



**CORPORATE** **plan**  
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**summary**  
Capital and Operating Budget 1999-2000

Canada



**CORPORATE** **plan**  
1999 - 2000 TO 2002 - 2003  
**summary**  
Capital and Operating Budget 1999-2000

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Translation: ComTra Inc.; Design and Production: Accurate Design & Communication*



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**NATURE**

**mandate**

# CANADIAN **museum of** nature

The Canadian Museum of Nature (CMN) became a Crown corporation on July 1, 1990, under the *Museums Act*. It reports to Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage. The *Museums Act* declares that the heritage of Canada and all its peoples is an important part of the world heritage, and must be preserved for present and future generations. It recognizes that museums play an essential role in fostering Canadians' sense of identity; museums are sources of inspiration, research and learning available to everyone.

The CMN's mandate is *"to increase, throughout Canada and internationally, interest in, knowledge of and appreciation and respect for the natural world"*. It fulfils this mandate *"by establishing, maintaining and developing for research and posterity, a collection of natural history objects, with special but not exclusive reference to Canada, and by demonstrating the natural world, the knowledge derived from it and the understanding it represents"*.

## PUBLIC POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of the Canadian Museum of Nature is to give Canadians an opportunity of discovering and understanding the natural world and how to live in balance with it. The Museum offers a voyage of discovery — discovery not only of Canada but also of the rest of the planet, and what lies under its seas and earth.

*“Through its superb collections, associated research and related exhibits and programmes, and with its human resource of scientific, programming and administrative staff, the CMN contributes to greater understanding, sharing and protection of Canadian natural heritage and identity.”*

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## CORPORATE PROFILE

The CMN had its origins in the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC), which was created in 1842. In 1927, the GSC became the National Museum of Canada, and in 1968, with passage of the *National Museums Act*, the National Museum of Natural Sciences was officially established. Twenty-two years later, the *Museums Act* established the CMN as a separate and autonomous Crown corporation with an expanded mandate.

The collections held and protected by the CMN — over 10 million specimens — are the fruit of years of painstaking exploration, observation and gathering. They form the heart of the Museum and the basis for its contribution to Canada, because they make it possible to analyse and address some of the most pressing problems of our time. The scientific work of the CMN ranges hugely in time and space, and covers an enormous spectrum — from understanding the secrets of long-extinct species to undertaking polar research that will assist in predicting the impact of environmental change.

The Museum’s public galleries in Ottawa offer a wide range of nature exhibits, lively and original interpretation programmes, workshops, films, lectures and demonstrations. Travelling exhibits reach Canadians across the country. In addition, Canadians discover and explore the natural world through CMN multimedia products, including a Website, videos, CD-ROMs, audio-cassettes, television programmes and popular print publications.

At the head of the CMN is a Board of Trustees whose 11 members, from all regions of the country, are appointed by Governor-in-Council. The Board delegates authority to the President for the management of the Museum and is accountable to Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

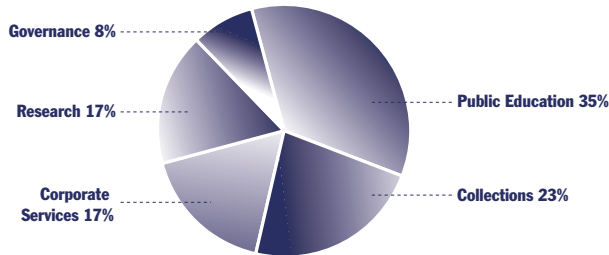
The CMN's staff of 150 is now consolidated in two buildings in the National Capital Region. The public exhibition galleries are located in the Victoria Memorial Museum Building (VMMB), one of Ottawa's best-known historical landmarks. Collections, research laboratories and administrative offices are housed in Aylmer, Quebec, in the new Natural Heritage Building (NHB). The Museum also leases a building on Industrial Road in Ottawa for its dermestid colony (insects that clean bones).

**Financial Resources**

In 1999-2000, the CMN will operate within a total budget of \$22,364,000, of which 92% will be appropriated from the Government of Canada and the remaining 8% will be self-generated. A considerable portion of the Museum's revenue goes toward fixed costs for accommodation (34%) and staff (44%).

Figure 1 below shows how costs are attributed. (The fixed costs are allocated among the Museum's activities on the basis of use.)

*Figure 1: 1999-2000 Resources by Activity*



*In keeping with the Museum's mandate, the largest expenditures are in three primary activities: Research, which includes systematics and applied research; Collections, which includes specimen storage, preservation, monitoring and access, and Public Education.*



## STRATEGIC ISSUES

The CMN's goals for the period from 1999 through 2003 are:

- to be a recognized national leader in the natural history and museum communities;
- to be a credible scientific institution and source of information;
- to be an institution with national presence.

The Museum's corporate plan is built on an assessment of the strategic issues the institution must address. These issues have been identified by looking back at the Museum's recent performance, outward to the external environment in which it operates, and inward to assess corporate resources.

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### *Performance Review*

The CMN identified three strategic issues for the planning period: **sharing the Museum's knowledge; revenue generation, and operational efficiency**. It developed objectives, strategies and performance measures to address these, with the following results for the first eight months of 1998–99.

#### **1. Sharing, communicating and promoting the Museum's vast store of knowledge.**

The main objective was to foster a greater sense of common geographical identity and heritage among Canadians through appreciation and understanding of Canada's natural history, and to be more effective in sharing and communicating the Museum's knowledge. There were four strategies for achieving this objective, each with its own performance measures.

##### *A. Conducting collection-based research that generates new knowledge with predictive value to address socially relevant issues.*

The CMN is involved in three major research projects, with the umbrella titles of *Issues in Biodiversity*, *Paleobiological Studies* and *Rare Elements*. A major component of *Issues in Biodiversity* is the three-year Rideau River Biodiversity Project, which during the period under review concluded a successful first field season. Other components included a study of pan-Arctic flora, the organization

**The CMN identified three strategic issues for the planning period: sharing the Museum's knowledge; revenue generation, and operational efficiency.**

of the International Diatom Symposium and lectures given at the Third International Summer School on Biodiversity and Systematics. The role of the Biological Survey has been extended through a preliminary module in parasitology. Much of the activity under Paleobiological Studies centred on planning for the Fossil Gallery, opening at the Victoria Memorial Museum Building in 2001. The Rare Elements project saw active involvement with the 17th International Mineralogical Association (IMA) meeting, and the submission to the IMA of two proposals for new mineral species.

The CMN chairs and co-ordinates the Federal Biosystematics Partnership (FBP), advocating systematics expertise essential to Canada's future. A key project is the production of an authoritative list of Canadian species, scheduled for completion in 2000-2001. Among the Museum's many other partners are the Biodiversity Convention Office (Environment Canada), the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife, and the Ecological Monitoring Assessment Network (EMAN). There is a great deal of government activity with proposed endangered species legislation and the CMN has been active in advising on the scientific expertise necessary for successful implementation.

### ***Performance Measures***

Research productivity is measured by the total number of refereed publications per total scientific staff. The annual rate was determined to be an average of two per year per staff member (the rate of 0.95 given in the previous year's summary was a partial year total). This rate is on target for the planning period and will be maintained.

#### ***B. Developing, preserving and making accessible an information resource of collections and associated data to support research and public programmes.***

The Museum worked with the Canadian Museums Association (CMA) to establish a research and collections consortium bringing together Canada's natural history facilities. The CMN continued to be an active partner in the Canadian

Biodiversity Information Initiative (CanBII), implementing a project to provide access to national databases of natural history information. The first module undertaken is “The Butterflies of Canada”.

### ***Performance Measures***

The Collections Management Information System (Multi MIMSY) is now operational, and data entry and conversion plans are targeted for completion by the end of this fiscal year. The Collections Development Plan is on target and scheduled for completion in 1999-2000. The Disaster Preparedness Plan is slated for completion in the last quarter of the fiscal year.

#### ***C. Developing and maintaining a variety of interactive and multimedia exhibits and educational products to increase knowledge and appreciation for nature across Canada.***

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Among the highly successful attractions offered during this period were “Arctic Odyssey”, “Discover Canada ... A Celebration of Nature in Canada”, and “On the Trail of the Otter”. A large number of exhibits and events were arranged in partnership with local organizations to ensure the Museum’s participation in the community. School programmes were redesigned to correlate with the new Ontario science and technology curriculum, as had been done with Quebec’s natural sciences curriculum. More Canadian content was added to “Monarca — Butterflies Beyond Boundaries”, which began its cross-Canada tour in Sherbrooke QC in September, and planning began on a millennium exhibit called “Finders and Keepers”. The seventh publication was released in the Tiny Perfect Dinosaur series. Television outreach was expanded with arrangements for both a half-hour programme and a six-part series on the Rideau River Biodiversity Project. Website visitor traffic jumped from 30,000 hits in the first quarter to 79,000 in the third.

The Museum was pleased to host ten interns in 1998-99 who worked on a variety of projects ranging from joint ventures for CMN and the CMA and database development for CMN images.

***Performance Measures***

Achieving the CMN’s objective of fostering greater appreciation and understanding of Canadian natural history through its programmes and exhibits is reflected in part by the Museum’s ability to attract visitors. Attendance figures for the year to date increased slightly compared to the same period last year — despite higher fees for admission — thanks to several new events and a heightened media relations and advertising programme.

***D. Developing a national communications campaign to position CMN’s products and services in order to enhance public interest.***

The CMN is drafting a Corporate Communications Strategy that will bring the Museum into the new millennium. Establishing community links and grassroots initiatives are central to the strategy. The Museum has already forged links with other like-minded organizations, including the Bamfield Marine Station, the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, Montreal’s Insectarium, the National Capital Commission and provincial and regional museums.

There was a significant increase in English and French print coverage of CMN discoveries and activities. Radio coverage increased overall in the National Capital Region, and French radio coverage went up 17%. The Museum won six awards for its inventive advertising at the 1998 Advertising and Sales Association (ASA) Awards Gala.

***Figure 2: Audience Reach***

|                  | 1997-98<br>Actual | 1998-99<br>Planned | 1998-99<br>Actual (to 98/11/30) |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| VMMB visitors    | 258,590           | 250,000            | 197,554                         |
| VMMB after hours | 35,294            | 52,800             | 22,026                          |

### *Performance Measures*

Again, visitor numbers show that the CMN’s strategy for enhancing public interest and support was a success. On average, there were 3,000 more visitors to the VMMB every month during the eight-month period under review than in 1997-98. Nationally, which includes travelling exhibits, attendance was exactly as projected. Local multi-media broadcast figures were nearly at projected year-end levels as early as the end of November, and Website visits increased dramatically.

#### **2. Revenue generation**

The objective was to increase self-generated revenues and other resources, and a number of strategies were developed.

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A Development team was recruited and a plan formulated for raising funds through individual, community, corporate and foundation donations. A feasibility study was conducted for a Capital Campaign to support the creation of new exhibits for the VMMB. A fee schedule was developed for CMN consulting services. Admissions, educational activities, rentals, product sales and parking all contributed significantly to the Museum’s operating revenue. A member of the research staff was awarded a \$27,000 research grant by the National Geographic Society, and efforts were stepped up to increase other grant contributions to Museum research.

### *Performance Measures*

Indications are that revenue-generation and fund-raising targets for the planning period will be met.

*Figure 3: Self-Generated Revenue (in dollars)*

|                               | 1997-98<br>Actual | 1998-99<br>Planned | 1998-99<br>Actual (to 98/11/30) |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Revenue Generating Activities | 1,531,000         | 1,408,000          | 1,060,000                       |
| Fund-raising                  | 393,000           | 95,000             | 75,000                          |

**The CMN undertook a comprehensive planning process in 1998, incorporating perspectives from stakeholders all across Canada.**

### **3. Operational efficiency and effectiveness**

The objective was to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the CMN's operations. The strategies were:

*A. Implementing new management practices in order to create a work environment conducive to a productive and effective work force*

The CMN undertook a comprehensive planning process in 1998, incorporating perspectives from stakeholders all across Canada. A new human resources framework was developed to help the Museum become a *continuous learning organization*. Negotiations were concluded with PIPSC and PSAC although performance pay remains to be negotiated. A review of Common/Corporate Services was launched, with more than 150 issues to be looked at.

*B. Continuing the development of new streamlined, integrated corporate information systems*

Acquisition and deployment of new corporate information systems (Collections Management Information System, FMIS, HRIS, and VMMB Ticketing and Reservation System) are proceeding on schedule. With their implementation, mission-critical systems will be Y2K compliant. Corporate software and hardware standards were established, a comprehensive personal computer plan was completed and implemented, and an updated Information Technology Plan was begun. The Museum's records classification system is being redesigned. A new base Information Technology Services agreement with Compaq (formerly Digital) was completed and implemented.

*C. Victoria Memorial Museum Building Master Plan*

A long-term, fully integrated VMMB master plan, designed to correct health and safety and building code deficiencies in this historic building and to increase visitor satisfaction and operational efficiency was completed in December. The master plan integrates budget and building infrastructure issues with a large

scale refit and renewal of the public spaces. Renewal of the VMMB is contingent on Crown funding to renovate the facility; once this is confirmed the campaign to raise funds in the private sector for exhibitions and programming can be launched.

### ***External Environment***

The Canadian Museum of Nature competes for visitors with several national and local museums in the National Capital Region. In the CMN's favour are its focus on nature, the scientific foundation of its exhibits and programmes, and its capacity to provide a live interactive experience with specimens; as a result, despite major new exhibitions at two other national museums and higher admission fees, attendance at the CMN increased slightly.

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The CMN's largest audience segment is young middle class families. Over 70% are English-speaking from Ontario, but a strong promotional campaign in the French-language media has boosted Francophone and Quebec visitorship. Entertaining children is the dominant explicit motivation for CMN's visitors, and high satisfaction levels, especially with hands-on exhibits and participatory activities, are evident.

Among existing signature exhibits, the Dinosaur, Mammals, and Birds of Canada, Creepy Critters and the Viola MacMillan Mineral Gallery are the overwhelming favourites, while Animals in Nature, Plant Life and the Earth Hall are less satisfying. The Arctic theme remains popular, so the "Arctic Odyssey" exhibit will continue for several more years.

As a national institution, the Canadian Museum of Nature relies to a great extent on federal government funding. To increase its public value, the Museum is vigorously pursuing additional sources of revenue, including individual and corporate donations and sponsorships and other private-sector partnerships. In the interests of greater efficiency, the Museum has adopted new accounting practices as approved by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Consumer research confirms that Canadians continue to be concerned about environmental issues and are demanding environmental education from respected unbiased sources, with a focus on solutions. The CMN is ideally positioned to be a unique and invaluable source of information in this regard.

**The Canadian Museum of Nature competes for visitors with several national and local museums in the National Capital Region.**

The new information technologies mean that people no longer have to go to see museums — museums can come to them. The CMN is taking advantage of the latest advances in interactive computer technology to reach the widest audience possible. Its Website is expanded regularly: 54 new elements were added to it in 1998–99. In the first half of last year, there were 25% more visits to the site than in

the same period of the previous year. Not only does the information highway bring the Museum to new “visitors”, it also gives CMN’s researchers easier access to data and enhanced ability to communicate findings to colleagues around the globe.

The Minister of Canadian Heritage has declared that her government’s priority is enhancing Canadians’ attachment to their country. By encouraging Canadians to view Canada from the perspective of nature — which transcends political boundaries — the CMN makes a significant contribution to this national policy objective.

***Corporate Resources***

- The CMN’s staff and volunteers are its most important asset and the primary factor in its ability to fulfil its mandate.
- Extensive national consultations with stakeholders have reinforced the important national role the CMN can play within the scientific and museum communities and with the public at large.
- The CMN is Canada’s national repository for collections of natural history. The Museum houses approximately 10 million specimens that are used by scientists across Canada and around the world.
- Research at the CMN focuses on socially relevant topics where the Museum’s expertise in systematics — the comprehensive study of the evolution and current status of minerals, fossils, plants and animals — can be applied by scientists and decision-makers in the conservation of biodiversity and in planning for wise use of resources.
- The Museum’s public programming fosters nature literacy, science literacy and informed discussion about the environment among Canadians, particularly families with young children.



## ***Challenges***

Potential year 2000 problems in mission-critical systems have been dealt with through the acquisition of new systems for managing finances, human resources, collections and public participation and use.

Renovation of the exterior stonework of the Victoria Memorial Museum Building was completed in 1998. Now the interior of this splendid heritage building (where the Parliament of Canada sat after the great fire of 1916) must be renewed if the health and safety of visitors and employees and the preservation of specimens on exhibit is to be assured. A six-year Master Plan has been drawn up and a submission to Treasury Board for infrastructure funding has been prepared.

14 Programmes and exhibits too must be continually renewed if they are to remain accurate, stimulating and educational. The CMN is working to sustain the public's regard for the institution as a key source of unbiased, relevant and insightful information. Shops, restaurants, rental facilities and public spaces must be refreshed and enhanced to increase visitors' comfort, to incorporate new knowledge concerning the elements that go into creating a 'readiness to learn' in a public education facility, and to strengthen the Museum's ability to generate revenue. A fund-raising campaign directed at the private sector has been designed to meet these needs.

The cost of operating the CMN's facilities including IT and security absorbs up to 40% of annual revenue while another 44% of the budget is allocated for staff. These high fixed costs limit the scope and scale of the public service CMN can provide. Through critical capital investments in the near term, CMN is seeking to achieve a new level of public visibility and service to enable fulfilment of the institution's essential mandate with renewed vigour, imagination and impact.

## **OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

The CMN has set four objectives for the five-year planning period, and formulated strategies for achieving each, along with performance indicators for measuring achievement.

**OBJECTIVE #1:** To increase national service and impact, *by increasing accessibility to Canada's natural history collections, acting as a focal point for knowledge on science issues and providing national education and outreach.*

**STRATEGIES:** This objective will be achieved by establishing a network of links with other institutions; matching the CMN's activities to government policy objectives; conducting a strong research program; increasing collection access; developing new travelling exhibits; answering and stimulating questions via the Website; strengthening media relations; and developing new publications for general audiences.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** Staff presentations to professional audiences outside the National Capital Region will be increased by 20% (79 to 95) over the five-year planning period. The number of refereed publications per staff members will be sustained at the level of two per year. A baseline will be established in 1999-2000 for non-refereed publications per year. Collections transactions will be increased by 15% (20,259 to 23,300) by 2003-04. Website visits will continue to increase.

**OBJECTIVE #2:** To better demonstrate the value of the work done by the institution, *by sharing the Museum's vast store of knowledge through a collection-based research programme, a strong programme of public education and community involvement and a variety of outreach initiatives.*

**STRATEGIES:** This objective will be achieved by offering a variety of high-quality interpretive programmes and providing a museum experience that is welcoming, engaging, and scientifically pertinent; by increasing communications and targeting advertising to attract both new audiences and return visitors; by enhancing public enjoyment of the VMMB through renovation of the interior and renewal of the exhibits and programmes; and by offering school programmes and guided tours at the Natural Heritage Building (NHB) in Aylmer.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** The number of visitors will be increased by 2% (250,000 to 276,000) by 2003-2004 and more if the capital investment in the VMMB is achieved. Baselines will be established in 1999-2000 for numbers of partnerships and for staff presentations to outside audiences.

**OBJECTIVE #3:** To put in place, maintain and continually improve an effective and efficient infrastructure of systems and facilities to support all institutional work, *by developing and improving corporate systems and services.*

**STRATEGIES:** This objective will be achieved by ensuring Y2K readiness and by upgrading hardware as required; by developing multi-year integrated plans for collections, research and public education; by developing a corporate Intranet; by completing the review of common services; by implementing and communicating the CMN's human resources plan; and by launching the phased renewal of the VMMB.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** Cost per user will be reduced from \$12.74 to \$11.50 by 2003-04. A baseline will be established in 1999-2000 for the number of professional development days per staff member. The percentage of the salary budget spent on professional development will be increased from 1.94 to 2%.

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**OBJECTIVE #4:** To increase self-generated revenue *thereby allowing the Museum to increase its public value in all three aspects of its mandate – research, collections and public education.*

**STRATEGIES:** This objective will be achieved by implementing a development programme; launching a capital campaign in the private sector for renewal of the VMMB; delivering educational programmes commissioned by specific groups; enhancing the revenue potential of the VMMB and the NHB; increasing consulting services; making full use of distribution agreements, royalties and direct mail marketing; and implementing cost reduction and cost recovery strategies.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES:** Revenue-generating activities will be increased by a minimum of 2% annually, reaching \$1,570,000 by 2003-04. Per-visitor gross sales will be increased from \$2.45 to \$3.40 over the period. Pledges from charitable gifts and sponsorships will be increased from \$225,000 to a sustainable minimum of \$500,000 annually. The number of potential donors approached will be increased from 50 to 25,000. Donation revenue will be increased from \$95,000 to \$1,620,000 by 2003-04.