



RÉSEAU CANADIEN DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT
CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK
RÉSEAU CANADIEN DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

Message from the board.

The Board of Directors for the Canadian Environmental Network (RCEN) would like to thank all of you who have contributed to this organization's success. The need for partnership and collaboration in the environmental sector has never been greater, and we're grateful for your support.

For over 30 years, RCEN, along with its affiliate provincial environmental networks, has provided a platform and an independent, non-partisan voice for grassroots organizations to take part in the policy process. During that time we have grown and adapted to Canada's social and environmental evolution, always pursuing our vision of sustainable public policy through public participation.

Today, our sector has an unprecedented opportunity to create significant and lasting change in environmental policy. The current government's stated commitment to improve civil society partnerships and energy to tackle rebuilding our economy, in part by investing in greener economic activities, generates opportunities for RCEN and its members to make a difference.

Making the most of this opportunity requires us to work together and make serious investment in our capacity as a community of ENGOs.



Looking forward into 2021, we anticipate yet another challenging twelve months of steady, sustainable forward progress for RCEN.

Board of Directors, RCEN

RCEN facilitates **cooperation and networking** among non-profit, nongovernmental environmental organizations across Canada and internationally.

Mission

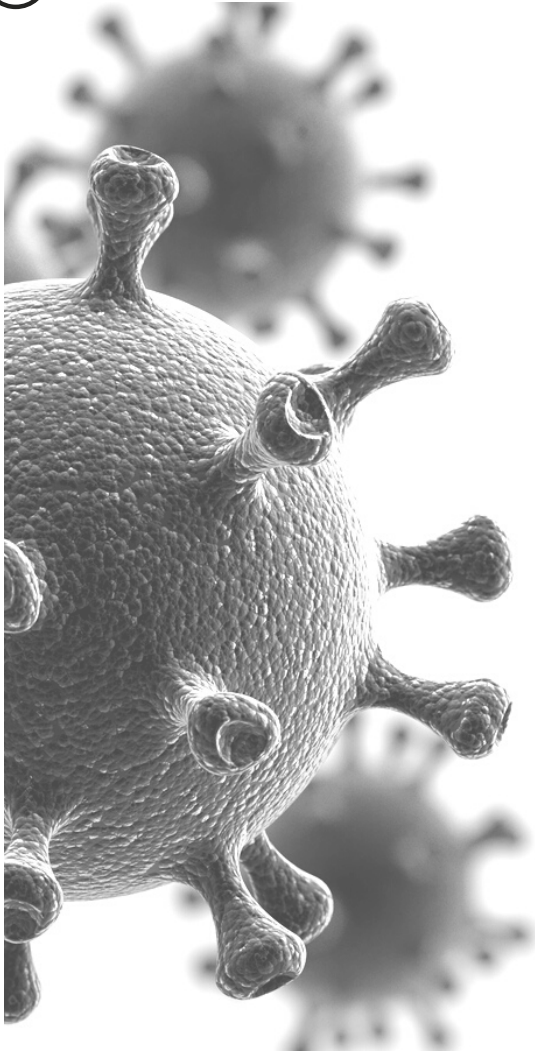
To enable and enhance our members' work of protecting, conserving, restoring and promoting a clean, healthy, sustainable environment.

Vision

By working together at consultations and workshops or through various caucuses or committees-local, regional and national groups share best practices and build strong relationships between each other and with various partners.

Values

RCEN believes in evidence-based policy formulated through robust and meaningful consultations with Indigenous peoples, community-based organizations and subject matter experts. We believe in partnership, collaboration and capacity-building. We believe that the people working in the environmental sector deserve recognition, resources and support to sustain their important contributions.



Global pandemic.

In March 2020, COVID-19 shook the globe. While we retreated indoors and wished our loved ones well, the earth continued to spin and RCEN continued to fight for sustainability.

Thousands of people lost their jobs, businesses and social securities. Economic and medical uncertainty ran rampant and shed light on social challenges that disproportionately affect marginalized communities.

At RCEN we understood that sustainability and conservation would have a different face in the times to come.

In aligning to the social and economic challenges posed by COVID-19, RCEN took on the challenge of ensuring an equitable **Green Economic Recovery** for a post-pandemic Canada: a recovery that provides economic stimulus and social equity through the restoration and protection of ecosystems.

Together with its provincial affiliate networks, RCEN took this challenge to Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) through a letter to the Federal Minister of Environment Jonathan Wilkinson offering support for the Green Economic Recovery.

This opened the door to meetings with ECCC representatives and new opportunities for RCEN to participate in economic recovery and environmental initiatives in the federal government.

Green economic recovery.

Caucus updates.

The **Environmental Planning and Assessment Caucus** continued its multi-year role of co-ordinating consultations and reporting on federal environmental assessment law and policy. This year, its focus was to review the Impact Assessment Agency's guidelines on Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), Sustainability, and Environmental Obligations and Commitments.

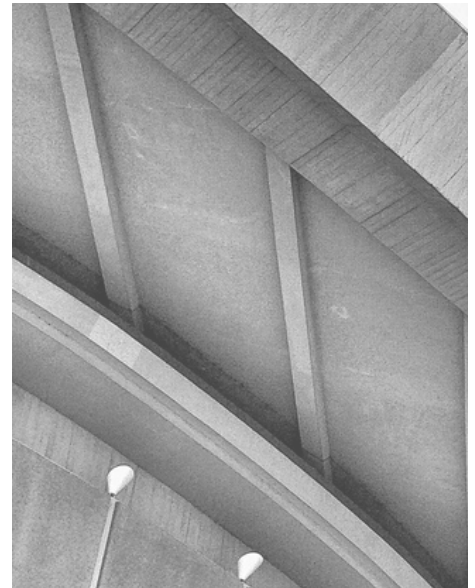
Although the pandemic prevented in-person meetings and delayed the start of the project, Caucus members held several virtual meetings and produced three documents of recommendations. The work is ongoing and we look forward to updating our network on the progress soon.

The Biodiversity Caucus got an infusion of youthful energy when members of the Canadian Youth Biodiversity Network (CYBN) stepped up to take a leading role in the Caucus. They have hosted talks and webinars on biodiversity related issues and the Sustainable Development Goals, and they conducted national youth consultations on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The event featured voices from 40 youth members and a collaborative youth statement is in progress.

Finally, a **Sustainable Development Goals** caucus is in the works. The caucus will discuss current and future SDG policy and national updates on the Canadian National Strategy.



Our vision for the next year is to expand the visibility of the caucuses' work and hire an Engagement Coordinator who will help RCEN members participate more fully in caucuses..



SDG updates.

RCEN has a vested interest in helping Canadians meet their commitments on the **Sustainable Development Goals** by providing a crucial link between the federal government and community stakeholders on environmental issues. The SDGs present an enormous opportunity for ENGOS by establishing a shared language and framework for understanding and communicating the impacts of their work.

In 2020, our SDG Coordinator reached out to members and the wider ENGO pool to better understand their challenges and successes in using the SDGs. These discussions revealed that ENGOS face limits in their capacity to adopt the framework into their missions and activities, as well as a lack of government funding and support.

RCEN has also sent an **Environmental Petition to the Auditor General of Canada** outlining government setbacks in the SDGs and asking questions regarding progress, engagement and responsibilities.

The petition sought clarity from 7 ministries on their steps towards furthering the SDGs and current setbacks as compared to global successes in the movement. The petition has been accepted and we await replies.

33.3%

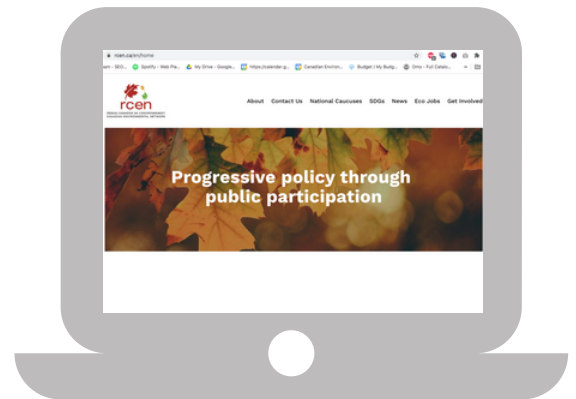
RCEN reached out to organizations that had a vested interest in the SDGs on a collaboration and information seeking mission with a 33.3% response rate.

Website launch.

During the last quarter of 2020, RCEN transitioned to a newer and more user-friendly website platform. The **new website** features an RCEN introductory video, the goodwork.ca job board, and the Energy Mix (an environmental news platform)..

Website analytics suggest the site has received an average of **1500- 2400 visitors** every month since the launch. A new public newsletter is now available through the website for non-members with RCEN updates, event notifications and environmental news.

Importantly, the website features a new **members-only section** with consultation opportunities, caucus updates and fundraising information and links.



Speed-networking.

Building connections is at the heart of what we do. This year RCEN introduced a regular **Speed-Networking Hour** for environmental professionals to connect. We invited folks from diverse organizations to expand their green circle.

So far we have held four very successful events with 28 participants total, 12 different organizations and companies and three guest speakers.

We've featured Mike Simpson from the BCCIC on incorporating the SDGs in ENGO outreach, Alicia Richins from the Common Approach on measuring and reporting ENGO impact and Kristina Inrig from Sustainable Eastern Ontario on capacity building for grassroots organizations.

Participants have written to us and reported that they made valuable connections at these events and have already turned those connections into tangible benefits like access to training and hiring programs.



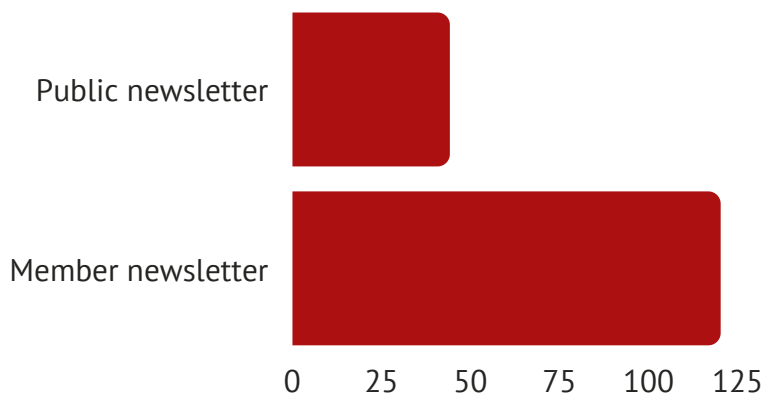
Online engagement.

2020 OVERVIEW

We expanded our social media and general online presence by establishing a clear voice and purpose for our communications strategy.

RCEN hired a Communications Coordinator in August 2020.

In 2021 will continue to establish our social media platforms as a credible, reliable and resourceful tool for the public and ENGO representatives alike, by growing our team to include an **Outreach Co-ordinator** and by completing the communications strategy process that is currently ongoing.



Statistics overview from April 2020 to March 2021.

170

new facebook followers - total of 2562.

565

new instagram followers since launching page in July.

63

views on our Youtube channel with two new videos.

Staff updates.

In 2019, RCEN hired its first staff member since 2011. We have been growing ever since. In 2020, we doubled our core staff and also welcomed a summer student who kickstarted our growing social media following. **Ana Giovanetti**, our SDG Program Coordinator, enhanced RCEN's focus and involvement in the Sustainable Development Goals movement.

Devanshi Kukadia was promoted from Sustainability Project Manager to Organizational Development Manager where she worked tirelessly to raise funds, build partnerships and lift RCEN to a higher operations potential.

We sadly wished her goodbye this year as she embarked on a new opportunity. Thank you for your hard work, Devanshi!

We now extend a warm welcome to Ana as our new Program Director where she will bring her passion, dedication and ambition for RCEN in 2021.

Finally, we could not have accomplished everything that we have without our **volunteers** who have brought energy and manpower to the organization with translations, communications, website development and research.

Looking forward.

As we enter into 2021, RCEN intends to keep growing steadily as it has for the past few years. The seeds of many projects and partnerships were planted in 2020 and will bear fruit in 2021.

But it can only happen with the continued support and engagement of our members. This organization is made up of the people who give generously of their time and expertise, and who recognize how much more we can achieve when we work together.

So, join a caucus, come to a Speed-Networking event, and write to us when you have a project to promote. This network is your network, and its future is your future.

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