



Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative - Overview

A grass-roots network of municipalities, businesses and NGOs is developing a regional initiative in Atlantic Canada to better understand the challenges and opportunities of sustainability and to move the region toward sustainable solutions. The Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative (www.atlanticsustainability.ca) is a collaborative project designed to build capacity and momentum around sustainability in Atlantic Canada using The Natural Step framework as a guide. The project is led by a non-profit organization, the Centre for Rural Sustainability (www.ruralsustainability.org), on behalf of the 14 organizations that are participating in the capacity building program.

This is a year-long project with 3 key milestones. The project opened with a launch dinner on Monday, May 14, followed by a training and networking workshop, “Strategic Sustainability: Helping Atlantic Canada Move Toward Sustainable Development”, on May 15-16, 2007 at Oak Island Resort. This workshop provided participants with awareness, understanding and a common language of sustainability, and the tools needed to begin addressing these issues at the both the organizational and regional levels.

The first workshop is followed by some “homework” for participating organizations, as well as some individual coaching from The Natural Step Canada. November 13-14, 2007, participants will reconvene in Moncton, New Brunswick for a second workshop to discuss their progress, share success stories, and increase their knowledge in key areas. Participants will also begin developing a high level sustainability analysis of the Atlantic Region.

Homework and coaching will follow the November workshop, leading up to a regional sustainability summit planned for April 17-18, 2008. This summit will showcase the achievements of sustainability partners, and will provide another opportunity for partners to share successes and lessons with each other. It will also engage new organizations in the network and follow up activities.

It is expected that although the training and education part of the project will end in April 2008, the regional network built over the year will continue to grow, and to help its members collaborate and support each other in progress towards sustainability in Atlantic Canada.

There are three ways to participate in the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative:

1. As a **Sustainability Partner** your organization makes a commitment to fully participating in the year-long project, including the workshops and homework, to developing your own action plan around sustainability on an organizational or



community level, and to working with other partners to help move sustainability forward at the regional level.

2. As a **member of the public** you can participate in the workshops (limited public space is available), and/or belong to the network, share ideas and resources on sustainability in Atlantic Canada, and participate in the regional summit in April 2008.

3. As a **sponsor** you can help to support this unprecedented regional initiative and participate in a way that meets your needs.

Partner organizations (Sustainability Partners) include municipalities, large and small businesses, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations. If your organization is thinking about issues of environmental, social, and economic sustainability and is interested in building capacity to work towards a more sustainable future, consider becoming a partner in this project.

For more information about the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative, about the ACSI workshops, or about sponsorship, please consult the website, www.atlanticsustainability.ca, or contact Clare Levin, Project Coordinator, coordinator@atlanticsustainability.ca or 902-830-1120.