

# The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD)

## Roles, Responsibilities, Activities

Presented to the  
Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

10 March 2020



Office of the  
Auditor General  
of Canada

Bureau du  
vérificateur général  
du Canada

# Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESD)

- Established via 1995 amendments to the *Auditor General Act*.
  - Appointed by Auditor General of Canada
  - Audits the results of federal programs related to the environment and sustainable development (E&SD)
  - Audits the implementation of the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS) and departmental sustainable development strategies (SDS)
  - Manages the environmental petitions process



# The CESD's Reports to Canada's Parliament

- 2 reports per year
- 4 audit topics per year plus annual petitions report



# The CESD's Focus

- Performance audits
- SDS monitoring
- Petitions
  
- Being OAG's E&SD specialist
- OAG's SDS
- International work
- Sustainable development goals



# Performance Audits

- Topics have an E&SD focus but use the same methodology and have the same requirements as all audits done by the Auditor General
- Recent examples:

**Pipelines (2015)**  
**Severe Weather (2016)**  
**Clean Energy (2017)**  
**Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation (2017)**  
**Fossil Fuel Subsidies (2017 and 2019)**

**Salmon Farming (2018)**  
**Marine Mammals (2018)**  
**Sustainable Development Goals (2018)**  
**Toxic Substances (2018)**  
**Biodiversity (2018)**  
**Invasive Species (2019)**  
**Mining (2019)**



# Auditing the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

## Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

- Can the targets and goals be assessed?
- How well are federal departments and agencies meeting targets and goals?
- Report to Parliament on the fairness of the information in the progress report.

## Departmental sustainable development strategies

- Assess implementation and progress.

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Home → About the OAG → Sustainable development and the OAG → Review and Comments on the Draft 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

### Review and Comments on the Draft 2019–2022 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

Under the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change is required to prepare within every 3-year period a Federal Sustainable Development Strategy based on the precautionary principle. The Act states that the strategy "shall set out federal sustainable development goals and targets and an implementation strategy for meeting each target and identify the minister responsible for meeting each target."

13 GOALS	29 TARGETS
+200 ACTION PLANS	SUPPORTING THE 2030 AGENDA

ASSESSES  
MONITORS  
REPORTS  
REVISORS  
CESD

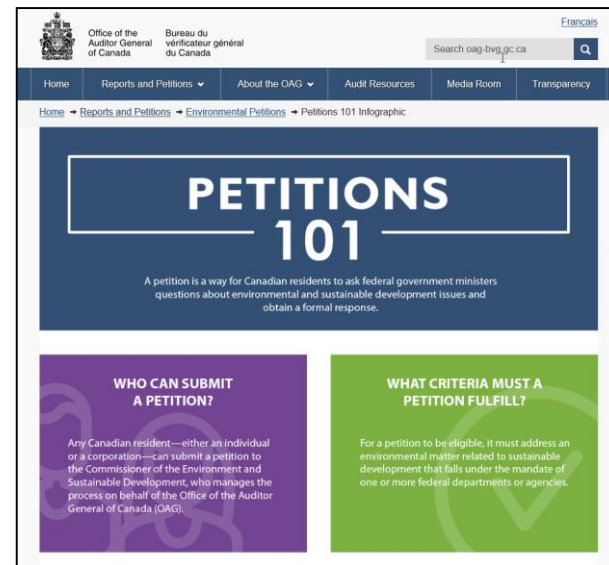


# Environmental Petitions . . . A Voice for Canadians

The environmental petitions process is a way for Canadian residents to bring their concerns about environmental and sustainable development issues to the attention of the federal government and obtain a formal response from a minister.

For more information, visit:

[www.oag-bvg.gc.ca](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca)



The screenshot shows the website for the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG/BVG). The page is titled "PETITIONS 101" and is an infographic. The header includes the OAG/BVG logo and name in both English and French, along with a search bar and navigation links for Home, Reports and Petitions, About the OAG, Audit Resources, Media Room, and Transparency. The main content area features a large blue box with the title "PETITIONS 101" and a subtitle: "A petition is a way for Canadian residents to ask federal government ministers questions about environmental and sustainable development issues and obtain a formal response." Below this are two colored boxes: a purple one titled "WHO CAN SUBMIT A PETITION?" and a green one titled "WHAT CRITERIA MUST A PETITION FULFILL?".



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# Recent and Upcoming Work

- December 2019
  - SDS
  - FSDS Progress Report
  - Petitions
  - Perspective
- Spring 2020
  - Transportation of Dangerous Goods
- Fall 2020
  - Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals
  - Water Basins
  - SDS
  - Petitions





# Priorities

## 1. 2030 Agenda—Sustainable Development Goals

- An OAG focus since 2016; all OAG work will contribute.
- Work with auditors in other countries to assess
  - preparedness (2018)
  - implementation (2020)

## 2. Climate change

- Past work focused on mitigation; adaptation (2014, 2017).
- Future work will consider finance, pan-Canadian framework initiatives (2022).

## 3. Supporting the committee



# Thank you!



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