



**For Immediate Release: Halifax, NS (December 5th, 2007)
Sustainability in Action workshop – November 13-14, 2007**

Sustainability in Action

On November 13th and 14th, 2007, 50 participants in the **Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative**, including organizations like Aliant and the Halifax Regional Municipality, came together to share their progress and celebrate successes in their journey towards sustainability.

The Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative (ACSI) is the only regional, multi-sector sustainability project in North America. It is a collaborative grassroots project that supports project partners in better understanding the challenges and opportunities of sustainability and in moving their respective organizations and the Atlantic Canadian region toward more sustainable solutions. Partners include municipalities, businesses, and non-governmental organizations such as Halifax Regional Municipality, Aliant, the City of Saint John, iNova Credit Union, the Town of Stratford, Bathurst Sustainable Development, and others (see full list below), who have signed a project charter committing their organizations to taking action on sustainability.

The partners are attending intensive training sessions throughout the year-long project. They also work to embed sustainability action plans into their organizations, create a collaborative network to support each other, and they serve as role models and champions of sustainability in their sectors.

The *Sustainability in Action* workshop, which took place in Moncton, New Brunswick on November 13th and 14th marked the half-way point in this project, launched in May 2007. Partners shared their successes and challenges in improving sustainability in their organizations over the last six months. They also shared information and resources in specific areas of interest, such as green procurement and employee education.

Some of the successes and achievements of the ACSI partners so far include:

- A program to reduce use of plastic bags has saved 4,000 bags to date.
- Staff and stakeholders in many of the organizations have completed training and education to learn more about sustainability and how it affects them and their work.
- A paperless office policy was implemented.
- An information kit on sustainability was developed and delivered to businesses in one municipality.
- One business now uses solar power for a portion of their energy needs.
- One municipality became a Fair Trade town.
- Green procurement policies have been improved/implemented for a number of partners so that purchasing decisions are environmentally responsible.



- An anti-idling policy was implemented.
- One organization launched a commitment to becoming carbon neutral.

“The *Sustainability in Action* workshop really helped to showcase the great work on sustainability that the ACSI partners have already carried out,” says the Director of the Centre for Rural Sustainability and Sustainability Partner coach, Dr. John Colton. “It was also exciting to see the connections that are developing between partners as they share information and resources and support each other in this important work.”

Committed Sustainability Partners who have signed the ACSI Charter, include:

- Aliant
- Bathurst Sustainable Development
- Halifax Shambhala Centre
- Jacques Whitford Ltd.
- P’lovers, the Environmental Store
- St. Margaret’s Bay Stewardship Association
- Town of Stratford
- Antigonish Sustainable Development Project
- Halifax Regional Municipality
- iNova Credit Union
- Just Us! Coffee Roasters
- City of Saint John
- Stewardship and Outreach section, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
- Town of Wolfville

Partner organizations will act as ambassadors for sustainability in Atlantic Canada, helping to make this region a leader in sustainable development. The project is coordinated by the Centre for Rural Sustainability and uses The Natural Step Framework as its base sustainability planning tool.

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About the Centre for Rural Sustainability

The Centre for Rural Sustainability (CRS) is a community non-profit organization that facilitates learning, planning, and strategic decision making around issues of long-term and short-term sustainability for rural Nova Scotia communities. The organization envisions a not-too-distant future where the financially stable economies of rural communities are fuelled by ecologically sustainable means that foster quality of life, social justice, and health. See www.ruralsustainability.org for more information.

For more information about The Natural Step, please see www.naturalstep.ca.