



**Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and
Natural Resources**

**Comité sénatorial permanent de l'énergie, de l'environnement et des
ressources naturelles**

The Honourable Julie Dabrusin, P.C., M.P.
Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

May 8, 2026

Dear Minister:

On 10 March 2026 and 26 March 2026, the Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources (the Committee) studied the Draft 2026–2029 Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS). The Committee heard from a total of six witnesses on the topic, including officials from Environment and Climate Change Canada and officials from the Office of the Auditor General of Canada. The Committee wishes to share its observations and concerns with you.

The Committee heard the FSDS described as a snapshot of federal initiatives to address sustainability in a way that reflects the priorities of the government and the concerns of Canadians. Pursuant to the requirements of the *Federal Sustainable Development Act*, Environment and Climate Change Canada is conducting public consultations on the FSDS from 12 January 2026 to 12 May 2026. This letter constitutes the Committee's submission to those consultations. The FSDS will be tabled in Parliament in November 2026.

During its study, the Committee learned about the difficulties and shortcomings in the federal response to sustainable development. In the 2025 report, *Lessons Learned from Canada's Record on Sustainable Development*, the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development outlined how Canada is performing lower than average at achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals compared to other Group of Seven (G7) countries. Since 2000, Canada has made the least progress in improving its sustainable development score among G7 countries.

Testimony given in committee highlighted how sustainable development requires a long-term view that considers the interests of future generations. Long-term thinking regarding sustainability allows economic, environmental, and social interests to work in tandem, whereas short-term thinking reduces the chances of ensuring a promising future for coming generations.

Despite how the federal government has introduced many measures across economic sectors, they have not been sufficient to meet the Canada's 2030 targets of reducing emissions by 40% to 45% below 2005 levels. In fact, the Committee heard how emissions remain higher today than they were in 1990.

The Committee urges the Government to engage with Indigenous peoples and honour Canada's commitments to them. The *Federal Sustainable Development Act* calls for the involvement of Indigenous peoples and the promotion of equity, and requires Indigenous representation on the Sustainable Development Advisory Council. Therefore, the Committee supports better integrating knowledge and perspectives of Indigenous peoples into discussions on sustainable development and working together with Indigenous peoples to co-develop approaches to achieving sustainable development and honour federal commitments.

The Committee also noted the importance of building Canadian clean technology and recognized federal intentions of expanding the sector. However, the Committee is concerned that targets related to clean technology under the FSDS remain static, unchanged from targets set in 2023.

The Committee encourages the Government of Canada to unify policy direction and strengthen implementation across departments to better align disparate sustainability frameworks. The Committee also urges the Government to set measurable targets that support progress reporting and accountability.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joan Kingston". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joan" being more prominent than the last name "Kingston".

The Honourable Joan Kingston, Senator
Chair, Standing Senate Committee on Energy,
the Environment and Natural Resources

cc: Catherine Cuerrier, Committee Clerk, Standing Senate Committee on Energy,
the Environment and Natural Resources