



Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Departmental Sustainable Development
Strategy 2020 to 2023

Canada

Section 1: Introduction to the Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy

The [2019 to 2022 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 purpose of this Act to provide the legal framework for developing and implementing a Federal Sustainable Development Strategy that will make environmental decision-making more transparent and accountable to Parliament, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency supports the goals laid out in the FSDS through the activities described in this Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy (DSDS).

Section 2: Sustainable Development Vision and Context at the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) vision is to create opportunities for economic growth and prosperity in Atlantic Canada by building on competitive regional strengths and through inclusive clean growth. The Agency supports the FSDS by helping Atlantic Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to position themselves to reduce their carbon footprint while creating sustainable economic opportunities for themselves, their communities and Atlantic Canadians. ACOA will contribute to three objectives from the 2019 to 2022 FSDS: a low-carbon government, clean growth and clean energy.

To advance Atlantic Canada's economic, social and environmental development, ACOA will embrace an approach that helps firms, communities and stakeholders become more innovative by adopting new technologies, products and processes, including clean technologies, and pursuing new avenues for expansion and market diversification in order to compete and succeed in a global market. These efforts will include enabling them to access federal clean technology funding. ACOA will continue to use an approach that:

- supports and promotes projects that embrace clean technology, products, processes and services that improve performance and protect the environment;
- helps diversify the economy, opening up access to new markets, reduces emissions and generates well-paying jobs for Atlantic Canadians;
- builds visibility and awareness of the responsible management of resources and the adoption of sustainable economic practices;
- strengthens regional connections with partners on clean growth issues, including clean technology development and adoption;
- builds deeper connections to leading clean growth programs; and
- is concrete, focused and results-based.

Activities are described in more detail in Sections 3 and 4. Details of ACOA's plans for clean growth will also be included in its annual Departmental Plan.



FSDS Goal: Low-Carbon Government

The Government of Canada, through its FSDS, will transition to low-carbon, climate resilient, and green operations in support of the Greening Government Strategy. ACOA will continue to support the Government of Canada's Greening Government Strategy to transition to low-carbon, climate resilient and green operations. The Agency will do so with green procurement and by promoting sustainable travel practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. For example, ACOA will ensure the integration of environmental performance considerations into the procurement process, including planning, acquisition, use and disposal.



FSDS Goal: Clean Growth

ACOA recognizes that clean technologies provide the pathway to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and more sustainable growth in all areas of the economy, including transportation, natural resources development, manufacturing, construction and utilities. ACOA aims to continue its significant investments in clean growth and clean technology to support clean technology development, demonstration, commercialization, deployment, adoption and exports from existing resources. In the context of the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change and the Atlantic Growth Strategy, ACOA will continue to work with the Provinces – as well as with regional Indigenous organizations, industry stakeholders and experts – to explore how to stimulate economic growth, create jobs, grow clean-tech firms, adopt clean technologies, foster exports, and drive innovation to transition to a low-carbon economy, leveraging regional strengths.



FSDS Goal: Clean Energy

ACOA will promote collaboration and work with partners on clean energy infrastructure with the Clean Power Roadmap for Atlantic Canada. This will support a collective vision for how jurisdictions will collaborate over the coming decades to build a clean power network across Atlantic Canada. This also includes supporting Atlantic Canada initiatives that provide for the demonstration and deployment of smart grid integrated systems projects. These efforts will support the Government of Canada's goal of generating 90% of electricity from renewable and non-emitting sources by 2030, up to 100% in the long term.

Section 3: Commitments for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency



This goal captures commitments from the Greening Government Strategy, as well as reporting requirements under the Policy on Green Procurement.

Greening Government Communities FSDS target(s)	FSDS contributing action(s)	Corresponding departmental action(s)	Contribution by each departmental action to the FSDS goal and target	Starting point(s) Performance indicator(s) Target(s)	Program(s) in which the departmental actions will occur
By 2022, departments have developed measures to reduce climate change risks to assets, services and operations	Increase training and support on assessing climate change impacts, undertaking climate change risk assessments and developing adaptation actions to public service employees, and facilitate sharing of best practices and lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include climate change-related risks in the departmental risk identification exercise and make necessary changes to mitigate them, if applicable 	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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance indicator: Annual review of ACOA's corporate risks to ensure they are relevant to and/or integrate considerations of climate change mitigation and adaptation, if applicable Starting point: Nil Target: Reviewed and up-to-date corporate risk identification exercise 	Internal Services
Actions supporting the Goal: Greening Government	Departments will use environmental criteria to reduce the environmental impact and ensure best value in government procurement decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure completion of Green Procurement training for all Agency acquisition cardholders and track this information. Ensure the integration of environmental performance considerations into the procurement process, including planning, acquisition, use and disposal. 	Actions that reduce the generation of waste will help to reduce Scope 3 emissions for the production, transport and disposal of material. Diverting waste from landfill reduces landfill gas and transport waste hauling emissions. Material recovery via recycling reduces emissions for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance indicator: Percentage of Agency acquisition cardholders that have completed Green Procurement training. Starting point: 100% in 2018 to 2019 Target: 100% annually 	Internal Services

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and analyze green purchase trends. 	the extraction and production of virgin materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance indicator: Percentage of toner cartridges that are recycled Starting point: 100% in 2018 to 2019 Target: 100% annually Performance indicator: Percentage of copy paper purchased that has a minimum of 30% recycled content Starting point: 100% Target: 100% annually Performance indicator: Percentage of paper used that is Forest Stewardship Council certified paper, including for letterhead, business cards and envelopes Starting point: 100% in 2018 to 2019 Target: 100% annually 	
Actions supporting the Goal: Greening Government	Starting in the 2019 to 2020 fiscal year, 75% of new light-duty administrative fleet vehicle purchases will be zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) or hybrid, and priority will be given to purchasing ZEVs	Develop a strategic approach and take actions to decarbonize ACOA fleets, notably by implementing mandatory right-sizing analysis and low-carbon replacement assessments for all vehicle purchases as per the Greening Government Strategy's Fleet Guidance and while considering PSPC purchasing guidelines, availability of infrastructure and service and ACOA's operational needs.	As conventional vehicles are replaced over their lifetime with ZEVs or hybrids and/or the size of the fleet is reduced, greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance indicators: Percentage of vehicles replaced using right-sizing analysis and low-carbon replacement assessments, as per the Greening Government Strategy's Fleet Guidance. Starting point: 0% in 2020 Target: 100% of vehicle replacements made with 	Internal Services

Greening Government Communities FSDS target(s)	FSDS contributing action(s)	Corresponding departmental action(s)	Contribution by each departmental action to the FSDS goal and target	Starting point(s) Performance indicator(s) Target(s)	Program(s) in which the departmental actions will occur
				right-sizing analysis and/or low-carbon replacement assessment by 2023	



Clean Growth: A growing clean technology industry in Canada contributes to clean growth and the transition to a low-carbon economy

Responsible Minister: Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development and Minister of Natural Resources

Clean Growth FSDS target(s)	FSDS contributing action(s)	Corresponding departmental action(s)	Contribution by each departmental action to the FSDS goal and target	Starting point(s) Performance indicator(s) Target(s)	Program(s) in which the departmental actions will occur
Implement our Mission Innovation pledge to double federal government investments in clean energy research, development and demonstration from 2015 levels of \$387 million to \$775 million by 2020	Invest in clean technologies	Support economic development projects that foster the development, commercialization, export and adoption of clean technologies. Where appropriate, ACOA will collaborate with regional and provincial stakeholders, including post-secondary institutions, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, Indigenous communities and research centres, when making these investments.	<p>FSDS: ACOA investments in clean technology will count directly toward national targets pledged for the Mission Innovation commitment. This will maintain investment levels committed to in Budget 2016, where regional development agencies' collective annual support for clean technology was doubled to \$100 million per year.</p> <p>Sustainable Development Goal: 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance indicator: ACOA annual expenditures (\$) for economic development projects that foster the development, commercialization, export and adoption of clean technologies, and the scaling up of clean-tech firms, annually. Starting point: Over \$34 million in 2018 to 2019 Target: \$30 million annually 	Inclusive Communities; Diversified Communities; Research and Development, and Commercialization; Innovation Ecosystem; Business Growth; Trade and Investment
	Other	Deliver funding and support through the Canada Coal Transition Initiative to assist Atlantic Canadian communities affected by the phase out of coal-fired electricity. This five-year initiative started in 2018 to 2019.	<p>FSDS: ACOA will deliver funding for skills development and economic diversification activities to help communities and workers in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick impacted by the regulations to phase out traditional coal-fired electrical generation by 2030.</p> <p>Sustainable Development Goal: 12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance indicator: Percentage of CCTI-eligible communities and surrounding areas that have projects by 2021 Starting Point: 0 communities with programs in 2018 to 2019 Target: 5 out of 5 eligible communities with projects by 2021 Performance indicator: Number of projects 	Business Growth; Diversified Communities; and Innovation Ecosystem Canada Coal Transition Initiative, led by Natural Resources Canada and supported by ACOA for Atlantic Canada

Clean Growth FSDS target(s)	FSDS contributing action(s)	Corresponding departmental action(s)	Contribution by each departmental action to the FSDS goal and target	Starting point(s) Performance indicator(s) Target(s)	Program(s) in which the departmental actions will occur
				<p>approved supported by the Canada Coal Transition Initiative by 2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting Point: 0 projects in 2018 to 2019 (new program) • Target: At least 12 projects in 2020 to 2021. • Performance indicator: Value of projects approved supported by the Canada Coal Transition Initiative by 2021 • Starting Point: \$0 in 2018 to 2019 (new program) • Target: \$10 million in 2020 to 2021. 	



Clean Energy: All Canadians have access to affordable, reliable and sustainable energy

Responsible Minister: Minister of Natural Resources

Clean Energy FSDS target(s)	FSDS contributing action(s)	Corresponding departmental action(s)	Contribution by each departmental action to the FSDS goal and target	Starting point(s) Performance indicator(s) Target(s)	Program(s) in which the departmental actions will occur
<p>By 2030, 90% and in the long term, 100% of Canada's electricity is generated from renewable and non-emitting sources</p>	<p>Promote collaboration and work with partners on clean energy infrastructure</p>	<p>Facilitate the development of the region's renewable energy capacity through the convening of partners and the development of a common knowledge base (e.g. undertaking research, convening partnerships) between governments and the private sector. This would support, among other key policy priorities, the Clean Power Roadmap for Atlantic Canada.</p> <p>Activities include evaluating options, forecasting demand, identifying projects and fostering clean energy opportunities to support Atlantic industry development and national clean energy objectives.</p>	<p>FSDS: The roadmap will outline a collective vision of how jurisdictions will collaborate over the coming decades to build a clean power network across Atlantic Canada. It will help to maximize and expedite the development of clean and renewable energy resources in Atlantic Canada.</p> <p>Sustainable Development Goal: 7.2</p>	<p>Performance indicator: Number of studies and analysis done annually in partnership with private and public stakeholders, to foster clean energy opportunities and advance the objectives of the Atlantic Growth Strategy's Clean Growth and Climate Change priority.</p> <p>Starting point: 1 study completed in 2020</p> <p>Target: 1 new study or analysis completed annually</p>	<p>Policy, Research and Engagement</p> <p>Atlantic Canada Energy Office (ACOA)</p>

Section 4: Integrating sustainable development

ACOA's sustainable development vision is to create opportunities for economic growth and prosperity in Atlantic Canada by building on competitive regional strengths and through inclusive clean growth. The Agency's activities will continue to incorporate a sustainable development focus on its projects and build upon the strengths of the region's clean technology firms.

ACOA will foster practices that promote sustainable development in its internal operations and project management activities. ACOA initiatives related to sustainable development are incorporated into the Agency's procurement planning, tracking and reporting systems. For example:

- pursuing best practices in environmental management and pollution prevention, including recycling;
- participating in sustainable development interdepartmental working groups;
- educating ACOA staff on environmental issues and concerns, and providing them with the resources to carry out the Agency's sustainable development agenda; and
- setting measurable targets, reporting on progress and reviewing the Agency's contributions to the FSDS on an annual basis through the Agency's Main Estimates process.

ACOA senior management is responsible for integrating sustainable development principles into the Agency's policies, programs and operations.

The Agency will consider the environmental effects of initiatives subject to the Cabinet Directive on the Environmental Assessment of Policy, Plan and Program Proposals, as part of its decision-making processes.

ACOA will continue to ensure that its decision-making process includes consideration of FSDS goals and targets through its Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process. An SEA for a policy, plan or program proposal includes an analysis of the impacts of the given proposal on the environment, including on relevant FSDS goals and targets.

Public statements on the results of ACOA's assessments are published when an initiative that has undergone a detailed SEA 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.