



The Conservation Council of Ontario

Greening Ontario:

An NGO Strategy for Conservation and the Environment



June 2003

Credits

Greening Ontario: An NGO Strategy for Conservation and the Environment

Greening Ontario seeks to strengthen the positive and significant contributions of Ontario's many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in support of common environmental goals. It addresses the need to recognize centres of leadership and excellence, develop capacity in all organizations, and apply the combined resources of Ontario's NGOs in alliances and special campaigns to promote a conservator society and address priority issues.

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Credits

Over 100 representatives from Ontario NGOs contributed project examples, new ideas and advice in support of this strategy through our surveys and the November 2002 Eco Summit in Toronto. Many of these contributions are reflected in the recommendations and examples in this report.



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Monitor the progress of Ontario's NGO Environmental Strategy at
<http://www.greenontario.org>

Green Ontario is the gateway site to understanding Ontario's
environmental commitment.

Introduction

NGOs: People Helping People

This strategy is aimed at strengthening the ability of Ontario's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote a conservator society and a healthy environment in Ontario.

Non-governmental organizations have a vital role to play in ensuring a healthy environment for future generations.

- we are watchdogs and protectors of the environment;
- we conduct research on environmental trends and solutions;
- we provide policy advice to governments
- we provide practical solutions to our members, the public, homeowners and businesses;
- we demonstrate new ideas and technology
- we help people appreciate and enjoy our natural environment;
- we pitch in and help restore degraded environments;
- we educate the public and promote environmental and conservation values within our society.

Who are we? We are over 700 small and large environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS) including national, provincial, regional and neighbourhood-based groups. We are also the numerous other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with an environmental mandate or interest, including cultural, health, professional and labour groups, service clubs, religious institutions, community and ratepayers associations, school clubs, and government agencies such as conservation authorities.

Almost every individual in Ontario belongs to at least one non-governmental organization. We help people express their personal values, contribute to society, and care for one another.

Ontario's NGOs are already a formidable force. The NGO Sector Environmental Strategy seeks to build support for individual organizations, promote cooperation, and apply the combined resources of Ontario's NGOs to our common environmental goals.

What is an Environmental Strategy?

A strategy is a planning and communications tool. It is a way to organize and combine resources. It is also a way to communicate to each other and the public our commitment to solving the most pressing environmental problems.

Strategies can be narrow in scope (e.g. a single issue) or they can cover many related issues (e.g. a green economy). A strategy can be written for a single organization (government, business, or an NGO) or it can reflect an integrated response across all sectors.

A strategy should contain several key elements:

- ❖ It should state a desired goal or target.
- ❖ It should identify the means by which to achieve the goal.
- ❖ It should lead to measurable results.
- ❖ It should allow for periodic review and updating.

Why an NGO Environmental Strategy?

An environmental strategy, simply put, deals with how to combine our efforts and resources in order to achieve our common goals. The NGO strategy will:

1. acknowledge existing skills and strengths within the NGO sector;
2. identify needs, gaps and opportunities where groups can develop new projects;
3. encourage and facilitate partnerships between like-minded organizations;
4. facilitate the development of common priorities between funders and the NGO community and reduce fundraising costs;
5. stimulate public support and facilitate access to information and environmental solutions;
6. serve as a model for other sectors and jurisdictions.

A little bit of coordination can go a long way.

Introduction

Defining Common Goals

Ontarians want a clean environment. This vision is supported continually through public opinion polls and is endorsed by all political parties, federal, provincial and local governments, and progressive businesses.

The issues and environmental challenges are many, however we can summarize our goals in three statements:

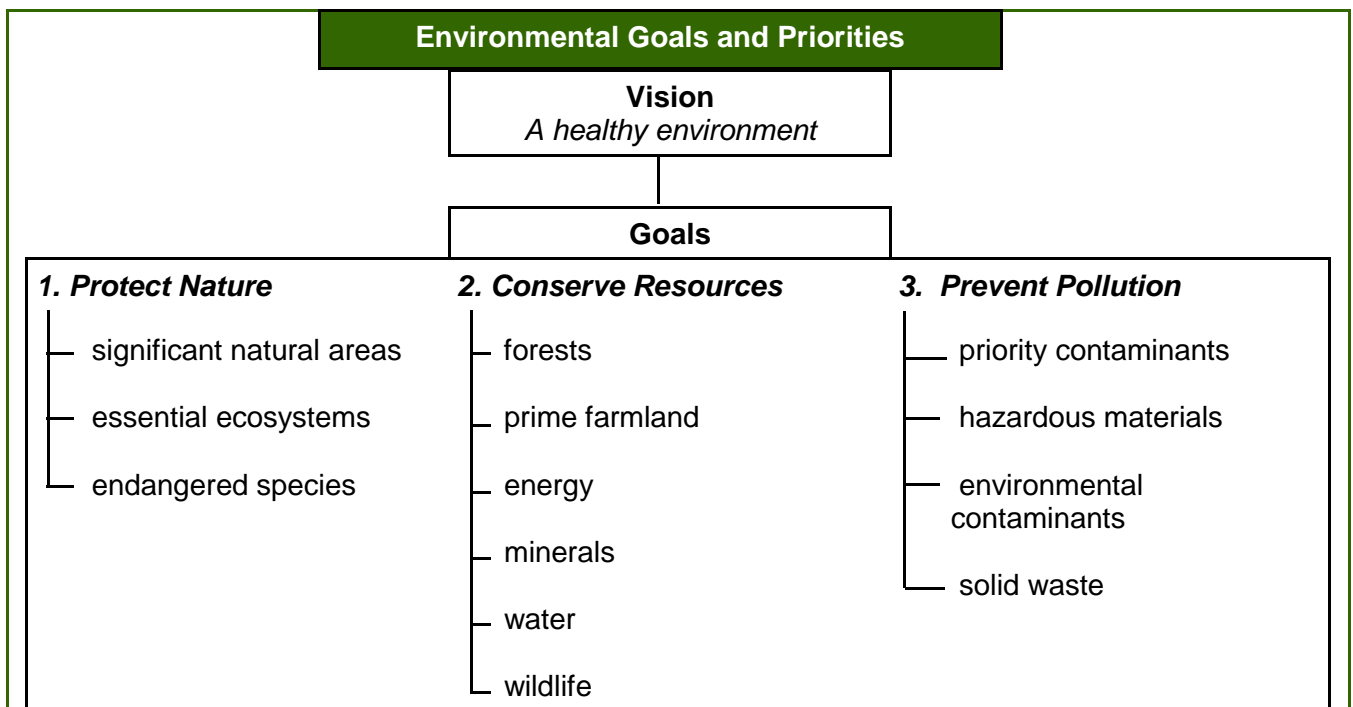
1. Protect nature and natural ecosystems;
2. Conserve natural resources;
3. Prevent the pollution of the air, water, and land.

These three goals cover the cycle of our interaction with the natural environment — we compete with nature for space, use its resources, and then spew our waste back into the environment.

We can go a step further still, and identify many of the key issues where action is required:

- **protecting significant natural areas** — including parks and other protected areas, wildlife corridors, wetlands, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs), Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), moraines and locally significant areas
- **maintaining essential ecosystems** — such as watersheds, lakes and rivers

- **protecting endangered species** — ensuring special protection for endangered species
- **protecting prime farmland** — in particular Class 1-3 farmland and tender fruitlands
- **preserving and enhancing greenspace** — such as moraine lands, conservation lands, local parks and degraded urban lands
- **conserving and managing wildlife** — ensuring healthy populations of all species
- **conserving energy** — promoting energy efficiency and alternative energy sources, and developing a sustainable energy system
- **conserving minerals** — promoting conservation and recycling, and minimizing the environmental impact of exploration, development and processing mineral resources
- **conserving water** — conserving water resources and protecting groundwater recharge areas
- **addressing priority contaminants** — eliminating the production and use of the most hazardous substances
- **managing hazardous materials** — promoting alternatives to substances that can harm the environment, humans or wildlife
- **reducing environmental contamination** — including the levels of pollution in our air, water and land, and restoring contaminated areas.
- **reducing solid waste** — promoting re-use, reduction and recycling of solid waste.



Introduction

Environmental Integration

In addition, there are numerous economic and social issues where we need to address environmental concerns and identify opportunities for environmentally-sound development.

A Healthy, Sustainable Economy

- A Green Economy (green products and services)
- Corporate Ethics and Responsibility
- Voluntary programs
- Environmental Management Systems
- Economic Instruments and Full Cost Accounting
- Regulations and Enforcement
- Aggregates (gravel)
- Agriculture and Food
- Biotechnology and Food
- Cars
- Chemicals
- Dry Cleaning
- Energy
- Forestry
- Golf
- Housing
- Hotels
- Manufacturing
- Mining
- Offices
- Photo Chemicals
- Plastics
- Restaurants
- Retail
- Tourism and Recreation
- Transportation

A Healthy, Sustainable Society

- Environmental Education
- Green Homes
- Community Action (local projects)
- Smart Growth (urban planning)
- Poverty and the Environment
- Health and Environment
- First Nations and Environment
- Multiculturalism and Environment
- Faith and the Environment

The Greensteps Survey: NGO Priority Issues

The Conservation Council asked Ontario NGOs to identify their priority issues where:

- A) they felt immediate action was needed, and
- B) they saw the greatest potential for achieving results through non-governmental leadership and voluntary action.

Over 50 groups responded. Five issues that stood out in the survey results were:

- energy, including conservation, air pollution, climate change, and green energy
- water and watersheds, including source protection, pollution and water treatment
- urban sprawl, the loss of farmland and greenspace, and the need for smart growth
- environmental education
- health and the environment

On some issues, like energy conservation, groups saw a strong potential for NGO leadership in delivering solutions to the public.

Issue	No of Votes	
	A	B
Energy Conservation	27	31
Air Pollution	23	14
Climate Change	17	11
Sustainable Energy Options	20	18
Watershed Integrity	19	16
Water Conservation	24	20
Urban Sprawl	29	8
Loss of Farmland	23	13
Transportation	19	12
Environmental Education	18	21
Health and the Environment	21	10

See www.greenontario.org for the full Greensteps report

Introduction

Developing the NGO Strategy

Since its inception over 50 years ago, the Conservation Council of Ontario has sought to promote good strategic planning on environmental issues. Our founder, Frank Kortright, referred to it as a “big plan” for conservation. Today, with the increased complexity of environmental issues and the numerous organizations that have a conservation mandate, the need for coordination and cooperation is greater than ever.

Over the last twenty years, the Conservation Council has prepared several comprehensive environmental strategies for Ontario. This NGO-oriented strategy marks a shift from previous policy-oriented strategies to an emphasis on capacity building and implementing practical conservation solutions.

The NGO strategy has been developed through a six month research and consultation process, including opinion polls and an Eco Summit meeting.

Greensteps Survey

The CCO distributed a background activities and priorities survey to over 200 organizations, with a 15% response rate. The results, including factsheets on group activities is available in pdf format at www.greenontario.org.

Oracle Research Survey

Oracle Research conducted a survey of 100 non-governmental organizations for the Conservation Council. The results are summarized on this and the following page. The complete result are available via the Green Ontario website.

Ontario’s Eco-Summit 2002

The Conservation Council convened the first Eco Summit for Ontario on November 27, 2002. Over 100 people attended the summit, and thirty groups made presentations in sessions on Protecting Nature, Conserving Resources, Preventing Pollution and Reaching Across Sectors. Information and reports on the Eco Summit are available via the internet at www.greenontario.org/ecosummit/.

Strategy Review

The NGO strategy has been circulated widely with a request for comments and statements of support.

Overall, we have heard a strong interest from both groups and funders in finding ways to strengthen Ontario’s environmental movement and improve the level of cooperation and coordination in achieving our common environmental goals.

Oracle Survey: Organization Needs

We asked Oracle Research to survey over 100 organizations on the priorities and trends in the environmental movement. Over half the groups rated fundraising as being very important to achieving their goals, with public outreach, policy development, coalition building and organizational management also ranking as important.

Item	Important	Very important	Total
Media relations and public outreach	31.2%	41.6%	72.8%
Organization management skills	32.5%	35.1%	67.6%
Fundraising	13.0%	53.2%	66.2%
Government relations, public consultation, and policy development	28.6%	35.1%	63.1%
Coalition building and special campaigns	24.7%	26%	50.7%

Introduction

Next Steps

On the following pages you'll find the two-page strategy, an elaboration with examples and project ideas, and a worksheet.

- Individual groups are encouraged to use the NGO strategy to identify and develop partnerships and projects related to their strengths. A worksheet with project ideas is included at the end of the strategy.
- Funders are encouraged to support the NGO strategy and indicate special areas of interest.
- Stay in touch. Sign up for our e-newsletter via the Green Ontario website, or e-mail us updates on new activities related to the NGO strategy and your listing in the Green Ontario website.
- The Conservation Council will revise its "Green Ontario" website to serve as a gateway for the NGO strategy — linking the public and Ontario's NGO community to centres of excellence on issues, policy research, support services, and practical solutions.

Oracle Survey: The Conservation Solution

Ontario's NGOs recognize the need to shift environmental management from a crisis management approach to an integrated, forward-thinking approach:

1. Environmental crises have been a stronger motivator for environmental solutions than has voluntary environmental leadership.

Strongly agree 24.7%
Agree 44.2%
Total 68.9%

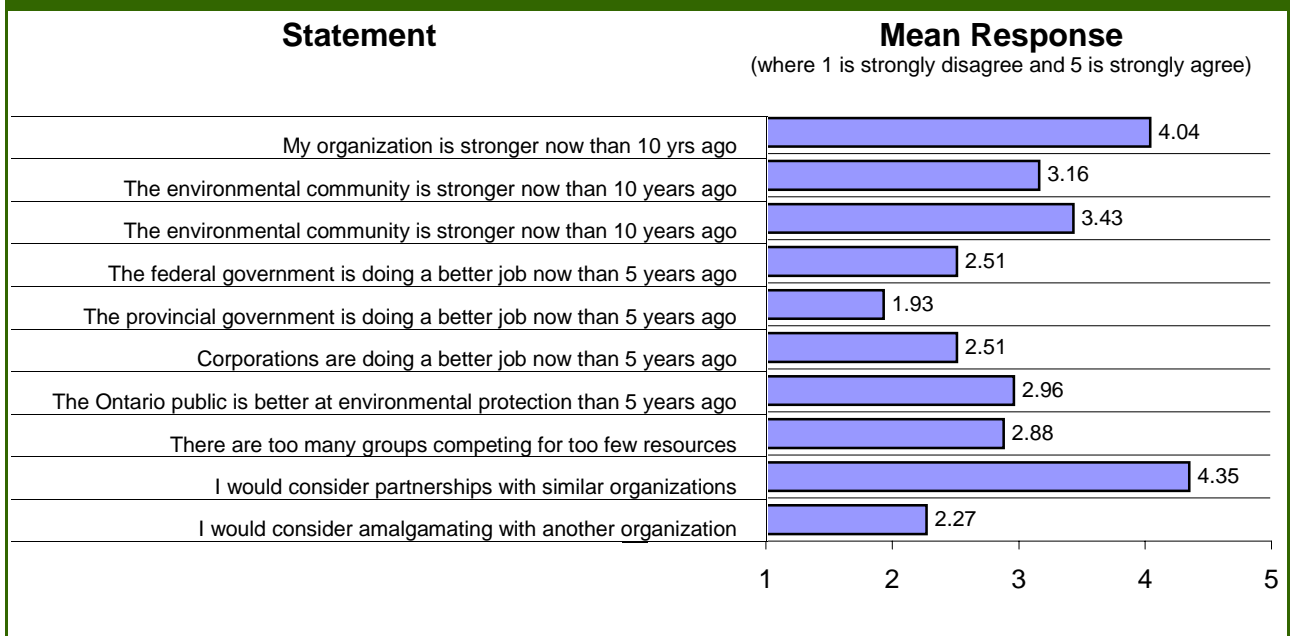
2. There is a strong need for a conservator society in Ontario, one that seeks to protect nature, conserve resources, and prevent pollution.

Strongly agree 63.6%
Agree 16.9%
Total 80.5%

3. Ontario needs a strong coalition to help promote conservation values and a conservator society.

Strongly agree 45.5%
Agree 31.2%
Total 76.7%

Oracle Survey: Trends in Environmental Commitment



Greening Ontario: An NGO Strategy for Conservation and the Environment

Goal To enhance the capacity of Ontario's non-governmental organizations to promote a conserver society and deliver environmental solutions

- Objectives**
1. Strengthen networking and cooperation between Ontario's NGOs
 2. Meet the organizational needs of individual groups
 3. Strengthen NGO leadership in developing conservation and environmental solutions
 4. Promote public and community involvement in conservation and environmental projects and activities
 5. Deliver coordinated conservation and environmental campaigns.

- Activities**
1. **We will seek to strengthen and coordinate environmental networks in order to promote cooperation and the sharing of resources and ideas around common goals.**
 - a) Build the capacity of major network organizations
 - b) Develop an alliance of networks.
 2. **We will seek to strengthen support services, training, and capacity building for individual groups.**
 - a) Identify and support provincial centres of excellence for support services
 - b) Provide organization management skills
 - c) Provide professional services (legal and planning in particular)
 - d) Provide internet communications support
 - e) Develop apprenticeship programs, field experience bursaries and job exchanges
 - f) Provide environmental employment programs
 - g) Provide environmental leadership training (management skills and issue expertise)
 - h) Develop group-to-group mentoring by experienced community activists
 - i) Support strategic planning and business planning by individual groups and new alliances.
 3. **We will seek to strengthen the NGO contribution to research, solutions and education.**
 - a) Identify and support provincial centres of excellence for research and information on issues, environmental solutions and services, and public education
 - b) Improve the quality and access to information on environmental quality and trends via State of the Environment reporting
 - c) Conduct regular public opinion polls
 - d) Host an annual summit and specialized conferences on major areas of concern
 - e) Coordinate the distribution of ENGO publications and resources
 - f) Develop joint publications
 - g) Develop gateway internet sites on the environment
 - h) Coordinate e-news, major listserves and web-based announcements
 - i) Promote environmental and conserver values.

Continued next page...

Greening Ontario: An NGO Strategy for Conservation and the Environment

Activities 4. **We will develop NGO outreach programs.**

- a) Develop an NGO sector environmental network (cultural, social, health, professional associations, etc.)
- b) Develop NGO member outreach, education, and challenge programs
- c) Develop multilingual and multicultural services and programs.

5. **We will support community-based action.**

- a) Develop community-based environment networks and action plans
- b) Identify financial and in-kind support for community projects under the action plan
- c) Develop a database of great community projects
- d) Develop a recognition award for community innovation and successful projects.

6. **We will develop provincial strategies and campaigns.**

- a) Identify common goals
- b) Form alliances or multi-sector task forces to develop strategies in support of the common goals
- c) Develop provincial campaigns.

7. **We will promote government and corporate leadership**

- a) Identify policies that will facilitate achieving common environmental goals
- b) Strengthen opportunities for environmental assessment and public consultation on government policies and new initiatives
- c) Promote corporate environmental responsibility
- d) Establish a provincial multi-sector round table on the environment.

Implementation **NGO Leadership**

1. Identify areas of expertise and leadership
2. Develop projects and services to address gaps and needs
2. Develop alliances and partnerships between organizations
3. Develop cooperative campaigns to address common goals.

Environmental Funders

1. Support the NGO Environmental Strategy
2. Identify areas of commonality between funding guidelines and the strategy
3. Develop new funding to address outstanding needs.

Multi-Sector Cooperation

1. Develop environmental leadership by governments, agencies, institutions, and businesses.
2. Implement policy and economic measures that support Ontario's environmental goals
3. Develop ongoing opportunities for dialogue to identify common goals and strategies.

Conservation Council of Ontario

The Conservation Council of Ontario is committed to promoting the strategy, using it to guide our own business planning and for revising our website (www.greenontario.org) to provide summaries and links on each section of the strategy.

Elaboration

Goal

To enhance the capacity of Ontario's non governmental organizations to promote a conservator society and deliver environmental solutions.

The scope of this strategy is on Ontario's non-governmental organizations, including environmental groups as well as all other organizations that have an interest in the environment or a responsibility or mandate for environmental protection. These groups include Ontario's cultural, social, health, religious, labour, and professional groups as well as service clubs and not-for-profit institutions. All of these organizations are capable of making a contribution to the health of our environment, to the creation of healthy communities, and to an environmentally sustainable economy.

Many of these organizations are already active in the environmental field, and there are excellent services that are already being provided by Ontario's environmental community. Our goal is to enhance these services and activities in order to facilitate the ability of the public to participate in environmental solutions, in their own lives, in their communities, and in their work.

This strategy recognizes the need for an important shift in the environmental movement. The need and desire for a healthy environment has been firmly established. We need to focus on solutions and the role that NGOs can play in delivering these solutions to the public and other audiences.

Objectives

1. Strengthen networking and cooperation between Ontario's NGOs
2. Meet the organizational needs of individual groups
3. Strengthen NGO leadership in developing conservation and environmental solutions
4. Promote public and community involvement in conservation and environmental projects and activities
5. Deliver coordinated conservation and environmental campaigns.

The five objectives support the goal by strengthening the existing mechanisms for networking and cooperation between NGOs, recognizing and supporting each others strengths, and identifying the gaps where new activities are needed.

The objectives further recognize the need to identify priority issues and develop special campaigns in support of our common environmental goals. These priorities can reflect current trends in environmental quality, new funding opportunities, or the identification of emerging issues.

Finally, there is a strong NGO role in promoting public awareness and commitment in support of a healthy environment. The development and maintenance of a strong environmental and conservation ethic in society is an important step in creating an environmentally-sound society and economy. It also facilitates our ability to addressing individual priorities as they emerge.

Activities

1. ***We will seek to strengthen and coordinate environmental networks in order to promote cooperation and the sharing of resources and ideas around common goals.***
 - a) *Build the capacity of major network organizations*
 - b) *Develop an alliance of networks*

Ontario has a number of networking organizations. Some, like the Ontario Environment Network and the Conservation Council of Ontario, were formed to facilitate communication and cooperation between organizations. More recently, coalitions and networks are being developed around specific issues.

- a) **The Ontario Environment Network** supports over 700 environmental groups in Ontario from national and provincial organizations to regional and local groups. The OEN promotes communication and networking between groups and facilitates the development of common positions through issue caucuses.
- b) **The Conservation Council of Ontario** is a fifty year old organization with a mandate to promote cooperation on conservation and environmental protection. It's membership includes environmental groups as well as organizations that have a broader mandates, such as agriculture, forestry, labour and environmental management.

New Alliances

Other priority issues that could benefit from alliances include:

1. ***Energy conservation and green energy***, reflecting the need for public outreach and support programs to meet the Kyoto Protocol targets and to support the challenge from Ontario's Energy Minister for a ten percent reduction in personal energy consumption.
2. ***Smart Growth***, uniting groups working on controlling sprawl and promoting healthy communities.
3. ***Farmland preservation***, addressing the continued loss of prime agricultural land in the urban shadow and the need to promote a viable farm economy in southern Ontario.

A Network Alliance

An alliance between networking organizations such as the OEN, CCO and OHCC would recognize each other's strengths in reaching the depths of Ontario's environmental community and the breadth of organizations with an environmental mandate. An alliance would maintain the distinct roles of each, while facilitating cooperation and action on issues where there is widespread support.

- c) **The Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition** is a network of healthy community initiatives that integrate environmental, social and economic issues.
- d) **Ontario Stewardship** is a Ministry of Natural Resources program coordinating 40 community stewardship councils.
- e) **The Federation of Ontario Naturalists** is a federation of 119 naturalist groups across Ontario.
- f) **Great Lakes United** is a bi-national network of environmental groups in the Great Lakes region.
- g) **The Ontario Clean Air Alliance** is a broad-based alliance supporting the phase out of coal power plants in Ontario.
- h) **The Canadian Children's Health Environment Network** is a national network helping coordinate the work of organizations in the field of children's health and the environment.
- i) **Ontario Environmental Education Network** is a new network formed to promote environmental awareness and education throughout Ontario.

Networking and coordination are ongoing needs. As such, they are not a good fit with the current emphasis on short-term project funding. Stable core funding is required to maintain a basic level of networking and communications between like-minded organizations. Coordination of our efforts will, in turn, lead to stronger project-oriented proposals by individual groups within the networks.

2. **We will seek to strengthen support services, training and capacity building for individual groups.**

- a) *Identify and support provincial centres of excellence for support services*
- b) *Provide organization management skills*
- c) *Provide professional services (legal and planning in particular)*
- c) *Provide internet communications support*
- d) *Develop apprenticeship programs, field experience bursaries and job exchanges*
- e) *Provide environmental employment programs*
- f) *Provide environmental leadership training (management skills and issue expertise)*
- g) *Develop group-to-group mentoring by experienced community activists*
- h) *Support strategic planning and business planning by individual groups and new alliances*

Provide training and support services

Thanks to the Sustainability Network (<http://www.sustain.web.ca>), organization management advice and training is being made available to Ontario NGOs. Additional opportunities are needed for apprenticeships in major organizations and job exchanges with other NGOs, governments and corporations.

Online training, like such as the GreenAbility series of fundraising courses (<http://www.greenability.org>), offer new possibilities for making training accessible to groups across Ontario.

Provide professional services

Legal and planning are two areas in particular where local groups need professional assistance. This can be provided either via intergovernmental funding or through programs to make professional available to local groups.

Develop internet communications

The rise of the internet over the past decade has created new ways for communicating with ourselves and the public. Most organizations now have websites and could benefit from training and technical support. Web Networks (<http://www.web.ca>) is Canada's leading non-profit internet service provider and best suited to help develop NGO internet skills.

Provide training and skills development

A full range of programs are required in order to provide lifelong support for environmental training —

from scholastic awards and bursaries, through youth employment, apprenticeships, volunteer training and professional development for professional environmentalists.

Develop group-to-group mentoring

New groups are formed each year, usually in response to a local need or crisis. These groups start from scratch and look around for help and advice. They could benefit from the experience of others who have set up a new group, sorted through the Environmental Registry, laws and bureaucracy, or prepared for an OMB or environmental assessment hearing.

Tay River Defence

The Tay River Defence is a local citizen's group formed in response to a proposal to withdraw water from the Tay River (near Perth) for a mining operation. With no prior experience, they challenged the proposal in an Environmental Review Tribunal hearing and won their case. Their experience would be invaluable to other

A travel fund and mentoring network would be a tremendous help to new groups (and even existing ones) that are facing formidable challenges in navigating planning and legal processes.

Support strategic and business planning by organizations.

Strategic planning and business planning are two tools whereby groups can identify how their activities, either individually or in combination with others, will contribute to achieving common goals. In particular, funding should be available for:

- Strategic planning for alliances and coalitions, in particular for new alliances that are proposed to address new priorities and gaps in our existing strategy
- Annual policy conferences such as the OEN Spring and Fall meetings, the Conservation Council's Eco Summit, and the Recycling Council's annual conference. These conferences should lead to the development of strategic plans
- Business planning for individual organizations in relation to achieving specific environmental goals.

3. We will seek to strengthen the NGO contribution to research, solutions and education.

- a) Identify and support provincial centres of excellence for research and information on issues, environmental solutions and services, and public education
- b) Improve the quality and access to information on environmental quality and trends via State of the Environment reporting
- c) Conduct regular public opinion polls
- d) Host an annual summit and specialized conferences on major areas of concern
- e) Coordinate the distribution of ENGO publications and resources
- f) Develop joint publications
- g) Develop gateway internet sites on the environment
- h) Coordinate e-news, major listserves and web-based announcements
- i) Promote environmental and conserver values.

Develop centres of excellence

Within Ontario's NGOs there is a tremendous wealth of expertise and experience. At the provincial level, we need to identify centres of excellence (organizations with the resources and skills to take a leadership role), establish clusters of like-minded organizations, and promote a coordinated use of resources.

Improve access to State of the Environment research and public opinion polls

Complete and reliable information is an important cornerstone for environmental planning. Leaders in environmental policy and SoE research need:

- access to existing research and data
- the ability to interpret the information and make it accessible to the public
- the ability to conduct independent research.

The FON And Smart Growth: Providing Volunteers with Resources

Ontario's Smart Growth Initiative is intended to manage urban growth and provide opportunities for public input. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists has produced a public guide, "A Smart Future for Ontario", and is conducting community workshops.

The FON recognizes that local groups will be at the front line of the battle to control urban sprawl. Their guide and workshops are providing these groups with the tools they need to play an active role in local planning issues.

Ongoing assistance and support for community groups and public watchdogs are needed to help protect sensitive areas, promote transit, and assist in developing compact, healthy communities. In particular, local groups need access to planning expertise.

Host an annual summit and specialized conferences

Ontario needs an annual environmental policy conference, combined with conferences focused on resolving individual issues.

Develop information distribution services and common publications.

We all publish, but rarely do we pay sufficient attention to distribution. At the very least, we need a common resource centre for environmental publications.

Where possible, groups should author joint publications to create a stronger message, combine resources, and provide the public with a single message.

Clusters of Environmental Expertise

Research	Issues	Support Services	Education and Outreach
State of the Environment Policy Other	Natural Areas Protection Resource Conservation Pollution Prevention Green Economy Green Society	Legal Land Use Planning Organization Management Other	Public Cultural Professional Formal Education Other

Develop gateway internet sites on the environment

Several environmental “gateway” sites have already been developed; some offering information for the public, and others offering more detailed information on specific issues. Others need to be developed for additional issues such as energy, air quality, nature and waste, and these gateway sites should be promoted by all organizations. Listserves and web-based announcements are also effective in keeping people up to date on events and issues. We need to coordinate and promote these gateways and information services to facilitate public access to information and reduce duplication.

Environmental education is the cornerstone for building long-term environmental solutions.

Promote environmental and conserver values

Environmental education is the cornerstone for building long-term environmental solutions. Without a strong conservation ethic in society, we cannot generate support for green investments and environmental policy. We need to restore conservation and environmental values within our society in order to stimulate a willingness to adopt conservation practices in daily life, develop public support for environmental initiatives, and encourage the development of an environmentally-sound economy and policy framework.

In a separate strategic planning exercise, Environmental Education Ontario (EEON) is developing a multi-sector *Strategic-Action Plan for Environmental and Sustainability Education in Ontario*. See <http://www.eeon.org> for details.

4. We will develop NGO outreach programs.

- a) *Develop an NGO sector environmental network (cultural, social, health, professional associations etc.)*
- b) *Develop NGO member outreach, education, and challenge programs*
- c) *Develop multilingual and multicultural services and programs.*

Wherever people form associations, be they social or professional, we need to support the ability of these associations to promote conservation and environmental values and actions.

Develop an NGO sector environmental network

A first step is to develop a network of contacts within the many NGOs, identify existing environmental programs, and offer environmental resources and services. The types of activities these groups can undertake are as varied as the organizations, e.g. from environmental codes for professional associations to environmental ambassadors for cultural associations.

We will seek support for conservation and a healthy environment from the many cultural, social, health, and professional associations. We will also seek their interest in developing outreach programs and/or their participation in conservation campaigns.

Develop NGO member outreach and involvement programs

Just as many major employers offer employee environmental awareness and incentive programs, Ontario’s NGOs need to develop membership outreach and incentive programs to encourage members to participate in special projects or province-wide campaigns to promote conservation and environmental solutions.

Accessing Environmental Information Online

Public Gateway Sites	Issue Gateways (Examples)	E-News and Info
Green Ontario (Ontario) www.greenontario.org	H2Info (water) www.H2Info.org	People and Planet Friendly (events) www.planetfriendly.net/
The Green Pages (Canada) www.thegreenpages.ca	Cdn. Centre for Pollution Prevention www.c2p2online.com/	Electric Green (links to news items) www.exworld.com/environment/
		Web Networks (events/alerts/resources) http://community.web.ca/

Develop multilingual services and programs

Few Ontario environmental groups have the capacity to provide information in languages other than English. In particular, French language information can only be found on government web sites and a few NGO sites (such as the Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition).

Particular attention should be paid to:

- developing francophone and bilingual capacity in environmental organizations;
- translation, publishing and distributions services for key publications (including web pages) that provide basic information on conservation and environmental issues;
- developing multi-cultural outreach and engagement programs, such as an environmental ambassadors program.

TCHEC's Environmental Ambassadors

The Toronto Chinese Health and Environment Committee (TCHEC) developed the Environmental Ambassadors project to train volunteers as community environmental ambassadors. Each ambassador would set up displays at community events and provide the public with information on recycling and energy conservation.

This is a project worth duplicating for other languages and cultures.

Community Planning

Some of the programs available to communities include:

- ✓ *The Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition's community facilitators*
- ✓ *The Ontario Environment Network's regional networking*
- ✓ *The Conservation Council's Community Action Plan manual*
- ✓ *The Green Communities Association*
- ✓ *Earth Day Canada's EcoAction Teams*

5. We will support community-based action

- Develop community-based environment networks and action plans*
- Identify financial and in-kind support for community projects under the action plan*
- Develop a database of great community projects*
- Develop a recognition award for community innovation and successful projects*

Develop community-based environmental networks and action plans

Community level networking and planning are essential steps in reaching the public. Even within the smaller municipalities there are dozens of groups, (e.g service clubs, ratepayer associations, schools, cultural groups and religious groups) that would benefit from being part of a community environmental network. Help them come together to brainstorm priorities and project ideas, and then help to find the resources that will make these projects happen.

Identify financial and in-kind support

Funding and municipal staff support need to be earmarked for pro-active community environmental planning. A part-time resource person from the local municipality is often all that is needed to identify potential sponsors within the community and match them with community projects.

Identify and replicate successful community projects.

There are some excellent ideas out there. We need to exchange success stories and help duplicate the more successful projects. A database of project ideas and resources would help. So too would an award for innovation and success in community projects.

Develop a recognition award for community innovation and successful projects

Similar to the Communities in Bloom competition, communities should be encouraged to participate in a competition for the best green communities in Ontario, based on:

- Community involvement
- Natural areas management and restoration
- Conservation and efficiency
- Pollution prevention
- Smart growth planning

6. **We will develop provincial strategies and campaigns.**
- Identify common goals*
 - Form alliances or multi-sector task forces to develop strategies in support of the common goals*
 - Develop provincial campaigns.*

Up to now, we've looked at building capacity within individual organizations, improved networking, identifying centres of excellence, and strategic planning. With a stronger NGO sector, we can look at our ability to develop coordinated campaigns to address priority issues and common goals.

NGO campaigns have traditionally been focused on shifting public policy (such as the Climate Action Network), in recognition of the critical role government policy plays in environmental solutions. With the recognition of common goals (such as the need for energy conservation) and a stronger NGO sector, we can also develop campaigns where the NGO sector can play an active role in implementing solutions.

Identify priority issues and common goals

Priority issues can be identified via needs assessment and strategic planning, or by groups responding to current events and emerging issues. The NGO survey conducted for this strategy identified five issues that scored high with participating organizations:

1. Energy, including conservation, green energy, transportation and emissions
2. Water and watersheds, including source protection, pollution and treatment
3. Urban sprawl, farmland protection and smart growth
4. Environmental education
5. Health and the environment.

Green Energy and Conservation

A Green Energy and Conservation Task Force could bring environmental groups, business and government together to develop a common strategy for promoting energy conservation and renewable energy.

Energy conservation, green marketing, green homes and environmental education were seen as issues where the NGO sector could play a strong role in delivering solutions. The protection of agricultural land and the control of urban sprawl, on the other hand, were seen as requiring municipal and provincial government leadership.

Set up special task forces and/or alliances

On top of Ontario's longstanding federations, networks and Councils, new coalitions of organizations are being formed to address specific issues and needs. Task forces, alliances and other partnerships are an opportunity to combine our resources in support of a common goal.

In general, a task force reflects a partnership of organizations where each organization contributes skills and resources towards achieving specific goals. Task forces, such as those established by the former Round Table on Environment and Economy for example, allow NGOs to work with each other or alongside corporate and government leaders to design and implement strategies in support of common goals.

Green Energy Resources

Here's just a few of the programs and resources available in the NGO sector to support green energy, energy conservation, and greenhouse gas reduction:

- ✓ *Green Communities Association home energy audits*
- ✓ *Ontario Sustainable Energy Association – assistance in community energy cooperatives*
- ✓ *Toronto Renewable Energy Cooperative – set up Toronto's first windmill*
- ✓ *Green Tags Ontario and Grey Bruce Renewable Energy Co-op – sales of green power*
- ✓ *Solar Energy Society of Canada, Greenpeace and others – solar energy*
- ✓ *Earth Day Canada, Sierra Club, Suzuki Foundation, EnerACT, Toronto Environment Alliance and many others – outreach*

Link these resources with major energy companies and government conservation and alternatives support programs, and we can design an effective public outreach campaign for conservation and green power.

Greening Ontario: An NGO Strategy for Conservation and the Environment

Alliances have been used both as a partnerships where the participating organizations play active roles as part of a united campaign (e.g. the Partnership for Public Lands), and to establish a distinct organization where the supporting organizations empower the alliance to speak and act on their behalf (e.g. the former Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain and the Ontario Clean Air Alliance).

Develop special campaigns

Most often, groups have developed their own outreach projects and campaigns. We need to unite these activities, in particular where there is a strong need for action, or a strong public demand for clear advice and support.

Outreach campaigns can be developed using NGO resources alone, or they can include corporate and government partners. NGO outreach campaigns would likely include:

- research
- support services
- demonstration projects
- membership involvement
- public outreach and education
- voluntary individual action

Involving corporate and government partners has the benefit of being able to introduce economic and policy instruments to the toolbox, making for a stronger campaign.

Conservation in Action	
Possible Campaigns	Components
Green Stewards (stewardship)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support for stewardship of shoreline and river habitat, provincial and local parks, private lands, homes and neighbourhoods, schoolyards and playgrounds, and other degraded habitats • Assist in mapping locally significant lands • Support municipal zoning and protection of significant lands • Promote the clean-up of brownfields and contaminated sites
Green Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote energy conservation • Demonstrate alternative energy • Develop wind co-ops • Develop a solar roofs campaign • Identify economic barriers and incentives • Promote transportation alternatives
Save Our Farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve prime farmland • Promote farm viability • Support community-based agriculture • Promote organic food • Develop a sustainable food system
Grow Smart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curb urban sprawl • Promote healthy community design • Aid citizen involvement
Buy Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate consumers • Promote environmental labeling • Develop sector strategies (e.g. drycleaning) • Promote green economic instruments
Waste Not	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote recycling and composting • Reduce household hazardous waste • Promote waste-free products and packaging • Promote product stewardship
Green Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an integrated home package (nature, energy, waste) • Promote conservation • Provide home audits and retrofits • Encourage natural landscaping

7. **We will promote government and corporate leadership**

- a) *Identify policies that will facilitate achieving common environmental goals*
- b) *Strengthen opportunities for environmental assessment and public consultation on government policies and new initiatives*
- c) *Promote corporate environmental responsibility*
- d) *Establish a provincial multi-sector round table on the environment.*

Identify policies that will facilitate achieving common environmental goals

Ontario's NGO sector can contribute much to the development of an environmentally-sustainable society and economy, but we cannot do it alone. In almost every instance, progressive government policy and economic instruments will make the transition much easier.

The goal of environmentally-sustainable development in Ontario presents many conflicts and challenges. These challenges cannot be overcome by ignoring them. We need to recognize that the lack of dialogue over contentious environmental issues keeps them contentious.

More opportunities need to be found to promote dialogue and strategic planning on environmental issues, including conferences, round tables, task forces and formal environmental agreements or covenants. In particular, there needs to be an emphasis on developing realistic goals, measurable targets and practical solutions.

Strengthen opportunities for environmental assessment and public consultation on government policies and new initiatives

Ontario's NGOs should be consulted on major provincial, municipal, and federal policies and initiatives with respect to the environment. In particular, for the provincial government, this includes:

- a) **Statements of Environmental Values (SEVs):** the SEVs were introduced under the Environmental Bill of Rights in 1994. A full public review should be conducted by 2004.
- b) **Ministry Business Plans:** Ministries are required to publish annual business plans. Public consultation should facilitate consensus on the priorities for future plans.

- c) **New strategic directions:** solicit NGO participation in setting new strategic directions and through ongoing advisory committees.

Promote corporate environmental responsibility

NGOs can play a lead role in promoting corporate environmental responsibility by:

- Promoting ethical investing
- Proposing shareholder resolutions
- Participating in the development of corporate environmental standards (such as ISO 14000)
- Developing partnerships with corporate environmental leaders
- Promoting public awareness (a "buy green" campaign, for example).

Our Money Where Our Mouth Is!

Over the past ten years, several ethical funds and one major bank (Citizens Bank of Canada) now offer viable alternatives to traditional, unscreened investments.

1. *NGOs can develop investment policies for their own finances consistent with their mandate*
2. *NGOs can encourage their membership to consider including ethical funds in their personal portfolios.*

Establish a provincial multi-sector round table on the environment

Ontario needs an independent forum that will continue to promote leadership and cooperation for a healthy environment and environmentally-sustainable development.

Existing multi-sector agencies and consultation programs could be integrated as sectoral initiatives under a provincial round table initiative. The Smart Growth advisory panels, and the Waste Diversion Organization are two examples.

Ontario's NGOs would provide valuable service to a provincial round table, including policy research, demonstration projects, and public outreach.

Implementation

NGO Leadership

1. *Identify areas of expertise and leadership*
2. *Develop projects and services to address gaps and needs,*
2. *Develop alliances and partnerships between organizations*
3. *Develop cooperative campaigns to address common goals.*

Environmental Funders

1. *Support the Greening Ontario strategy*
2. *Identify areas of commonality between funding guidelines and the strategy*
3. *Develop new funding to address outstanding needs.*

Multi-Sector Cooperation

1. *Develop environmental leadership by governments, agencies, institutions, and businesses.*
2. *Implement policy and economic measures that support Ontario's environmental goals*
3. *Develop ongoing opportunities for dialogue to identify common goals and strategies.*

For our part, the Conservation Council of Ontario is committed to promoting the strategy, using it to guide our own business planning and for revising our website (www.greenontario.org) to provide summaries and links on each section of the strategy.

Ontario NGOs

Compare the strategy with your own programs and priorities. You should be able to identify recommendations where your group can play, or is already playing, a lead role.

- Let us know of existing programs that should be included in the Green Ontario gateway site.
- Use the strategy to identify opportunities for partnerships and new projects.
- Use the strategy to support your funding applications.
- Send us a letter of support.

Funding Agencies

Compare the strategy with your own funding program and priorities. Which aspects of the strategy are you best able to support? Please let the Conservation Council know and we will include a link to your program in the appropriate sections of the strategy on our website.

Encourage applicants to use the strategy in developing their proposals.

Governments

Compare the strategy with your own programs and priorities. Which aspects of the strategy are you best able to support?

What mechanisms are in place for involving NGOs in strategic planning for the environment? Can you identify areas for improvement?

What policies, economic instruments, funding programs, and other support programs do you have in place that will support NGO initiatives for raising public awareness and commitment?

For municipalities, do you have a community action program to encourage local participation in environmental projects?

Corporations

Compare the strategy with your market, products and/or services. What aspects of the strategy are you best able to support.

Do you have funds earmarked for supporting environmental programs?

Can you identify areas where you can play a leadership role in promoting a green economy, or in developing cooperative campaigns with the NGO sector?



**Monitor the progress of Ontario's NGO Strategy
for Conservation and the Environment at
www.greenontario.org**

Worksheet

Here's a summary of the recommendations and project ideas in this strategy. It can be used by NGOs, funders, governments and companies alike. Check the ones where you are either already playing a lead role, can support the implementation of the recommendation, or would like to develop new projects and activities.

Need	Ideas	Check
Networking	Provide stable core funding	
	Develop an alliance of networks	
	Develop new alliances for priority issues (e.g.. energy conservation, smart growth and farmland)	
Support Services	Identify and support provincial centres of excellence for support services	
	Provide organization management skills	
	Provide professional services (legal and planning in particular)	
	Provide internet communications support	
	Develop apprenticeship programs, field experience, bursaries and job exchanges	
	Provide environmental employment programs	
	Provide environmental leadership training (management skills and issue expertise)	
	Develop group-to-group mentoring by experienced community activists	
	Support strategic planning and business planning by individual groups and new alliances	
Research, solutions and education	Identify and support provincial centres of excellence for research and information on issues, environmental solutions and services, and public education	
	Improve access to State of the Environment information	
	Conduct regular opinion polls and public research	
	Host an annual summit and specialized conferences on areas of concern	
	Coordinate the distribution of ENGO publications and resources	
	Develop joint publications	
	Develop gateway internet sites on the environment	
	Coordinate e-news, major listserves and web-based announcements	
	Promote environmental and conserver values	
NGO Outreach	Develop an NGO sector environmental network (cultural, social, health, professional etc.)	
	Develop NGO member outreach and involvement programs	
	Develop multilingual services and programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francophone and bilingual capacity • Translation, publishing and distribution services • Multicultural outreach and engagement (e.g. environmental ambassadors) 	

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Need	Ideas	Check
Community Action	Develop community-based environment networks and action plans	
	Identify financial and in-kind support	
	Develop a database of great community projects	
	Develop a recognition award for community innovation and successful projects	
Provincial strategies and campaigns	Identify common goals	
	Form alliances or multi-sector task forces to develop strategies in support of the common goals	
	Develop special campaigns	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Stewards 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Energy 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save Our Farms 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow Smart 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy Green 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Not 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Homes 	
Government and Corporate Leadership	Identify green policies	
	Strengthen opportunities for NGO consultation on government strategies and new initiatives	
	Strengthen opportunities for environmental assessment and public consultation	
	Promote corporate environmental responsibility	
	Establish a provincial multi-sector round table on the environment	

Get Listed!

The Conservation Council of Ontario will be keeping an up-to-date list of environmental leaders for each of the above sections on our Green Ontario website. Send links to your website to cco@web.ca, and check <http://www.greenontario.org> for the complete NGO environmental guide!

Special Thanks

The Conservation Council of Ontario wishes to express its thanks to the organizations and individuals who helped make this strategy possible through their participation in our surveys and the 2002 Eco Summit.

Green Ontario Survey — Organizations Who Responded

Alternatives, Autosshare, Caledon Countryside Alliance, Canadian Auto Workers DREC, Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention, Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists, Carolinian Canada, Centre for Sustainable Transportation, Clean Air Partnership, Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment, Eneract, Environmental Defence Canada, Environmental Education Ontario, People and Planet Friendly, The Green Group, Greenest City, Humber Arboretum and Nature Centre, Kairos Canada, Lake Superior Binational Forum, Mining Watch, Northwatch, Oakvillegreen, Ontario Association for Impact Assessment, Ontario Environmental Industry Association, Ontario Lung Association, Ontario Parks Association, Ontario Society for Environmental Management, Pollution Probe, Sustainable Peterborough, Sustainable Reporting Program, The Land Between, Watershed Report Card, Web Networks, Whole Village, Women's Health and Environment Network.

Eco Summit 2002 Registrants and Speakers

Name	Affiliation
Leslie Adams	POWER
Beatiz Alas	Hispanic Development Council
Dave Alexander	Regional Municipality of Niagara
Peter Alley	The Land Between
Lyn Apgar	Ontario Trillium Foundation (Halton/Peel)
Rick Barnard	LMS ProLink
Bob Barnett	Niagara Escarpment Conservancy
Amanda Barnstaple	Wye Marsh
Brian Barsness	Meritas
Michael Berger	Sierra Club Eastern Canada Chapter
Peter Blanchard	People and Planet Friendly Events
Paul Bubelis	The Sustainability Network
Amy Buskirk	Donner Foundation
Matt Caruana	Green\$aver
Valerie Charnish	Conservation Council of Ontario
Marilyn Churley	Ontario NDP
Harvey Clare	Conservation Council of Ontario
Mike Colle	Ontario Liberal Party
Phyllis Creighton	Conservation Council of Ontario
Ike Devries	Ontario Institute of Agrologists
Carol Dillon	Tay River Defense
Mel Dillon	Tay River Defense
Nuala Doherty	Ontario Trillium Foundation
Brenda Dolling	Whole Village Sustainable Farm/Ecovillage
Andrea Dube	Conservation Council of Ontario
Suzanne Elston	Recycling Council of Ontario
Alistair Fairweather	Greensaver
Leesa Fawcett	FES, York University
Kyle Ferguson	Environmental Communication Options
Marg Fleming	Toronto Zoo
Barry Fraser	Ontario Institute of Agrologists
Adele Freeman	Toronto Region Conservation Authority
Kim Fry	Ontario Environment Network
Steve Gilchrist	Ministry of Energy
Bill Glenn	Conservation Council of Ontario
Jack Goering	Conservation Council of Ontario
Jed Goldberg	Earth Day Canada

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Martin Grosskopf	Acuity Funds Ltd.
Mary Gyemi Schulze	Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario
Alison Healing	Conservation Society of Hamilton & District
Jennifer Hounsell	International Society for Ecosystem Health (ISEH)
Helen Howes	Ontario Hydro
Don Huff	Environmental Communication Options
Tanya Imola	Ministry of the Environment
Lois James	Conservation Council of Ontario
Tony Jennings	The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation
Jan Kasperski	Ontario College of Family Physicians
Shaffina Kassam	Environment Canada (Ontario Region)
Michael Keating	Sustainability Reporting Program
Khaleed Khalfan	Ontario Society for Environmental Management
Stephanie Kodish	Conservation Council of Ontario
Ruth Kuchinad	Willow Park Ecology Centre
Todd Latham	Ecolog / ONEIA
Cynthia Lee	Toronto Zoo
Marc Lichtenberg	City School -TDSB
Arwen Long	Energy Action Council of Toronto
Catherine Ludgate	IMPACS
Shirley McCormack	Cats in Kennels Program
Iris McGee	Oakvillegreen Conservation Association
Sophie McKenna	Ministry of Transportation
Kevin Mercer	Riversides
Joan Miles	Green Tourism Association
Simon Miles	Conservation Council of Ontario
Gilmar Militar	Ontario Trillium Foundation (Halton/Peel)
Ranjana Mitra	ecoSource Mississauga
Alan Morin	Wye Marsh
Rod Muir	Waste Diversion Toronto
Idil Mussa	ecoSource Mississauga
Marjori Ng	TCHEC Environmental Ambassadors
Tunde Otto Harris	Environmental Education Ontario
Nancy Palardy	Kairos Canada
Alice Parkes	McGill University
Doug Petrie	Conservation Council of Ontario
Linda Pim	Federation of Ontario Naturalists
Steve Probyn	The Probyn Group
Carol Ray	Humber Arboretum
Dave Renaud	Canadian Auto Workers Union (CAW)
Sherry Rendek	Clean Air Partnership
Ray Rivers	Clean Air Canada Inc.
Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg	Women's Health and Environment Network
Nicola Ross	Caledon Countryside Alliance
Renee Sandalowsky	Oakvillegreen Conservation Association
Shayna Scott	Conservation Council of Ontario
Paul Seccaspina	Oracle Poll Research
Jen Shragge	Humber Arboretum Centre
Ravi Mark Singh	Energy Action Council of Toronto
Doug Skeates	Conservation Council of Ontario
Marla Slavner	The Environment Guide
David Sterritt	The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation
George Strachan	Ontario Federation of Agriculture
Shelley Strain	Emery Creek Environmental Association
Diane Szoller	Thames Region Ecological Association
Jennifer Turgeon	ecoSource Mississauga
Katherine Vansittart	
Julia von Flotow	Festive Earth Society
Carolyn Wallace	EcoAction, Earth Day Canada
Mary Ellen Warren	Ministry of the Environment

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The Bruce Trail Association
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Clean Air Partnership
ENVision
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