



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada

Canada

Governance Review

Executive Report

Audit and Evaluation Branch

August 2017

EXECUTIVE REPORT

The governance review was included in the Audit and Evaluation Branch's 2015 Integrated Risk-Based Audit and Evaluation Plan, as approved by the Deputy Minister upon the recommendation of the External Audit Advisory Committee.

The objective of this review was to assess whether the Department's key governance mechanisms were meeting the needs of senior management and supporting effective decision making and coordination.

This review was intended primarily as a consulting assignment, the purpose of which was to provide advice to the Deputy Minister and to identify good practices and areas for consideration in further improving Environment and Climate Change Canada's (ECCC) governance. The project used primarily a consultation-based approach, through interviews with all Executive Management Committee (EMC) members and selected Directors General (DG). The observations and considerations contained in the review are primarily derived from the result of these consultations and from our summary examination of key departmental documents.

The project also included a comparative review of a few selected Science-Based Departments and Agencies (including Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, National Resources Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency), which focussed on key aspects and challenges of governance.

The governance review included some items for consideration by ECCC's senior management in the areas of:

- strategic planning and policy coordination (for example, creation of a policy committee, regular strategic policy/planning retreats)
- senior committee structure (for example, ways to better communicate decisions made at Executive Management Committee meetings)
- DG committees (for example, clarifying and broadening of the mandates of DG-level committees)
- regional coordination (for example, assessing Regional Directors General (RDG) representation and their role on key DG-level committees)

Actions on these items for consideration have already been noted. For example:

- creation of a policy committee (a forum to provide medium- to long-term strategic foresight and to strengthen science-policy integration) in April 2017
- establishment of an Operations Committee (Portfolio Look Ahead meetings) in January 2017
- improved records of decisions for EMC meetings, beginning in January 2017
- new departmental DG-level committee structure approved in August 2017
- regular strategic EMC retreats, starting with two held in May and August 2017