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Northern Pipeline Agency



2023 to 2027 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy Northern Pipeline Agency

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Executive Summary

The Northern Pipeline Agency (the Agency) is pleased to present its 2023 to 2027 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy.

The Agency was established by the [Northern Pipeline Act](#)ⁱ in 1978 to facilitate the planning and construction by Foothills Pipe Lines Ltd. (Foothills) of the Canadian portion of the Alaska Highway Gas Pipeline (AHGP) project and to maximize social and economic benefits from its construction and operation while minimizing any adverse effects. In 2013 Foothills notified the Agency that no further work is planned on the AHGP and it will await further commercial interest before recommencing its efforts.

To align with the reduction in the AHGP project activities, the Agency has since scaled down its operations to a minimal level while continuing to fulfill Canada's ongoing obligations as set out in the Act, including through an ongoing commitment to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and by contributing to federal efforts to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Pursuant to the requirements of the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*, the Agency will release its results on this Strategy on an annual basis.

SECTION 1

Introduction to the Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy

The [2022 to 2026 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy \(FSDS\)](#)ⁱⁱ presents the Government of Canada's sustainable development goals and targets, as required by the [Federal Sustainable Development Act](#).ⁱⁱⁱ This is the first FSDS to be framed using the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and provides a balanced view of the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development.

In keeping with the purpose of the Act, to make decision-making related to sustainable development more transparent and accountable to Parliament, the Agency supports the goals laid out in the FSDS through the activities described in this Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy (DSDS).

The [Federal Sustainable Development Act](#)^{iv} also sets out [7 principles](#)^v that must be considered in the development of the FSDS as well as DSDSs. These basic principles have been considered and incorporated in the Agency's DSDS.

To promote coordinated action on sustainable development across the Government of Canada, this departmental strategy integrates



efforts to advance Canada's implementation of the 2030 Agenda National Strategy, supported by the Global Indicator Framework (GIF) and Canadian Indicator Framework (CIF) targets and indicators. The strategy also now captures SDG initiatives that fall outside the scope of the FSDS to inform the development of the Canada's Annual Report on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

SECTION 2

Northern Pipeline Agency's Sustainable Development Vision

As the federal regulator for the Canadian portion of the Alaska Highway Gas Pipeline project, the Agency has the mandate to maximize social and economic benefits from its construction and operation while minimizing any adverse effects, particularly for directly affected Indigenous Peoples.

The Agency supports the 2022 to 2026 FSDS by seeking opportunities to promote solutions in relation to government priorities on greening the economy and inclusive growth, including those linked to Indigenous economic reconciliation. The Agency will do this by considering the economic, environmental and social dimensions of its decisions, programs, services and operations.

This DSDS represents the Agency's first independent sustainable development strategy.

SECTION 3

Listening to Canadians

As required by the [Federal Sustainable Development Act](#), the Agency has taken into account comments on the draft 2022-2026 FSDS made during the public consultation held from March 11 to July 9, 2022.

During the public consultation, more than 700 comments were received from a broad range of stakeholders, including governments, Indigenous organizations, non-governmental organizations, academics, businesses, and individual Canadians in different age groups and of various backgrounds. The draft FSDS was also shared with the appropriate committee of each House of Parliament, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, and the Sustainable Development Advisory Council for their review and comment.

What We Heard

Across the submissions received, the Agency identified sustainable development priorities and issues that affect us.

These priorities include the following:

- **Reducing inequalities through continuous engagement with Indigenous communities** – Canadians noted the importance of consultation and engagement with Indigenous communities through the lifecycle of energy projects.
- **Green Procurement** – Canadians want to see the Government of Canada implement net-zero procurement to incentivize companies' voluntary engagement in the race to net zero.

Comments were focused on ensuring that meaningful Indigenous engagement and consultation occurs on major projects, and that new infrastructure projects should be examined with net zero target considerations.

What We Did

The Agency took the above-mentioned key priorities and issues into consideration in this DSDS.

While the Agency is not a lead, key contributing agency, or horizontal lead identified in the [Federal Implementation Plan](#)^{vi} for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN SDG, the Agency takes into account the Government of Canada's commitment to achieving these goals in its strategic initiatives and activities.

On reducing inequalities, the Agency has a unique opportunity to work with Indigenous Peoples and businesses, particularly in Yukon Territory and the Provinces of British Columbia and Alberta, regarding the construction of the Alaska Highway Gas Pipeline project, while supporting Indigenous communities. Establishing thoughtful relationships with Indigenous communities will allow the Agency to be a more effective regulator. The Agency will work with Foothills to highlight the importance of collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, communities and businesses.

Please find more information on the FSDS public consultation and its results in the [FSDS Consultation Report](#).^{vii}

SECTION 4

Northern Pipeline Agency's Commitments





GOAL 10: ADVANCE RECONCILIATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND TAKE ACTION ON INEQUALITY

FSDS Context:

This Goal's focus on addressing inequality and advancing reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities draws inspiration from SDG Global Indicator Framework targets:

10.2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status

10.3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard

Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples is essential to addressing social, economic and environmental inequalities and achieving substantive equality. Achieving reconciliation goes beyond closing these gaps. First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities hold inherent, unique and constitutionally protected Aboriginal and Treaty rights under section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982. First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities must always be engaged in decisions about environmental management, infrastructure and natural resource development within their territories on a nation-to-nation, Inuit-Crown and government-to-government basis, and in keeping with negotiated treaties, agreements, and other constructive arrangements that recognize and implement Indigenous rights.

Target theme: Advancing reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis communities

Target: Between 2023 and 2026, and every year on an ongoing basis, develop and table annual progress reports on implementing the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) ^{viii}

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	DEPARTMENTAL ACTION	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR STARTING POINT TARGET	HOW THE DEPARTMENTAL ACTION CONTRIBUTES TO THE FSDS GOAL AND TARGET AND, WHERE APPLICABLE, TO CANADA’S 2030 AGENDA NATIONAL STRATEGY AND SDGS
<p>Implement the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act</i></p>	<p>Provide Indigenous cultural competency training and/or training on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.</p> <p>Program: Oversee and regulate the planning and construction of the Canadian portion of the Alaska Highway Natural Gas Pipeline Project.</p>	<p>Performance indicator: Percentage of staff who have completed internal or external Indigenous cultural competency training</p> <p>Starting point: Percentage of staff trained 0% in 2022-23</p> <p>Target: 100% by March 31, 2024</p>	<p>Public servants are in a unique position to help build respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples in Canada. This action encourages public service employees to increase their cultural competency skills and awareness of issues facing First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada, and improve their knowledge of the UN Declaration.</p> <p>Cultural competency training will provide Agency staff with the basic knowledge and historical perspective necessary to understand the importance of implementing the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act</i> to advance reconciliation.</p> <p>Relevant targets or ambitions: <i>CIF Ambition:</i> Canadians live free of discrimination and inequalities are reduced <i>GIF Target:</i> 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard</p>



GOAL 12: REDUCE WASTE AND TRANSITION TO ZERO-EMISSION VEHICLES

FSDS Context:

This Goal's focus on reducing waste and transitioning to zero-emission vehicles directly supports SDG Global Indicator Framework targets:

12.3: By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses

12.4: By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment

12.5: By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

12.7: Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities

By transitioning to a cleaner and more circular economy that prioritizes reducing consumption and waste generation, reusing the resources already extracted, and finding processes and technologies that take a holistic systems-based approach to minimizing waste throughout the economy, we can help reduce negative impacts on the environment.

Target theme: Federal Leadership on Responsible Consumption

Target: The Government of Canada’s procurement of goods and services will be net-zero emissions by 2050, to aid the transition to a net-zero, circular economy

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	DEPARTMENTAL ACTION	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR STARTING POINT TARGET	HOW THE DEPARTMENTAL ACTION CONTRIBUTES TO THE FSDS GOAL AND TARGET AND, WHERE APPLICABLE, TO CANADA’S 2030 AGENDA NATIONAL STRATEGY AND SDGS
Strengthen green procurement criteria	<p>Ensure all procurement and materiel management specialists are trained in green procurement (such as, the Canada School of Public Service course on green procurement, or equivalent) within one year of being identified</p> <p>Program: Internal Services</p>	<p>Performance indicator: Percentage of procurement and materiel management specialists trained in green procurement within one year of being identified</p> <p>Starting point: Percentage of staff trained 0% in 2022-23</p> <p>Target: 100% of procurement officers and material management specialists receive training within one year of being identified.</p>	<p>Green procurement incorporates environmental considerations into purchasing decisions and is expected to motivate suppliers to reduce the environmental impact of the goods and services they deliver, and their supply chains.</p> <p>Relevant targets or ambitions: <i>CIF Ambition:</i> Canadians consume in a sustainable manner <i>CIF Indicator:</i> 12.2.1 Proportion of businesses that adopted selected environmental protection activities and management practices <i>GIF Target:</i> 12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities</p>



GOAL 13: TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

FSDS Context:

Taking action on climate change by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and short-lived climate pollutants and building resilience directly supports SDG Global Indicator Framework targets:

- 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries
- 13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning
- 13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

The effects of human-caused climate change are being felt across our country, and particularly in the Canadian north.

Climate change threatens ecosystems and affects the health of Canadians, especially the most at-risk populations such as youth, seniors, and Indigenous populations.

Target theme: Federal Leadership on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions and Climate Resilience

Target: The Government of Canada will transition to net-zero carbon operations for facilities and conventional fleets by 2050

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	DEPARTMENTAL ACTION	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR STARTING POINT TARGET	HOW THE DEPARTMENTAL ACTION CONTRIBUTES TO THE FSDS GOAL AND TARGET AND, WHERE APPLICABLE, TO CANADA'S 2030 AGENDA NATIONAL STRATEGY AND SDGS
<p>Implement the Greening Government Strategy through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve climate resilience, and green the government's overall operations</p>	<p>Ensure all relevant employees are trained on assessing climate change impacts, undertaking climate change risk assessments, and developing adaptation actions within one year of being identified</p> <p>Program: Internal Services</p>	<p>Performance indicator: Percentage of relevant employees trained on assessing climate change impacts, undertaking climate change risk assessments, and developing adaptation actions within one year of being identified</p> <p>Starting point: Percentage of staff trained 0% in 2022-23</p> <p>Target: 100% trained by March 31, 2024</p>	<p>Trained staff can identify risk to critical program delivery, and develop responses to increase the resilience of operations to impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Relevant targets or ambitions: <i>CIF Ambition / Target 13.3:</i> Canadians are well-equipped and resilient to face the effects of Climate change</p> <p><i>GIF Target:</i> 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning</p>

SECTION 5

Integrating Sustainable Development

The Agency 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 the Agency's assessments are made public when an initiative has undergone a detailed SEA (see [here](#)).^{ix} 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.



Endnotes

- i *Northern Pipeline Act*, <https://www.laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/N-26/>
- ii 2022 to 2026 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy, <https://www.fsds-sfdd.ca/en>
- iii *Federal Sustainable Development Act*, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/F-8.6/index.html>
- iv Ibid
- v 7 principles, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/F-8.6/page-1.html#h-240618>
- vi Canada's Federal Implementation Plan for the 2030 Agenda, <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/agenda-2030/federal-implementation-plan.html>
- vii FSDS Consultation Report, <https://www.fsds-sfdd.ca/en/listening-to-canadians>
- viii *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, <https://www.laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/U-2.2/index.html>
- ix Northern Pipeline Agency Reports, <https://northern-pipeline.canada.ca/publications/69>