



New Canadians

This section is for individuals and organizations that support, deliver, or provide environmental and sustainability education to new Canadian constituencies and individuals, teaching English as a second language (TESL) organizations, school boards, ethnic community organizations, and language instruction professionals.

Outcomes

New Canadian constituencies and individuals will:

1. Acquire an understanding of issues related to the environment, and develop **environmental literacy**

Sample Indicators:

- They learn about the local environment and related issues.
- They are knowledgeable about environmental **sustainability** issues.
- They are familiar with basic ecological principles.
- They are aware of the impact of humans on nature and its function.
- They realize that healthy people depend on a healthy environment; they increase “environmental common sense.”
- They develop an **environmental literacy** that enables them to understand and act on environmental issues.

2. **Adopt behaviours and actions consistent with being stewards of the environment and nature**

Sample Indicators:

- They are aware of existing environmental resources and how to access them.
- They increase activity in and care for the natural environment.
- They find information on and favour environmentally friendly products.
- They are aware of “product life-cycles.”
- They seek and share knowledge of the environment with others.



3. Participate in their community, as well as local, provincial, or national environmental organizations to bring about change

Sample Indicators:

- Each community has its own environmental organization.
- An umbrella organization helps coordinate efforts of individual communities.
- The participation of **new Canadians** in environmental organizations and activities increases.

Needs

New Canadians need:

1. Recognition and appreciation of the knowledge they bring from their countries of origin
2. Environmental awareness through support from and inclusion in existing environmental networks
3. Success stories of government, business, and individual action for the environment
4. Curriculum in schools and language training programs that includes environmental studies
5. Support within their local communities for environmental awareness and education
6. Educational programs and support to enable them to benefit fully from the recreational possibilities in their environment
7. Support for basic needs with an emphasis on easy, green approaches to meeting those needs
8. Availability of high quality, needs-based, flexible language programs that will enable them to become environmentally aware and committed citizens
9. Language training institutions and teachers committed to an inclusive approach to the environment
10. A commitment on the part of the government to continue supporting language training up to, and including, **LINC** level five
11. More work-based language programs

Strategies

Programs, Projects, and Policies

1. Develop environmental expertise within the local community; create environmental circles within the community (e.g., to cultivate apartment gardens, green schoolyards, naturalized areas, cultural gardens, and composting programs).
2. Create programs to provide New Canadians with the level of language necessary to interact with other groups involved in the environmental movement.
3. Install “3Rs” (reduce, reuse, recycle) signage in all government offices and commercial businesses, and in ethnic communities in appropriate languages.
4. Set up a buddy system, twinning a new Canadian with an “old” Canadian.



5. Establish programs that introduce ethnic groups into the “culture of power” in Canada, thereby empowering them to function effectively within existing political structures.
6. Design a program for nature and wilderness experiences for **new Canadians**.
7. Work with funding organizations to ensure their funding criteria are more sensitive to the capabilities of **new Canadians’** organizations.
8. Work with funding organizations to ensure their programs support capacity building for new Canadian organizations through a direct approach (i.e., engage **new Canadians** in capacity building).
9. Invite and encourage individual involvement in environmental initiatives.
10. Develop environmental linkages through school curriculum (e.g., language training and environmental studies).
11. Add a question about the Canadian environment to the citizenship test.
12. Ask businesses to provide more durable goods and repair them when needed.

Resources

1. Promote the sharing of environmental information in a culturally sensitive way.
2. Create a central Ontario database of environmental organizations, publications, contacts, and foundations, and make the database available to **new Canadians**.
3. Create a central database with a list of language training programs available to **new Canadians**; secure long-term government funding for language training.
4. Build bridges—a flow of information—between **new Canadians** and environmental groups, with a high level of environmental exchange.
5. Create a new umbrella group—New Canadians for the Environment—with specific responsibilities; provide funds to set up the organization.
6. Increase government funding for the environment in general, and for **environmental education** programs in particular; include a special emphasis on **new Canadians**.

Support

1. Use the media to promote the environment and recognize good examples of environmental learning among **new Canadians**.
2. Make funding available for environmental messages in ethnic media so groups can reach out to their members.
3. Establish a funding program to provide start-up funds for community organizations that want to set up environmental programs.
4. Provide awards for stellar examples of good practice—ranking and listing products, services, and businesses.
5. Recognize environmental accomplishments and role models (communities, governments, private industry, and celebrities); create an “order of the environment” in the style of the Order of Canada.



6. Provide incentives (e.g., tax breaks) for local community groups with successful environmental projects.
7. Provide support for nature and wilderness experiences for **new Canadians**.

Please see Appendix 1 for a list of useful websites.

