



CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR  
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY

L'INSTITUT CANADIEN DU  
DROIT ET DE LA POLITIQUE  
DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

130 Spadina Avenue Suite 305  
Toronto, Ontario M5V 2L4

Tel: (416)923-3529  
Fax: (416)923-5949  
[www.cielap.org](http://www.cielap.org)

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The Rt Hon Jean Chretien  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Langevin Building  
House of Commons  
Ottawa  
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr Chretien

We are writing to you on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy. For over 30 years CIELAP has shown leadership in the research and development of environmental law and policy that promotes the public interest and sustainability.

Canada was a leader at the Earth Summit in 1992. It is our hope that Canada will again show that leadership at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in August/September in Johannesburg, South Africa. As a rich country that has enjoyed an international reputation of being an honest broker and committed to human rights and the environment, we urge you to ensure that Canada plays a constructive leadership role in Johannesburg. The sustainability issues we need to address are complex but it is crucial that they be adequately addressed for the sake of the environment, the economy and the health of present and future generations.

Recent polls by Environics International show that Canadians want their government to show leadership on environmental issues. Not only do the majority of Canadians condemn a US-like approach to Kyoto but ratings of our current performance in the area of international environmental leadership have plummeted. The upcoming WSSD offers an important opportunity for Canada to regain its reputation both in the international community and at home. We urge you, Mr Prime Minister, to show that needed leadership and attend the WSSD yourself.

In the fall of 2001 CIELAP released a discussion paper entitled *Sustainable Development in Canada: A New Federal Plan*. In April 2002 we co-sponsored a conference entitled Partnering for Sustainability. We are committed to changing our attitudes, purchasing habits and actions so that we can contribute as individuals and as an organization to a more sustainable future. We urge the government of Canada to support and encourage similar initiatives within Canadian society.

In particular, we are concerned that:

- The gap between the wealthiest and poorest, both within our own country and between countries, continues to widen;
- We are destroying the ecosystem – the air, land and water – on which we and other species depend;
- We are focusing our resources and efforts to addressing terrorist acts, rather than focusing on promoting more sustainable and equitable communities, which will address the underlying causes of terrorism;
- The biosphere is showing unmistakable signs of damage from the use of fossil fuels and the dumping of industrial waste into the planet's air, water and soil.

We need to act now, as individuals, as organizations within the private and non-governmental sectors and as governments.

The CIELAP board of directors and staff pledge individually, to the best of our ability, to make changes in our lifestyle and purchasing habits so that our individual ecological footprint on the earth can be substantially reduced.

CIELAP will work with you and your government to ensure that governmental decisions reflect the goals of sustainability.

CIELAP will work with business leaders to continue to promote leadership in attaining sustainability and reducing their corporate ecological footprint.

We ask that you show leadership by personally attending the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This will show Canadians and the world that we consider sustainability and the movement towards a more sustainable future to be important.

There are some specific actions that Canada could take to reassure Canadians and the world that you and your government do take sustainability issues seriously. These are:

- Carry out a thorough analysis of current and emerging trade agreements in terms of their compatibility with sustainability.
- Ratify the Kyoto Protocol without delay.
- Ratify the Biosafety Protocol.
- Provide incentives to individuals and corporations to use green power and to adopt energy conservation measures.
- Put every effort into de-escalating the climate of violence and war around the world by offering and supporting sustainable initiatives. We applaud Canadian leadership in support of the International Criminal Court.

Canadians want their Government to show leadership in the world on how to reduce our ecological footprint and shift gears to a more sustainable path of development. CIELAP pledges to work with governments, the private sector and the not for profit sector to that end. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns with you prior to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Thank you, on behalf of the Board and staff of CIELAP.

Yours sincerely

David Powell  
President

Anne Mitchell  
Executive Director

cc David Anderson, Minister of Environment Canada  
Allan Rock, Minister of Industry Canada  
Bill Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade  
Susan Whelan, Minister of International Cooperation