

Past, Present and Future: Green Procurement at the B.C. Ministry of Environment

598 Policy Report

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Executive Summary

Objectives

This research was undertaken for the British Columbia Ministry of Environment (the Ministry or MOE) to develop a set of recommendations to integrate green purchasing practices into current MOE procurement decisions.

Green procurement is defined as the integration of environmental considerations into the procurement process (Five Winds International, 2002). “Green” can be a specific or broad concept depending on the objectives of the initiative. The B.C. Government’s (Government) current approach to greening procurement takes a narrow view, focusing on carbon neutrality. This aligns with the goal of carbon neutrality for government operations, as set out by the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act* (Government of B.C., 2007a). However, the MOE wishes to take a broader approach, incorporating supply chain logistics and toxics reduction, in addition to carbon neutrality.

This document reviews the literature on green procurement, discusses existing green procurement efforts in the MOE and B.C. Government, identifies opportunities and barriers to integrating green practices into current procurement decisions and provides recommendations on how to develop green procurement within the Ministry.

Summary of Methods

A variety of methods were used to gather information for this report. First, a preliminary literature review of academic journals, government documents and other reports was completed. A focus group composed of participants with various interests and expertise from the MOE and the Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services was conducted. The questions asked of the focus group were designed using force field analysis, discussing the barriers to and opportunities of introducing green procurement practices at the MOE. The researcher also attended various meetings and workshops including the Procurement Policy Climate Change Working Group meetings and a workshop hosted by the Sustainable Purchasing Network (SPN). The SPN Workshop also served as an opportunity to network with groups outside of government and learn about their experience and lessons learned.

Findings

The Findings section is divided into two parts. First, is a description of the actors in the BC Government’s procurement policy network and an indication of each group’s responsibility in the procurement process. Second, Ministry of Environment’s green procurement efforts to date are discussed. Included in this section are the results of the green procurement focus group. Each barrier and opportunity identified at the focus group, is discussed incorporating information from the literature ultimately informing the report’s recommendations. The barriers identified in the focus group are: desire, limiting choices, education, ministry structure, awareness of policy, cost, standards and specifications, life

cycle costing and performance measuring. The opportunities were identified as: leadership, financial benefits, industry partnership and supporting government goals.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are intended to outline the steps required for the development of a green procurement program at MOE. They are listed in priority order.

1. Executive Support –The Deputy Minister must support green procurement initiatives and the staff responsible for purchasing. The literature highlighted the importance of garnering executive support.
2. Green Procurement Action Plan – This document will be developed to outline green procurement policy and programs. Having this plan will help gain executive support.
3. Social Marketing Strategy – A MOE social marketing program should be developed and use different tactics to encourage staff to re-think their purchasing choices. One element of this program would be a green purchasing guide. Most jurisdictions that have implemented a green procurement policy have supplemented it with a guide to provide staff with resources and tools to put the policy into practice
4. Program Evaluation – An evaluation framework needs to be developed. A baseline analysis of current green purchases should be outlined. Goals to improve the percentage of green purchases and measures to determine the status of the program should be included. Tools used by other jurisdictions to measure performance are also identified.

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Introduction

Climate Change is a serious issue for governments, businesses and individuals. Recently, the British Columbia (B.C.) Government has made climate change a priority in its stated goals. In both the 2007 and 2008 Speech from the Throne, the importance of green living and the effects of climate change were discussed (Government of British Columbia, 2007b, Government of British Columbia, 2008a). With the *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act*, the Government has also committed all provincial ministries, health authorities, school districts, colleges, universities, crown corporations and other Government agencies to be carbon neutral by 2010¹. BC is the first jurisdiction in North America to make this carbon neutral commitment (Government of BC, 2008b). One of the ways in which this objective can be achieved is through the implementation of green procurement practices; paper purchasing alone accounts for three percent of Government wide greenhouse gas emissions (Government of British Columbia, 2008b). With less than two years remaining until the deadline, implementation strategies are needed. The Ministry of Environment is well positioned to help the Government devise such strategies.

The Ministry of Environment's Strategic Policy Division provides corporate leadership, coordination, analysis and inter-agency communications services (Ministry of Environment, n.d.). The Division commissioned this report to complement Government's carbon neutrality objective. However, the Division wishes to take a broader approach, an approach focused on the broader concept of environmental sustainability. Sustainability is defined as "forms of progress that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" (United Nations, 1987, Ch.1, para. 49). MOE is specifically interested in developing the idea of green procurement. Green procurement "involves the purchasing of products or services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose" (Five Winds International, n.d., para. 1). "Green" can be a specific or broad concept depending on the objectives of the initiative. Introducing sustainable purchasing practices is an innovative way for the Ministry to take a leadership role and use its buying power to potentially steer the market in a 'greener' direction.

Green procurement has been considered by the Government, but no obligatory policy has ever been set. The Government sets out its management and financial policy in the *Core Policy and Procedures Manual* (Ministry of Finance, 2007a). Currently, the Core Policy and Procedures' Environmentally Responsible Procurement Guidelines are the extent of an official green procurement policy (Ministry of Finance, 2007b). The Guidelines are listed in Appendix A of this report.

¹ "Carbon Neutral", in relation to a public sector organization for a particular period, means that the public sector organization has complied with the obligations under section 6 [requirements for achieving carbon neutral status] to

- (a) pursue actions to minimize the relevant greenhouse gas emissions for that period, and
- (b) net those greenhouse gas emissions to zero in accordance with that section

This study of green procurement is not the MOE's first effort in the greening of internal Ministry practices. In Winter 2006, the Ministry conducted a research project to estimate the Victoria headquarters building's environmental footprint. As a result of that work, a zero waste program has been implemented at the headquarters building that allows employees to recycle or compost the majority of their waste. The most recent green change at MOE is the creation of an operational policy regarding the use of 100% post-consumer recycled paper and default double-sided printing.

The purpose of the report is to provide recommendations on what strategies the MOE can pursue to establish the Ministry's leadership in the BC Government on integrating green procurement in its procurement practices. Based on existing responsibility allocations and drawing on the experiences of other jurisdictions with existing green procurement policies, MOE can pursue a number of practical strategies to position itself as a leader in green procurement.

Green procurement can be applied to both capital and operating purchases, with operating purchases consisting mainly of office supplies and furniture. Capital purchasing involves complex contractual relationships, and because of this, the scope of this report is limited to operating purchases, i.e., primarily office supplies and furniture. The main reason for limiting the scope of the report is because decisions regarding the purchase of office supplies are made by Ministry staff. Capital purchasing decisions are not made by Ministry purchasing staff.

Responsibility for procurement in B.C. is shared between three groups: the Procurement Governance Office (PGO), within the Office of the Comptroller General, in the Ministry of Finance; Procurement and Supply Services (PSS), a division within the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services (LCS); and each ministry which has its own purchasing staff. The PGO is responsible for the development of Government wide procurement policy. CBS is responsible for administering procurement in accordance with policy, and liaising with suppliers and manufacturers. Individual ministries' purchasing staff provide direction to CBS on desired product/service interests and verify the quality of delivered products. In addition, other staff members across government have individual purchasing cards to make purchases under \$5,000.

Now is a good time for the Ministry to take a closer look at how sustainability can be incorporated into procurement practices. The Ministry, by virtue of its mandate, plays a key role in all aspects of the Government's work with the environment. With support from the current Government, other jurisdictions and staff, there is an interest and desire for change. With a mission statement to "lead, inform, involve and support British Columbians to achieve the best environment stewardship and sustainability," a leadership role piloting new green procurement policies and initiatives seems appropriate for MOE (MOE, 2006, p.6).

The remaining sections of this report are as follows. The Methodology section discusses the different methods used to gather information for this paper. The research included: a literature review, a focus group session, informal interviews and participation in

workshops. The Methodology section also outlines and provides the rationale for why force field analysis was the approach used in the research. The Literature Review provides an analysis of green procurement using relevant academic journals, government documents and other reports. The review specifically focuses on the areas of economics, eco-labelling, supply chain and current MOE initiatives a green procurement program could link into. A jurisdictional scan of green procurement policies is also included. The Findings section is divided into two parts, first a discussion of the actors in the policy network and explanation of who is responsible for what. The other part is a discussion of current green procurement efforts being undertaken by the Ministry. This includes a discussion of the results from the green procurement workshop, identifying the barriers and opportunities for green procurement within the MOE. The Recommendations section synthesizes the findings into specific strategies for the MOE to implement a green procurement program. Several appendices provide more detail about research methods and a glossary of commonly used terms.

Methodology

The research completed for this report included a literature review, a focus group session, informal interviews with key staff members, participation in a Sustainable Purchasing Network workshop and attendance at a “Cradle to Cradle” design presentation. The research focuses on the procurement of supplies and furniture and excludes other capital expenditures because such the management of these expenditures is outside the MOE’s area of responsibility. Force field analysis was recommended by the client to guide the focus group and is commonly used to study organizational change. Force field analysis is discussed below along with the other methods used to put this report together.

Literature Review

Green procurement is a relatively new topic for which there is a limited amount of academic literature; however many non-profits and consulting agencies have resources on the subject. The literature review was completed to synthesize current research on green procurement. Articles and books were found through searches of Google, Google Scholar, and various databases available through the University of Victoria Library. Also, many unpublished sources, such as consultant reports, proposals and concept papers, were brought forth by the client. A compact disc containing several articles and documents was provided by the Sustainable Purchasing Network at their workshop. The information found provides the basis for the paper and helps to develop the recommendations.

A scan of green procurement policies from various jurisdictions is also included. The policies were limited to governments in Canada and the United States (U.S.) Federal Government to limit the scope of the review and to choose jurisdictions with similar purchasing conditions and needs as would be experienced in BC. Both the Canadian and the U.S. federal governments have green procurement policies. Manitoba and Alberta are the Canadian provinces that have the most developed policies implemented and proposed (EPRTG, 2008). Finally, after considering municipalities in BC, Whistler and Richmond were identified as municipalities within BC with well-developed policies from which examples of “smart practice” can be observed (Bardach, 1998). Richmond was the first municipality in Canada to develop a green purchasing policy and Whistler was another early adopter (Hughes, 2003).

Focus Group

A half-day focus group was held at MOE headquarters with LCS and MOE staff invited to participate. The workshop aimed to identify the barriers and opportunities surrounding green procurement at MOE. Participants were selected based on their expertise and experience with the topic. Attendees included administrators, policy advisors, directors, purchasers, and financial analysts. A list of participants is included in Appendix B. Sixteen people were invited and 12 attended, a 75% response rate. The research completed was approved by the UVic Human Research Ethics Board and the ethics documents are listed in Appendix D.

The workshop design was based on force field analysis, grouping ideas as either barriers or opportunities (Thomas, 1985). Force Field Analysis was developed to assist in analysing decision situations where a change in a specific direction, or of a given magnitude, is sought. This tool is widely used by organization development practitioners to plan and implement organizational changes (Thomas, 1985, Ajimal, 1985, Brager & Holloway, 1992). The analysis can also be used for evaluating forces affecting change. The theory states that all situations are in a temporary equilibrium and forces acting to change the situation are balanced by forces acting to resist change (Thomas, 1985).

“Force” is any factor or influence in an organization acting to change the organization’s state (Ajimal, 1985). Forces are generally referred to as “opportunities” and “barriers”. Change can be achieved by increasing opportunities or reducing barriers. Increasing opportunities without decreasing barriers can increase tension and conflict. For green procurement at MOE, these forces are embodied in staff attitudes towards the idea. Reducing barriers, as well as pushing opportunities is likely to be a more successful strategy than pushing opportunities in isolation.

Force field analysis helped identify barriers and opportunities for green procurement at MOE. The workshop and its materials were designed so participant responses could be classified as either a barrier or an opportunity. A diagram in the findings section shows barriers and what needs to be changed to increase the chance for a successful transition into a green procurement plan within the MOE.

The participants were given a worksheet and ten minutes to think and make notes individually. They were then divided into two groups to discuss their responses. At the end of the 45 minute group discussion, one member reported back on behalf of the group sharing the top barrier and top mitigation tactic for this barrier. After a break, the groups proceeded with the opportunities worksheet in the same manner, first with individual thinking time, followed by group discussion and reporting out. At the end of the second breakout group discussion, the group came together as a whole to discuss next steps. The worksheets are provided in Appendix C.

Workshops

The Sustainable Purchasing Network hosted a workshop entitled, “Integrating Sustainability into Purchasing” in February 2008, in which I participated. The workshop provided an opportunity to network and learn more about the efforts of other organizations, and provided an introduction to greening purchasing. Workshop materials included a CD of resources, some of which were used for the literature review.

I also attended a presentation given by Jay Bolus, Vice President – Technical Operations of McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC), a company that completes “Cradle to Cradle” design certification based on various criteria for environmental sustainability (MBDC, 2008). The presentation was centred on green procurement and the design of office supplies and furniture. The talk provided information on toxic chemicals in products. The information in this workshop emphasizes the need to consider green procurement from a broader perspective. Considering the fact that MOE wishes to consider

the aspects of procurement beyond climate change, attending this workshop was worthwhile.

Literature Review

The following literature review includes research on the subject of green procurement. The literature on green procurement discusses both the logistics of procurement and the economics behind it.

The first part of the literature review focuses on the literature that explains what makes a product green and provides guidance on how to identify a green product. What makes a product green is understood by comparatively examining the supply chain with and without green alternatives. Eco-labelling, a tool used to identify green products is also discussed.

The second part of the literature review examines the economics of procurement and the argument in the literature of whether environmental sustainability is worth a potentially higher product price, especially in the government context where purchases are made with taxpayer dollars.

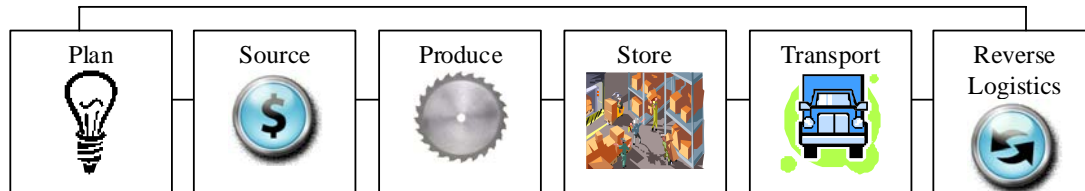
The final part of this section is a jurisdictional scan describing six different government organizations/jurisdictions that have implemented or are soon to be implementing a green procurement policy.

Supply Chain Considerations

Supply chain logistics explain the planning, storage, transportation and reverse logistics processes involved in getting goods and services to the right place, at the right time, and in the right condition, while minimizing the impacts on our natural and social environments (GVRD, 2005). Considering the entire supply chain takes procurement practices beyond the traditional considerations of solely how a product is made. A high performing supply chain results in increased revenue, reduced costs, improved asset utilization, and enhanced customer service (GVRD, 2005). A visual representation of the movement of goods from origin to destination in the traditional supply chain is seen below in Figure 1 (GVRD, 2005).

**Figure 1. Supply Chain Logistics Functions within an End-to-End Supply Chain
(Adapted from the Greater Vancouver Regional District Sustainable Supply Chain
Logistics Guide, 2005)**

Supply Chain Management Integrates All of these Functions



William McDonough and Michael Braungart (2002) examine the supply chain from a different perspective; discussing the idea of “cradle to cradle” design. Instead of the traditional cradle to grave system in which a product is developed, purchased and wasted, “cradle to cradle” is a closed-loop system where the item can be recycled or broken down into other useful items. McDonough and Braungart describe their goal as “eliminating the concept of waste – by design” (2002, p.15). They want the world to imagine products made of materials that are perpetually circulated in closed loops.

The mantra that McDonough and Braungart recite is “waste equals food” (p. 92). They explain, “the idea is to compose these products of materials that can be tossed on the ground or compost heap to safely biodegrade after use” (p. 105). At the end of product life, components can be used to create another product. The “cradle to cradle” idea is innovative because it addresses the root causes of environmental problems, instead of simply mitigating them. The “waste equals food” theory also links into Figure 1. Each stage of the supply chain could be made more sustainable with green alternatives.

One way products are made greener is through the components that producers choose to use for products in the plan/source/produce stages of the supply chain. In addition, the process of delivering the product to the consumer has an embodied energy use that could be decrease with less distance travelled. Like choosing locally grown food, consumers should be conscious of how far products have travelled when they are making green procurement decisions. Suppliers can cut down significantly on waste by choosing more sustainable ways to package their products, including less plastic and less packaging. Finally, at the reverse logistics stage of the supply chain a producer take back program could stop excess waste in the landfills and possibly stop hazardous material exposure from products that are improperly disposed of, for example computers with high levels of mercury.

McDonough and Braungart have a company called MBDC that has developed a certification process to identify “environmentally-intelligent design” (MBDC, 2008, para.1). Companies can pay MBDC to certify their products as “cradle to cradle”. Cradle to cradle certification means to create the product the company:

- Uses environmentally safe and healthy materials;
- Designs for material reutilization, such as recycling or composting;
- Uses renewable energy and energy efficiency;

- Efficiently uses water and ensures maximum water quality associated with production; and
- Institutes strategies for social responsibility (MBDC, 2008, para. 2)

Some “cradle to cradle” manufacturers have “environmental partnerships” to help consumers take their product to the next phase of its lifecycle – whether that is reselling or refurbishing, donating to charity or recycling. This extended producer responsibility component is an interesting practical application of the cradle to cradle model. However, the reverse logistics portion of the equation should consider the potential trade-off between the positive nature of recycling a product and the energy required to transport that product back to the manufacturer. This is something that could be considered by the MOE green procurement program. Each alternative is complex but MOE should recognize the factors that make up these alternatives and consider researching each further if an extended producer responsibility program is pursued. For example, the physical proximity of a building to a recycling depot may make recycling a more sustainable option than returning the product back to a manufacturer.

Identifying Green Products

In order to purchase green products staff must be able to identify them. This section is divided into two parts. First, a discussion of greenwashing provides information about manufacturers misleading consumers about the extent of the environmental nature of a company or product. Second, the concept of eco-labelling is explained as a means to identify products.

Greenwashing

As environmentally sustainable purchasing becomes more popular, the number of products advertised as green products is bound to increase. Swanson et al. (2004) note that one of the challenges to green purchasing is the variety of factors to consider when distinguishing or choosing environmentally preferable products. This challenge is increased when “greenwashing” techniques are used by manufacturers. Greenwashing is defined as the “act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service” (TerraChoice Environmental, 2007, para. 1).

- 1). Listed below are several greenwashing practices consumers need to be wary of:
- Unsubstantiated environmental claims;
 - Vague or misleading environmental claims;
 - Promotion of immaterial or negligible environmental benefits;
 - False claims of environmental benefit; and
 - Claims of environmental benefits that detract consumers from considering a product’s or a class of products significant environmental hazards (TerraChoice, 2007, para. 2-6).

Procurement staff need to remain vigilant to avoid being misled by greenwashing.



Eco-labelling

Eco-labelling is a voluntary method of environmental performance certification and labelling which certifies that a particular green standard has been met. Some of the

Environmental Purchasing Guidebooks provide lists of different eco-labels (US EPA, n.d.; Resort Municipality of Whistler, 2006). For the purposes of this report, only the eco-labels related to office products are listed below in Figure 2. A brief description of some common eco-labels is listed below and can be found in Appendix 6 of the Whistler Sustainable Purchasing Guide (Resort Municipality of Whistler, 2006) and on the website ecolabelling.org. MOE staff can use these recognizable symbols to identify green products.

Figure 2. Eco-label Examples

Eco-label	Description
<p data-bbox="256 520 784 556">Greenguard Indoor Air Quality Certified</p> 	<p data-bbox="854 520 1422 884">The Greenguard Environmental Institute (GEI) governs the GREENGUARD Certification Program and provides the world’s only guide to third-party certified low-emitting interior products and building materials. All certified products undergo quarterly indoor air quality performance testing according to stringent environmental chamber testing protocols and meet current air quality standards.</p>
<p data-bbox="256 919 618 955">Forest Stewardship Council</p> 	<p data-bbox="854 919 1422 1178">The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an independent, not for profit, non-governmental organisation that provides standard setting, trademark assurance and accreditation services for companies and organisations interested in responsible forestry.</p>
<p data-bbox="256 1213 483 1249">Transfair Canada</p> 	<p data-bbox="854 1213 1422 1507">In Canada, the Transfair label can be found on select brands of coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar, bananas and sports balls. Soon you’ll also find it on other products such as fruit juices and rice. Buying Fair Trade Certified products helps make the world a better place by paying farmers and working in developing countries for a fair price.</p>
<p data-bbox="256 1543 670 1579">Environmental Choice Program</p> 	<p data-bbox="854 1543 1422 1873">The Environmental Choice Program (ECP), Environment Canada’s eco-labelling program, provides a market incentive to manufacturers and suppliers of environmentally preferable products and services, and thereby helps consumers identify products and services that are less harmful to the environment. ECP is one of the longest running, most reputable</p>

	certification programs.
<p>Green Seal</p> 	<p>Green Seal is an independent, non-profit organization that strives to achieve a healthier and cleaner environment by identifying and promoting products and services that cause less toxic pollution and waste, conserve resources and habitats, and minimize global warming and ozone depletion.</p>
<p>Design for Environment</p> 	<p>Means that the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Design for Environment (DfE) scientific review team has screened each ingredient for potential human health and environmental effects and that – based on currently available information, EPA predictive models, and expert judgement – the product contains only those ingredients that pose the least concern among chemicals in their class.</p>

Eco-labels are an easy means for purchasers to quickly identify green products. Also, eco-labelling could be incorporated into government contract specifications (Resort Municipality of Whistler, 2006; Eco-labelling, 2008).

Economics of Green Procurement

Four billion dollars is spent annually on goods and services by the BC Government which makes it a powerful purchasing entity (Procurement Governance Office, 2008). The MOE headquarters building itself spends approximately \$300,000 annually on office supplies, printing and office machines (M. Saroya, personal communication, March 5, 2008). Government has the potential to significantly influence local economies and stimulate demand for lower-emission and energy-saving technologies, products and services. Budget 2008 includes two million dollars to develop a new low-carbon purchasing policy with, for example, a new emphasis on products that are designed to avoid waste as much as possible (Climate Action Secretariat, 2008). Government has an opportunity to make significant change.

Current market prices fail to provide an accurate account of the ecological and social impacts of products and services. This is because governments have not yet implemented economy-wide environmental taxation or regulations, likely as a result of a combination of lack of political will, information, and the complexity of implementing these types of taxes and regulation. Traditionally, procurement policy has focused on the financial bottom line; the cheapest items that maintain an appropriate level of quality are purchased. The idea of the “triple bottom line” has been incorporated into the policies of several institutions. The triple bottom line incorporates, “biophysical, social and economic dimensions” (Hacking &

Guthrie, 2008, p. 74). Instead of price being the sole factor for purchasing decisions, consumers are beginning to consider the externalities of their purchasing choices, with the environment increasingly being included in purchase considerations. Societal concern about climate change and the environmental effects of products means that some people are willing to pay more for a greener option.

In order to retain their competitive edge, businesses must respond to changes in demand. If consumers shift their demand towards green products and production processes, designers, manufacturers and suppliers will be forced to react. Environmental purchasing stimulates business for environmentally responsible companies and sets a strong example for other public purchasers and corporations. Swanson et al. (2004) state that “green purchasing represents an opportunity to create or enhance an environmental dialogue between manufacturers/distributors and consumers” (p.671). Greening government procurement “provides suppliers with a major incentive to reduce their environmental impacts and stimulate markets for sustainable products and services” (Thomson & Jackson, 2007, p. 421).

It may be argued that government has to be responsible with taxpayer dollars and should only be buying products at the cheapest cost. This argument assumes that green products are always more expensive, which is not always true (Carl, n.d.). Secondly, those products that are more expensive in regards to their initial purchase price save money over the product’s lifecycle (Carl, n.d.). One example of this is energy efficient light bulbs which are usually more expensive than their counterparts but last four times as long. Finally, since environmental degradation has not generally been factored in through taxation or regulation, governments can reduce costly degradation by purchasing products that may be more costly in the short run, but that reduce overall costs, including hidden costs, in the long run.

Green Procurement Policies

There are many examples of green procurement policies across jurisdictions. The federal governments in the United States and Canada both have policies to support environmentally preferable purchasing. Some Canadian provinces and BC municipalities have also developed green purchasing policies. More specifically the policies of the Canadian Federal Government, the United States Federal Government, the Province of Manitoba, the Province of Alberta, the Resort Municipality of Whistler, and the City of Richmond are reviewed below.

A green procurement policy can solidify direction and act as a communication tool to contractors and the community (Sustainable Oregon, n.d.). Components of green procurement policies include most or all of the following:

- A description of why it is important to buy environmentally preferable products;
- A definition of environmentally preferable purchasing;
- A list of desired environmental attributes;
- Inclusion of environmental considerations balanced with performance, availability, and cost requirements;

- Components to empower a green purchasing team;
- A list of initial priorities;
- Existing environmental labeling and certification programs;
- A communications plan;
- Measurable goals and reporting requirements; and
- A plan to review policy regularly. (Sustainable Oregon, n.d., para. 14)

This is an “ideal” list of components that MOE could aim to incorporate in an Action Plan. The policies listed below include many of these components.

United States Government

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Environmental Preferable Purchasing program (EPP) is a well developed government green purchasing policies. First developed in 1993, it has several supporting tools such as guidance documents, brochures and a database of environmental information for products and services. The database facilitates green procurement by providing information on products and services with reduced environmental impact (US EPA, n.d.). The database links to:

- Contract language, specification, policies created and used by federal and state governments;
- Environmental standards and guidelines for products;
- Vendor lists of product brands that meet these standards; and
- Other information (guidance documents, fact sheets, environmental preferable purchasing case studies).

The database is housed on the EPA webpage in the EPP section. A timeline on the page shows the development of the policy and exactly when changes and supplementary information were made public. “Sorting out green advertising claims” and “Tips for buying green with the government credit card” are two of the information documents available (US FTC, 1999; US EPA, 2000). These are useful tools for MOE and the BC Government.

Government of Canada

The Government of Canada developed a green procurement policy in 2006. In addition to requiring that green products be purchased when available and economically viable, the policy requires that deputy heads of all departments and agencies report progress in their annual Reports on Plans and Priorities and Departmental Performance Reports. In particular, reporting guidance indicates that departments should note their plans to implement green procurement policy or departmental targets. A government wide performance measurement framework for green procurement is currently being developed by the Office of Green Government Operations in Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC, 2008).

The federal government also offers several documents online to guide Departments in greening purchasing. A “sustainable development plan”, explained in the federal government’s paper, *Directions on Greening Government* (PWGSC, 1995), would be an appropriate document to outline a green procurement action plan. The federal government’s approach recommends that the following components be used in an action plan document:

1. Departmental Profile – identification of what the department does and how it does it.
2. Issues Scan – assessment of department’s activities in terms of its impact on sustainable development.
3. Consultations – the perspective of clients, partners and other stakeholders on departmental priorities for sustainable development and how to achieve them.
4. Goals, Objectives and Targets – identification of the department’s goals and objectives for sustainable development, including benchmarks it will use for measuring performance.
5. Action Plan – how the department will translate its sustainable development targets into measurable results, including specific policy, program, legislative, regulatory and operational changes.
6. Measurement, Analysis and Reporting of Performance – what mechanisms the department is establishing to monitor and improve performance.

The following list, developed by the Sustainable Purchasing Network, provides a good example of goals for a green procurement program (Sustainable Purchasing Network, 2008):

- Increase social, ethical and environmental performance within both the organization and supplier business operations
- Increase sustainability purchasing leading to innovation, trade and investment in the sustainability sector.
- Growth of minority-owned businesses and the sustainable enterprise sector (e.g. Aboriginal, social, Fair-Trade, and environmental enterprises)
- Create a best practice model for sustainable purchasing for our business sector
- Increase local purchasing and local economic development
- Improve working conditions and labour practices for supplier employees
- Maximize recyclability and recycled content
- Reduce toxicity of purchases
- Reduced carbon in the supply chain

Canada’s green procurement policy also includes an important staff education component. Offered through the Federal Government’s online staff learning portal, interested Federal employees can participate in an online course, free of charge that takes two to four hours to complete. No specifics of the course are listed on the Office of Green Government Operations Webpage (PWGSC, 2008). If interested the MOE should pursue more details about the information the course provides. It seems like such resources could be shared between governments.

Province of Manitoba

In 1998, the Province of Manitoba passed the *Sustainable Development Act*, which sets out the principles of sustainable development for the province. It required the establishment of Procurement Guidelines and the integration of the guidelines into provincial procurement manuals and procedures related to sustainability (Province of Manitoba, n.d.).

The Manitoba policy recognizes that the cost of some environmentally preferable products can be higher. It is noted that in all likelihood any cost premium will be offset by related benefits associated with conservation, life cycle cost analysis, full cost accounting and other changes in purchasing behaviour. Identifying this premium and still encouraging staff to make the greener choice shows that the Province of Manitoba is willing to internalize its negative externalities.

The procurement guidelines were developed to be broad in scope to give purchasing staff the opportunity to be flexible and creative in their application. To facilitate implementation of the procurement guidelines, a government wide procurement council was established. Staff realized that in order for guidelines to be effectively implemented they would have to be incorporated into existing procurement plans. Departments have to produce an annual report on Procurement Guideline implementation that will be made public through their annual departmental reports to the Legislature (Province of Manitoba, 2008).

Province of Alberta

In 2005, the Department of Alberta Environment (AENV) committed to develop a policy for procurement of environmentally preferred products and services. Although still in the development stages, the policy states environmentally preferred products and services will be purchased when they are available at reasonable cost, and available within the options under current departmental or Government of Alberta corporate supply arrangements (Province of Alberta, 2005).

The AENV policy is a departmental policy, as opposed to the other policies mentioned thus far that apply across government. The policy is currently in the early stages of implementation but “green procurement guidelines” are expected for various categories of products and services. These may include:

- Paper and paper products;
- Official Ministry publications;
- Office supplies;
- Computer, electrical equipment, and other supplies;
- Office and other furniture (including major appliances);
- Vehicles and transportation equipment;
- Food services and catering;
- Consulting services; and
- Developing ministry “Standing Offers” (Province of Alberta, 2005).

The guidelines will be developed in consultation with key stakeholders and approved by executive committees. Members of the Alberta Environment Office Ecology Team will be accountable for sharing the “green procurement guidelines” with AENV’s key purchasing officers and providing training and other implementation assistance to them. Finally, AENV plans to develop an auditing function to evaluate annual expenditures of goods and services, for which the green procurement guidelines have been developed. AENV will commit to reviewing individual “green procurement guidelines” one year after implementation, and every three years thereafter (Province of Alberta, 2005).

City of Richmond, British Columbia

In 2001, the City of Richmond released the “Environmental Purchasing Policy” and supplementary “Environmental Purchasing Guide”. The policy states that environmental considerations should be included in contract and tender specifications wherever possible. It commits the City of Richmond to look at all life cycle stages of products and purchase those that are more environmentally responsible. The policy also stipulates that cost and quality must not be compromised for the sake of environmental attributes (City of Richmond, 2000).

The Environmental Purchasing Guide provides implementation tools and includes specific purchasing guidance in the following areas:

- General building maintenance;
- Janitorial products;
- Vehicles and maintenance;
- Furniture and office systems;
- Office equipment and related services; and
- Office supplies (City of Richmond, 2000)

The Guide also includes the policy, general guidance for environmental purchasing, sample specifications and reference materials (City of Richmond, 2000).

Resort Municipality of Whistler, British Columbia

In 2006, the Resort Municipality of Whistler adopted a “Sustainable Purchasing Policy” with hopes of integrating the municipality’s commitment to sustainability into everyday purchasing decisions. The policy is supported by an online purchasing guide, designed to identify alternative products and help purchasers evaluate procurement decisions (Resort Municipality of Whistler, 2006). The policy itself uses the following six step approach to evaluating purchasing decisions:

1. Identify the product’s service;
2. Assess the need for the product;
3. Identify the product’s content;
4. Identify the product’s current sustainability impacts;
5. Envision a sustainable product/service; and
6. Identify and prioritize more sustainable options.

The needs assessment in step two is the most important part of this approach, because if the product is not needed, any purchase green or otherwise, is unsustainable.

The online purchasing guide is an important tool because it acts as a reference for staff members. The guide has three parts: (1) a background on sustainable purchasing; (2) a purchasing assessment; and (3) a glossary/tools/worksheets section. The unique component of this purchasing guide is the product assessment inventory. Each of Whistler’s commonly purchased products is listed with an image and a brief table listing components of the products purchasers should choose and avoid. For example, the table associated with “writing instruments” is below (Resort Municipality of Whistler, 2006).

Figure 3. Writing Instruments (Resort Municipality of Whistler, 2006)

Choose	Avoid
• Refillable pens and pencils	• Single use pens and pencils
• Recycled materials	• Virgin materials
• Bio based sustainably harvested materials	• Petro-chemical based and/or bio-based materials that are not sustainably harvested
• Soy-based or vegetable inks	• Inks containing heavy metals
• Water based markers or highlighters	• Solvent-based markers and highlighters
• Alcohol based dry-erase markers	• Ketone-based dry erase markers

Conclusion

This section sets out where green procurement fits within the supply chain and which stages of that process can be made greener. An understanding of greenwashing tactics and usefulness of eco-labelling as a tool to identify green products are noted. The economics argument ultimately supporting green procurement is also discussed. Finally, the scan of smart practices associated with green procurement in other jurisdictions is most relevant to this paper’s recommendations. MOE could use the common components to develop their policy. Components that are mentioned in more than one policy include:

- Outlining clearly which products the policy will affect
- Considering changes to contract and tender specifications (possibly including eco-labelling requirements)
- Including an Environmental Purchasing Guide as a resource for staff
- Requiring reporting of progress on the implementation of policy
- Creating an opportunity for staff green procurement training

Combining this information with what is described next in the Findings section will inform this report’s recommendation of how MOE can move forward with green procurement.

Findings

This section is divided into two parts. First, is a description of the actors in the BC Government's procurement policy network and an indication of each group's responsibility in the procurement process. Second, Ministry of Environment's green procurement efforts to date are discussed. Included in this second section are the results of the green procurement workshop. Detailed discussion of how MOE could go about overcoming barriers or capitalizing on opportunities follows. All of this information is required to form the report's recommendations.

Key Procurement Groups in the B.C. Government

Figure 4. Relationships of Actors in the BC Government Procurement Process

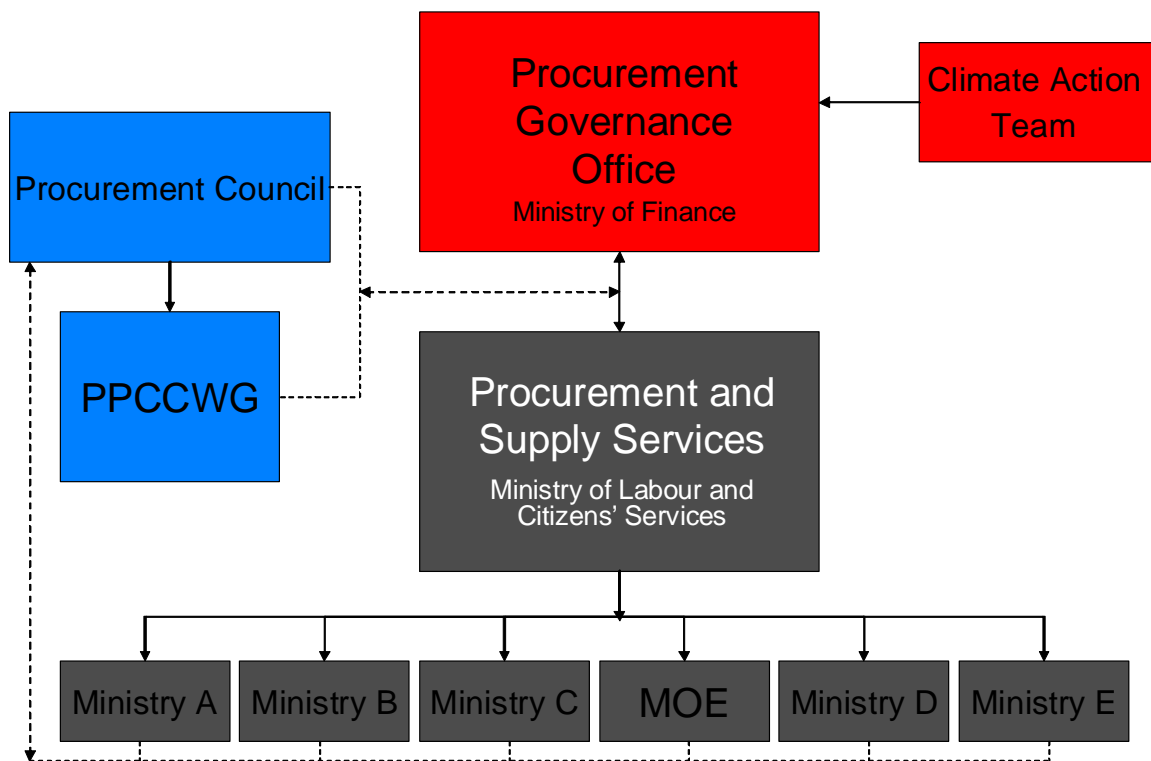


Figure 4 shows the relationships between the key procurement players in the BC Government. The diagram is colour coded. Red groups have a policy development role, the grey groups are involved in the practical, service delivery areas and the blue groups are responsible for issue development. Solid lines are process lines and dotted lines are feedback lines. Arrows that go one way show that one group affects the next, a two way arrow means that the groups affect each other reciprocally. Each group is explained in more detail below.

Climate Action Team

In November 2007 the Government announced the formation of the Climate Action Team. Invited by the Premier to take part, the team is made up of 22 experts in the field whose goal is to identify greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction policies and actions that will bridge the gap to help government meet its GHG reduction targets. In July 2008 the Climate Action Team released its recommendations. One of these recommendations was to amend the procurement portion of the province's core policy to incorporate the triple bottom line and to incorporate life cycle costing into contracts and purchases, sending a signal to industry about the government's changed procurement focus (Government of BC, 2008c). This is a significant development because the recommendations from the Climate Action Team will be taken very seriously by Government. The Premier has acknowledged that the opinions of these experts are to be respected (Government of BC, 2008c). These developments indicate Government support for green procurement.

Ministry of Finance - Procurement Governance Office (PGO)

The PGO was established in 2002, with the goals of “modernizing government's corporate procurement policy, providing support and training to staff, and monitoring compliance with procurement policies” (Ministry of Finance, 2008a, para. 2). Since its establishment, the PGO has introduced the *Procurement Services Act* in 2003, which has enabled the “modern, efficient provision of government procurement services” (Ministry of Finance, 2008a, para. 4). The Act identifies five procurement principles: competition, demand aggregation, value for money, transparency and accountability (Ministry of Finance, 2008a). However, at no point do any of the principles or policies specifically address the environment.

The only green procurement resource currently available for B.C. ministries is the *Guidelines for Environmentally Responsible Products and Services* (Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, 2006). “The Purchasing Handbook”, a document that is publicly available on the LCS Purchasing Services webpage, states that “the environmentally responsible procurement guidelines are designed to encourage ministries to consider environmentally responsible products as part of purchasing decisions” (Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, 2006, p. 5). One of the principle statements reads, “where feasible and cost effective and where the products are compatible with individual ministry requirements, preference should be given to purchase of environmentally sensitive products and services” (Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, 2006, p.5). The guidelines were designed with three main objectives:

- “making B.C. an environmental role model for government procurement by making it a priority to use environmentally responsible products and services, where feasible and cost effective;
- to increase demand for environmentally responsible products and services, this may ultimately enhance quality and cost competitiveness; and
- to continue to increase government conservation of resources through use of more reusable products, and products and services that require less energy and materials to produce/use” (Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, 2006, p. 5).

The Guidelines are non-binding and therefore ministry compliance is voluntary. In an April 2007 Ministry of Finance concept paper, the idea of expanding existing procurement policy to include environmental impacts when conducting individual assessments was brought forward. These suggested policy changes would ultimately be the responsibility of the Procurement Governance Office because they are the only body with the authority to change government wide procurement policy. As a result of that concept paper, the previously mentioned PPCCWG was created to explore options for government-wide green procurement practices.

Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services – Procurement and Supply Services

Procurement and Supply Services (PSS) manages the practical side of procurement for government. The recently updated *Procurement Services Act* provides the legal authority for PSS to enter into contracts for goods and services on behalf of ministries. The staff members at PSS liaise between suppliers and government. They manage and develop Corporate Supply Arrangements (CSAs). A CSA is an arrangement where a supplier offers to provide goods or services to one or more government or public sector entities for a defined period of time with pre-determined terms and conditions, and at a negotiated price (Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, n.d.). CSAs maximize the financial savings achieved through demand aggregation. Section 6.3.2 of Treasury Board core policy states that if a requested item or service is available in an existing CSA, ministries must acquire them through this arrangement (Ministry of Finance, 2007a).

The Distribution Centre Victoria (DCV), managed by LCS, serves the B.C. government, broader public sector and publicly funded agencies (Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, n.d.). Stationary and office supplies, managed inventory services and protocol and specialty giftware can all be purchased through the DCV. All items available through the DCV are streamlined through existing CSAs. Although it is encouraged for all staff to use the DCV, if it is not used, the purchase can be made directly from a supplier using a purchase order or purchase card.

In the spring of 2008, five new procurement specialists were recruited to provide climate action and advisory services to ministries and public bodies located throughout British Columbia. These positions will apply an environmental lens to the assessment of business needs and risks, drafting environmental factors into the competitive bidding process for goods and services, carrying this environmental lens through to the negotiation of results contracts and following up with customers and suppliers to ensure that environmental commitments have been met.

Ministry Purchasing Staff

Each Ministry has purchasing staff that are responsible for ministry wide purchasing of office supplies. As mentioned, many purchasing decisions in the BC Government are decentralized, as in addition to the designated purchasing staff, many staff members have

credit cards for making government purchases. Anyone who makes purchases on behalf of government has to follow the guidelines set out by PSS.

Figure 5. Purchasing Process (Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services, 2006)

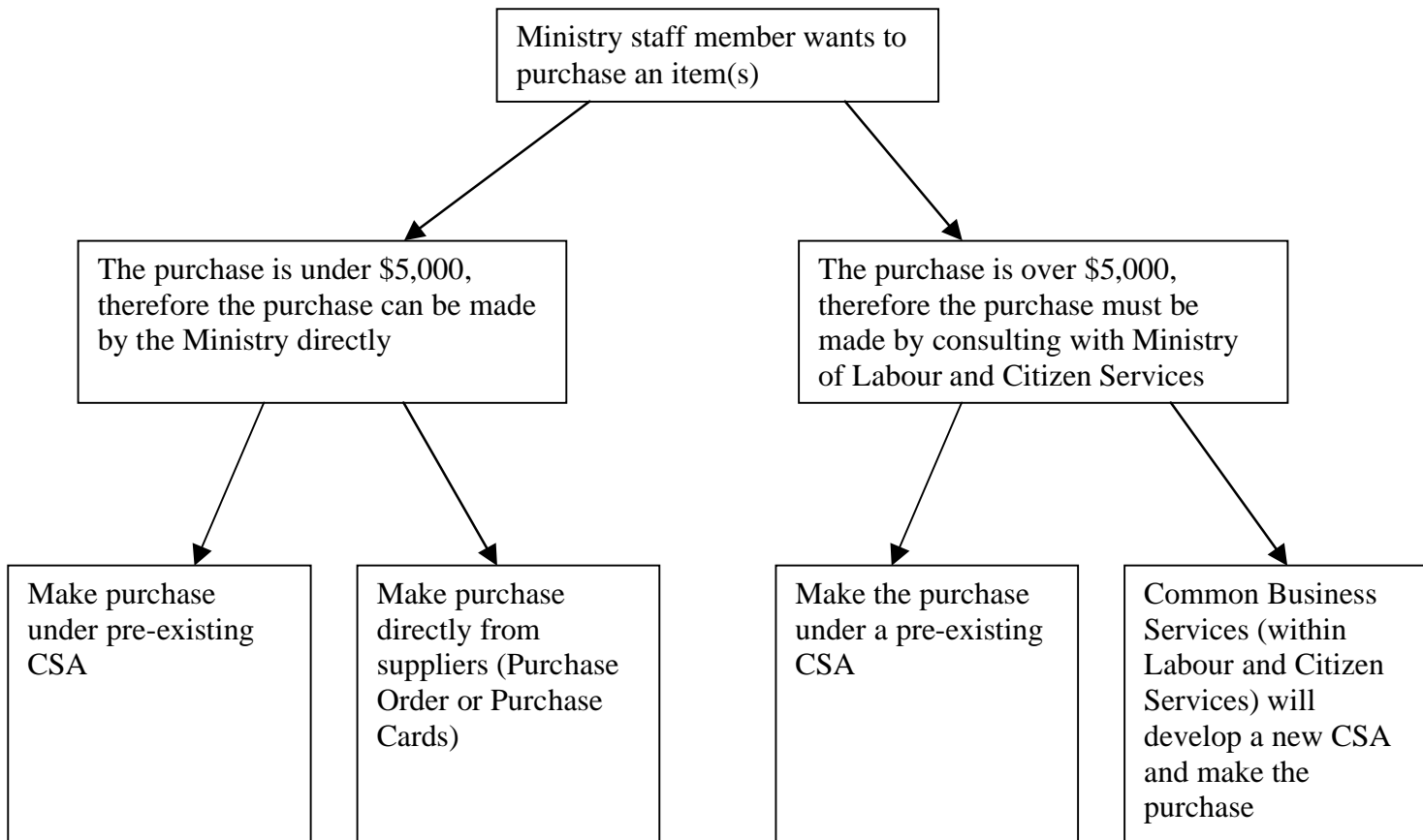


Figure 5 illustrates the process that any ministry employee has to follow when purchasing items on behalf of government. Ministries have full authority to contract for services as long as the contract complies with applicable government policy; it is the role of PSS to assist them in obtaining these contracts².

Procurement Council

The Procurement Council consists of representatives from both LCS and PGO and also includes a representative from each Ministry, although participation is voluntary. The council is co-chaired by one representative from LCS and one representative from PGO. MOE has one representative on the Procurement Council. The B.C. *Core Policies and Procedures Manual* states that, "Procurement Council supports an effective and productive relationship between procurement governance, procurement service and clients for shared procurement delivery, including promotion of best practices for government procurement

² The complete list of current CSA's is available on the Purchasing Services webpage. <http://pss.gov.bc.ca/csa/csa.html>

and corporate resolution of procurement policy and service issues” (Ministry of Finance, 2008a, sec. 6.2, para. 7).

Procurement Policy Climate Change Working Group (PPCCWG)

PPCCWG is a sub-group of the Procurement Council. The Terms of Reference for the PPCCWG give it a mandate to make recommendations to Procurement Council concerning policy in support of climate action initiatives. The group’s recommendations will address:

- expanding existing procurement policy to include the assessment of environmental impacts when engaged in procurement activities;
- direction regarding the application of the *Guidelines for Procurement of Environmentally Responsible Products and Services*; and
- addressing outsourcing, alternative service delivery and third party services (Ministry of Finance, 2008b, para. 1).

PPCCWG is composed of specific members of the Procurement Council and government staff with an interest in greening procurement. These additional staff members were invited to join the group by the co-chairs. The working group is also co-chaired by the Procurement Governance Office (Ministry of Finance) and the Purchasing Services Branch (LCS). MOE has two members on this working group, one from Corporate Services Division and one from Strategic Policy Division.

Discussion amongst the group is currently focused on developing policy for procurement of green goods and services and estimating the effect this policy would have on existing contracts. The overall focus of this group is to help government deliver on its carbon neutral mandate through procurement practices. In the future, PPCCWG will focus on “green” initiatives beyond climate change. It is important for MOE to stay current with happenings at PPCCWG, as this is where any decisions about a government wide green procurement policy will be made.

Ministry of Environment Green Procurement Efforts

The procurement efforts listed below are meant to describe first steps taken by the Ministry. These could potentially be developed further and brought together into a green procurement action plan.

Save Our Seats (S.O.S)

In Fall 2007 two MOE staff members put together a proposal to implement a pilot project to purchase “cradle to cradle” chairs. The goal of this pilot project is to see the gradual introduction of office chairs that have been designed for their effectiveness from a lifecycle perspective. When a public servant’s current chair reaches the end of its useful life, that employee will receive a “cradle to cradle” certified chair in replacement. When the “life” of these chairs end, they can be recycled into a new or similar product, eliminating waste entirely. “Cradle to Cradle” certification also includes criteria of energy-use quantity and

quality, such as the use of renewable energy and further contributing to GHG emission reductions.

Using this initiative as a first step will help the MOE to explore what CSA protocol revisions will entail and how to liaise with LCS to make any required changes. Addressing supply chain issues, specifically end of life options, will likely be this biggest hurdle to the project's success. This project will also provide an opportunity to engage and educate staff.

100% Recycled Paper & Duplex Printing

The Ministry is actively decreasing its carbon emissions by reducing the amount of paper used and using recycled paper. In January 2008 an email was sent to all MOE employees announcing the Ministry's decision to begin using only 100% recycled paper for all printing and photocopying purposes. This change was made to support green initiatives and to reduce the Ministry's carbon footprint. Offices were asked to transition to this type of paper as old stocks were depleted. Switching to 100% recycled paper will help the Ministry in its carbon reduction goals.

A subsequent email was sent to all MOE employees on April 11, 2008 regarding duplex (double-sided) printing. Double sided printing will be set as the default setting on all Ministry printers. The email also informs staff that with the estimated reduction of 20% in paper use, the carbon footprint for MOE and Corporate Services Division (CSD) could reduce their carbon footprint by 12 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per year, the same impact as taking three new cars off the road. Moving to duplex printing will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions but should result in savings of \$9000 for MOE and CSD annually.

Making these small changes can have a significant effect, not only financially as discussed, but also as an educational tool for staff.

E3 Fleet Vehicle Program

In November 2006, the Ministry provided initial start up funding for the E3 Fleet project (FBC, 2007). The program provides tools to private and public sector fleet managers, helping them reduce costs, reduce environmental impact, adopt new technologies and benchmark their operation against others (FBC, 2007). The MOE partnered with the Fraser Basin Council and Western Economic Diversification Canada on this initiative. As a founding member of the project, the Ministry was given the option to take advantage of the opportunities and services the E3 Fleet Program provides.

The program has four components:

- Green Rating Guide;
- Points system for determining just how green a fleet is;
- A third party audit of fleets; and
- Ultimate rating at the Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum level.

The ultimate goal of E3 is to reduce energy consumption and pollution. In the early stages it was thought that MOE would serve as the government pilot for the E3 fleet program. However, since the program's inception the pilot role has been transferred over to the Ministry of Small Business and Revenue. While some progress was made while MOE had the lead role, it became apparent that a centralized, rather than regionally organized, ministry would be better suited to the pilot. As of 2005, the Government operated the largest fleet of hybrid gasoline-electric passenger cars in Canada (FBC, 2007). The vehicles are meant for everyday use throughout the province in all types of road and weather conditions. Other efforts directed at greening the fleet include: hybrid/alternative fuel vehicles, using biodiesel and ethanol fuel blends, switching to more efficient vehicles and reducing kilometres travelled.

Hybrid vehicles are seen by the public when government staff use them to drive for work offsite. By choosing to purchase hybrid cars, citizens are aware that government is making an effort to choose green modes of transportation. This public visibility is a key opportunity or leverage point for green initiatives.

Green Teams

In 2007, Ministry of Environment organized groups of interested staff that work together to implement projects that will foster principles of environmental sustainability in the workplace. The end goal of the Green Teams is to reduce the environmental footprint and CO₂ emissions of Ministry operations and spheres of influence. These teams link to a green procurement initiative because they could be part of developing a pilot project and could be used to increase staff engagement and education. The participation of employees in the development of new procedures and policies will make staff more supportive during implementation and facilitate a smooth integration of green purchasing practices (PWGSC, 1995).

Partnership with Alberta

In 2008 an information note was written jointly by MOE and the AENV staff to prepare for a joint executive meeting on the subject of harmonizing green procurement practices. The note outlines the current status in both B.C. and Alberta procurement and notes possible areas of future harmonization between the jurisdictions. Areas of focus include: cross government procurement policies, green buildings, green purchasing and asset management, information technology, fleet management, environment ministry initiatives. Three key opportunities are also identified for both immediate and medium-term harmonization. First, is the potential to harmonize paper policies. Alberta Environment could expand on its existing recycled paper policy to require 100% recycled content for general office uses. This policy would mirror the one in place at B.C. Ministry of Environment. Second, a smart purchasing initiative could be put in place. B.C. and Alberta Environment could each commit to restrict procurement of office supplies beyond paper to green product alternatives currently available within existing standing offers. Finally, a 'clean sweep' initiative could be developed. This would involve BC and Alberta Environment jointly piloting and funding a green cleaning project for staff cleaning

supplies. Currently, neither jurisdiction has protocols in place respecting staff use of cleaning products.

It is also explicitly stated in the paper that the opportunities identified are intended to complement environmentally responsible purchasing projects already underway in each jurisdiction. In each instance, the Environment ministry would be establishing itself as a government leader in green procurement strategies. Both Ministries benefit from the opportunity to be privy to lessons learned in a similar jurisdiction. This will be an important relationship to continue to develop.

Environmental Responsible Procurement Toolkit

The MOE Change Section and LCS Purchasing Services Branch developed a toolkit for use in evaluating suppliers' bids. The final version of the "Environmental Responsible Procurement Toolkit" (ERT) was developed in February 2007 and was presented to several members of the Procurement Council (Tim Reeve & Associates, 2007). The toolkit provides a framework for considering how environmental factors could be incorporated into the procurement process. The toolkit identifies key environmental issues and solicits information from the vendor about the magnitude of potential environmental impacts. The four steps of the program are:

1. Assess and scope the need for product;
2. Assess key environmental issues;
3. Determine environmental questions to include in Requests for Proposals; and
4. Evaluate environmental impacts and costs based on vendor responses.

In addition to the four steps, the ERT identifies six key environmental issues or hazards, each covering major environmental impacts and associated financial costs. The six categories are:

1. Negative emissions to air, land and water;
2. Energy efficiency;
3. Transportation;
4. Chemicals;
5. Toxic or hazardous materials or substances; and
6. Waste

The toolkit also includes environmental questions to ask of producers in regards to environmental practices. These questions are designed to be included in requests for proposals.

The Procurement Council stated that more work was required before this toolkit could be used government wide and requested improvements that focused on verifiability, measurability, consistency and validity. The toolkit was considered complicated and the fact that it remained an optional tool for ministries meant that it was not enforceable. Soon after the presentation to Procurement Council, one of the key staff members involved in the development of the toolkit left government. The loss of this champion slowed progress. Lastly, it was clear that government was in a process of reinventing itself as a 'green'

organization but there were no specifics about what that would mean in terms of funding and policy approaches.

In January 2008 the Procurement Policy Climate Change Working Group (PPCCWG) discussed the toolkit and suggested it be used to develop new policy for green procurement. One of the roles of the PPCCWG is to review the toolkit and see if it can be improved and provide recommendations for an implementation strategy. In March 2008, the PPCCWG, decided that the toolkit would not be the focus of any new green procurement policy. Instead, focus was placed heavily on low carbon procurement. Although this tool is not being considered by the PPCCWG, it is still an available option for MOE to consider.

Green Meetings and Travel

The “Fast Facts” Newsletter sent to all MOE staff in March 2008 identifies the new “Hotel Guide” for B.C Government employees posted on the purchasing services webpage. A new addition to this year’s Hotel Guide is the Green Key certification³. The guide lists Green Key properties first. The identification of these properties and their placement in the guide is intended to encourage government travellers to consider the environmental footprint of properties when choosing accommodations.

Green Procurement Focus Group

In March 2008, the green procurement focus group was held at the MOE and included staff participation from MOE and LCS. The purpose of this group was to discuss the possibility of green procurement practices into MOE’s current purchasing process. Through worksheets and group discussion, staff revealed their perceptions of opportunities and barriers surrounding green procurement (see Appendix B for listing of participants).

³ Green Key is a “graduated rating system designed to recognize hotels, motels, and resorts that are committed to improving their fiscal and environmental performance” (Hotel Association, n.d., para. 1). To obtain a Green Key ranking, companies must fulfil a long list of environmental requirements. Based on the results of an environmental audit, completed by the Hotel Association of Canada, businesses are rated on a 1-5 scale, five being the highest (Hotel Association, n.d.). When necessary, companies are given guidance on how to look for opportunities to reduce operating costs and environmental impacts through reduced utility consumption, employee training, and supply chain management.

Figure 6. Visual representation of barriers and opportunities at the MOE

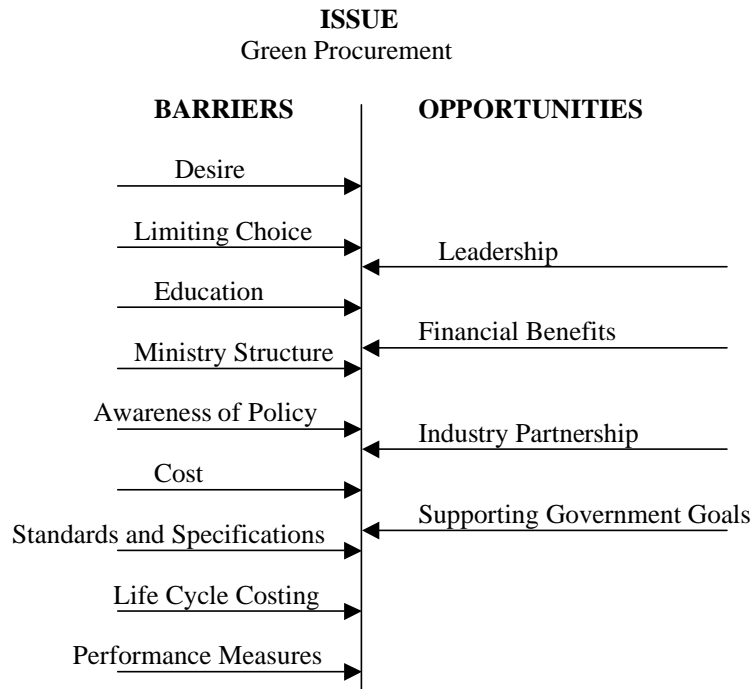


Figure 6 is a visual representation of a force field analysis and the barriers and opportunities discussed in this section are inserted.

Barriers – Key Themes

During the workshop several common barriers were established and amalgamated below into seven themes. The seven barriers, in no particular order are:

Desire

Desire in this context means political and personal desire. Staff have to want to pursue green procurement for it to happen. Currently, service plan priorities are not specifying sustainable purchasing as a goal for the ministry therefore it ranks lower as a political and professional priority.

There is also the concept of corporate memory and certain staff having a cynical view of buying green. Long-time staff are aware that green purchasing efforts have been tried and have faltered before. Some staff are sceptical about the effects of green procurement initiatives. Some staff may question the benefits of buying green.

Limiting Choices

There is a perception amongst staff that by choosing to purchase green, product choices become limited. This may or may not be true depending on perspective. There are green

alternatives to most things the Ministry purchases. However, some staff might not be aware of green alternatives or the fact that in some cases, making the green choice means not making the purchase at all. During the workshop, participants mentioned concern that there might be a limited number of green vendors and it may mean buying outside of B.C. which may not be the overall “greenest” choice. Truly, there are greener alternatives to most of the products needed to support the work of a public servant. The list of green alternatives provided in the Municipality of Whistler’s Green Purchasing Guide proves this point providing green alternatives for 20 different product categories. Having a somewhat limited selection may lead to financial benefits in the long run. Limiting choice may decrease unnecessary or wasteful purchases. There is no fundamental barrier to having MOE buying green and participants suggested perhaps choice may not be as strong a barrier as desire.

Education

Education or lack thereof, is another key barrier for greening procurement. Firstly, the term ‘green’ needs to be clearly defined. People understand the term “green” to mean sustaining and maintaining environmental integrity. However, the term is applied to many different processes in the workplace and can mean different things depending on the context. Having a tool to inform staff of Ministry choices and progress would allow for a stronger feeling of inclusively and sharing of information amongst staff.

A social marketing program can have an educational component. Social marketing is defined as, “an integrated marketing communication approach to promoting behaviour change that benefits individuals or society” (Wilbur, 2008). Social marketing could be used as a way to gain executive support. By explaining buying choices, expressing the Ministry’s interest sustainable purchasing and examining an individual’s real need to purchase a particular item, more staff members may be encouraged to think twice before purchasing unnecessary or unsustainable products. A social marketing program can design a theme, for example, “together we can come up with a Ministry solution”. Another component of staff education is identifying where green products can be purchased and how staff can easily access them. This type of information could be included in a green purchasing guide like that used in Whistler and Richmond.

Ministry Structure

The organizational structure of the MOE is perceived by staff as another barrier for green procurement. MOE is identified as one of the most decentralized Ministry structures within the B.C. Government, having regional offices and a significant number of staff working across the province. Consequently, there are purchasers located across B.C. for each office or region. The push for change lies in the mass buying power of the Ministry, however when purchasing is dispersed throughout the ministry and from person to person, it is harder to coordinate purchasing efforts. It is important to stress the value of using CSAs and having sustainable CSA options available. Reducing the number of orders or duplicate purchases is a simple green step. This again illustrates why the education component of the initiative is so important.

Awareness of Policy

Many staff have a limited awareness surrounding current purchasing policy. Among workshop participants, the general consensus is that low price is the supreme law for purchasing decisions. It is thought that the financial component carries the largest weight. This perception, in conjunction with the fact that people tend to believe that green products cost more, creates a perceived barrier that is very significant for staff. The ultimate price that we pay for damaging the environment when we make unsustainable choices needs to become a factor in the decision making process and culture. The recommendation made by the Climate Action Team, to incorporate life cycle costing into contracts and purchases, shows that government needs to begin incorporating a greener focus into procurement decisions.

The lack of awareness about purchasing policies illustrates a need for more communication to staff regarding purchasing issues. Making information available about the effects of purchasing choices and how to use purchasing cards more sustainably would be helpful. These types of resources could be kept in a green purchasing handbook.

Cost

Each ministry has a budget. As discussed in the limiting choice section, there is a common belief that green products are more expensive. As a result of this, many staff at the workshop were concerned that green procurement is not a financially sustainable option. Although green products can initially be more expensive, by collectively making a change government can use its purchasing power to lower the price differential of 'greener' goods. Also, if government develops CSAs with green distributors, there is the possibility of comparable pricing for green products. One hundred per cent recycled paper has become significantly less expensive since the ministry first identified it as an option (E. Scraba, personal communication, March 5, 2008).

Standards and Specifications

What is written in the purchasing request for proposal is what the supplier must follow to win the contract bid. MOE is aware that is a complicated process to begin changing standards and specifications. Any changes MOE would want to make to contract with a potential green procurement policy would have to be discussed with Common Business Services at LCS. As a result, MOE and LCS have started discussing the process for making the change. MOE suggested the integration of eco-labelling requirements, including environmental questions about the organization into contracts or the inclusion of extended producer responsibility clauses. Extended producer responsibility is an initiative that would have to be considered in conjunction with the LCS. It would mean changing current contracts and inserting some language addressing the requirement that producers will have to take back products for disposal at the end of product lifecycle.

Life Cycle Costing

Life cycle costing is a method used to establish the total cost of owning, operating and maintaining a product over its entire lifespan. It takes into consideration operating and maintenance costs incurred over the lifetime of the product plus the initial capital costs. In many cases the upfront costs for green products are higher but it may mean the product will be longer lasting or more sustainable in the long run. Including life cycle costing and implementing extended producer responsibility will reflect the Ministry's mandate. Life cycle costing would be more complex, take longer to develop and would likely be more expensive than pursuing a process that focuses on eco-labelling. However, it may be the type of process that is developed over time. Eco-labelling is an easy first step, life cycle costing could be incorporated later.

Life cycle costing is a tool in Manitoba's green procurement policies and is also mentioned in the BC Climate Action Team's Recommendations.

Performance Measures

Performance Measures are important for any initiative in order to determine what sort of effect the change has. According to the *State of the World Report*, "many green purchasing efforts fall short because organizations do not set strict targets for the activity and there is no system of accountability" (Halweil and Matsny, 2004, p.134). Although it could be a very complicated process, having an inventory to show which, if any, green products the Ministry currently purchases would be helpful. Both the total and the percentage of the relevant budget allocated to green products purchased is useful information. This data would set a base for comparison over time.

Once these base numbers are recorded it will be important to set realistic goals and targets for the future of a green purchasing initiative. Purchasing staff and staff from the Strategic Policy Division could work together to prioritize and determine easy steps for increasing the number of green purchases. The Environmental Responsible Toolkit could be used to define "green" products (Reeve et al, 2005).

Comparison with other Ministries within B.C. and outside of the province, would inform how the MOE measures up. The BC-Alberta Harmonization Initiative allows MOE to determine how it compares to Alberta and to observe and share successes between neighbouring provinces.

Tactics to overcoming barriers

In order to overcome the barriers, the study groups listed a variety of tactics that could be used for mitigation including:

- Changing mindset;
- Limiting staff choice;
- Government acting as a model or catalyst for new technology;
- Establishing environmental standards and specifications;
- Educating staff;
- Educating executive;
- Having information available;

- Changing perceptions of need;
- Adopting lifecycle costing; and
- Implementing performance measures.

Summary

The groups determined that the number one barrier to implementing leadership on green procurement within MOE is individual desire or will. The participants felt that without desire from all staff at the Ministry, green procurement will not be successful. An effective green procurement program requires that most staff participate, since MOE has such a decentralized purchasing set up, and without staff buy-in the success of any green procurement policy would be threatened. The mitigation tactic that was mentioned most often by both groups was educating the executive. Staff members feel that if there is interest at the top level of the organization then the message will be passed down and any choices made to purchase green will be defensible.

Opportunities Key Themes

During the workshop several common opportunities to securing green procurement at MOE were discussed, the key points are listed below.

Leadership

Since 2006, the environment has consistently ranked as a top concern for Canadians (Hoggan, 2008). Studies show that the environment is a deeply held value for Canadians and their concern is driven by awareness of global warming. While Canadians do not generally understand the word “sustainability”, Canadians’ values are in line with the principles of sustainability (Hoggan, 2008). It also noted that Canadians are looking for leadership on sustainability, but they struggle trusting business and government to provide leadership, let alone leadership on sustainability. The Hoggan report identifies green procurement as a good first step in terms of strategies for government to regain trust.

Adopting some sort of green procurement policy would promote a leadership role in environmental sustainability for the MOE amongst the B.C. provincial government ministries. As the MOE, there is a natural interest in sustainable environmental processes. It is only logical that a sustainable purchasing initiative should begin at the MOE. Environment departments in the federal U.S. and Canadian federal and provincial governments were responsible for initiating green purchasing policies. Green procurement policies align with the push from the centre of government to reduce the carbon footprint and eventually have a carbon neutral government. Ultimately these strategies support the goals set out in the MOE Service Plan. Adopting a greener procurement strategy could also mean opportunities for involvement in the redesign of the Corporate Procurement catalogue.

In order to push such an initiative forward support from the executive levels of the Ministry is required. In much of the literature addressing green procurement implementation strategies, management level buy-in is considered a vital part of the process (Brager and Holloway, 1992; Schwering, 2003). The Environmental Responsible Purchasing Toolkit

notes that advancing the strategy will be greatly assisted by high-level (Premier/Cabinet/Deputy Minister) messaging that emphasises the interest and importance of environmentally responsible procurement and clearly links this activity to key government objectives (Tim Reeve & Associates, 2007).

Financial Benefits

The procurement process has traditionally been centred around which company can supply the required product for the least cost. The introduction of other factors such as the environment and social concerns could cause organizations to stray somewhat from the traditional focus.

Although some staff are concerned with the potential prospect of higher prices for green products, implementing sustainable purchasing practices will have positive effects. It will be difficult to measure how the premium paid for a green product compares to the cost of the negative externality the product avoids. So, the purchasing staff should look to identify green products that are most reasonably priced compared to the traditional alternative. According to Five Winds (2002) there are several ways that governments can see financial benefits from adopting green procurement practices.

- Cost avoidance – lower waste management fees, lower hazardous material management fees, less time and costs for reporting
- Savings from conserving energy, water, fuel and other resources
- Reduced risk of accidents, reduced liability and lower health and safety costs
- Improved employee and community health through cleaner air and water, less demand for land fill and less demand for resources.

There is the potential for long term financial gain with the limitation of unnecessary or wasteful purchases. Buying less is also a financial benefit. This initiative is not just about buying more green items, but buying green and more importantly reducing our impact by reducing overall consumption. Green procurement is also a means to drive economic development in a more sustainable direction. Creating a market for green products sends a signal to suppliers and producers. A discussion of the economic benefits needs to be a part of a green purchasing guide so that staff understand the importance and far-reaching effects of green purchasing.

An example showing that the green choice can be more effective and less expensive is janitorial products. The United States Environmental Protection Agency looked at cleaning in hospitals and showed that using microfiber cloths was not only more effective at removing bacteria, it used less water, less chemicals, cost less overall and allowed staff to be more productive (US EPA, 2002). The microfiber cloths can be reused and washed after their use. This initiative shows how making greener choices can be the basis for a strong business case.

Industry Partnership

Building partnerships with industry is an important part of developing a green procurement policy. These partnerships link into the idea of integrating “cradle to cradle” criteria into Corporate Supply Arrangements, such that any company bidding on a contract must have their product certified. This would send a message to producers and suppliers that government is setting a higher standard than in the past.

After meeting with LCS staff, MOE staff are now aware that specifically identifying “cradle to cradle” in corporate supply arrangements (CSAs) is not a viable option. “Cradle to cradle” is a trademarked certification program and companies pay McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC) for the designation. It is not recommended that government align itself with a private company by requiring that manufacturers be “Cradle to Cradle” certified. To ensure that sustainable production principles are upheld, the general characteristics that are required for “Cradle to Cradle” certification could be used as requirements setting new CSAs or to update current CSAs. It is important to consider that “many purchasers (especially government) hesitate to endorse specific eco-labelled products, asking instead suppliers satisfy label’s underlying criteria” (Halweil and Mastny, 2004, p.138). If this idea is pursued further, staff should be sure to consider any legal or copyright issues that may arise. Eco-labels that are bestowed on products by government agencies or credible non-profits could still be used, because the producers are not paying the certifiers to have the label on their product.

Supporting Government Goals

Thomson and Jackson (2007) note that the success of green procurement policies is linked to how the policy reflects organizational goals. The BC Government and the MOE are interested in ways to reduce GHG’s and make greener choices. As such, the political support is present for integrating green criteria purchasing choices. If the MOE acts swiftly, it could become the Government’s champion for green procurement.

As mentioned earlier in the paper, the MOE works to maintain a healthy environment. The Ministry also acts to lead, inform, involve and support British Columbians to improve environmental stewardship and sustainability. By virtue of this mandate and goal, MOE ideally situated to be the first to integrate green procurement into purchasing practices. Executive support already exists for green teams; therefore, a green procurement project would be an excellent fit amongst the many green MOE initiatives. Introducing green procurement could lead to broader sustainability efforts and if green procurement is successful, the executive may be inclined to support other sustainability efforts within the Ministry.

Tactics to capitalize on opportunities

Listed below are tactics MOE could use to capitalize on the opportunities identified during the focus group. The list is divided into existing practices and new opportunities and the ideas are ordered from easiest to implement to most challenging.

Existing practices

- Including a green tip or a green purchasing suggestion as part of the ‘Fast Facts’ Newsletter distributed by the Corporate Services Division bi-weekly.
- Using the internal Green Teams as an opportunity to test out barriers to change and implementation strategies.
- Incorporating green procurement initiatives into a ‘lunch and learn’ type of activity for interested staff to improve their understanding of the topic and ask questions.
- Having the BC and Alberta work together through the Harmonization Project, allows for sharing of information and experiences regarding procurement.
- Linking into the Extended Producer Responsibility and Design for Environment projects from the Environmental Protection Branch at MOE gives staff an opportunity to expand thinking beyond carbon emissions and in the long run could influence broader industry practices, therefore having implications beyond government.

New initiatives

- Obtaining communication and support for the initiative by executive.
- Training for front line staff or even as a component of Public Service Orientation, would allow all staff to have a chance to be familiar with purchasing and possibly create awareness for how ‘greener’ ideas could be integrated into the traditional purchasing structure.
- Integrating green ideas into awards given to staff could be a good social marketing tool and create the opportunity for unique gifts to be given.

Conclusion

The Findings section suggests that direction from executive is required for a green procurement to be considered by purchasing staff. Staff indicated that they have attempted green procurement research before and it was not successful; there was not the same level of interest and it did not complement Government’s goals the way that it does now. Participants made several suggestions of tactics to overcome the barriers and opportunities and some of these ideas will be used as recommendations. Although there are more barriers listed than opportunities, some of the tactics would not only push opportunities forward but could simultaneously mitigate some of the barriers. For example, using the green teams to educate staff may dispel some of the barriers of limited choice, education, awareness of policy and standards and specifications.

Recommendations

In 2005, a report completed for the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services stated, "many steps have already been taken to advance environmentally responsible procurement, however there is no cabinet approved direction or policy that will ensure deep integration of environmentally responsible procurement activities within the Government of B.C" (Five Winds International et al., 2005b, p. 9). Three years later, the same thing could be said. The message from the centre of government in the Throne Speech and the most recent budget support the greening of Government. To date, there is no concrete policy direction to bolster this support. As Reeve (2007) also mentions, when one looks at the current atmosphere both within government and the broader marketplace, there are a host of compelling opportunities that suggest the Province is well poised to see tangible returns and benefits resulting from a renewed emphasis on environmentally responsible procurement. The recommendations below are designed as steps to help the Ministry of Environment transition to a more sustainable purchasing program.

1. Support for a change in purchasing needs to be initiated from the Deputy Minister's Office

Top level support can not be understated as a mechanism to motivate interest and responsiveness from employees. It is important for the Deputy Minister to give support to green procurement so staff are conscious of the change and purchasers have something with which to defend purchasing decisions. Deputy Minister support was also a key need identified in the workshop; a government procurement expert also suggested that switching over to green products would not be too challenging, however a message from the Deputy communicating intent for greening procurement would give staff something to look to as a defensible statement of more sustainable purchasing decisions. With support from Ministry executive, next steps such as introduction or modifications of policy can take place.

2. An Action Plan for implementing green procurement policy and practices in the Ministry needed to be developed

An Action Plan can be used as a tool for gaining executive support and also identifies goals and components of an implementation plan.

Use the Action Plan to outline a Ministry green procurement policy

This report, *Past, Present and Future: Green Procurement at the Ministry of Environment*, could make up a large portion of the categories listed above. A clear definition of what the Ministry will use for the word "green" in this context should also be established. Although it is at the Ministry's discretion whether the Action Plan should be released publicly, it is recommended that until support is given from the Deputy Minister to move forward, the report should be kept internal.

Transform the BC Environmentally Responsible Procurement Guidelines into MOE Policy

As a first step the Ministry should implement the environmentally responsible procurement guidelines as ministry policy. Having policy would give staff a defensible mandate to make green purchases. The guidelines are already set out so it would be a simple transition to make them policy.

Show how green procurement fits with MOE's core business areas

It will be important to illustrate to the Executive that green procurement links into the work being completed across the Ministry. As mentioned, the Strategic Policy Division has an interest in this work. In addition, work completed by the Environmental Protection Division, on industry product stewardship and extended producer responsibility is related to greening purchasing.

Use waste disposal as an example for green procurement

An important component of green procurement that also needs to be considered is the waste disposal process. Currently, headquarters-based staff are privileged to have recycling systems available for most types of waste, soft and hard plastics, metal, and compost through a zero waste pilot project. There are also recycling containers at most desks for paper disposal. However, the reuse policy for other products such as binders or file folders is less defined. Examining the disposal policies more closely for these products may reveal how they can be reused, recycled or diverted to those who can use them.

Identify an internal Ministry champion for green procurement

As the MOE green procurement program evolves and can be used as an example for other Ministries, there may be a natural role for MOE's Deputy Minister to be the champion of this change in business practice.

Work with the Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services to integrate environmental criteria into specific Corporate Supply Arrangements

An area for collaborative policy change is the work done on CSAs with the LCS. It is recommended that MOE work with LCS to suggest or change contract specifications to reflect environmentally preferred purchasing choices. CSAs represent a significant opportunity for integration of environmentally responsible considerations into the procurement process. Some existing CSAs already give consideration to environmentally responsible attributes for goods and services, particularly within the realm of office products and stationary supplies.

The agreements also provide an opportunity within government-wide contracts to further embed the practice of incorporating environmentally responsible evaluation criteria in product and vendor selection. Focusing on government-wide contracts is advantageous because of the somewhat decentralized nature of overall procurement within government and the Ministry of Environment. Although MOE does not have control over government-wide contracts directly, MOE staff should connect with LCS staff and provide support, where needed, on work to integrate green criteria. Integrating green criteria or government sponsored eco-labels, such as Environmental Choice, would be well received in

government because it would be a conflict of interest to explicitly support one private eco-labelling company.

Consider the possibility of incorporating extended producer responsibility into contracts

Another aspect that could be incorporated into CSAs to potentially green contracts is extended producer responsibility. If manufacturers are responsible to take back their products at the end of the lifecycle they will be inclined to “eliminate unnecessary parts, forego unnecessary packaging and design products that can easily be disassembled, remanufactured, recycled or reused” (Halweil and Mastny, 2004, p. 106).

3. Design and Implement a Green Procurement Social Marketing Strategy

Getting staff to begin thinking about what they are purchasing and giving them the tools to start looking for green alternatives could be highlighted in a MOE social marketing program. It is important to educate staff so they are aware of the effects of their choices. For staff to be willing to participate and make meaningful environmental change they must know why the change will be beneficial. There are several specific ways the Ministry could approach a social marketing program:

Create a Green Purchasing Guide as a reference for staff

Developing a resource filled with tools and resources would be helpful for staff with questions about how to integrate a green purchasing policy into their daily work. Sections of the guide could include:

- ❖ How green purchasing fits into current ministry purchasing practices;
- ❖ Tips on how to make green choices;
- ❖ Outlining the location of green products on the DCV;
- ❖ A list of the components of common office products, similar to the list in the municipality of Whistler’s guide. Instead of prescribing certain brands to buy, this list compares more/less sustainable components staff can look for;
- ❖ Information about “Greenwashing”; and
- ❖ Contact information for people who are involved in the purchasing process.

Work with LCS and the Distribution Centre Victoria (DCV) to increase the awareness and visibility of available environmentally responsible products

Green products are currently available and identified with a green symbol in the DCV catalogue, however, the products are somewhat hidden. The “Green Products” menu option could be placed in a high profile location on the homepage, showing that these products exist and they are encouraged as a first choice for all staff.

Increase awareness of the presence of these greener products by sending a ministry-wide email alerting purchasers to these changes and suggest that staff consider these options first

This information could be included in the bi-weekly 'Fast Facts' newsletter that is distributed by the Corporate Services Division. Information regarding green products or green hotel options for employee travel could be included, as suggested at the Green Procurement Workshop.

Ministry Green Teams should be used as a channel to encourage more awareness on the topic of procurement

There is already executive support for the development of the green team program. Staff should take this opportunity to develop a green team specifically with the intent of improving awareness on the topic of procurement. A new green team could initiate a friendly Division versus Division competition on who can buy the least new products and of those required purchases the highest percentage of green alternatives purchased.

Develop "Lunch and Learn" sessions on the topic of greening procurement

These sessions will give interested staff a chance to improve their understanding of the topic and also learn how they can integrate greener practices into their daily work.

Implement a green procurement training course for all staff that conduct any purchasing for the Ministry or have a purchasing card

Similar to the course offered by the Federal Office for Greening Government Operations, an online course, free of charge that takes two to four hours to complete could be designed. The course could explain procurement policy and distribute the green purchasing guide.

4. Develop a Performance Measurement Strategy

After some baseline analysis, it is important to set goals and performance measures to determine the status of the program and prove its success. Tracking, measuring and reporting on progress is an important part of any continuous improvement commitment. For the B.C. Government this could be seen as the challenge with purchasing cards. In such a decentralized system it is very difficult to keep track of all purchases made with staff purchasing cards. Perhaps setting strict Ministry targets is one way to encourage staff to work together to achieve a greener purchasing goal.

One of the suggestions made in the B.C.-Alberta Harmonization document is the importance of having baseline information to measure progress against. Once baseline data is available a target can be set. For example, an idea from Alberta was to set a target percentage of total dollars spent on buying green office supplies. Having this information would allow staff to create performance measures and future goals for a green procurement program. Another type of evaluation is comparing the cost of purchasing products over time. To evaluate the true cost difference of products, quality, reuse and resale value, and durability should be factored into the true cost assessments. Both the Federal Government and the Province of Manitoba mention including green procurement progress in annual reports. MOE should consider incorporating green procurement goals into the Ministry Service Plan. Then the public could be made aware of progress and the Ministry could use the data for improving internal green procurement progress over time.

Implementation Plan:

The first and second recommendations are linked. Support from the Deputy Minister is required for any green procurement program or policy development to go ahead. However, the Deputy will need a document to read to understand the issue and peruse different options on how to move forward, which is why the Action Plan needs to be developed. Once support is given from executive, the third and fourth recommendations can be advanced. There is no specific timeline set to these recommendations because this report was commissioned for research purposes and it is up to the Ministry to determine at what pace these recommendations will proceed.

Conclusion

This paper has provided the Ministry of Environment with recommendations on how to approach the development of a green procurement program. These ideas are based on primary research and work that has been done previously in academic circles, different jurisdictions and within the B.C. Provincial Government.

Since March 2007 when the green procurement workshop took place the Climate Action Team made their recommendations suggesting changes that need to be made government wide. If implemented, making life cycle costing a mandatory part of procurement will certainly affect the Ministry of Environment. However, this does not mean that the Ministry has to wait for government wide direction. Now is a very good time for the MOE to take a closer look at how sustainability can be incorporated into procurement practices. Support from the centre of government, from other jurisdictions and from staff has created interest and desire for change. Ministry of Environment should take a leadership role and push these ideas forward.

Glossary of Terms

The following key terms are used throughout this paper:

C2C: Cradle to Cradle – refers to the lifecycle of various products. “Cradle to Cradle” is a closed loop system where the item can be recycled or broken down into other useful items.

CBS: Common Business Services, Ministry of Labour and Citizens’ Services - responsible for administering procurement in accordance with policy and liaises with suppliers and manufacturers.

CSA: Corporate Supply Arrangement – an arrangement where a supplier has offered to provide goods or services to one or more government or public sector entities for a defined period of time with pre-determined terms and conditions, and at a negotiated price.

MOE: Ministry of Environment

Green Purchasing/Environmentally Responsible Purchasing: Considering environmental effects at all stages of the product life cycle of purchasing decisions

Memorandum of Understanding: an agreement between parties to carry out their separate activities in a coordinated and mutually beneficial manner.

PGO: Procurement Governance Office – responsible for developing procurement policy

Socially Responsible Purchasing: Purchasing products from companies that are not involved in environmentally damaging production, exploitative, unhealthy or unsafe employment engagements, and or unethical supply chain management.

Supply Chain: the management of the components, manufacturing and distribution of a manufactured product.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Guidelines for Environmentally Responsible Procurement

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA GUIDELINES FOR PROCUREMENT OF ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

These guidelines have been developed as part of a Cabinet-directed BC Based Climate Change Action Plan to implement a long-term strategy that supports provincial economic, social and environmental priorities.

Core Policy Manual Policy Reference:

(6.3.1 Procurement Planning - Policy 13)

Ministries are encouraged to follow the Guidelines for Procurement of Environmentally Responsible Products and Services.

Guidelines For Procurement of Environmentally Responsible Products and Services

Objectives:

- These procurement guidelines are designed to encourage ministries to consider environmentally responsible products and services as part of their purchasing decisions. The objectives of these guidelines are:
- To provide an environmental role model for government procurement, by making it a priority to use environmentally responsible products and services, where feasible and cost effective.
- To increase demand for environmentally responsible products and services, which may ultimately enhance their quality and cost competitiveness.
- To continue to increase government's conservation of resources through the use of more reusable products, and products and services which require less energy and materials to produce or use.

Principles:

- Where feasible and cost effective, the Government of British Columbia will acquire products and services that are environmentally responsible. Environmentally responsible products are those that reduce waste, improve energy efficiency, limit toxic by-products, contain recycled content or are reusable. Environmentally responsible services are those that employ environmental responsibility in their management, administration and operations.
- The substitution of environmentally sensitive products for more environmentally harmful products will increase as their usage becomes more prevalent and as they become more cost effective and of comparable quality to those products previously purchased.

Practices:

- Where feasible and cost effective and where the products are compatible with individual ministry requirements, preference should be given to purchase of environmentally sensitive products and services.
- As part of prudent acquisition management, ministries should consider use of environmentally sensitive products and services on a trial basis to ensure performance and technical requirements are met, prior to making longer term purchasing commitments.
- Evaluation criteria specified in the solicitation document should consider the environmental impact over the life cycle of each product compared to the alternatives, by taking into account economic and environmental impact, production processes used, energy use, maintenance and disposal requirements.
- Evaluation criteria specified in a services solicitation document should consider a proponent's corporate environmental sustainability policy.
- Where they are cost effective and meet performance and technical standards, products certified under a relevant environmental labelling program may be specified in the solicitation document. Specific environmental technical requirements may also be included in product specifications.

Examples of information sources or programs:

- Environmental Choice Program
- Buy Green
- Green Building Materials Virtual Sample Room
- EnerGuide
- PowerSmart
- Energy Star

Ministries are encouraged to consult with Purchasing Services Branch for more information on the procurement of environmentally sensitive products and services.

Procurement Planning Checklist for Products and Services Supporting Sustainable Environmental Management:

In order to reduce the environmental impact of an acquisition, this checklist has been developed to help ask the right questions at the planning stage of an acquisition.

Acquisition:

Have other options for meeting the needs been explored, e.g.:

- Have both internal surplus and Asset Investment Recovery been checked to ensure no comparable product is available?
- Have the feasibility of short-term rental or sharing the product been investigated as alternatives to purchasing?
- Is the quantity requested appropriate and sure to be used?
- Will the product be used to the end of its useful life; if not, can it be easily reallocated?

Once it has been determined that a purchase should be made, there are a number of specific product characteristics that can help identify an environmentally responsible item. Users should be cautioned against products with unsubstantiated claims, and should look for statements such as the percentage of recycled content.

Is the product:

- Certified by the Environmental Choice Program or other program?
- Designed to minimize waste?
- Energy efficient (e.g., office equipment with a power-saving "sleep" mode)? If included in the EnerGuide labelling program, does it compare favourably to other labelled products in the same category?
- Less polluting during its use than competing products (e.g., non-toxic, biodegradable cleaners)?
- Free from hazardous ingredients that would require special disposal?
- Free from resources that come from environmentally sensitive regions (e.g., rainforests)?
- Free from banned and/or restricted substances (e.g., CFCs)?
- Manufactured from recycled materials, including a high percentage of post-consumer recycled content?

Is the product packaging:

- Designed to minimize waste (e.g., bulk packaging)?
- Reusable by the end-user?
- Accepted by the supplier for reuse, recycling or recovery?
- Recyclable locally?
- Made from recycled materials?

Operation, utilization and maintenance:

Is the product:

- Durable, with a long service life?
- Accompanied by clear and comprehensive operating instructions?
- Easy to maintain in good operating condition?
- Economical to repair?
- Easy to upgrade?
- Reusable or does it include reusable parts (e.g., reusable batteries)?

Disposal:

Can the product or its parts:

- Be reused or reallocated?
- Be resold through Asset Investment Recovery?
- Be returned to the supplier for reuse, recycling or recovery?
- Be contributed to a waste exchange program?

- Be recycled locally?

The relative importance of each of the above questions will vary from one product category to another. Be sure to advise your suppliers that you will be evaluating products according to these factors.

When purchasing services, consider requiring your contractor to meet environmental standards.

Examples of Environmentally Preferable Product Categories:

- Recycled paper and paper products
- Remanufactured laser printer toner cartridges
- Re-refined lubricating and hydraulic oils
- Recycled plastic outdoor-wood substitutes
- Re-crushed cement concrete aggregate and asphalt
- Re-manufactured tires and products made from recycled tire rubber
- Paint that is re-manufactured, recycled, low VOC, low toxicity, non-oil based
- Cleaning products with lowered toxicity
- Energy saving products
- Alternate fuel and fuel efficient vehicles

Appendix B – List of Green Procurement Workshop Participants

Position	Ministry
Manager, Customer Service & Admin	Labour and Citizens' Services
Director, Purchasing Services	Labour and Citizens' Services
Senior Policy Analyst – Science and Sustainability	Ministry of Environment
Senior Policy Analyst – Science and Sustainability	Ministry of Environment
Senior Policy Analyst – Intergovernmental Relations	Ministry of Environment
Purchasing/Facilities Clerk	Ministry of Environment
Corporate Services Clerk	Ministry of Environment
Executive Co-ordinator, Division Initiatives	Ministry of Environment
Manager, Financial Operations	Ministry of Environment
Administrative Assistant – Science and Sustainability	Ministry of Environment
Policy Analyst – Strategic Policy	Ministry of Environment
Policy Analyst – Deputy Minister's Office	Ministry of Environment

List of Staff Interviewed who could not attend the Workshop

Position	Ministry
Climate Change Policy Analyst	Ministry of Environment
Environmental Management Analyst	Ministry of Environment

Appendix C – Worksheets from the Green Procurement Workshop

Possibilities for Green Procurement: Break Out Discussions

Worksheet 1 – Barriers - Notes for the Participant

You will have **ten minutes** to complete this worksheet on your own prior to group discussion.

As a government employee:

1. What would you consider to be barriers to implementing green procurement practices at Ministry of Environment?

2. What are some tactics that could be used to mitigate these barriers?

As a citizen:

3. What would you consider to be barriers to implementing green procurement practices at Ministry of Environment?

4. What are some tactics that could be used to mitigate these barriers?

5. What do you see as the number one barrier and number one tactic for mitigation to be? Please be prepared to have one group member report back to the group.

3. What are some other opportunities for green procurement that MOE could tap into?
What are some specific ways we can go about maximizing these opportunities?

4. What do you see the number one opportunity to be? Please be prepared to have one volunteer who will report back to the group.

Appendix D – Ethics Review Documents

The following application form is an institutional protocol based on the [Tri-Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#)

Instructions:

1. Download this application and complete it on your computer. Hand written applications will not be accepted. The ethical approval process takes 4-6 weeks.
2. Use the *Human Research Ethics Board Guidelines* to complete this application: <http://www.research.uvic.ca/Forms/>. Note: This form is linked to the guidelines. Access links in blue text by hitting CTRL and clicking on the blue text.
3. Submit one (1) original and two (2) copies of this completed, signed application with all attachments to: Human Research Ethics, Technology Enterprise Facility (TEF), Room 218, University of Victoria, PO Box 1700 STN CSC, Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 Canada
4. If you need assistance, contact the Human Research Ethics Assistant at (250) 472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca
5. Please note that applications are screened and will be returned to the applicant if incomplete (e.g. missing required attachments, signatures, documents).

A. Principal Investigator

If there is more than one Principal Investigator, provide their name(s) and contact information below in Section B, Other Investigator(s) & Research Team.

Last Name: Walton

First Name: Stephanie

Department/Faculty: School of Public Administration

Email: smwalton@uvic.ca

Phone:

Fax: 721-8849 (SPA office)

Mailing Address:

(if different from Dept/Faculty)

Title/Position:

Faculty

Undergraduate

Ph.D. Student

Staff

Master's Student

Post-Doctoral

Students: Provide your Supervisor's:

Name: Lynda Gagne

Email: lgagne@uvic.ca

Department/Faculty: School of Public Administration

Phone: 250-721-8063

Graduate Students: Provide your Graduate Secretary's email address: jselina@uvic.ca

B. Project Information

Project Title: **Past, Present and Future: Recommendations for Green Procurement options with the B.C.**

Ministry of Environment

Anticipated Start Date: February 2008

Anticipated End Date: July 2008

Geographic location(s) of study: Victoria, B.C.

Keywords: 1. Green Procurement 2. Recommendations 3. B.C. Ministry of Environment

Is this application connected/associated/linked to one that has been recently submitted? Yes No

If yes, provide further information:

Other Investigator(s) and Research Team:

(Include co-investigators, students, employees, volunteers, community organizations. The form will expand.)

Contact Name	Role in Research Project	Institutional Affiliation	Email or Phone
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For Faculty Only: Graduate Student/Research Assistant who will use this data to fulfill UVic thesis/ dissertation/ academic requirements.

Email or Phone

Student/Research Assistant

C. Agreement and Signatures

Principal Investigator and Student Supervisor affirm that:

- *I have read this application and it is complete and accurate.*
- *The research will be conducted in accordance with the University of Victoria regulations, policies and procedures governing the ethical conduct of research involving human participants.*
- *The conduct of the research will not commence until ethics approval has been granted.*
- *The researcher(s) will seek further HREB review if the research protocol is modified.*
- *Adequate supervision will be provided for students and/or staff.*

Principal Investigator

Student's Supervisor

Signature

Signature

Print Name

Print Name

Date

Date

Chair, Director or Dean

I affirm that adequate research infrastructure is available for the conduct and completion of this research.

Signature

Print Name

Date

D. Project Funding

Have you applied for funding for this project? Yes No

Has notice of award been received? Yes No

If yes, please complete the following:

Source(s) of Project Funding	Project Title used in Funding Application(s)
-------------------------------------	---

Will this project receive funding from US Funders (e.g. NIH)? Yes No

If yes, provide further information:

E. Level of Risk

The [Tri-Council Policy Statement](#) (TCPS) definition of “minimal risk” is as follows:

The research can be regarded as within the range of minimal risk if potential participants can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the participant in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research. The designation of minimal or non-minimal risk affects the way the application is reviewed not the substance of the ethical review.”

Based on this definition, do you believe your research qualifies as “minimal risk” research?

Yes No

Explain your answer by referring to the level of risk stated in the TCPS definition:

I will be asking various B.C. Government Staff members about their experiences with Green Procurement (i.e. historical information, current status). I believe that my research qualifies as ‘minimal risk’ because this would be the type of information they would discuss in their daily job.

F. Scholarly Review

What type of scholarly review has this research project undergone?

- External Peer Review (e.g. granting agency)
- Supervisory Committee or Supervisor—required for all student research projects
- None
- Other, please explain:

G. Other Approvals

Do you need to seek approval from other agencies, community groups, local governments, etc?

Yes

No

(Attach proof of having made request for permission or approval letter. Please forward approvals upon receiving them. Be assured that ethics approval may be granted prior to receipt of external approvals.)

If yes, what types of other approval will you need?

School District, Superintendent, Principal, Teacher

VIHA or other regional government authority. If you are planning to conduct research in a VIHA facility, you must use the [Joint UVic/VIHA application form](#) on the ORS website. Above minimal risk applications, please contact the Ethics Office.

Indigenous Community Consultation

Indigenous community approval may be required when the research involves Indigenous people from a community (whether residing in urban or reserve areas), the cultural knowledge and/or resources of Indigenous people, or where individuals speak on behalf of an Indigenous nation.

a. Does your research specifically involve or include in the study's population sample individuals from an Indigenous community?

Yes

No

b. Will a particular Indigenous community or communities be a central focus of the research?

Yes

No

c. If you answered "yes" to questions a) or b), have you consulted with the Indigenous community or communities for this study?

Yes

No

d. If you answered "yes" to question c), briefly list the people you have contacted and describe the process that you have or will follow. Include documentation of consultations.

e. If you answered "no" to questions c), briefly justify your decision not to seek Indigenous community approval.

f. How will you disseminate results to the community? (*e.g. executive summary, information session*).

Other, please explain:

H. Description of Research Project

1. **Purpose and Rationale of Research**

Briefly describe in non-technical language:

Please use 150 words or less. The form will expand to the length of your answers.

1a. The research objective(s) and question(s)

I am looking to record the shift towards more environmentally sustainable procurement practices in the B.C. Provincial Government. The objective of this research paper is to ultimately provide recommendations to the Ministry of Environment on next steps for green procurement. In order to develop the recommendations, a review of relevant literature will be completed. Also, I will examine case studies for examples of existing green procurement strategies. Finally, I will be speaking with government employee contacts who have been identified as 'key contacts' on the subject and can provide information such as historical facts and current status.

1b. The importance and contributions of the research

This project, researching past and current efforts in the area of green procurement, will give the provincial government an opportunity to record past efforts and create a basis for discussion on how to move forward with this initiative. The Ministry is also looking to identify innovative green practices, with green procurement being a possible showcase for the Ministry.

I. Recruitment

2. Recruitment and Selection of Participants

2a. Briefly describe the target population(s) for recruitment. Ensure that all participant groups are identified (*e.g. group 1 - teachers, group 2 - administrators, group 3 - parents*).

Staff members with knowledge of the government's efforts on the subject of green procurement to date.

2b. Why is this population of interest?

These will be the people that will be able to share the most information on the history and current status of green procurement.

2c. What is the desired number of participants?

7-9

2d. What are the salient characteristics of the participants (*e.g. age, gender, race, ethnicity, class, position, etc.*):

Participants will be policy analysts, climate change specialists, senior facilities workers. Demographics will not be collected as part of the research.

2e. Provide a detailed description of your exact recruitment process. Explain:

i) Who will recruit/contact participants (*e.g. researcher, assistant, third party*)

I (the researcher) will be contacting people directly. Participants will be identified by searching on the internet or by suggestion from other staff members in the branch.

- ii) Describe any relationship between the investigator(s) and participant(s) (e.g. *instructor-student, manager-employee*). Complete item 3 if there is a [power over relationship](#).

The participants will be other provincial government staff members, some from within the same Ministry, and others working outside of the Ministry. There will be no 'power over' relationship.

- iii) Describe how recruitment will be done (e.g. *in person, by telephone, letter, snowball sampling, word of mouth, advertisement*) and from what source(s) will the participants be recruited. If applicable, include how contact information for participants will be obtained.

Recruitment will be completed through contact via email or telephone. The B.C. government directory will be used as a source for contact information.

- iv) Describe the steps in the recruitment process.

Once a potential participant is identified, he or she will be contacted by (e)mail or telephone. The researcher will then ask the participant if he or she is willing to participate in the study and share their knowledge regarding green procurement in the B.C. Provincial Government. If so, the researcher will send along the recruitment and consent forms for more information and sign off.

- v) Whether the permission of other bodies is required (e.g. *school boards*).

No permission of other bodies is required.

3. [Power-Over](#)

If you are completing this section, please refer to the:

[Guidelines For Ethics in Dual-Role Research for Teachers and Other Practitioners](#)

Are you or any of your co-researchers in any way in a position of authority or power over participants? Examples of a "power-over" situation include teachers-students, therapists-clients, supervisors-employees and possibly researcher-relative or researcher-close friend.

Yes No Varies

If *yes* or *varies*, describe below:

- i) The nature of the relationship.
- ii) Why it is necessary to conduct research with participants over whom you have power.
- iii) What safeguards (steps) will be taken to minimize inducement, coercion or potential harm.
- iv) How the dual-role relationship and the safeguards will be explained to potential participants.

Recruitment Materials Checklist:

As applicable, attach all documents referenced in this section (*check those that are appended*):

- Script(s) – in-person, telephone, 3rd party, e-mail, etc.
- Invitation to participate
- Advertisement, Poster, Flyer

J. Data Collection Methods

4. Data Collection

For community-based research, autobiographical or observational research, please see Appendix III of the Guidelines.

4a. Which of the following methods will be used to collect data? Check all that apply.

- Interviewing participants:
- in-person
 - by telephone
 - using web-based technology
- Conducting group interviews or discussions (including focus groups)
- Administering a questionnaire or survey:
- In person
 - by telephone
 - mail back
 - email
 - web-based
 - Other, describe:
- Attach draft interview questions
- Attach questionnaire or survey:
- standardized (one with established reliability and validity)
 - non-standardized (one that is un-tested, adapted or open-ended)
- Administering a computerized task (describe in 4b)
- Observing participants
- [In 4b, describe who and what will be observed. Include where observations will take place.]*
- Recording of participants using:
- audio
 - video
 - photos or slides
- Images used for analysis
- Images used in disseminating results [include release to use participant images in consent materials]

Analyzing secondary data or secondary use of data (Refers to information/data that was originally gathered for a purpose other than the proposed research and is now being considered for use in research., e.g. patient or school records, personal writings, lesson plans).

- Secondary data involving anonymized information (Information/data is stripped of identifiers by another researcher or institution before being shared with the applicant). Eligible for [Application for a Waiver from Full Ethical Review](#)
- Secondary data with identifying information (Data contains names and other information that can be linked to individuals, e.g., student report cards, employment records, meeting minutes, personal writings).

In item 4b describe the source of the data, and explain whether and how consent was obtained from the individuals for use of their data.

- Using human samples (e.g., saliva, urine, blood, hair)

Ensure that you apply to the [Biosafety Committee](#) for the storage and use of biological materials. Also, complete the [Human Tissue Form](#) available on the ORS website, have it signed and attach it to your application. If using human tissue only, skip to 7g-8, 11-end.

- Other, specify:

- 4b. Provide a sequential description of the procedures/methods to be used in your research study. List all of the research instruments and assessment tools, and in an appendix provide copies of all instruments. If not yet available, provide drafts or sample items/questions. For multi-method or other complex research, use the following sections in ways best suited to explain your project.

Literature review:

Data for this project will come from a literature review of management journals and popular materials such as green procurement case study publications released by policy think tanks. Government procurement policies and documents will also be consulted.

Interviews:

Additional advice, including non implementation risks, from persons who have designed or implemented a green procurement strategy or procurement guidelines will be also be used in the analysis.

-A copy of the interview questions is attached to this application.

Report Preparation:

From literature reviews and interviews, identify the basics of procurement and how green purchasing can be integrated. The literature and interviews will identify barriers and opportunities for the Ministry.

- The Cradle to Cradle principles will be integrated as another dimension of green procurement.
- Advice from interviews will be used to identify strategic “next steps” within an Action Plan designed to move the ministry forward.
- Next steps and Recommendations will be provided.

- 4c. Where will participation take place? (Provide specific location, e.g., UVic classroom, private residence, participant’s workplace)

Participant’s workplace

- 4d. How much time will be required of participants?

Varies. 30 minutes to 1 hour

Data Collection Methods Checklist:

As applicable, attach all documents referenced in this section (*check those that are appended*):

- Standardized Instrument(s)
- Survey(s), Questionnaire(s)
- Interview and/or Focus Group Questions
- Observation Tools

K. Possible Inconveniences, Benefits, Risks and Harms to Participants

5. Benefits

Identify any potential or known benefits associated with participation and explain below. *Keep in mind that the anticipated benefits should outweigh any potential risks.*

- To the participant
- To society
- To state of knowledge

1. The participant will be involved in a share of knowledge and will have access to the final report once it is

completed.

2. The enormous purchasing power of government is very real and with green procurement strategies, government has the strength to influence sustainable design and production. Ideally, in time, these sustainable options could also be afforded to society as a whole. There is also the possibility that if staff members are exposed to these practices at work they may integrate them into their personal purchasing as well.

3. Having this paper available to government staff will be a quick source of information and will provide recommendations on next steps for the provincial government.

6. Inconveniences

Identify and describe any known or potential inconveniences to participants:
Consider all potential inconveniences, including time devoted to the research.

Participants will have to schedule time into their day to have a discussion.

7. Estimate of Risks

Could this study involve the following? Please answer each question by putting an **X** in the appropriate boxes:

7a. Could a participant feel demeaned or embarrassed during their participation in the research?

Very unlikely Possibly Likely

7b. Could a participant feel fatigued or stressed due to the research?

Very unlikely Possibly Likely

7c. Could a participant experience any other emotional or psychological discomfort as a consequence of participation?

Very unlikely Possibly Likely

7d. Is there any social risk, possible stigmatization, loss of status, privacy and/or reputation?

Very unlikely Possibly Likely

7e. Are there any physical risks?

Very unlikely Possibly Likely

7f. Could a participant experience any economic risk? (e.g. job security, job loss)

Very unlikely Possibly Likely

7g. Do you see any chance that participants may be harmed in any other way? (e.g. risk to community)

Very unlikely Possibly Likely

8. Possible Risks

If you indicated in Item 7 (a) to (f) that any risks are *possible* or *likely*, please explain below:

8a. What are the risks?

8b. What will you do to try to minimize or prevent the risks?

8c. How will you respond if the risk of harm occurs? (e.g. *what is your plan?*)

9. Deception

Will participants be fully informed of everything that will be required of them prior to the start of the research session?

- Yes No (If no, complete the [Request to Use Deception form](#) on the ORS website.)

L. Compensation

10. Compensation

10a. Is there any compensation for participating in the research (e.g. gifts, honorarium, bonus points, reimbursement for transportation, parking, childcare, etc.)?

- Yes No

If yes, explain the nature of the compensation and why you consider it to be necessary:
Also consider if the amount of compensation could be considered to be a form of inducement.

10b. Explain what will happen to compensation if participants withdraw during or anytime after data collection (e.g. compensation will be pro-rated, full compensation will be given, etc.).

M. Free and Informed Consent

The following questions address the competence of participants to give consent, the process used in your research to obtain consent, ongoing consent, and the participants' right to withdraw. Consult Appendix V of the Guidelines for further information.

11. Participant's Capacity (Competence) to Provide Free and Informed Consent

Identify your prospective participants: (Check all that apply.)

Competent

- Competent adults
- A protected or vulnerable population (e.g., inmates, patients)
- Competent youth
- Youth 13 to 18: consent of youth will be obtained, and parental consent is required due to institutional requirements (e.g. school districts)
- Youth 13 to 16: consent of youth will be obtained, parents will be informed
- Youth 13 to 16: consent of youth will be obtained, parents will NOT be informed
- Youth 17 to 18: consent of youth will be obtained, parents will not be informed

Non-Competent

- Non-competent adults:
- Consent of family/authorized representative will be obtained
- Assent of the participant will be obtained
- Non-competent youth:
- Consent of parent/guardian
- Assent of the youth will be obtained

- Competent children
- Children under 13: consent of parent/guardian will be obtained, and child consent will be obtained
- Other, explain:

- Non-competent children:
- Consent of parent/guardian
- Assent of the child will be obtained

12. Means of Obtaining Consent:

(Check all that apply, attach copies of all consent materials, complete item 13)

- Signed** consent. *(Attach consent script(s) and consent form(s) - see [template](#) available on ORS Website)*
- Verbal** consent. *(Attach information letter(s). Explain below why written consent is not appropriate and how verbal consent will be documented.)*
- Implied** consent *(e.g. anonymous, mail back or web-based survey. Attach information letter, see [template](#))*
- Other** means. *(Explain below and provide justification.)*
- Consent **will not be obtained**. *(Explain below)*

Explain consent procedure if “verbal consent,” “other” or “consent will not be obtained”:

13. Informed Consent

Describe the exact steps you will follow in the process of explaining and obtaining informed consent.

I will explain to my participants that anything we discuss during our conversation may be included, anonymously, in my research paper. This will be noted in the letter of informed consent that each participant will sign. If they do not consent they will not be part of the study.

14. Ongoing Consent

Ongoing consent is required for research that occurs over multiple occasions and/or multiple research activities and/ or extended periods of time (i.e., more than one point of contact, including second interviews, review of transcripts, etc.)

14a. Will your research occur over multiple occasions or an extended period of time?

- Yes
- No

14b. If yes, describe how you will obtain ongoing consent:

15. Participant’s Right to Withdraw

Free and informed consent requires that participants have the right to withdraw at any time without consequence or explanation.

Describe what participants will be told about their right to withdraw from the research at any time.

If participants decide they no longer wish to be involved in the discussion or sharing of information they only need to say so and the information will be ineligible for inclusion in the final research paper.

16. What will happen to the person’s data if s/he withdraws part way through the study?

- It will not be used in the analysis.
- It is logistically impossible to remove individual participant data.
- It will be used in the analysis if the participant agrees to this. Describe how this agreement will be obtained:

Free and Informed Consent Checklist:

As applicable, attach all documents referenced in this section (*check those that are appended*):

- Consent Form(s) – Include forms for all participant groups and data gathering methods
- Letter(s) of Information for Implied Consent
- Verbal Consent Script

N. Anonymity and Confidentiality

17. Anonymity

Anonymity means that no one, including the principal investigator, is able to associate responses or other data with individual participants.

17a. Will the participants be anonymous in the data gathering phase of research?

- Yes No

17b. Will the participants be anonymous in the dissemination of results (*e.g. use of video, photos*)?

- Yes No

18. Confidentiality

Confidentiality means the protection of the person's identity (anonymity) and the protection, access, control and security of his or her data and personal information during the recruitment, data collection, reporting of findings, dissemination of data (if relevant) and after the study is completed (e.g., storage).

18a. Will the confidentiality of the participants and their data be protected?

No - If confidentiality will not be protected, explain why. If you are asking the participants to waive their right to confidentiality (you plan to identify them with their data), explain what steps will be taken to respect their privacy, if any.

Yes, completely

Yes, with limits (*Check relevant boxes below.*)

Limits due to the nature of group activities (*e.g. focus groups*) the researcher can not guarantee confidentiality

Limits due to context: The nature or size of the sample from which participants are drawn makes it possible to identify individual participants (*e.g. school principals in a small town*)

Limits due to selection: The procedures for recruiting or selecting participants may compromise the confidentiality of participants (*e.g. participants are identified or referred to the study by a person outside the research team*)

Limits due to legal requirements for reporting

Other:

18b. If confidentiality will be protected, describe the procedures to be used to ensure the anonymity of participants and for preserving the confidentiality of their data (*e.g. pseudonyms, changing identifying information and features, coding sheet, etc.*).

18c. If there are limits to confidentiality due to the methods (*e.g. group interview*), sample size or legal requirements (*e.g. reporting child abuse*) so that you cannot guarantee confidentiality, explain what the limits are and how you will address them with the participants:

Only certain staff members have knowledge of this subject matter and would be relevant to the study. Therefore, there number staff members who could discuss the topic is limited. Also, some staff members may recommend other individuals that should be contacted. These reasons are why confidentiality is limited.

O. Use and Disposal of Data

19. Use(s) of Data

19a. What use(s) will be made of all forms of data collected (*photos, videos, audiotapes, transcripts, etc.*)?

It will be used to inform my final research paper.

19b. Will your research data be analyzed, now or in future, by yourself for purposes other than this research project?

Yes

No

Possibly

19c. If yes or possibly, how will you obtain consent for future data analysis from the participants (e.g. request future use in current consent form)?

19d. Will your research data be analyzed, now or in future, by other persons for purposes other than explained in this application?

Yes No Possibly

19e. If yes or possibly, by whom and how will you obtain consent from the participants for future data analysis by other researchers (e.g. request future use in current consent form)?

20. Commercial Purposes

20a. Do you anticipate that this research will be used for a commercial purpose?

Yes No

20b. If yes, explain how the data will be used for a commercial purpose:

21. Maintenance and Disposal of Data

Describe your plans for preserving, protecting and destroying all the types of data associated with the research (e.g. paper records, audio or visual recordings, electronic recordings, coded data) after the research is completed:

21a. means of storing data (e.g., a locked filing cabinet, password protected computer files):

Locked Filing Cabinet, Password protected computer files

21b. location of storing data:

Personal Computer, Desk drawer

21c. duration of data storage (if data will be kept indefinitely, explain):

Until the completion of 598 defense

21d. methods of destroying or archiving data:

Deletion/Removal from computer

22. Dissemination

How do you anticipate disseminating the research results? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Directly to participants | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thesis/Dissertation/Class presentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presentations at scholarly meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Published article, chapter or book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Media (e.g. newspaper, radio, TV) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, explain: | |

The research results will be disseminated in a management report submitted to the University of Victoria as a graduation requirement of the School of Public Administration and submitted to client, the Strategic Policy Division of the Ministry of Environment. The report will also be available to the students and faculty of the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria.

P. Researchers

23. Conflict of Interest

23a. Are you or any of the research team members in a perceived, actual or potential conflict of interest in regard to this research project (*e.g. in relation to participants, partners in research, private interests in companies or other entities*)?

Yes No

23b. If yes, please provide details of the conflict and how you will manage it:

24. Researcher(s) Qualifications

In light of your research methods, the nature of the research and the characteristics of the participants, what training or qualifications do you and/or your research team have?

I have the required research and subject knowledge to conduct interviews based on my previous work experience and MPA course work in ADMN 502A, 502B, 509.

25. Risk to Researcher(s)

25a. Does this research study pose any risks to the researchers, assistants and data collectors?

No.

25b. If there are any risks, explain the nature of the risks, how they will be minimized, and how they will be responded to if they occur.

Q. Further or Special Questions

26. Multiple Site Research

26a. Does this project involve collection of data at multiple sites within Canada requiring the approval of other sites, bodies or organizations (*e.g., other ethics board(s)*)?

Yes No

26b. If you responded Yes to 27a. above, list the sites, bodies or organizations:

27. International Research

27a. Will this study be conducted in a country other than Canada?

Yes No

27b. If yes, describe how the laws, customs and regulations of the host country will be addressed:

28. Other Information

If there is anything else you would like to inform the HREB about this study, provide the details below:

Attachments*



*Ensure that all applicable attachments are included with all copies of your application. Incomplete applications will not be processed and will be returned to the applicant.

As applicable, label and attach the following documents (check those that are appended):

Section I - Recruitment Materials:

Script(s) – in-person, telephone, 3rd party, e-mail, etc.

Section J - Data Collection Methods:

Interview and/or Focus Group Questions

Section M - Free and Informed Consent:

Consent Form(s) – Include forms for all participant groups and data gathering methods

Script for Recruitment:

Hello,

You are invited to participate in a study on green procurement initiatives within the B.C. Provincial Government. This research project will gather relevant information regarding the possibility of a green procurement strategy within the B.C. Provincial Government. The 598 Management Report will tell the story of past and current efforts within the province and will profile successful green procurement cases in other jurisdictions. Ultimately, the report will amalgamate all of this information and provide recommendations to the B.C. Provincial government for next steps. The study is important because a thorough and successful green procurement strategy can have far-reaching effects within government and beyond.

You were recommended to me as someone who could share information on the subject of green procurement. I am hoping we will be able to get together and have a discussion on the subject. I will be using this information in my report.

As this research project is being completed as part of the requirements for a degree in Public Administration, participants are required to provide consent in accordance with the University of Victoria's Human Research Ethics Board. A consent form has been attached for you to review and sign before an interview is conducted.

Please email or phone me to let me know if you are willing to participate. If necessary, I will follow up with a phone call to confirm your participation.

Thank you,

Stephanie Walton

Data Collection Methods – Interview Questions:

1. What is your experience with procurement processes and rules in the provincial government?
2. What is your relationship/experience with the ‘greening’ of procurement strategies within government?
3. Do you think green procurement is important? Why or why not?
4. To your knowledge, what efforts does the B.C. government have currently supporting green procurement?
5. What have been barriers that you have noticed to the success of past green procurement strategies?
6. What opportunities do you see for green procurement for the future?
7. From your experience do you have any recommendations for future green procurement strategies?
8. Do you have any suggested guidelines for the implementation of a green procurement strategy?

Consent Form:

Participant Consent Form

Past, Present and Future:

Recommendations for Green Procurement Options with the B.C. Ministry of Environment

You are invited to participate in a study entitled “Past, Present and Future: Recommendations for Green Procurement Options with the B.C. Ministry of Environment” that is being conducted by Stephanie Walton. You are being asked to participate in this study because you have been identified as an individual with knowledge to share in the area of green procurement.

My name is Stephanie Walton and I am a graduate student in the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria and you may contact me if you have further questions by emailing smwalton@uvic.ca or calling 250-213-1315. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a degree in the Masters of Public Administration. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Lynda Gagne. You may contact my supervisor at 250-721-8063.

The purpose of this research project is to tell the story of the shift towards more environmentally sustainable procurement practices in the B.C. Provincial Government. The objective of this research paper is to ultimately provide recommendations to the Ministry of Environment on next steps for green procurement. In order to develop the recommendations, a review of the relevant literature will be completed. Also, I will examine case studies for examples of existing green procurement strategies. I will be asking employee contacts, identified because of their knowledge in the research area, to provide relevant information (i.e. historical info, current status). The information gathered in these various methods will be used to ultimately inform my recommendations.

Research of this type is important because this project, researching past and current efforts in the area of green procurement, will give the provincial government an opportunity to observe past efforts and create a basis for discussions on how to move forward with this initiative in the future. As was indicated in the March 2007 Throne Speech, the government is keen to improve environmental sustainability in B.C. Green Procurement is another tool that could help to reach this goal.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include discussing the concept of environmentally sustainable procurement, relative to past and current procurement efforts within the B.C. Provincial Government. The discussion will also touch on suggestions for possible future efforts.

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, specifically the fact that discussions will take place during work hours, so the scheduling of time will be the main inconvenience. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include benefits to the state of knowledge about possibly implementing green procurement practices at BC Ministry of Environment. There is a future possibility that the footprint neutral approach to headquarters operations will be other BC government Ministries.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will not be used.

Because interviews will take place by direct communication (in person or via telephone) between the researcher and participant, all participants will be known to the researcher. In addition, the researcher plans to follow up on suggested contacts identified through initial interviews. It may be that you were identified as a contact by another participant. Therefore, your anonymity cannot be protected. However, your name will not be matched with any information provided during the interviews and discussions. Confidentiality will be assured and reported results will not refer to individuals by name. The focus of the research is not on the personal characteristics of participants, but their professional opinions and advice on implementing green procurement operations.

Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by password protected computer files and a locked filing cabinet. The data will be summarized and discussed in a report for both a Public Administration course and the client, the Strategic Policy Division of the BC Ministry of Environment. Once completed, the report will be available to the Strategic Policy Division, BC Ministry of Environment executive and the students and faculty of the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria. Data from this study will be disposed of after the acceptance of the defense of the final project. Electronic data will be erased, paper copies will be shredded.

Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include the researcher, Stephanie Walton, smwalton@uvic.ca. In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.