery strategies, make adjustments to fisheries facing serious challenges, and develop a conservation ethic that values long-term objectives for the resource over short-to-medium-term social or economic goals.

DFO uses integrated processes, a multi-skilled workforce and broad stakeholder engagement to inform decisions. Internally, senior-level decision-making is supported by a departmental governance structure that integrates consideration of environmental science, economic analysis, and policy, program and regional expertise. It is also informed by the results of departmental initiatives that seek the collaboration and input of external stakeholders (e.g., other federal departments and agencies, provincial and territorial governments, international governments and organizations, universities, industry sectors and potentially implicated aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities across Canada.)

To support accountability and transparency, consideration of Canada's environmental goals and targets under the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy has been integrated into DFO's business planning processes, in reports to Canadians and in tools to support decision-making, such as strategic environmental assessments.

Implementing the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy is a government-wide collaborative effort. DFO has participated in standing interdepartmental committees at the senior management level and in supporting working groups at the staff level. This collaboration not only supported implementation of DFO's departmental sustainable development strategy, but also ensured that the Department contributed to the development of broad deliverables, such as Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Progress Reports.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment Planned Highlights and Commitments

DFO commits to making environmental decision-making more transparent and to ensuring that the Government's environmental goals are taken into account when

pursuing social and economic goals.

Over the course of fiscal year 2011-12, the Department reviewed and updated its internal operational guidance and supporting processes and tools for Strategic Environmental Assessment to align with the FSDS and the revised [2010 Guidelines for Implementing the Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals](#). The updates were developed taking into account work led by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency in collaboration with DFO and other federal departments to strengthen the application of strategic environmental assessment and improve reporting on summary information regarding the results of strategic environmental assessments.

Information on the DFO's strategic environmental assessment process and the results of strategic environmental assessments are accessible at [Strategic Environmental Assessment \(SEA\)](#).



### **DFO's Implementation Strategies to support Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Theme III (Protecting Nature)**

The Department contributes implementation strategies spread across five Federal Sustainable Development Strategy targets related to species at risk, marine ecosystems, alien invasive species, sustainable fisheries and sustainable aquaculture. For more detailed information on the implementation strategies and links to Federal Sustainable Development Strategy goals and targets, DFO programs, and associated performance information, please consult [DFO's Implementation Strategies to Support Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Theme III: Protecting Nature](#).



### **DFO's Contribution to Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Theme IV (Shrinking the Environmental Footprint - Beginning With Government)**

The Department is committed to meet 11 new government-wide targets related to Greening Government Operations and outlined in [Federal Sustainable Development Strategy Annex 4 on Environment Canada's website](#). For department-specific details concerning these commitments, please consult the [Supplementary Table Greening Government Operations](#) on the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat website.

### **Other DFO initiatives that support sustainable development**

For information on other DFO initiatives that contribute to sustainable development but are not yet captured in the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy please consult [Other DFO initiatives that support sustainable development](#).