

2023 to 2024 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy Report

National Film Board of Canada

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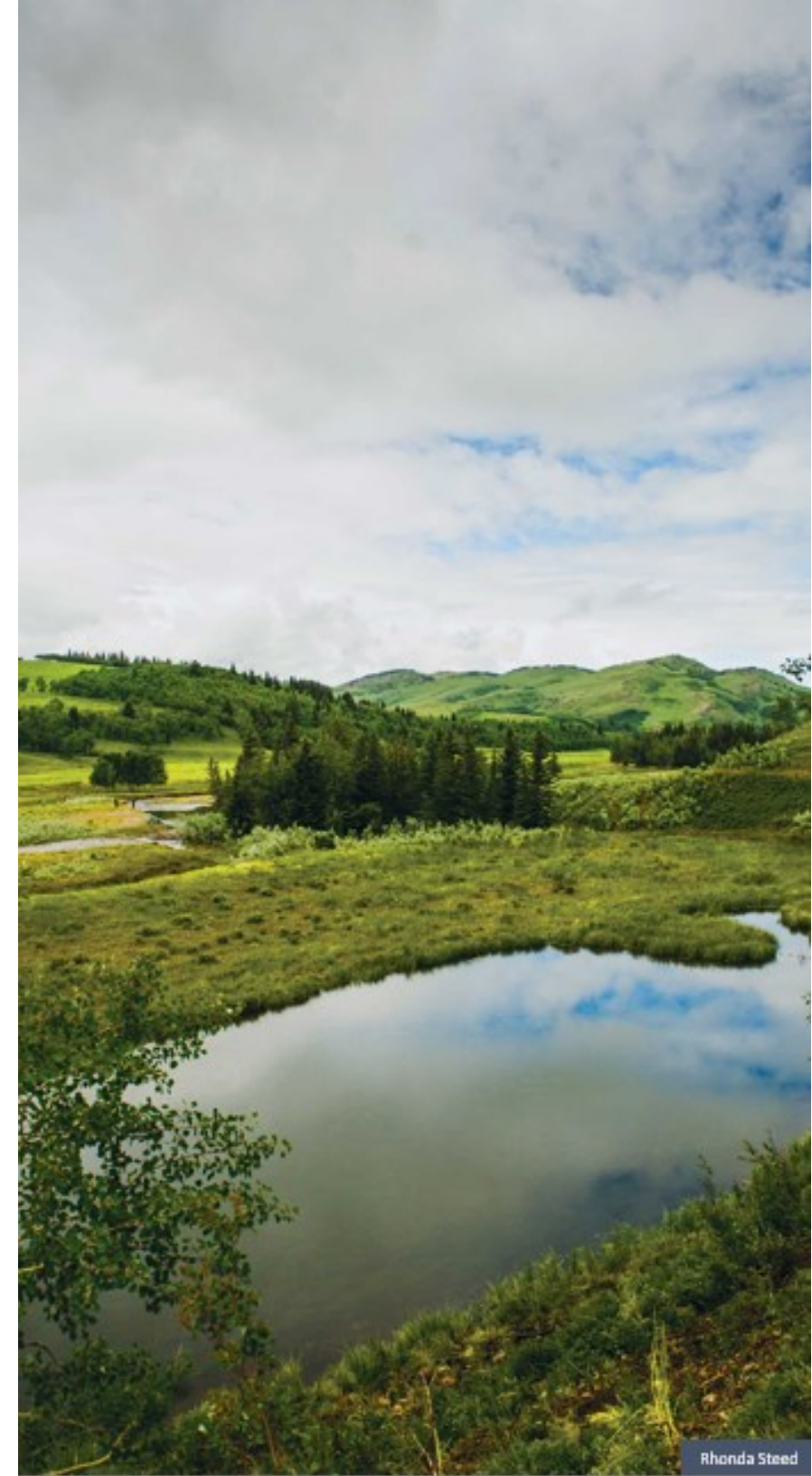
Introduction to the 2023 to 2024 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy Report

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

In keeping with the purpose of the Act, to make decision-making related to sustainable development more transparent and accountable to Parliament, the NFB supports the goals laid out in the FSDS through the activities described in the NFB's 2023 to 2027 Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy (DSDS). This Report provides a report on progress related to the NFB's DSDS in the fiscal year 2023 to 2024.

The [Federal Sustainable Development Act](#) also sets out [7 principles](#) that must be considered in the development of the FSDS as well as DSDSs. These basic principles have been considered and incorporated in the NFB's DSDS and 2023 to 2024 DSDS Report.

To promote coordinated action on sustainable development across the Government of Canada, the NFB's departmental strategy reports on Canada's progress towards implementing the 2030 Agenda and advancing the SDGs, supported by the Global Indicator Framework (GIF) and Canadian Indicator Framework (CIF) targets and indicators. The Report also now captures progress on SDG initiatives that fall outside the scope of the FSDS.



Commitments for the NFB





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

FSDS Context:

As Canada's public producer and distributor of documentary films, animation and interactive/immersive experiences, with a mandate to reflect Canadian perspectives to Canadian and global audiences, the NFB actively contributes to the process of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

As a public producer, the NFB has been producing works by First Nations, Métis and Inuit directors since 1968. In order to encourage industry talents from these communities and enable them to present their perspectives on the world to Canadian audiences, the NFB's Departmental Results Framework sets a target for the percentage of completed NFB productions that are directed by Indigenous filmmakers and creators. It is important to mention that for film shoots in Indigenous communities, the NFB is inspired by and asks its production partners to follow the recommendations outlined in *ON-SCREEN PROTOCOLS & PATHWAYS: A Media Production Guide to Working with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Communities, Cultures, Concepts and Stories*.¹ The NFB also offers Indigenous Circle, a support circle for staff and creators who regularly work with the NFB. The NFB may also offer mentoring opportunities for Indigenous crew in craft positions.

In its distribution activities, the NFB publicizes and promotes works by Indigenous artists by presenting these works at various festivals in Canada and abroad, by screening them in various other settings,² and by making them available for free on the NFB's Indigenous Cinema portal,³ which offers 460 films by Indigenous filmmakers in various languages, including 19 Indigenous languages. At the same time, the NFB offers Canadian teachers numerous

¹ Prepared for imagineNATIVE, 2019: https://creativebc.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/imagineNATIVE_on_screen_protocols_and_pathways_5_15_2019.pdf

² For example, the Aabiziingwashi (Wide Awake) tour, a series of over 1000 screenings of works by Indigenous filmmakers, as well as the community-screenings initiative that resulted from it.

³ https://www.nfb.ca/indigenous-cinema/?&film_lang=en&sort=year:desc,title&year_min=1939&year_max=2023

resources for classroom discussions of subjects related to the history, culture and current experiences of Canada's Indigenous Peoples,⁴ thus helping to advance understanding of Indigenous realities in Canadian schools. The NFB's latest project in this regard is the *Indigenous Voices* learning program, the first module of which will be released in 2024. Lastly, the NFB works to preserve the accessibility of an impressive archive of film and audiovisual works that reflect Indigenous lives and experiences from the early 1940s to the present day.

In addition, in 2017, the NFB launched its 2017–2020 Indigenous Action Plan for redefining its relationships with Indigenous creators, partners and audiences, and responding to systemic inequities and barriers to access that the Indigenous community has long identified in the current audiovisual production ecosystem. Developed in collaboration with an Indigenous Advisory Group, this plan includes additional commitments that respond to the work and recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and address Indigenous creators' concerns, particularly in the areas of production, distribution, industry leadership and transformation of the organizational culture. For example, in its Indigenous Action Plan, the NFB has committed to allocate 15% of its production spending to projects by Indigenous artists. This plan is the starting point for a major initiative and a long-term institutional commitment. Work has also begun on measuring what this plan has achieved since its inception and on pursuing these efforts by setting priorities shared by the entire organization.

Internally, in 2021–2022, the NFB created and filled the position of Director, Indigenous Relations and Community Engagement. This director helps to develop closer relationships with Canada's Indigenous communities and advises the NFB on the production and distribution of its works. Since her appointment, she has developed customized training sessions on Indigenous cultural competency that have been presented to all NFB employees. These sessions focused mainly on the culture and experiences of members of First Nations. Given the distinctive character of Canada's Métis and Inuit communities, the NFB will be offering its employees in-depth training sessions on the specific perspectives of these two Indigenous Peoples, under Goal 10 of its DSDS.

But first, to make sure that all NFB employees have the basic knowledge needed to understand the differences among members of First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, all NFB staff must take the following three courses from the Canada School of Public Service: *Reflecting on Cultural Bias: Indigenous Perspectives* (IRA101), *The Uncomfortable Truth: A Brief History of the Relationship Between Indigenous Peoples and the Government of Canada* (IRA102) and *Inuit in Canada* (IRA105).

⁴ For example, the [Indigenous Cinema educational playlists](#) offer teachers a variety of films on these subjects, organized according to their students' ages.

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

Target: Between 2023 and 2026, and every year on an ongoing basis, develop and table annual progress reports on implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada)

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	DEPARTMENTAL ACTION	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR STARTING POINT TARGET	HOW THE DEPARTMENTAL ACTION CONTRIBUTES TO THE FSDS GOAL AND TARGET AND, WHERE APPLICABLE, TO CANADA'S 2030 AGENDA NATIONAL STRATEGY AND SDGS	RESULTS ACHIEVED
<p>Implement the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act</i></p>	<p>Design and deliver to permanent employees (via Microsoft Teams) in-depth training sessions on Indigenous cultural competency, specifically and distinctively presenting the perspectives of Inuit and Métis communities. Although these Peoples are Indigenous, each community has its own history, culture and lived experience, and the NFB will make them known to all of its employees. This training, which will deal with such subjects as history, intercultural competency, human rights, conflict resolution and antiracist education, will be developed in collaboration with Métis and Inuit consultation services, respectively.</p> <p>Program: Internal Services (Director, Indigenous Relations and Community Engagement)</p>	<p>Performance indicator: Percentage of permanent employees who have taken the in-depth training sessions on Indigenous (Inuit and Métis) cultural competency.</p> <p>Starting point: No permanent employees (0%) will have taken these training sessions as of November 2, 2023.</p> <p>Consecutive targets: As of March 31, 2024: 99% of all permanent employees will have taken Indigenous (Inuit) professional learning sessions, presented in French and in English, in collaboration with an Inuit facilitator. As of March 31, 2025: 50% of all permanent employees will have taken Indigenous (Métis) professional learning sessions, presented in French and in English, in collaboration with a Métis facilitator.</p>	<p>In the public sector, lack of Indigenous cultural competency can reinforce racist attitudes and feed public distrust toward members of Indigenous communities. The NFB recognizes the need to act so as to create the conditions conducive to a genuine, sustained transformation of its organizational culture, by giving its employees the opportunity to develop a better understanding of this subject.</p> <p>Members of the Public Service are in a unique position to facilitate respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. The proposed action encourages employees of the Public Service to increase their cultural competency and their sensitivity to issues related to the First Nations, Métis and Inuit in Canada. This action will contribute to the development of the cultural competencies and knowledge needed to implement the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i>.</p>	<p>Indicator result: 14% of permanent employees have taken an Indigenous (Inuit) professional training session, organized in collaboration with an Inuit lecturer.</p> <p>Notes: Building on the preceding year's Truth Before Reconciliation initiative, the NFB focused on Canada's Inuit communities in 2023–2024. All NFB employees were asked to attend the following three online courses from the Canada School of Public Service: <i>Reflecting on Cultural Bias: Indigenous Perspectives</i> (IRA101), <i>A Brief History of the Relationship Between Indigenous Peoples and the Government of Canada</i> (IRA102) and <i>Inuit in Canada</i> (IRA105).</p> <p>As of March 31, 2024, 63% of the NFB's permanent employees had taken these courses, which were prerequisites for an Indigenous interactive professional learning session focusing on the perspectives of Canada's Inuit</p>

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	DEPARTMENTAL ACTION	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR STARTING POINT TARGET	HOW THE DEPARTMENTAL ACTION CONTRIBUTES TO THE FSDS GOAL AND TARGET AND, WHERE APPLICABLE, TO CANADA’S 2030 AGENDA NATIONAL STRATEGY AND SDGS	RESULTS ACHIEVED
		<p>As of March 31, 2026: 99% of all permanent employees will have taken Indigenous (Métis) professional learning sessions, presented in French and in English, in collaboration with a Métis facilitator.</p>	<p>Relevant targets or ambitions: <i>GIF Target:</i> 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.</p>	<p>communities and presented by an Inuit lecturer.</p> <p>The search for a bilingual presenter for the sessions took much longer than expected, which delayed the training and affected the institution’s ability to meet the target set for fiscal year 2023–2024. Also, the level of participation was lower than expected, mainly because of scheduling conflicts and management of the organizational changes that occurred in the last quarter of the fiscal year, which prevented more employees from attending the training sessions. These training sessions will be offered again in 2024–2025.</p>



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

FSDS Context:

The NFB fully supports the goal of reducing waste. Although the NFB does not own any vehicles or buildings, it still takes initiatives to make its operations more environmentally friendly. For example, before moving its headquarters to the LEED®-NC-Gold-certified Îlot Balmoral building in Montreal in 2019, the NFB undertook an extensive project to digitize its operations and archives in order to reduce its use of paper. In 2023, the number of photocopies that the NFB made was down 47% from 2019, which represented 20,000 fewer pages photocopied every month throughout the organization. In this context, it should also be noted that the NFB ensures that its office computers have an average service life of at least four years; that 95% of its purchases of paper for photocopying, commercial printing and envelopes have at least 30% recycled content; and that 90% of its empty toner cartridges are returned to the supplier or recycled through programs provided by building management.

The goal of the departmental action described here is to enhance these various initiatives by familiarizing a large number of employees with the principles of green procurement, including an understanding of the life cycle of purchased goods and services and an awareness of the importance of giving preference to goods and services that have a lesser or reduced impact on the environment. The NFB expects that the proposed training in green procurement will give its staff the tools needed to reduce the amount of waste that the NFB generates; to promote use of renewable resources, reuse and recycling within the NFB; and, ultimately, to reduce the amount of GHGs that the NFB produces.

Target theme: Federal Leadership on Responsible Consumption

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

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	DEPARTMENTAL ACTION	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR STARTING POINT TARGET	HOW THE DEPARTMENTAL ACTION CONTRIBUTES TO THE FSDS GOAL AND TARGET AND, WHERE APPLICABLE, TO CANADA’S 2030 AGENDA NATIONAL STRATEGY AND SDGS	RESULTS ACHIEVED
Strengthen green procurement criteria	<p>Ensure that all NFB employees with procurement authority take the Canada School of Public Service course on green procurement.</p> <p>Program: Internal Services (Director, Finance and Administration)</p>	<p>Performance indicator: Percentage of employees with procurement authority who have taken the training in green procurement.</p> <p>Starting point: As of November 2, 2023, fewer than 1% of all employees with procurement authority will have been trained in green procurement.</p> <p>Consecutive targets As of March 31, 2024: 30% of all employees with procurement authority will have taken the Canada School of Public Service course on green procurement. As of March 31, 2025: 99% of all employees with procurement authority will have taken the Canada School of Public Service course on green procurement.</p> <p>Subsequent years: Keep the proportion of new employees trained in green procurement at 99%.</p>	<p>Green procurement practices incorporate environmental considerations into procurement decisions and should motivate suppliers to green their goods, services and supply chains. Also, by favouring green-procurement initiatives inspired by the principles of the circular economy, the NFB will reduce the volume of waste that it produces, thus contributing to the achievement of Goal 12.</p> <p>Relevant targets or ambitions: <i>CIF Ambition/Target:</i> Canadians consume in a sustainable manner. <i>CIF Indicator:</i> 12.2.1 Proportion of businesses that adopted selected environmental protection activities and management practices. <i>GIF Target:</i> 12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.</p>	<p>Indicator result: 31% of all NFB employees with procurement authority took the Canada School of Public Service course on green procurement during fiscal year 2023–2024.</p>



GOAL 13: TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

FSDS Context:

As of 2022–2023, the NFB has not yet taken any actions specifically targeting climate change and its impacts, but some of the NFB’s initiatives have likely helped to reduce GHG emissions. One example was the implementation of its 2021–2025 Technology Plan, which was accelerated in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. Although fighting climate change was not the primary goal of this plan, its deployment reduced the GHG emissions caused by travel by the NFB’s employees and partners. The 2021–2025 Technology Plan is intended to provide staff, production teams and specialists with the best available tools to deal with a constantly changing environment and thereby enable the NFB to reduce its carbon blueprint. Some of these tools are used for remote collaboration, not only by employees who are provided with all of the equipment that they need and can remotely access all of the software and services they need to work remotely, but also by production teams, creators, craftspersons and partners who have remote audiovisual production solutions at their disposal. These technology tools deployed by the NFB reduce local, regional and national travel and the associated GHG emissions. Another example of the NFB’s contribution to the fight against climate change and to the reduction of its environmental footprint was the 2019 move of its headquarters to the LEED®-NC-Gold-certified Îlot Balmoral building in Montreal. The NFB English Program’s Ontario Studio also leases office space in a building that is LEED® EB:O&M Platinum certified.

To contribute to the fight against climate change more directly, the NFB participates actively in a group which was set up by CBC/Radio-Canada to discuss and exchange best practices on sustainable audiovisual production, including carbon emissions created through the production process. This group started meeting in the winter of 2022–2023 just as the NFB began work on its own Green Plan (provisional title). This initiative, currently in the design stage, will enable the NFB to participate in the fight against climate change by reducing its GHG emissions in particular and its environmental footprint more broadly. The NFB is currently completing a preliminary audit of its GHG emissions so that it can determine which activities will have the greatest impacts on its carbon footprint in the short and long terms, and then target these activities as priorities.

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

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

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<p>Implement the Greening Government Strategy through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve climate resilience, and green the government's overall operations</p>	<p>Reduce the NFB's GHG emissions by implementing its Green Plan (under development), which will comprise new practices to reduce the NFB's GHG emissions in its internal operations and in the production, distribution and conservation of its works.</p> <p>Program: Internal Services (Partnerships and Business Development)</p>	<p>Performance indicator: Complete the steps preliminary to setting a target for reducing GHG emissions, then set a science-based target.</p> <p>Starting point: Form the internal working group and conduct the preliminary audit of the NFB's GHG emissions to identify the NFB activities that have the greatest impact on these emissions. This preliminary audit, which will be completed in fall 2023, will guide the NFB's subsequent actions.</p> <p>Consecutive targets: As of March 31, 2025: Have completed an in-depth baseline study on the carbon footprint of an NFB activity sector that has a large impact in terms of GHGs. As of March 31, 2026: Have set a science based GHG reduction target for the NFB activity sector that was the subject of the baseline study the year before.</p>	<p>The development and implementation of the NFB's Green Plan will enable the organization to take concrete, effective steps to considerably reduce its GHG emissions, which will contribute to the Government of Canada's transition to net zero emissions and its fight against climate change.</p> <p>Relevant targets or ambitions: <i>CIF Ambition/Target:</i> Canadians reduce their greenhouse-gas emissions. <i>CIF Indicator:</i> 13.1.1 Greenhouse-gas emissions <i>GIF Target:</i> 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning</p>	<p>Indicator result: No target was set for fiscal year 2023-2024.</p>

Integrating Sustainable Development

The NFB will continue to ensure that its decision-making process includes consideration of FSDS goals and targets through its Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process. An SEA for a policy, plan or program proposal includes an analysis of the impacts of the given proposal on the environment, including on relevant FSDS goals and targets.

The NFB did not conduct a detailed SEA in 2023–2024. Although the NFB does conduct SEAs when required, up until now, no NFB initiative has been subjected to a detailed SEA requiring a public statement. Due to the nature of the NFB’s mandate, the proposed policies, plans or programs that the NFB submits to the Minister or Cabinet for approval usually do not have any significant positive or negative environmental effects.

Nevertheless, as stated in the NFB’s 2023–2025 Action Plan, taking Environmental, Social and Governance criteria into consideration when developing its strategic directions is a priority for the institution. For example, the NFB strives to mitigate the environmental impacts associated with the production and distribution of its films and with its operations in general, and it also seeks to work with the other organizations in the Department of Canadian Heritage portfolio to create consistent targets, language and reporting, in line with sustainable development, social (including EDI) and governance criteria.

Overall, the NFB takes environmental, economic and social factors into consideration to make decisions designed to support sustainable development. For more details on the statements of principle that guide decision making with regard to parity, equity, inclusion and the NFB’s relationships with Indigenous Peoples, consult the [Equity & Representation](#) pages at production.nfbonf.ca and the [Plans and Reports](#) pages at canada.ca.

