



Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines

PREFACE

In 1987, the Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers (CCREM), the forerunner of the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME), published *Canadian Water Quality Guidelines*, which provided national environmental quality guidelines for major water uses in Canada. In addition to being highly successful in Canada, these guidelines have received international recognition by the United Nations and the World Health Organization as models for harmonized ambient environmental quality standards. They are currently being used in more than 45 countries around the world.

In April 1996, the Deputy Minister's Committee of the CCME gave its approval to the Water Quality Guidelines Task Group to work towards assembling a document, *Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines*, that would integrate national environmental quality guidelines for all environmental media including water (drinking water, recreational water, water for aquatic life, irrigation water,

and livestock water), soil (agricultural, residential/parkland, commercial, and industrial land uses), sediment, tissue residue (for wildlife consumers of aquatic biota), and air (for human health, vegetation, animals, materials, and aesthetic atmospheric properties).

As the world's first integrated document of its kind, *Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines* represents the culmination of more than a decade of harmonized, national science-based guideline development work in Canada by the CCME's Water Quality Guidelines and Soil Quality Guidelines Task Groups, the Committee on Environmental and Occupational Health's (CEOH) Federal-Provincial Subcommittee on Drinking Water and the ad hoc Federal-Provincial Working Group on Recreational Water Quality, and the Canadian Environmental Protection Act/Federal-Provincial Advisory Committee (CEPA/FPAC) Working Group on Air Quality Objectives and Guidelines.