

The Environmental Conservation Directorate is involved in developing and implementing programs designed to protect and conserve the environment. The environmental emergency program involves protective or preventive activities associated with unforeseen environmental threats, such as oil spills. The program examines the national state of preparedness to cope with such accidents, and co-ordinates the development of over-all improvement in the state of preparedness. It also acts as the focal point through which the expertise and resources of the Department can be brought to bear on an environmental accident.

The environmental contaminants program, which has been responsible for the development of the proposed Environmental Contaminants Act, involves the protection of the environment from the adverse effects of identifiable substances produced by industrial activities. This program is also responsible for the management of hazardous materials, which involves the development of codes of good practice, and guidelines for the identification, transportation, storage and disposal of environmentally hazardous materials. The solid waste management program's objectives are to reduce the impact on the environment and increase resource recovery and energy conservation from solid wastes.

The federal activities environmental protection program deals with matters associated with the facilities and activities of all federal government agencies and Crown corporations. Areas of concern cover both land installations and vessels, and include treatment and disposal of waste water, solid waste management, air pollution, noise pollution and other operations which are a threat to environmental quality. This program includes the responsibility for the development and implementation of a national approach to the management of noise and the responsibility for the ecological impact appraisal and control activities which include the development and implementation of ecological protection regulations, guidelines and codes; analysis and appraisal of ecological impact studies; implementation of ecological impact control measures; and associated enforcement and surveillance activities.

The federal government is also committed to cleaning up pollution problems at existing federal facilities within a reasonable time frame. Clean-up projects have dealt with water, air, noise, dust and solid waste pollution problems at airports, government offices, laboratories, grain elevators, defence bases, parks and ships and harbours.

1.5.1 Federal legislation

There are already a large number of statutes that are important in renewable resources and environmental quality management. Major pieces of legislation for which the Department of the Environment is responsible include the following: The Fisheries Act (RSC 1970, c.F-14, amended 1970); The Canada Water Act (and phosphate regulations) (RSC 1970, c.5 1st Supp.); The Migratory Birds Convention Act (RSC 1970, c.M-12); The International River Improvements Act (RSC 1970, c.I-22); The Game Export Act (RSC 1970, c.G-1); The Fisheries Development Act (and the Fish-Chilling Assistance Regulations) (RSC 1970, c.F-21, amended 1973 and 1974); The Clean Air Act (and Lead Free Gasoline Regulations) (SC 1970-71-72, c.47); The Forestry Development and Research Act (RSC 1970, c.F-30); Canada Wildlife Act (SC 1973, c.21); Weather Modification Information Act (SC 1970-71-72, c.59); and Fish Inspection Act (RSC 1970, c.F-12).

In view of the need to co-ordinate and consolidate the activities relating to environmental quality and renewable resource matters carried out by federal agencies other than the Department of the Environment, an Interdepartmental Committee on the Environment was established in 1973. This committee, with representation at the deputy minister level, is the primary forum for interdepartmental consultation on environmental and related resource issues and assists the Department of the Environment in co-ordinating the development and implementation of Canada's environmental policies and programs.

1.5.2 Federal-provincial programs

Jurisdiction over renewable resources and environmental matters is shared by the federal and provincial governments. In some areas, such as fisheries, legislative jurisdiction rests with the federal government and certain management and administrative responsibilities have been delegated to the provinces; in other areas, such as forest resources, the legislative jurisdiction rests with the provinces. Frequently management practices for one resource may affect the management of others and virtually all resource management practices are related to