

Canadian Museum of History
Environmental Sustainability Policy

1. TITLE

Environmental Sustainability Policy (hereafter, the Policy).

2. INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Museum of History is a federal Crown corporation established by the *Museums Act*, with responsibility for two national museums: the Canadian Museum of History and the Canadian War Museum. In addition, the Corporation administers the national investment program, Digital Museums Canada, and the online Virtual Museum of New France.

Uses of the terms “the Museum” and “the Corporation” in this document refer to the Canadian Museum of History as a corporate entity and encompass both the Canadian Museum of History and the Canadian War Museum.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE

The Policy was approved by the President and Chief Executive Officer on November 15, 2024, taking effect the same day.

4. POLICY OWNER

The Chief Strategy Officer & Vice-President, Reconciliation, Engagement and Government Affairs is the Policy Owner.

5. APPLICATION

The Policy applies to all employees of the Corporation.

Use of the term “employee” in this document refers to full-time and part-time employees of the Museum, advisory groups, volunteers, emeriti, research associates, students, trainees, interns, consultants, contractors, and other persons, organizations, and stakeholders working at or on behalf of the Museum.

6. DEFINITIONS

Biodiversity

- The variety of ecosystems, species of living organisms, and genes in a particular area.

Environmental Action Plan

- A key operational document guiding the implementation of the Policy, the Environmental Action Plan is developed every three years and defines the Museum's environmental projects, targets, metrics, deadlines, estimated investments, and teams responsible for project execution.

Environmental Impact

- Change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, resulting from an organization's activities, products, or services. Examples of adverse impacts include increases in greenhouse gas emissions and waste, or reductions in waste diversion. Examples of beneficial impacts include reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and waste, increases in waste diversion, and contributions to environmental stewardship through various organizational activities, projects, and programs.

Environmental Sustainability

- The protection and responsible management of natural resources, aiming to balance ecological, social, and economic goals, including, but not limited to, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, reducing waste, promoting renewable energy, and optimizing resource usage.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Emissions of the gases that contribute to the greenhouse effect and global warming: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆), and nitrogen trifluoride (NF₃). Described by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, the greenhouse gas emissions of an organization consist of:
 - **Scope 1 emissions:** direct greenhouse gas emissions that occur from sources that are controlled or owned by an organization, such as the emissions associated with fuel combustion in boilers, furnaces, generators and vehicles.
 - **Scope 2 emissions:** indirect greenhouse gas emissions from the generation of electricity, steam, heat, cooling, or other external energy sources purchased by an organization.
 - **Scope 3 emissions:** indirect greenhouse gas emissions, not included in Scope 2, that occur in the value chain of an organization, including, but not limited to, emissions related to the production of purchased goods, services, and materials; upstream and downstream transportation and distribution; waste disposal and recycling; employee commuting, business travel, and visitors' travel; investments and leased assets.

Greenwashing

- The practice of conveying a false impression or misleading information regarding the environmental benefits of a company, product, service, project, or activity.

Greenwashing can take many forms, from reporting unsubstantiated environmental data to using generic images of nature, animals, leaves, or the colour green in corporate environmental disclosures and communications.

Natural Resources

- Naturally occurring materials, substances and phenomena that are used by and have value to humans, including air, sunlight, soil, water, minerals, plants, animals, and other aspects of the environment.

Sustainable Development

- Development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Waste Diversion

- The portion of generated waste that is reused, recycled, or composted, and therefore diverted from landfills.

7. CONTEXT

Environmental sustainability is a critical consideration for the Museum, given its pivotal role in preserving cultural heritage and educating the public. Globally, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of adopting sustainable practices within the museum sector to minimize adverse environmental impacts and contribute to broader conservation efforts. As a Crown corporation operating in multiple provinces, the Museum is also subject to various environmental regulations, guidelines, and requirements established by the Treasury Board of Canada and other authorities, including the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, the *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*, the *Competition Act*, the *National Adaptation Strategy*, the *Government of Canada Adaptation Action Plan*, the *Greening Government Strategy*, and the *Act Respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

At the heart of the argument for environmental sustainability in museums lies the imperative to conserve resources and minimize the ecological footprint. Museums are often large, energy-intensive institutions with significant operational needs, including climate control, lighting, and transportation. By implementing energy-efficient technologies, optimizing resource utilization, and increasing waste diversion, museums can significantly lessen their adverse environmental impacts — such as greenhouse gas emissions and waste accumulation — and contribute to global efforts to protect the environment. Moreover, museums serve as custodians of cultural and natural heritage, entrusted with preserving historical material for future generations. Environmental sustainability is essential for fulfilling this custodial responsibility, as climate change and environmental degradation pose significant threats to museum collections and culturally significant sites.

In addition to conservation objectives, environmental sustainability aligns with the educational mandate of museums by providing opportunities for public engagement and raising awareness. Museums have a unique platform for educating visitors about environmental issues and the interconnectedness of cultural and natural heritage. By serving as role models and advocates for environmental sustainability, museums can influence public attitudes, behaviours, and policies related to conservation and environmental protection, and set a positive example for other institutions to follow. Additionally, sustainable practices can result in cost savings over time, as energy efficiency measures and waste reduction strategies can yield financial benefits alongside environmental dividends in the long run.

8. PURPOSE

Building organizational resilience through sustainable practices in all areas of operations is a key strategic direction for the Museum. The Museum aspires to adopt exemplary standards of environmental sustainability and motivate other museums to implement similar practices. Recognizing this priority, the Museum has established four high-level commitments:

1. Continuous sustainable reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, water, and energy usage.
2. Continuous sustainable reduction in waste, following the 3R principle of sustainable development: reduce, reuse, recycle.
3. Protection of natural environment and biodiversity within the scope of the Museum's activities.
4. Development and integration of sustainability policies, procedures, and guidelines across the Museum's teams and operations, in line with the goals enumerated in Points 1-3 above.

The purpose of this Policy is to help align the Museum's commitments with actions, embed environmental sustainability into the Museum's governance, and facilitate collaboration on environmental projects across the Museum's teams and operations. The objectives set out in the commitments to environmental sustainability affect all the Museum's Portfolios and stakeholders. This Policy aims to set out the guiding structure for the development and update of operational policies, processes and practices across the Museum's teams and operations to contribute to reaching these objectives.

Environmental sustainability is a shared responsibility.

9. POLICY DETAILS

The Museum establishes the following guiding principles of environmental sustainability:

A. Environmental Stewardship

- Integrating environmental considerations into all aspects of Museum operations, from exhibitions and collections management to travel, facilities management, and visitor engagement.
- Striving to continuously improve environmental performance by implementing best practices and adopting innovative solutions that reduce the Museum's greenhouse gas emissions and other adverse environmental impacts.

B. Strategy and Planning

- Embedding environmental considerations into strategic planning to ensure alignment between the Museum's environmental sustainability commitments and strategic goals.
- Developing the Environmental Action Plan to guide the integration of environmental sustainability into the Museum's activities and operational planning.

C. Risk Management and Assessment

- Incorporating environmental risks in the Museum's risk management framework and risk assessment processes.
- Conducting periodic evaluations of the potential impacts of changing environmental conditions on the Museum, including changes in temperature and humidity, using scenario analysis and other risk assessment tools.

D. Resource Efficiency and Materials Usage

- Reducing waste generation and prioritizing reuse and recycling of materials throughout the Museum's facilities and operations.
- Conserving energy, water and other natural resources through efficient use, technological upgrades, and behavioural changes.

E. Sustainable Procurement and Supply Chain

- Embedding the principles of the *Policy on Green Procurement* into contracting, prioritizing the procurement of environmentally responsible products and services, giving preference to those with recycled content, minimal packaging, environmental certifications, and local sourcing.
- Seeking to partner with suppliers and vendors who share the Museum's commitment to environmental sustainability.

F. Travel and Transportation

- Participating in virtual meetings to minimize business travel and prioritizing energy-efficient transportation when travel is necessary. *To be read in conjunction with the Travel, Hospitality, Conference, Training and Event Expenditures Directive.*
- Developing incentive and awareness strategies to encourage the use of public transportation and other eco-friendly travel options for Museum employees and visitors.

G. Exhibitions and Design

- Incorporating environmental factors at all stages of the exhibition life cycle, from planning and development to production, maintenance, and deinstallation, aiming at the reduction of waste and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Prioritizing the use of modular, scalable, reusable, and adaptable installations, technologies, and equipment.

H. Collections and Conservation

- Embedding environmental sustainability principles into the Museum's acquisition, deaccession, and curatorial practices.
- Promoting environmentally friendly conservation techniques, prioritizing the use of non-toxic and natural materials.

I. Research and Fieldwork

- In research activities, recognizing the reciprocal relationship between human history and natural history.
- Reducing and mitigating the adverse environmental impacts of research activities, emphasizing sustainable research practices.

J. Awareness and Engagement

- Raising awareness among staff, volunteers, visitors, and other stakeholders about the importance of environmental sustainability and about their collective role in protecting the environment.
- Offering educational programs, exhibitions, and initiatives that inspire and empower environmental stewardship.

K. Collaboration and Advocacy

- Collaborating with other cultural institutions, community organizations, and government agencies to share knowledge, resources, and best practices in environmental sustainability.
- Advocating for policies and initiatives that support environmental protection, climate action, and sustainable development at the local, national, and global levels.

L. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Establishing clear environmental performance indicators and continuously measuring, monitoring, and evaluating the Museum's progress towards achieving its environmental goals and targets.
- Embedding environmental objectives into the performance appraisals of relevant Museum Portfolios, teams, and employees.

M. Reporting and Communications

- Reporting on the Museum's key environmental performance indicators, including the Museum's Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, waste, energy and water usage, in

line with the guidelines of the Treasury Board of Canada, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, relevant sustainability reporting standards, and industry practices.

- Transparently communicating the Museum’s environmental efforts and achievements through annual reports, website updates, the intranet, and other communication channels.

N. Governance and Advisory

- Ensuring that environmental sustainability is embedded into the Museum’s strategy, governance, risk management, and operations.
- Leading the development of the Environmental Action Plan and monitoring its progress.
- Reporting on the Museum’s environmental performance indicators.
- Facilitating communication, information sharing, and coordination of environmental sustainability activities across various teams and areas of operations.

10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. President and Chief Executive Officer

The President and Chief Executive Officer is responsible for leadership and control over the implementation of the Policy at the Museum.

- Ensuring the alignment of Museum actions with the strategic directions for environmental sustainability set by the Board of Trustees.
- Approving the Museum’s Environmental Action Plan.
- Monitoring the Museum’s environmental sustainability performance and holding Vice-Presidents accountable for meeting Portfolio-specific environmental goals.
- Reporting to and engaging with the Board of Trustees to ensure the Board’s support of the Museum’s environmental objectives.

B. Vice-Presidents

Vice-Presidents are responsible for the implementation of the Policy within the scope of their Portfolios.

- Ensuring that Portfolio-specific environmental goals and targets are met.
- Allocating resources and providing support to managers and employees to carry out environmental sustainability initiatives.
- Measuring, monitoring, and reporting on environmental sustainability performance indicators within their areas of responsibility.
- Collaborating with other Vice-Presidents to share best practices and coordinate environmental sustainability activities across the Museum operations.

C. Reconciliation, Engagement and Government Affairs (REGA)

The REGA Portfolio performs advisory, monitoring, reporting, and coordination functions, within the scope of the Policy, and provides subject matter expertise to the relevant internal and external stakeholders.

- Acting as the primary point of contact and source of expertise on environmental policy, action planning, and reporting at the Museum.
- Advising leadership and teams on the integration of environmental sustainability into the Museum's strategy, governance, risk management, and operations.
- Leading the development of the Environmental Action Plan and monitoring its progress.
- Leading the annual external reporting on the Museum's environmental performance indicators.
- Coordinating periodic assessments of the Museum's environmental impacts and risks and identifying opportunities for improvement.
- Monitoring environmental disclosure standards and trends to ensure the Museum's compliance with relevant regulations and best practices.
- Reviewing the Museum's policy instruments to ensure their alignment with the Museum's environmental sustainability commitments and objectives.
- Providing guidance to relevant Museum stakeholders and coordinating employee training on environmental sustainability matters related to the Museum's commitments, policy and action plans.
- Acting as ambassador for environmental sustainability within the Museum and for the Museum, representing the Museum in relevant external networks and associations.

D. Employees

Environmental sustainability is a shared responsibility; therefore, each employee's contribution is essential.

- Familiarizing themselves with the Policy and understanding their role and responsibility in its implementation.
- Developing relevant skills and competencies in environmental sustainability as they pertain to their areas of work and responsibilities.
- Participating in training sessions and workshops on environmental sustainability practices and procedures.
- Identifying opportunities for waste reduction, energy conservation, and other environmental sustainability initiatives within their areas of work.
- Reporting any environmental concerns or suggestions for improvement to their supervisor or to REGA.

11. ACCOUNTABILITY

All employees are expected to actively support and uphold the Museum's environmental sustainability principles, demonstrating transparency, honesty, accuracy, and responsibility in all actions that create real, possible or potential environmental impacts. The Museum is committed to providing clear, substantiated, and verifiable information about its environmental impacts and initiatives, ensuring alignment with recognized reporting standards and best practices. Any form of greenwashing is strictly prohibited to maintain the integrity of the Museum's environmental commitments and stewardship.

12. REFERENCES

Legislation, Government Policies, and External Directives

- *Act Respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*
- *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*
- *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*
- *Competition Act*
- *Greenhouse Gas Protocol*
- *Greening Government Strategy*
- *Government of Canada Adaptation Action Plan*
- *National Adaptation Strategy*
- *Policy on Green Procurement*

Internal Policies and Directives

- *Directive on Material Management*
- *Travel, Hospitality, Conference, Training and Event Expenditures Directive*

13. PUBLICATION

This Policy will be posted internally on the Museum's intranet and on the corporate website for public dissemination.

14. MONITORING

REGA will be responsible for receiving any comments and questions regarding this Policy. All employees are expected to be aware of the Policy and share responsibility for upholding it.

15. CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

In the event of non-compliance with the Policy, corrective measures may be applied, ranging from training to removal of conferred authority, to disciplinary action including suspension, or any combination thereof.

16. REVIEW

The Policy will be monitored and reviewed every three years to ensure that it remains relevant and consistent with the Museum's values, legal obligations, and global environmental sustainability trends. The Policy Office will initiate the review process.

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17. ENQUIRIES

Please direct any comments, questions, or concerns regarding the Policy to the Policy Office at the Canadian Museum of History, 100 Laurier Street, Gatineau, QC, K1A 0M8.