

Country report – Canada

10th London Group Meeting, 19-21 June 2006, New York

Regular publishing of environmental accounts

- Asset accounts for oil, gas, minerals and timber (physical and monetary). Data series cover generally the period 1961-2004
- Energy use (1990-2002)
- GHG emissions (1990-2002)
- Environmental protection revenues and expenditures (biennial; mid-1990s-2004)

Asset accounts

Natural resource stock estimates (timber, energy and mineral resources) in both physical and monetary terms are updated annually. Monetary estimates of these resource stocks at the national level are released within 90 days of the reference period and are included in the Canadian Balance Sheets Accounts. As for the complete reconciliation accounts (national and provincial levels in physical and monetary terms), they are released annually in June and are available in CANSIM, Statistics Canada's socio-economic database. These accounts present estimates that are two years after the reference year for energy, three years for minerals and timber. Off-shore petroleum resources and diamonds are now part of the natural resource stock accounts.

The focus for the land accounts in 2005-2006 continued to be on analytical outputs. A report detailing agricultural manure production was released in January 2006. New methodologies to estimate urban built-up areas were also developed. The urban built-up areas information will be used as part of Canada's greenhouse gas emission accounting for reporting to the UNFCCC. Other land accounts information is also being developed as part of the body of information that supports the Government of Canada's Environmental Sustainability Indicators program.

Work is progressing on the development of a natural capital index. This index is a value-weighted volume index of timber, energy and mineral resources with the objective of tracking the trend in natural capital. A research paper will be released in the fall of 2006. If it is determined to be relevant to users, this index will become a regular output of the System of National Accounts.

Finally, a project is under way to explore possibilities for valuing water resources, beginning with the value of hydroelectric reservoirs.

Flow accounts

Material and energy flow accounts for 2000 (revised), 2001 and 2002 (preliminary) were released recently. Methodological improvements have been made to the presentation of

emissions and energy intensity indicators to ensure proper interpretation of the calculations based on constant and current prices. Initial investigations into the use of synthetic input-output tables were carried-out. The synthetic tables will improve the timeliness of the material and energy flow accounts once they are incorporated into the program. Data for energy use and GHG emissions are presented for over 100 industries plus a wide array of household and government activities.

Work is just starting on the development of quarterly energy use and greenhouse gas emissions estimates. Canada's official estimates of greenhouse gas emissions are compiled by Environment Canada and submitted to the United Nations for verification approximately one and a half years following the reference year. A report presenting Canada's final figures is released to the public about six months later.

The objective with this new project is to prepare more timely and frequent estimates of energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. Seasonally adjusted estimates will be published approximately three months following the reference quarter at the national level. They will offer only limited sectoral detail: primary industries, manufacturing industries, utilities, transport industries, households and an "other" category. Their main value will be in providing a much earlier assessment of emissions performance than is currently available. Such timeliness is desirable given the approach of the 2008-2012 period during which Canada will have to meet its emissions reduction target under the Kyoto Protocol. The current volatility in energy prices also makes more timely and frequent data on energy use of likely interest to the public and to policy makers. Essentially, these estimates will provide a sense of the expected impact of economic change on GHG emissions and energy use at a macro level.

Technical cooperation

Statistics Canada has started a seven-year technical cooperation project on environmental accounts and statistics with the National Office of Statistics of China. Work will focus on the development of subsoil asset accounts in physical and monetary terms, and on emission accounts.