

**Voluntary Sector Initiative  
Draft Summary Report**

**National Watershed/Coastal Zone Stewardship  
Policy Recommendations and  
Suggested Actions for Implementation**

**July 25, 2003**

**Prepared by  
Langley Environmental Partners Society  
&  
Peter Abrams Consulting Services**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>INTRODUCTION</u></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<i>Figure 1: Summary of the Voluntary Sector Initiative National Watershed/Coastal Zone Stewardship Policy Discussion Project</i> .....	3
<b><u>POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION</u></b> .....	<b>4</b>
<i>Preamble</i> .....	4
<b><u>THEME 1: FOUNDING MECHANISMS</u></b> .....	<b>6</b>
<u>*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 1: Use an ecosystem based approach to watershed/coastal zone stewardship to define and harmonize jurisdictions, mandates and activities along watershed boundaries.</u> .....	6
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	6
<u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 2: Use a strategic approach to designing and initiating new watershed/coastal zone stewardship programs.</u> .....	6
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	6
<u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 3: Create opportunities to engage all parties in the watershed through the start up of watershed/coastal zone stewardship groups.</u> .....	7
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	7
<u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 4: Provide necessary support to meet the specific challenges of emerging groups/programs.</u> .....	7
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	7
<b><u>THEME 2: FUNDING</u></b> .....	<b>8</b>
<u>*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 5: Create stability for watershed/coastal zone stewardship groups and programs by generating long-term, stable funding through diverse sources.</u> .....	8
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	8
<u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 6: Ask governments to report on how they are cooperating to make better use of stewardship investments, as called for in Canada’s Stewardship Agenda.</u> .....	8
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	8
<u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 7: Offer specific assistance and training to sustain the development of organisations and optimize the funding allotted to them.</u> .....	9
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	9
<u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 8: Develop effective criteria and processes for funding community stewardship groups.</u> .....	9
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	9
<b><u>THEME 3: PARTNERSHIPS</u></b> .....	<b>10</b>
<u>*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 9: Create opportunities for and sustain collaborative partnerships toward a common vision with shared decision-making, shared risk taking and shared investment.</u> .....	10
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	10
<u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 10: Create opportunities for, and sustain diverse watershed/coastal zone stewardship groups that include relevant parties (e.g. government – including First Nations, community, educational institutions, industry and youth).</u> .....	10
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	10

<u>THEME 4: GOVERNANCE</u> .....	11
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 11: Support the development of a coalition/network, nationally, of watershed/coastal zone stewardship organizations.</u> .....	11
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	11
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 12: Establish and maintain long-term, collaborative, multi-party watershed/coastal zone stewardship governance bodies (e.g., all-party committees, joint management boards, and boards of directors).</u> .....	11
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	11
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 13: Ensure accountability of watershed/coastal zone policies and programs.</u> .....	12
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	12
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 14: Develop and implement policies and guidelines to deliver effective watershed/coastal zone planning and programs.</u> .....	13
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	13
<u>THEME 5: MONITORING AND EVALUATION</u> .....	15
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 15: Include monitoring and evaluation as part of program/project design and development.</u> .....	15
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	15
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 16: Provide consistent methods of monitoring and evaluation.</u> .....	16
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	16
<u>THEME 6: VOLUNTEERS</u> .....	17
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 17: Provide volunteer stewards and stewardship groups with support to maintain momentum and produce successful, long-term initiatives.</u> .....	17
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	17
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 18: Honour volunteers by publicly recognizing, celebrating and rewarding their efforts and accomplishments.</u> .....	17
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS:</u> .....	17
<u>THEME 7: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION</u> .....	18
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 19: Create transparent and accessible mechanisms to make relevant information, drawn from many different knowledge bases, available to all interested parties.</u> .....	18
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	18
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 20: Produce a comprehensive national communications strategy with an implementation plan and adequate funding.</u> .....	18
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	18
* <u>POLICY RECOMMENDATION 21: Create a community-wide, awareness-raising program that builds a stewardship ethic across generations and sectors.</u> .....	19
<u>SUGGESTED ACTIONS</u> .....	19
<u>DEFINITIONS</u> .....	20

## INTRODUCTION

*“We see [stewardship initiatives] as efforts to create and deepen a self-perpetuating and deeply personal connection between humans and the natural ecosystem. One significant advantage of stewardship initiatives is that everyone already has the desired connection; we need only help uncover it.” Salmon River Watershed Roundtable, Salmon Arm, BC*

This report presents the results of the National Watershed Stewardship Policy Discussion, a Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) project supported with Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI) funding. The project was designed to help achieve one of the goals of Canada’s Stewardship Agenda: “Strengthen policy and legislative support for stewards, by providing the essential economic, policy and legal tools and instruments required to support stewardship programs and activities.”

Beginning in March 2002, five watershed/coastal zone stewardship organizations each representing a distinct Canadian region were selected to implement the project: Langley Environmental Partners Society (LEPS) (British Columbia), the Clean Annapolis River Project (Nova Scotia), the Comité ZIP Baie des Chaleurs, (Quebec), the Ausable Bayfield and South Nation Conservation Authorities (Ontario), and the Land Stewardship Centre (Alberta). Following is a brief description of the project activities carried out by these organizations (see also Figure 1 below).<sup>1</sup>

During 2002 and early 2003, the stewardship organizations organized surveys and multi-party forums to collect information, promote dialogue, and generate ideas among communities, government, watershed/coastal zone stewardship groups and individual stewards on lessons learned with watershed/coastal zone program planning, implementation and policy development. Based on their results, each organization wrote a regional summary report detailing: a) factors of successful watershed stewardship programs, b) barriers to successful programs, and c) policy recommendations to improve watershed stewardship programs.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout May 2003, the five regional summary reports were posted to an on-line forum for discussion. These dialogues culminated in an on-line national watershed stewardship policy discussion forum on May 30.<sup>3</sup>

During June 2003, the information from the five regional summary reports and the on-line forums were incorporated into a draft national summary report: National Watershed Stewardship Policy Recommendations. This document was presented to participants at the National Watershed Stewardship Policy Forum in Langley, B.C., July 1 - 3. Participants were representatives from the five regional organizations and other governmental and non-governmental individuals. The report was thoroughly worked over and revised, then presented as a second-generation draft to the Leading Edge (LE) Conference in Victoria, July 3 - 6. Feedback on this draft was received during a dedicated session on July 6, and when the document was posted on the LE website during July and August.

Based on the feedback received from the LE session and the website posting, representatives from the five regional organizations wrote the final version of the national summary report: “National Watershed/Coastal Zone Stewardship Policy Recommendations and Suggested Actions for Implementation.”

This report is written for all levels of government, First Nations, community groups, landowners, landholders, businesses, individual stewards, etc. It will reach a wide variety of audiences, e.g., various government departments and agencies, the private sector, schools, and its format will be

---

<sup>1</sup> For more detailed information on the VSI Project, visit <http://www.leps.bc.ca/website/vsi.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Each regional report is available for viewing and downloading at <http://www.leps.bc.ca/website/vsi.htm>

<sup>3</sup> The regional and national discussion forums can be viewed at <http://www.stewardship2003.ca/forum/category-view.asp>

modified as necessary to more effectively communicate its content. The results of the report will also be integrated into the National Stewardship Action Plan arising from the LE Conference.

**Figure 1: Summary of the Voluntary Sector Initiative National Watershed/Coastal Zone Stewardship Policy Discussion Project**



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

## Preamble

The policy recommendations contained in this report are designed to strengthen watershed/coastal zone programs and activities. Thus, this report is timely because effective watershed/coastal zone stewardship is at the heart of successful watershed management. And watershed management is quickly becoming recognized in Canada and in many parts of the world as an effective approach for protecting water resources and for creating healthier, sustainable societies.<sup>4</sup> More effective watershed/coastal zone stewardship programs will not only enhance watershed management, but also deliver other tangible benefits to our citizens and governments: a means for addressing a broad range of often competing environmental, economic and social interests and constructively integrating these in collaborate problem solving processes; a strong foundation for building the values and practices that can continually improve and maintain water quality, watershed/coastal zone health, and the well-being of human and other species inhabitants; a means to realize synergistic connections across the landscape with other watershed/coastal zone stewardship activities, generating significant and positive contributions to solving broader environmental and socio-economic problems.

The report's policy recommendations and suggested actions for implementation are based upon input from a broad cross-section of communities and individuals across Canada directly involved in watershed/coastal zone stewardship. This input has been synthesized and organized in the following manner:

- The policy recommendations are grouped under seven emergent Themes.<sup>5</sup>
- The first recommendation under each Theme area is considered of primary importance and is listed with an asterisk (\*).
- Under each policy recommendation is a list of suggested actions to help implement the recommendation. The list indicates whether "Community" or "Government" would hold primary responsibility for carrying out the action. In some cases, the action is listed with both groups, indicating the primary responsibility is shared.
- For the purposes of this report, "Government" includes federal, provincial and municipal agencies and departments. "Community" includes: First Nations, watershed/coastal zone stewardship groups, individual stewards, community groups, businesses, and industry. First Nations are included under "Community", since, despite their emerging status as a new form of government, in most cases they do not yet possess the formal authority and governance powers under Canadian law necessary to carry out many of the actions suggested as governments' primary responsibility.
- The suggested actions with an arrow (⇒) are considered of primary importance and listed first.

Even though some policy recommendations and suggested actions have been identified as priorities, the remaining recommendations and actions are also important: they can create strong and positive synergistic effects when implemented as a comprehensive program, and they express the interests, concerns, ideas and aspirations of watershed/coastal zone stewards across Canada.

---

<sup>4</sup> From, Veale, B. J., A Review of Watershed Planning and Management: Best Practices, Legal Tools and Next Steps, Leading Edge Conference collection. The Leading Edge: Stewardship and Conservation in Canada, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> Themes: Founding Mechanisms; Funding; Partnerships; Governance; Monitoring and Evaluation; Volunteers; and, Information and Communication.

During the National Watershed Stewardship Forum in Langley, an important perspective was raised regarding the use of the phrase “watershed stewardship”. It was pointed out that in many regions of Canada, coastal zones, and not watersheds are used as the optimum planning and management unit. As well, all principles and issues pertaining to watershed stewardship apply equally to the stewardship of coastal zones. Thus, the concept of watershed stewardship has been broadened to include coastal zone stewardship. When “watershed stewardship” appears in this report, it is to preserve the historical accuracy of a name or title.

This report is written for all parties involved with or having an interest in watershed/coastal zone stewardship and management, e.g., community groups, First Nations, landowners and landholders, all levels of government, various government departments and agencies, businesses, conservation organizations, volunteer stewards. It will reach a wide variety of audiences, including the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Canadian Stewardship Agenda Working Group, other federal and provincial departments and agencies, First Nations, municipalities, community groups, schools and the private sector. To provide maximum benefit, the format of the report will be modified as necessary to suit the communication style of its target audiences.

## THEME 1: FOUNDING MECHANISMS

**\*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 1: Use an ecosystem based approach to watershed/coastal zone stewardship to define and harmonize jurisdictions, mandates and activities along watershed boundaries.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Raise awareness within communities about watershed/coastal zone functions, definitions and boundaries from both an ecological and legislative aspect.
- ⇒ Develop a network of local level and sub-watershed organizations that feed into a regional basin-level and provincial umbrella.
- ⇒ Create consistency among watershed/coastal zone stewardship organizations' mandates, policies, programs and activities.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Create consistency and synergies among involved agencies' mandates, policies, programs and activities.
- ⇒ Provide a mechanism for different jurisdictions and groups to meet and work together.
- ⇒ Move away from a compartmentalized approach to management. For example, involve multiple DFO branches in program delivery.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 2: Use a strategic approach to designing and initiating new watershed/coastal zone stewardship programs.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Use a consensus approach to develop a common vision, goals, objectives, and prioritized action plan to identify new watershed/coastal zone stewardship programs using an appropriate geographic scale.
- ⇒ Use client-centred models building on previous and existing programs such as ACAP, Fisheries Renewal BC, Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Program, to design and implement stewardship programs.
- ⇒ Identify group champions (individuals in the community), government, and conservation agency champions that can strongly support the start-up from technical and political perspectives.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Use client-centred models building on previous and existing programs such as ACAP, Fisheries Renewal BC, Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Program, to design and implement stewardship programs.
- ⇒ Support stewardship programs collaboratively with all relevant parties, aligned with local environmental needs, and delivered at the local level.
- ⇒ Collaborate in the development of communications strategies for both external and internal audiences to both raise awareness and generate support.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 3: Create opportunities to engage all parties in the watershed through the start up of watershed/coastal zone stewardship groups.**

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

**COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Include all parties, involving those not currently well engaged, in a proactive fashion.
- ⇒ Involve stakeholders in stewardship projects to encourage others to do the same.
- ⇒ Use local knowledge to build local acceptance (bridging the gap between “them” and “us”).

**GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Include all parties, involving those not currently well engaged, in a proactive fashion.
- ⇒ Involve stakeholders in stewardship projects to encourage others to do the same.
- ⇒ Use local knowledge to build local acceptance (bridging the gap between “them” and “us”).

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 4: Provide necessary support to meet the specific challenges of emerging groups/programs.**

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

**COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Create and make readily accessible (e.g. through the stewardship portal) user-friendly resources that can be used and adapted by groups who are starting up (e.g. handbooks, watershed/coastal zone kits, templates for organizational structure).
- ⇒ Provide mentoring and cross-support both within and among government and non-government, and basin and local groups.
- ⇒ Provide support for and dedicated resource individuals to promote and create opportunities for watershed/coastal zone stewardship.

**GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Allow sufficient time and funding for planning and design during start up.
- ⇒ Provide support for and dedicated resource individuals to promote and create opportunities for watershed/coastal zone stewardship.

## THEME 2: FUNDING

**\*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 5: Create stability for watershed/coastal zone stewardship groups and programs by generating long-term, stable funding through diverse sources.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Demonstrate that core-funding to watershed/coastal zone stewardship organizations is a good long-term investment (could apply a trust fund model to achieve this).
- ⇒ Create a fiscally responsible “cushion” fund that will allow the organization to operate for a period of time without project funding. (NB: may be more difficult for small volunteer groups).
- ⇒ Diversity funding partnerships.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Demonstrate that core-funding to watershed/coastal zone stewardship organizations is a good long-term investment (incorporating social, economic and environmental considerations and again, could apply a foundation/trust fund model to achieve this).
- ⇒ Provide sufficient funding for non-government, community-based positions to coordinate stewardship (“warm bodies”).
- ⇒ Change Treasury Board requirements to allow for B-based funding beyond a 5-year term.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 6: Ask governments to report on how they are cooperating to make better use of stewardship investments, as called for in Canada’s Stewardship Agenda.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Develop a framework for designing and implementing incentives for landowners, industry (e.g. agriculture, forestry, energy and mineral extraction) and government (e.g. to stimulate and support cooperation within and among departments/ministries).
- ⇒ Support government reporting on the cooperation of the use of resources.
- ⇒ Develop and utilize tools for valuing stewardship (e.g. NRTEE).

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Develop a framework for designing and implementing incentives for landowners, industry (e.g. agriculture, forestry, energy and mineral extraction) and government (e.g. to stimulate and support cooperation within and among departments/ministries).
- ⇒ Support government reporting on the cooperation of the use of resources.
- ⇒ Develop and utilize tools for valuing stewardship (e.g. NRTEE).

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 7: Offer specific assistance and training to sustain the development of organisations and optimize the funding allotted to them.**

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

**COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Apply the ACAP window model, where appropriate.

**GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Apply the ACAP window model, where appropriate.
- ⇒ Provide consistently scheduled training programs and support organizational capacity development (e.g., management skills, revenue generation, proposal writing, training in conflict resolution).
- ⇒ Provide training in how to optimize program funding.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 8: Develop effective criteria and processes for funding community stewardship groups.**

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

**COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Clarify the value of watershed/coastal zone stewardship, and incorporate findings into funding decision-making processes (e.g. ACAP study – Gardiner Pinfold report a useful reference).
- ⇒ Collaborate on streamlining funding agency (e.g. government, industry, NGO) decision-making processes.
- ⇒ Create criteria that recognize and value good watershed/coastal zone stewards such as “proven watershed/coastal zone stewardship capability”, and “proactive stewardship”.

**GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Clarify the value of watershed/coastal zone stewardship, and incorporate findings into funding decision-making processes (e.g. ACAP study – Gardiner Pinfold report a useful reference).
- ⇒ Collaborate on streamlining funding agency (e.g. government, industry, NGO) decision-making processes.
- ⇒ Create criteria that recognize and value good watershed/coastal zone stewards such as “proven watershed/coastal zone stewardship capability”, and “proactive stewardship”.

## **THEME 3: PARTNERSHIPS**

**\*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 9: Create opportunities for and sustain collaborative partnerships toward a common vision with shared decision-making, shared risk taking and shared investment.**

### **SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

#### **COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Work with partners on developing a common vision, shared interests, method of decision making, goals and objectives, roles and responsibilities and resource commitments.
- ⇒ Support risk taking and innovation.
- ⇒ Collaborate on developing MOUs that specify governance, priorities, management structure, joint workplan development, conflict resolution, etc.
- ⇒ Support local government capacity.

#### **GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Develop incentives for cooperation to overcome institutional barriers, e.g. flexibility in mandates, coordination within and among departments/ministries.
- ⇒ Support risk taking and innovation.
- ⇒ Collaborate on developing MOUs that specify governance, priorities, management structure, joint workplan development, conflict resolution, etc.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 10: Create opportunities for, and sustain diverse watershed/coastal zone stewardship groups that include relevant parties (e.g. government – including First Nations, community, educational institutions, industry and youth).**

### **SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

#### **COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Conduct directed outreach programs to encourage partnering.
- ⇒ Align with all orders of government, especially municipalities, to build a common vision for watersheds/coastal zones.
- ⇒ Ensure governing/management bodies, such as a board of directors, represent relevant range of interests, backgrounds and expertise.

#### **GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Conduct directed outreach programs to encourage partnering.
- ⇒ Align with all orders of government, especially municipalities, to build a common vision for watersheds/coastal zones.
- ⇒ Ensure governing/management bodies, such as a board of directors, represent relevant range of interests, backgrounds and expertise.

## THEME 4: GOVERNANCE

**\*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 11: Support the development of a coalition/network, nationally, of watershed/coastal zone stewardship organizations.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Identify or create a stable, long-term, central organization for each watershed/coastal zone.
- ⇒ Use existing organizations as much as possible.
- ⇒ Identify a core group to recommend representation, roles, and responsibilities from local, regional, provincial, and federal participants.
- ⇒ Establish guiding principles of openness, transparency, inclusiveness, flexibility and respect.
  - Network and build relationships across and between communities.
  - Invite smaller groups together with a common goal or idea to facilitate representation or a stronger advocacy role.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Identify or create a stable, long-term, central organization for each watershed/coastal zone.
- ⇒ Use existing organizations as much as possible.
- ⇒ Identify a core group to recommend representation, roles, and responsibilities from local, regional, provincial, and federal participants.
- ⇒ Establish guiding principles of openness, transparency, inclusiveness, flexibility, and respect.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 12: Establish and maintain long-term, collaborative, multi-party watershed/coastal zone stewardship governance bodies (e.g., all-party committees, joint management boards, and boards of directors).**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Create local watershed/coastal zone stewardship governance structures using transparent, inclusive processes.
- ⇒ Ensure governance structures have decision-making powers and a strong and stable legal or policy base.
- ⇒ Use existing organizations and processes as much as possible. Modify processes where necessary.
- ⇒ Identify and represent all parties with a vested interest.
- ⇒ Establish guiding principles of openness, transparency, inclusiveness, flexibility and

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Establish mechanism to create local watershed/coastal zone stewardship governance structures, and create these structures using transparent, inclusive processes.
- ⇒ Provide governance structures with decision-making powers and a strong and stable legal or policy base.
- ⇒ Use existing organizations and processes as much as possible. Modify processes where necessary.
- ⇒ Identify and represent all parties with a vested interest.
- ⇒ Establish guiding principles of openness, transparency, inclusiveness, flexibility and

- respect.
- Create governance structures that are clear, simple and evolve to serve needed functions.
  - Identify a core, representative group who will decide the roles, status and responsibilities of all members of the governing body.
  - Provide opportunity for “ex-officio” member status for government representatives.
  - Ensure members of a governance body are knowledgeable in environmental issues and have appropriate technical expertise or receive timely and sufficient training in required areas.
  - Demonstrate to governments that local citizens are capable of caring for and managing local watersheds/coastal zones.
  - Provide training and mentoring to local community groups to increase their capacity for governing their watersheds/coastal zones.
  - Examine laws in Washington State regarding watershed planning and local community management. Determine the feasibility of use in Canada.

- respect.
- Create governance structures that are clear, simple and evolve to serve needed functions.
  - Identify a core, representative group who will decide the roles, status and responsibilities of all members of the governing body.
  - Provide opportunity for “ex-officio” member status for government representatives.
  - Ensure members of a governance body are knowledgeable in environmental issues and have appropriate technical expertise or receive timely and sufficient training in required areas.
  - Delegate more on-the-ground decisions, such as water taking permits, from provincial or federal ministries or departments to the governance body.
  - Ensure government agencies provide technical expertise, funding, information and political commitment to the governance body.
  - Ensure governance bodies are not used for assuming legal responsibilities of governments.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 13: Ensure accountability of watershed/coastal zone policies and programs.**

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

**COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Ensure that all watershed/coastal zone stewardship legislation, regulations, policies, and programs follow the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, consistency, continuity, and fairness.
- ⇒ Establish strong, clear lines of decision-making and performance standards (e.g., timely, comprehensive reporting).
- ⇒ Ensure that all watershed/coastal zone stewardship governing bodies engage in “meaningful consultation” with their constituencies (e.g., create and regularly re-affirm management goals and objectives in a public process).
- Create checks and balances on program processes and activities that still allow for sufficient flexibility and autonomy to ensure

**GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Ensure that all watershed/coastal zone stewardship legislation, regulations, policies, and programs follow the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, consistency, continuity, and fairness.
- ⇒ Establish strong, clear lines of decision-making and performance standards (e.g., timely, comprehensive reporting).
- ⇒ Ensure that all watershed/coastal zone stewardship governing bodies engage in “meaningful consultation” with their constituencies (e.g., create and regularly re-affirm management goals and objectives in a public process).
- Create checks and balances on program processes and activities that still allow for sufficient flexibility and autonomy to ensure

- efficiency and responsiveness.
- Use real cost (full cost) accounting for environmental services and products in reporting, and in policy and decision-making.
- Create a clear and consistent link between the roles and responsibilities of stewardship partners and the visions, goals and objectives of associated programs (i.e., with the program's desired outcomes).
- Use MOUs among stewardship partners that are not restrictive, but that give everyone a clear understanding of what's expected.
- Use application-based processes for selecting program partners, area delivery and program monitoring and evaluation.
- Monitor and report on government actions to ensure it is carrying through on its commitment and following its own rules.
- Clearly articulate how public comments are responded to.

- efficiency and responsiveness.
- Use real cost (full cost) accounting for environmental services and products in reporting, and in policy and decision-making.
- Create a clear and consistent link between the roles and responsibilities of stewardship partners and the visions, goals and objectives of associated programs (i.e., with the program's desired outcomes).
- Use MOUs among stewardship partners that are not restrictive, but that give everyone a clear understanding of what's expected.
- Use application-based processes for selecting program partners, area delivery and program monitoring and evaluation.
- Monitor and report on government actions to ensure it is carrying through on its commitment and following its own rules.
- Clearly articulate how public comments are responded to.
- Guarantee the even application of current laws and use enforcement fairly where required.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 14: Develop and implement policies and guidelines to deliver effective watershed/coastal zone planning and programs.**

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

**COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Commit the resources necessary to effectively support management operations.
- ⇒ Allow sufficient time for all program/project phases: planning and design, implementation, on-going operation (including monitoring and assessment, and wind-up (including final evaluation)).
- ⇒ Provide long-term commitment to watershed/coastal zone stewardship policies and programs.
- Establish flexible programs and policies so they can be customized in their delivery to reflect the diversity of groups, local needs and opportunities.
- Support qualitative and quantitative research to determine issues of public interest.
- Support the integration of

**GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Commit the resources necessary to effectively support management operations.
- ⇒ Allow sufficient time for all program/project phases: planning and design, implementation, on-going operation (including monitoring and assessment, and wind-up (including final evaluation)).
- ⇒ Provide long-term commitment to watershed/coastal zone stewardship policies and programs.
- Establish flexible programs and policies so they can be customized in their delivery to reflect the diversity of groups, local needs and opportunities.
- Support qualitative and quantitative research to determine issues of public interest.
- Support the integration of

watershed/coastal zone stewardship with broader initiatives, e.g., global warming, eco-forestry, preventative health care/environmental quality, environmental services, cultural preservation.

- Assist with the implementation of local by-laws designed to improve the protection of sensitive ecosystems.
- Create on-going multi-party forums for dialogue and information sharing, and to get citizens' messages/voices to top politicians.
- Help communities present their ideas/recommendations to governments in a results-based manner.
- Ensure First Nations and municipal governments remain closest to the stewardship process
- Provide a "safe" forum and process for addressing misunderstandings and conflict.
- Ensure implementation of policies and programs are driven by local communities.

watershed/coastal zone stewardship with broader initiatives, e.g., global warming, eco-forestry, preventative health care/environmental quality, environmental services, cultural preservation.

- Assist with the implementation of local by-laws designed to improve the protection of sensitive ecosystems.
- Provide policy direction to watershed/coastal zone stewardship organizations through provincial water strategies/acts, industry codes of practise, best management practises, etc.
- In Alberta, complete and implement the Wetlands Policy as a part of the Water Strategy.
- In Ontario, deliver stewardship programs on a watershed basis through conservation authorities (ensures that delivery is coordinated on an ecological basis and that environmental work is done according to an overall plan).
- Consider comprehensive strategies like the Quebec Water Policy (provides a framework which simplifies the work of stewardship groups).
- Streamline approvals to speed up program delivery.
- Ensure First Nations and municipal governments remain closest to the stewardship process.

## THEME 5: MONITORING AND EVALUATION

**\*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 15: Include monitoring and evaluation as part of program/project design and development.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Establish comprehensive frameworks with a clearly defined purpose and target audience.
- ⇒ Establish and use effective baseline snapshots, benchmarks, criteria, and indicators.
  
- Include monitoring and reporting in funding programs/formulas.
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation processes follow the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, shared responsibility, consistency and continuity.
- Provide standardized methods/protocols for community-based monitoring.
- Determine both the kinds and sources of information needed to monitor and evaluate the program.
- Track and report on ecological, social, economic and organizational changes resulting from the project.
- Ensure reporting requirements meet accountability and information sharing objectives but are not onerous.
- Ensure individuals with appropriate skills or training lead evaluations.
- Communicate the value, benefits, processes and purposes of evaluations to partners.
- Make results of monitoring and evaluations fully accessible to partners and the general public.
- Make consistent the collection and storage of data.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Establish comprehensive frameworks with a clearly defined purpose and target audience.
- ⇒ Establish and use effective baseline snapshots, benchmarks, criteria, and indicators.
- ⇒ Provide the necessary tools for assessment and interpretation of monitoring data so that results are used to adaptively manage program delivery and implementation.
  
- Include monitoring and reporting in funding programs/formulas.
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation processes follow the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, shared responsibility, consistency and continuity.
- Provide standardized methods/protocols for community-based monitoring.
- Determine both the kinds and sources of information needed to monitor and evaluate the program.
- Track and report on ecological, social, economic and organizational changes resulting from the project.
- Ensure reporting requirements meet accountability and information sharing objectives but are not onerous.
- Ensure individuals with appropriate skills or training lead evaluations.
- Communicate the value, benefits, processes and purposes of evaluations to partners.
- Make results of monitoring and evaluations fully accessible to partners and the general public.
- Make consistent the collection and storage of data.
- Ensure government departments/agencies make monitoring data available to communities.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 16: Provide consistent methods of monitoring and evaluation.**

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

**COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Provide on-going training in the use of monitoring and evaluation tools to improve programs and ensure consistency.
- ⇒ Provide on-going training in the use of monitoring and evaluation results to improve programs and ensure consistency.
- ⇒ Provide assistance to groups to conduct inventories, monitoring, and analysis of, and reporting on, watershed/coastal zone resources.

**GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

- ⇒ Provide on-going training in the use of monitoring and evaluation tools to improve programs and ensure consistency.
- ⇒ Provide on-going training in the use of monitoring and evaluation results to improve programs and ensure consistency.
- ⇒ Provide assistance to groups to conduct inventories, monitoring, and analysis of, and reporting on, watershed/coastal zone resources.

## THEME 6: VOLUNTEERS

**\*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 17: Provide volunteer stewards and stewardship groups with support to maintain momentum and produce successful, long-term initiatives.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Address liability issues (e.g., in-stream and restoration work) for volunteer groups.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Develop and back environmentally sound measures that allow landowners to correct ecological problems on their land (e.g., financial and tax incentives, environmental payment, farm payments).
- ⇒ In partnership with other agencies, provide technical and administrative support to volunteer groups.
- ⇒ Ensure grant money is in place before a project starts.
- Encourage Revenue Canada to develop mechanisms to encourage volunteerism and the donation of environmental goods and services (e.g., capital gains incentives).

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 18: Honour volunteers by publicly recognizing, celebrating and rewarding their efforts and accomplishments.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS:

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Design and implement volunteer recognition and reward mechanisms.
- Involve many generations and diverse sectors (e.g., youth, industry, landowners, landholders) in stewardship.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Design and implement volunteer recognition and reward mechanisms.
- Involve many generations and diverse sectors (e.g., youth, industry, landowners, landholders) in stewardship.

## THEME 7: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

**\*POLICY RECOMMENDATION 19: Create transparent and accessible mechanisms to make relevant information, drawn from many different knowledge bases, available to all interested parties.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Provide regular, updated reports (e.g. State of the Basin reports) that outline the status, cumulative effects, thresholds, and limits of watersheds/coastal zones.
- ⇒ Support the creation of a central clearing house for watershed/coastal zone information exchange.
- Assist government staff in understanding how community groups function and operate.
  
- Support information sharing programs.
- Involve citizens in the collection of watershed/coastal zone information.
- Plan for regular meetings between government and concerned parties to ensure a good flow of information.
- Prioritize what information needs to be collected and for what purposes.
- Use common, accessible terminology, and provide information in a user-friendly format by identifying target audiences.
- Provide information to citizens on how the government policy and decision-making processes function.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Provide funding to collect accurate, baseline information and to place it in an appropriate digital format available for broad use at no cost.
- ⇒ Support the creation of a central clearing house for watershed/coastal zone information exchange.
- ⇒ Ensure agency staff are accessible to stewardship groups.
- ⇒ Provide regular, updated reports (such as state of the basin reports) that outline the status, cumulative effects, thresholds, and limits of watersheds/coastal zones.
- Support information sharing programs.
- Involve citizens in the collection of watershed/coastal zone information.
- Plan for regular meetings between government and concerned parties to ensure a good flow of information.
- Prioritize what information needs to be collected and for what purposes
- Use common, accessible terminology, and provide information in a user-friendly format by identifying target audiences.
- Provide information to citizens on how the government policy and decision-making processes function.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 20: Produce a comprehensive national communications strategy with an implementation plan and adequate funding.**

### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

#### COMMUNITY ACTIONS

- ⇒ Develop local communication plans consistent with the national communication strategy to ensure staff and volunteers hear a consistent message about activities and programs in the watershed/coastal zone.

#### GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

- ⇒ Ensure the strategy includes both internal (e.g. government) and external (e.g. public) communications.

⇒ The national communications strategy must be accompanied by an implementation strategy and funding to support government staff and community partners.

⇒ The national communications strategy must be accompanied by an implementation strategy and funding to support government staff and community partners.

- Create linkages and consistency between government and community communications programs.
- Ensure the national strategy provides training in marketing and communications, and media training for key program volunteers.
- Carry out monitoring and evaluation of the national strategy. The results should be used to improve the delivery of all internal and external communications.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION 21: Create a community-wide, awareness-raising program that builds a stewardship ethic across generations and sectors.**

**SUGGESTED ACTIONS**

**COMMUNITY ACTIONS**

⇒ Increase public understanding on what a watershed/coastal zone is, and the importance of watershed/coastal zone stewardship.

**GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

⇒ Increase public understanding on what a watershed/coastal zone is, and the importance of watershed/coastal zone stewardship.

- Incorporate environmental education (with a focus on stewardship) into the Ministries of Education learning outcomes, as detailed in individual provincial curriculum.

## DEFINITIONS

**Accountability** is being held answerable for the possession and use of some power, and/or the exercise of some responsibility. Two key questions determine the particular application of accountability: *To whom* is the party (parties) accountable and *for what* activities and levels of performance are they to be held responsible. Standards of performance need to be agreed upon and may include: transparency of all processes and operations; collaborative and inclusive decision-making processes; effectiveness in achieving goals; accessibility and sharing of information; fiscal responsibility. Mechanisms to hold parties accountable are varied and include reports, public institutions of accountability (e.g., courts, ombudsman services, formal inquiries), audits, periodic assessments and final evaluations.

Accountability generally falls under three levels: fiscal, process, and program. Fiscal: how funds are spent and whether the party/organization has been a good steward over the funds. Process: whether the party/organization has carried out a prescribed course of action. Program: what products and services were delivered and whom did they serve (Based on Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond: non-profit accountability, 2003. <http://www.rich.frb.org/cao/reports/nonprofit.html>).

In the watershed stewardship context, accountability often focuses on ensuring that decision-makers take into account and act upon the wants and needs of those who are affected by their decisions. This is most effectively guaranteed by providing the public with opportunities to participate in transparent, fair and inclusive shared decision-making processes.

**Communication** includes: sharing information within and outside an organization/agency; public relations activities; formal and informal exchanges of information and education programs; linkages with other programs.

**Community** refers to people, living in a definable area, who have common interests. The scale of the area is determined by the ability of these people to interact, to deal with their common interest. Therefore, a community could be a relatively large number of people in a relatively small geographic area, such as the members of a town who have a common interest. It could also be the community of people who are working on the recovery of endangered bird species across Canada (Federal-Provincial-Territorial Stewardship Working Group, Report on Consultations Towards Canada's Stewardship Agenda, Ottawa, 2002).

**Conservation** is the maintenance or sustainable use of the Earth's resources in a manner that maintains ecosystems, species and genetic diversity and the evolutionary processes that shaped them. Conservation may or may not involve the use of resources; that is, certain areas, species or populations may be excluded from human use as part of an overall landscape/waterscape conservation approach (Federal-Provincial-Territorial Stewardship Working Group, 2002).

**Meaningful consultation** is a process of consulting relevant parties before decisions are made, rather than after. Relevant parties are those individuals and groups who will be directly affected, or representatives of these individuals or groups. Other characteristics of meaningful consultation are: a process designed and endorsed by participants; sufficient technical and financial support is accessible; relevant information is provided freely in a language understandable to all stakeholders; adequate time is provided for responses; analyses of information are done collaboratively; participants' ideas and concerns are reported and accounted for in the final product, and periodic assessment and necessary adjustments of consultation process are made (Based on Nishnawbe Aski Nation, 2001; Silva Forest Foundation, 2000; and Smith, et al., 2000).

**Partnerships** refer to parties working together toward a common vision with shared decision making, shared risk taking and shared investment.

**Policy** can be broadly defined as a course of action or principle. Policies are created, adopted and used by governments, organizations, businesses, associations, etc.

**Stewardship** refers to the wide range of actions and activities of landowners, landholders, private companies, individual volunteers, communities, groups, organizations and all level of governments acting alone or in partnership, to promote, monitor and conserve biodiversity, to develop and use all natural resources in a sustainable manner, and to maintain the ecosystems on which life depends. Stewardship is also defined as: “An ethic by which Canadians care for our land, water and air as parts of a natural life-support system and act to sustain and enhance it for generations to come.” (Based on Federal-Provincial-Territorial Stewardship Working Group, 2002).

**Stewards** are individuals and organizations that are custodians of the environment who are knowledgeable and committed to conserving biodiversity, to wisely using natural resources and to maintaining or improving soil, water and air quality. Simply stated, stewards are custodians of environmental resources, using them without limiting the opportunities for future generations (Federal-Provincial-Territorial Stewardship Working Group, 2002).

**Strategic Approach** refers to a method of analysis for achieving a defined goal or objective that uses a “big picture” perspective. The result of the strategic analysis – e.g., a plan – is believed to be the most effective means of achieving the desired end point and responding to an identified challenge or problem.

When a strategic approach is used in watershed stewardship policy making and program implementation, a participatory process involving all relevant parties must direct it. The strategic approach must also position the organization or initiative so it is capable of responding effectively to changes in the operating environment.

**Sustainable Use** refers to a method of using the components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biodiversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations (Federal-Provincial-Territorial Stewardship Working Group, 2002).

**Watershed** is a topographically delineated area that is drained by a stream-system. Watersheds are the site of complex, dynamic interactions among land, air, water and animal and human inhabitants that create a variety of habitats and ecosystems. Watershed ecosystems are interconnected: disrupting or enhancing one part affects the whole. This interconnectedness can link watersheds across broad geographical and temporal scales, as in the case of smaller watersheds within larger ones (i.e. nested watersheds).

Watersheds are important sources of biodiversity. Watersheds, as well as wetlands and coastal habitats constitute important bio-geographical units for the purposes of natural resource planning, management and protection.

**Watershed approach** is an overall procedure that brings to bear a broad scope of issues and interests in managing the conservation and use of land, water and natural resources at the watershed or sub-watershed level. This approach is often systems-oriented and attempts to integrate multiple interests, goals, agencies, and levels of government. Decisions are made based on biophysical, social and economic considerations and local knowledge. A watershed approach embraces the voluntary participation of non-government interests and local government. There is a collaborative or partnership orientation toward problem-solving, planning and management (Born, S.M. and K.D. Genskow, Towards Understanding New Watershed Initiatives. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Available for downloading at Library: [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org)).

A watershed approach should be used as a guide and needs to be adapted to fit on-the-ground realities and the human scale. For example, the Saskatchewan River watershed may be too large to be managed as one administrative and political unit.

**Watershed stewardship** refers to stewardship actions and activities (see **Stewardship**) organized around, and focused on promoting, monitoring and conserving the ecological health (e.g., biodiversity) of a watershed unit. Since watersheds often span across many jurisdictional boundaries (e.g., of governments, of agencies and organizations), effective watershed stewardship requires strong collaboration among communities and all levels of governments. Successful watershed stewardship is based on integrated planning, implementation and evaluation processes.