

## Environment Fact Sheets

# Environmental management practices in Canadian businesses, 2016



Release date: June 19, 2019

---

## How to obtain more information

For information about this product or the wide range of services and data available from Statistics Canada, visit our website, [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca).

You can also contact us by

**Email at** [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)

**Telephone**, from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at the following numbers:

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| • Statistical Information Service                             | 1-800-263-1136 |
| • National telecommunications device for the hearing impaired | 1-800-363-7629 |
| • Fax line  | 1-514-283-9350 |

### Depository Services Program

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| • Inquiries line | 1-800-635-7943 |
| • Fax line       | 1-800-565-7757 |

## Standards of service to the public

Statistics Canada is committed to serving its clients in a prompt, reliable and courteous manner. To this end, Statistics Canada has developed standards of service that its employees observe. To obtain a copy of these service standards, please contact Statistics Canada toll-free at 1-800-263-1136. The service standards are also published on [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca) under “Contact us” > “[Standards of service to the public](#)”.

## Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued co-operation and goodwill.

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada as represented by the Minister of Industry, 2019

All rights reserved. Use of this publication is governed by the Statistics Canada [Open Licence Agreement](#).

**An [HTML version](#) is also available.**

*Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.*

---

## Environmental management practices in Canadian businesses, 2016

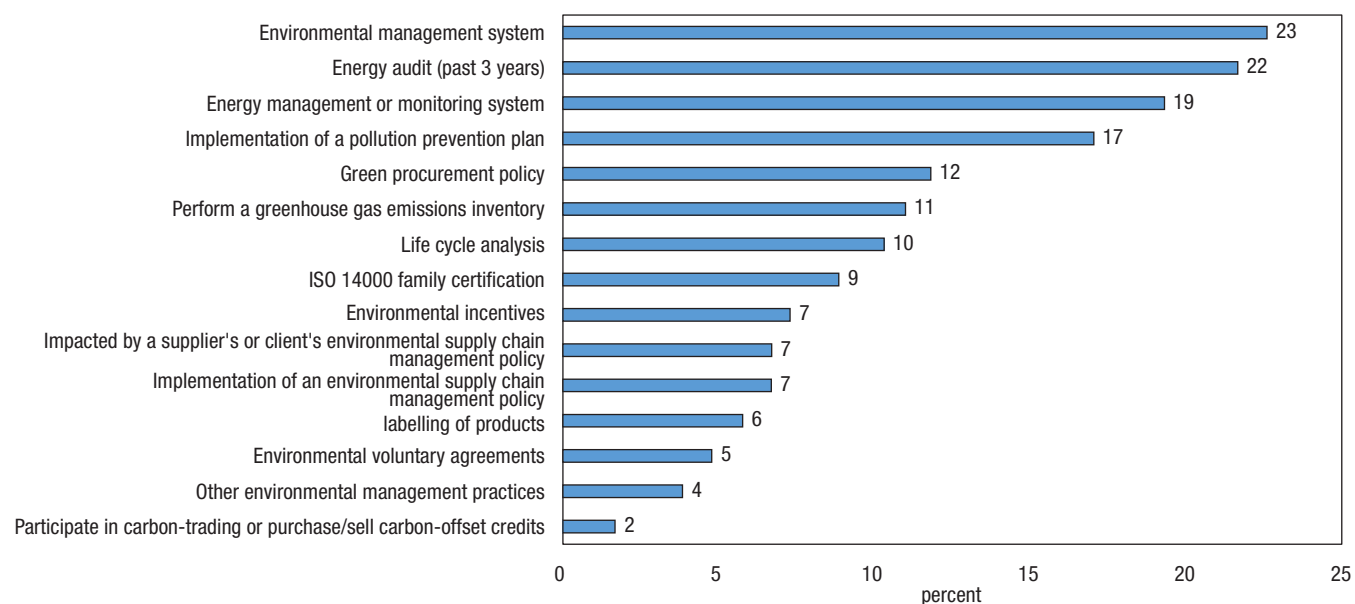
Environmental management practices are protocols that businesses adopt to reduce their impact on the environment. They can be implemented for various reasons, such as compliance with legislation and government regulations or a company directive on best practices. Businesses in scope in this fact sheet belong to manufacturing industries, logging (except contract), oil and gas extraction, mining and quarrying, electric power generation, transmission and distribution and natural gas distribution.

### Half of businesses have adopted at least one environmental management practice

In 2016, just over half of businesses (51%) had at least one environmental management practice. Among these businesses, 47% had adopted at least three, one-fifth (21%) had adopted two, and the remaining third (32%) had adopted one.

As in 2014, the two most commonly used practices in 2016 were environmental management systems (23% of Canadian businesses) and energy audits (22%) (Chart 1). In contrast, few businesses reported using environmental voluntary agreements (5%), down three percentage points from 2014. Profiles of four of the most common practices are provided later in this text.

**Chart 1**  
**Percentage of Canadian enterprises with environmental management practices, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Environmental Protection Expenditures, 2016. Table 38-10-0005-01.

## Environmental management practices are most common in the natural gas distribution and oil and gas extraction industries

In most of the industries studied, more than half of the businesses had adopted at least one environmental management practice (Chart 2). In four industries, more than three-quarters of businesses had implemented at least one practice. The natural gas distribution and oil and gas extraction industries led the trend, with 81% of their businesses using at least one environmental management practice. Half (51%) of natural gas distribution businesses had adopted at least six environmental management practices.

## The adoption of environmental management practices increases with the number of employees

The larger the business, as measured by the number of employees, the more likely it is to adopt at least one environmental management practice. In 2016, 95% of large enterprises (1,000 employees or more) had adopted at least one practice, compared with 84% of enterprises with 500 to 999 employees, 67% of enterprises with 100 to 499 employees, and 45% of small businesses (less than 100 employees).

## More than two-thirds of employees work for businesses with at least one practice

In general, businesses that had adopted at least one environmental management practice in 2016 had 69% of the employment share. As a result, more than two-thirds of workers in the industries of interest were employed by businesses that had adopted at least one practice. Of course, this proportion varied by type of practice. For example, businesses with ISO 14000 certification had 27% of the employment share, while those that had participated in environmental incentive programs had 15%.

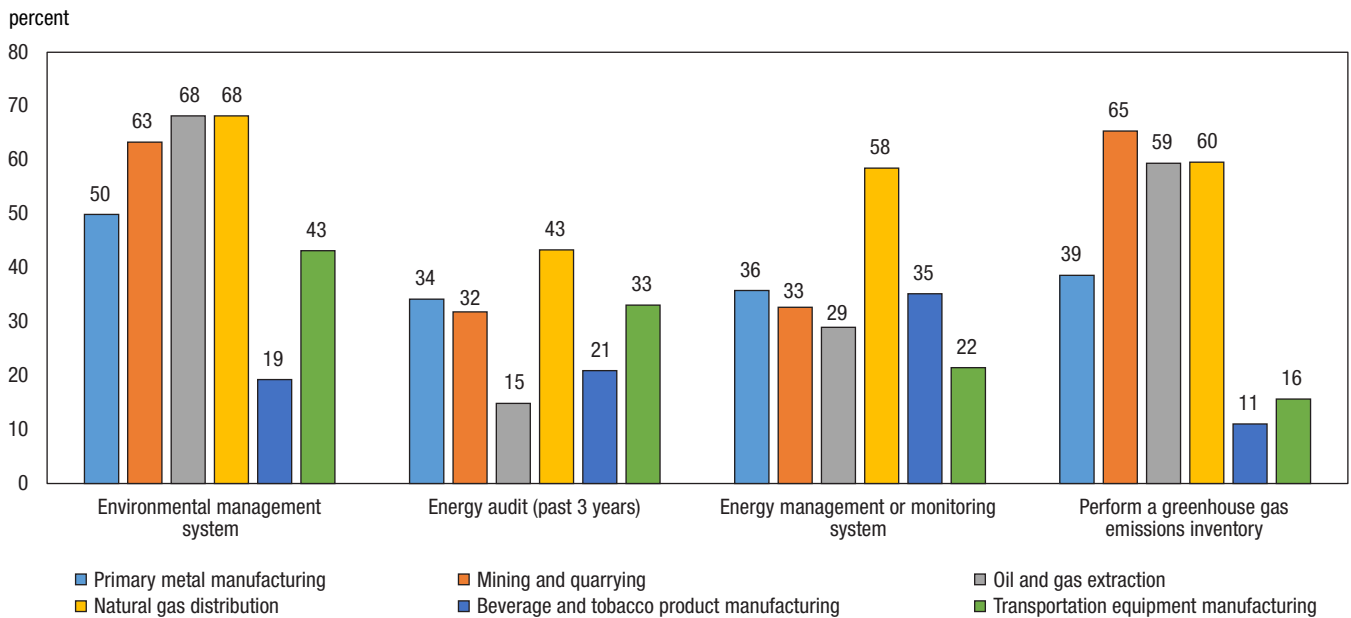
## Profiles of four of the most common practices

### Environmental management system

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of Canadian businesses had an environmental management system (EMS) in 2016 (Chart 1), making it the most popular practice. EMSs are a management tool that businesses use to assess and control the environmental impact of their activities. This practice was most frequent in the natural gas distribution (68%), oil and gas extraction (68%) and mining and quarrying industry (63%) (Chart 2).

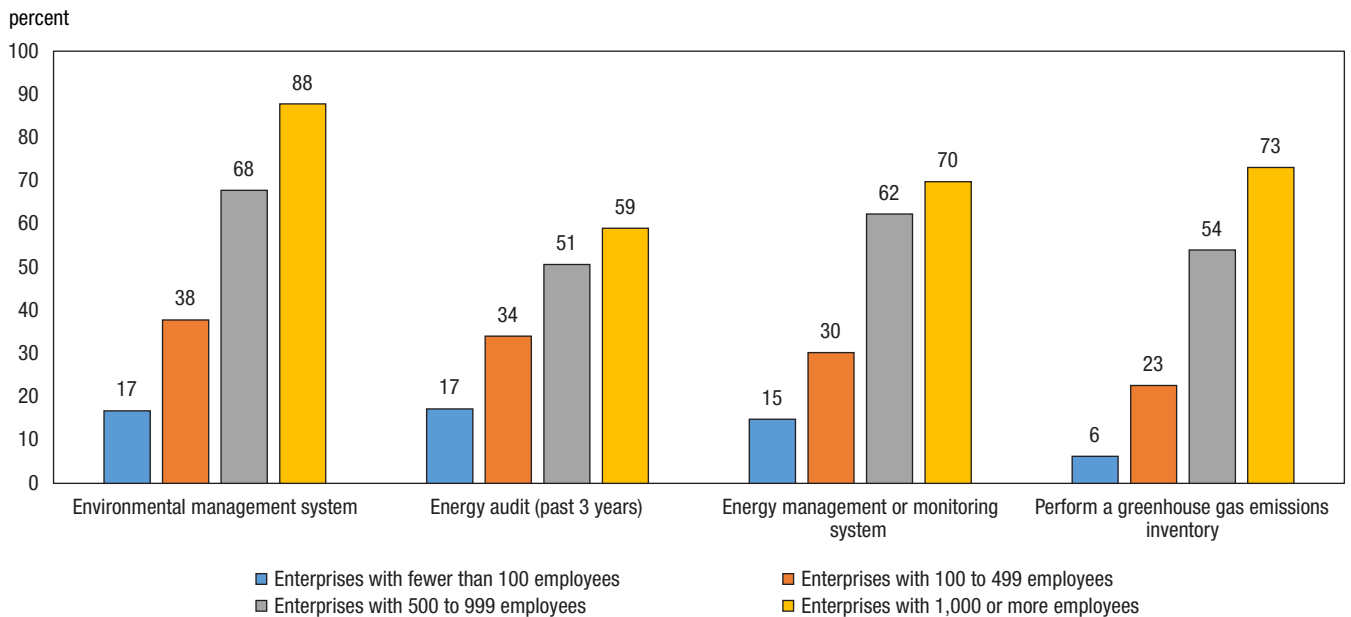
Having an EMS was also the most common practice in all business size groups. The percentage of companies with an EMS increased with company size, reaching 88% among large enterprises (1,000 employees or more) (Chart 3). Also, nearly half (45%) of employees in the industries of interest worked in businesses with an EMS.

**Chart 2**  
**Percentage of Canadian enterprises using selected environmental management practices, by industry, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Environmental Protection Expenditures, 2016. Special tabulations.

**Chart 3**  
**Percentage of Canadian enterprises using selected environmental management practices, by size of enterprise, 2016**



Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Environmental Protection Expenditures, 2016. Table 38-10-0005-01.

## Energy audit

In the past three years, 22% of Canadian businesses had conducted an energy audit (Chart 1). These audits include conducting analysis of the company's energy consuming systems and identifying potential areas reducing energy consumption. In 2016, energy audits were most common in the natural gas distribution industry, with 43% of businesses performing one (Chart 2). In comparison, energy audits were only performed by one-third of businesses in the following three industries: primary metal manufacturing (34%), transportation equipment manufacturing (33%) and mining and quarrying industry (32%).

In businesses with less than 100 employees or 100 to 499 employees, energy audits were the second most common practice (after EMSs), being adopted by 17% and 34% of their businesses respectively (Chart 3). Energy audits were performed primarily in enterprises with 1,000 employees or more (59%). However, energy audits were only the sixth most common practice in large businesses. Among the practices that came ahead of energy audits were ISO 14000 family certification (63%) and pollution prevention plans (72%). In 2016, the use of energy audits was associated with 37% of the employment share.

## Energy management or monitoring system

In 2016, nearly one in five Canadian businesses (19%) had an energy management or monitoring system in place (Chart 1). These systems help companies to manage energy use to improve energy efficiency. Energy management or monitoring systems were most popular in the natural gas distribution industry, with 58% of companies implementing one (Chart 2). Meanwhile, 36% of businesses in the primary metal manufacturing industry and 35% of businesses in the beverage and tobacco product manufacturing industry had an energy management or monitoring system.

In enterprises with 500 to 999 employees, energy management or monitoring system was the second most common practice (after EMSs), used by 62% of these companies (Chart 3). In 2016, the use of energy management or monitoring systems was associated with 37% of the employment share.

## Perform a greenhouse gas emissions inventory

A greenhouse gas emissions inventory is an estimate of the amount of greenhouse gas emissions businesses generate in a given period. This practice was used in 11% of Canadian businesses in 2016 (Chart 1), but it was more common in certain industries, such as mining and quarrying (65%), natural gas distribution (60%) and oil and gas extraction (59%) (Chart 2).

This practice was the second most often used by large enterprises (73%) (after EMSs) and the third most commonly used by enterprises with 500 to 999 employees (54%) (Chart 3). Overall, the use of a greenhouse gas emissions inventory was associated with 31% of the employment share.

### About the Environmental Protection Expenditures Survey

This release presents data from the 2016 Environmental Protection Expenditures Survey. It is conducted with just over 3,500 establishments in selected primary industries and in the manufacturing sector. This survey produces estimates of the capital and operating expenditures of Canadian businesses to protect the environment. Measures of industrial spending on environmental protection are restricted to spending to comply with current or anticipated regulations, conventions or voluntary agreements. It also collects data on the environmental management practices adopted by establishments.