STRENGTHENING EVALUATION PRACTICE

IN ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

IN THE LOWER MAINLAND

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine evaluation practice in environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. Specifically, it aims to ascertain and understand their current evaluation activities, determine the effectiveness of their assessments, and develop recommendations for strengthening their formal evaluation efforts. After a review of the literature on evaluation, the Canadian non-profit sector, ENGOs and qualitative research, this study is based on standardized interviews with ten ENGOs and five of their funders, and on an analysis of evaluation documents produced by the interview participants.

This research process reveals that ENGOs are informally and formally evaluating their environmental programs, primarily in order to obtain information that can satisfy their funders' accountability standards and improve their programs. They tend to rely more on internal evaluators than on external evaluation consultants, and they are using a variety of data collection strategies to collect fairly credible and useful qualitative and/or quantitative information. However, ENGOs focus more on meeting their funders' information requirements than on satisfying their own information needs; consequently, their evaluations do not always collect the right evidence for program improvement purposes. As well, ENGOs lack adequate resources to implement more formal and outcome evaluations, to develop and nurture in-house evaluation expertise, and to hire external evaluators for advice and guidance during their internal evaluation process.

This study also provides a number of recommendations for ENGOs and their funders with respect to how they can collectively strengthen evaluation practice in the environmental community. ENGOs should attempt to cultivate an organizational commitment to learning and reflection, ask their donors for evaluation funds, establish partnerships with other organizations, and create a long-term stable funding base for the environmental sector as a whole that generates revenue for evaluation and other organizational capacity-building activities. Funders, as well, should make their evaluation reporting prerequisites less onerous, ensure that their evaluation requirements reflect current developments in the evaluation field, provide additional project funds to cover evaluation expenses, offer evaluation capacity-building projects, and contribute more core/operational funding.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) in Canada are interested in providing high-quality information about the implementation and effectiveness of their environmental programs.[1] This interest appears to stem from external pressures, most notably increasing demands for evaluation from their funders, who need to use the findings to determine, on behalf of their donors, the extent to which their dollars are making a difference in the world. However, it is also based on internal considerations: a recognition that evaluation can lead to program improvements. In other words, ENGOs realize that evaluation can tell them how well their programs are doing and what changes should be made; consequently, it is an invaluable tool for improving the impact of their work, and ultimately, the state of the natural environment.

According to the few studies that exist on evaluation in the environmental sector, this interest in assessment has, fortunately, translated into action. Many ENGOs, like other types of non-profit organizations, are systematically evaluating their programs (Pinho, 2001). However, due in large part to a lack of funds to cover evaluation costs and the absence of in-house evaluation expertise (Juillet et al., 2001), they are not assessing the performance of their programs as often or as meticulously as they would like to. Most of their evaluations, for example, report on easily-measured program processes—inputs/resources (e.g. how much was spent) and outputs such as activities (e.g. what had to be done to achieve results, for instance, provide workshops, establish a telephone hotline and create and distribute publications) and implementation objectives (e.g. the number of goods and services provided, and the number of people served). Seldom do they measure long-term outcomes, impacts or results—changes in individuals/program participants, the larger community/environment, and the staff/organization that carried out the program (Pinho, 2001).

Given this situation, the question that needs to be asked is, “How can evaluation be more formally implemented so that ENGOs can satisfy their funders’ increasingly high standards of accountability, as well as their internal information needs?” Therefore, this study will contribute to this debate by investigating evaluation from the perspective of those who have the most to lose if evaluation is not conducted on an on-going basis—ENGOs who need to evaluate their programs to secure funding and

[1] In this study, the word ‘program’ may also be substituted with ‘project’, ‘policy’, ‘practice’, ‘product’, ‘intervention’, ‘initiative’, ‘activity’, ‘innovation’ or ‘service’.

improve their environmental programs, and green funders who have to determine, on behalf of their stakeholders, if their funds are being used as expected.

1.2 Purpose Statement

Within this context, then, the purpose of this study was to: (1) ascertain and understand evaluation activities[2] and needs in ENGOs in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, (2) determine the effectiveness[3] of ENGO evaluations, and (3) develop recommendations for strengthening formal evaluation practice in these environmental groups. As such, the questions that guided this study were as follows:

1. Why are ENGOs evaluating?
2. What evaluation activities are ENGOs carrying out?
3. How effective are ENGO evaluations?
4. What are green funders' evaluation requirements for ENGOs?
5. How do ENGOs and green funders feel about these requirements?
6. How do ENGOs and green funders feel about ENGO evaluation capacity?
7. How can evaluation practice in ENGOs be strengthened?

A secondary purpose of this study was to facilitate the exchange of information between ENGOs and green funders, by disseminating copies of the completed study to the ENGO and green funder research participants. Through a review of this report, for example, ENGOs will obtain feedback about the overall quality of their evaluations and their funders' perceptions with respect to ENGO evaluation capacity. Green funders, as well, will learn how ENGOs feel about their evaluation requirements and grantmaking practices, amongst other issues.

1.3 Key Definitions

A number of terms and concepts are used throughout this publication. They include the following (in alphabetical order):

- *Accountability*: "Accountability is the requirement to explain and accept responsibility for carrying out an assigned mandate in light of agreed upon expectations" (PAGVS, 1999, p. 11). "It involves: taking into consideration the public trust in the exercise of responsibilities; providing detailed information about how responsibilities have been carried out and what outcomes have

[2] This study considers 'recent' evaluation activities (i.e. those occurring at the time of the study and/or those completed in the past three years).
[3] "Effectiveness is a measure of the quality of [an] output" (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992, p. 351). Since, in this study, 'output' refers to ENGO evaluations and 'quality' refers to credibility and usefulness, effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which an ENGO evaluation is credible and useful.

been achieved; and accepting the responsibility for outcomes, including problems created or not corrected" (PAGVS, 1999, p. 118).

- *Core Funding*: Funding that pays for an organization's operational expenses such as staff salaries, rent, telephone bills, professional development activities, and equipment/supplies.
- *Credible Evaluation*: An evaluation that is credible contains information that is perceived "by stakeholders as believable, trustworthy, and relevant to answer *their* [evaluation] questions" (Milstein et al., n.d., p. 14).
- *Environmental Non-Governmental Organization (ENGO)*: A non-profit organization that primarily focuses on environmental conservation activities which "strive to protect or promote the natural integrity ("health") of ecosystems or components of ecosystems through the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems or the prevention of negative impacts on ecosystems (or components thereof)" (Gardner, 1993, p. 19).
- *Evaluation/Formal Evaluation*: The *systematic* determination of the merit, value or worth of a program, project, policy, practice, product, intervention, initiative, activity, innovation or service in order to inform decision-making (Robson, 2000; Clarke & Dawson, 1999). Organizations and individuals can also be assessed, but this study is not concerned with these objects.
- *Evaluation Capacity*: The term 'capacity' refers to "the human and financial resources, technology, skills, knowledge and understanding required to permit organizations to do their work and fulfill what is expected of them by stakeholders" (PAGVS, 1999, p. 118). 'Evaluation capacity', then, refers to the ability of organizations to allocate resources (i.e. time, money, personnel and expertise) to the practice of evaluation.
- *Evaluation Process*: The step-by-step process of planning and implementing an evaluation, as outlined in Section 2.4 of this study. This process includes such activities as selecting the evaluator, defining the evaluation questions, choosing the data collection methods, analyzing the evidence and disseminating the findings.
- *Funders' Evaluation Requirements*: The *questions* that funders expect ENGOs to answer in their written evaluation reports and/or the evaluation *products* that funders expect ENGOs to provide (e.g. interim evaluation report, final evaluation report and financial statement).
- *Fundraising*: The "solicitation of funds from individuals, outside of membership dues, and from corporations", governments and foundations (PAGVS, 1999, p. 119).
- *Green Funder/Funder*: An individual or organization (e.g. foundation, government agency or private business) that provides cash or in-kind donations to ENGOs.
- *Informal Evaluation*: An ad hoc (i.e. non-systematic) "subjective assessment" (Clarke & Dawson, 1999, p. 1) that ENGOs make about their programs (e.g. the gathering of information during impromptu one-on-one conversations with staff, program participants, etc.).
- *Non-Profit Organization*: "An organization that serves a public benefit, depends on volunteers at least for its governance, has limited direct control by governments, other than in relation to tax benefits, and is not profit making, thus eligible for exemption from paying income taxes" (PAGVS, 1999, p. 119).
- *Participant/Interviewee/Respondent/Key Informant*: A person who was interviewed for this study.
- *Resources*: Time, money, personnel and expertise/knowledge required to carry out the evaluation process.
- *Stakeholders*: "Anyone who has a stake, or interest, in an evaluation (in the sense that they are involved in or affected by it)" (Robson, 2000, p. 16). Stakeholders may include program staff/managers, volunteers, funders/donors/sponsors, policy-makers, evaluators and the target audience.

- *Target Audience/Clients/Program Participants*: Who a program is intended to serve; for example, the target audience for an environmental education program may include students, teachers and local community residents.
- *Useful Evaluation*: An evaluation that is useful provides "information that project staff and other stakeholders can utilize directly to make decisions about the program" (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 99).

1.4 Research Methods

Theoretical and empirical research was conducted in four stages, with the latter three stages constituting the use of the 'between method' or 'across-method' approach of methodological triangulation (Denzin, 1989). In the first stage, informal telephone conversations and personal unstructured interviews with evaluation consultants and a green funder confirmed the 'should-do-ability' (it should be done) and the 'do-ability' (it can be done) of this study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). In the second stage, a review of literature on evaluation, the non-profit sector in Canada, ENGOs and qualitative research was conducted. In the third stage, based on the exploratory conversations and the literature review, two interview schedules were designed to elicit information to answer the research questions. They were administered during standardized interviews with a sample of participants working for ENGOs and funding organizations in the Lower Mainland. In the final stage, documentary evidence obtained from the interview participants (e.g. evaluation surveys, evaluation plans, and grant application forms) was reviewed. All of the information collected in the last three stages was analyzed and summarized, thus producing the study presented here.

1.5 Data Sources

In addition to the use of methodological triangulation, this study adopted the strategy of data triangulation (Denzin, 1989). Information to answer the research questions was collected from three data sources: ten ENGOs, five funders and documentary evidence. The research participants were identified using a non-probability method of sampling known as purposeful or criterion-based sampling (Burns, 2000), that is, the non-random selection of "information-rich cases" (Patton, 1990, p. 169) according to the presence of certain criteria as defined by the researcher.

1.6 Data Analysis

During the standardized interviews, an interview schedule containing open-ended and close-ended questions was administered to the research participants. A content analysis of the answers to the open-ended questions was performed to identify unique and common themes. The answers to the fixed-choice questions were displayed in tables. Some of the findings from the surveys were verified and supplemented with a content analysis of relevant and available evaluation documents produced by ENGOs and their funders in the course of everyday events.

1.7 Significance of the Research

The significance of this research lies in two areas. First, there is very little information on the non-profit sector in Canada (Hall & Banting, 2000; CCP & CPRN, 1998; CPRN, 1997). As such, few studies investigate the non-profit *environmental* sector, particularly the topic of evaluation in the environmental community (Pinho, 2001). Second, there is a lack of literature on the role of evaluation within the funding community (McNelis & Bickel, 1996), as well as the impact that funders have on evaluation practice in ENGOs. This study, therefore, represents one step towards building a better understanding of these issues.

Additionally, it is hoped that the findings from this research will be of use to the ENGOs and green funders that were interviewed for this study, and other ENGOs and green funders in British Columbia, the rest of Canada, the United States and elsewhere. Independent evaluation consultants, environmental associations (e.g. the Canadian Environmental Network and affiliated chapters) and organizations that provide services and programs for the environmental community (e.g. in Vancouver: IMPACS or Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society and The Hollyhock School; in Seattle: TREC or Training Resources for the Environmental Community and ONE/Northwest Online Networking for the Environment) may also be interested in the results of this project.

1.8 Organization of the Research

This research is divided into six chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of this study and establishes the significance of this research. Chapter 2 reviews evaluation concepts, tools and practices, including such topics as the purposes of evaluation, the types of evaluation, and the evaluation process. Chapter 3 presents previous literature with respect to evaluation practice and funding circumstances in non-profit organizations at large and ENGOs in particular. Chapter 4 reviews this study's methodology, including the research design, role of the researcher, data collection methods, data sources, data analysis procedures and methods of verification. Chapter 5 introduces the findings from the interviews and document review. Finally, Chapter 6 presents key themes that were tested and verified during the course of conducting this study, as well as recommendations for strengthening evaluation practice in ENGOs, suggestions for further research, limitations of this study, and some final conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: EVALUATION CONCEPTS, TOOLS AND PRACTICES

This chapter assesses the existing knowledge base in the multidisciplinary literature on the subject of evaluation. Following a definition of this concept, the purposes of evaluation and some common types of evaluation are examined. Next, the steps to follow in order to conduct a high-quality evaluation *from within an organization* are presented. Since most of the evaluation manuals on the market are "difficult to locate, are too technical in nature, encourage external evaluation [which most ENGOs cannot afford] and are not flexible regarding organizational capacity and skills", it is hoped that the evaluation process presented here will be a practical tool that ENGOs can use to help them evaluate their programs (Bozzo & Hall, 1999, p. 17).

2.1 A Definition of Evaluation

Evaluation, the determination of the value, merit or worth of 'something' (Robson, 2000), is performed everyday by everyone. Most of the time, it is an informal activity (Paddock, 2001); for example, as when a program is judged based on a subjective assessment derived from ad hoc observations of individuals or events, and/or conversations with people, either in-person, on the phone or through other avenues. When very little time or money is invested in a program, or when very few people are affected by it, then this kind of evaluation is usually sufficient (Milstein et al., n.d.). However, when a program becomes more resource-intensive or impacts more people, then the formalization of evaluation is recommended (Milstein et al., n.d.). A formal evaluation is "the systematic collection, analysis and reporting of information about a [planned] program [in order] to assist in decision-making" (Public Health Branch, Ontario Ministry of Health et al., 1997, Definitions #3). As an established component of program management, it makes explicit the following three factors: "(1) the object of [the] review [i.e. the program], (2) the criteria with which value will be assigned and a judgment based, and (3) the behaviour or outcomes necessary if the object of the evaluation is to be judged as having met standards or expectation" (Paddock, 2001, p. 359).

A formal evaluation (hereafter referred to as 'evaluation' in this chapter and the rest of this study) can range in intensity from large-scale to small-scale. As depicted in Table 1, a large-scale evaluation tends to have a regional, national or international focus, takes more than six months to complete, and is carried out by an external evaluator or large evaluation team with sufficient resources at their disposal. In contrast, a small-scale assessment is likely local in focus, takes six months or less to complete, and is carried out by an internal evaluator or a small evaluation team with limited resources.

Table 1: The Likely Characteristics of a Large-Scale and Small-Scale Evaluation

LARGE-SCALE EVALUATION	SMALL-SCALE EVALUATION
• Regional, national or international in focus; • Takes a long time to complete (more than 6 months); • Carried out by an external evaluator or large evaluation team representing multiple organizations; and • Takes place with sufficient resources (time, money, personnel, expertise).	• Local in focus; • Takes a short time to complete (1 to 6 months); • Carried out by an internal evaluator (i.e. a staff member) or a small evaluation team (2 or 3 members); and • Takes place with limited resources.

Source: Robson (2000)

Contrary to popular opinion, a large-scale evaluation is not any ‘better’ than a small-scale assessment. In fact, as long as certain criteria are considered (see Table 2), a simple, quick and low-cost evaluation can provide as much quality information as a more complex, lengthy and extensive assessment (Milstein et al., n.d.).

Table 2: Some Ways to Ensure a High-Quality Small-Scale Evaluation

• Learn and follow an evaluation process from the very beginning of a program (see Section 2.4 for more information); • Limit the number of evaluation questions to be answered; • Collect information that only answers the evaluation questions; • Select data collection methods that are inexpensive, easy to use and require the least amount of time to apply; • Select at least one individual to coordinate and monitor the planning and implementation of the evaluation; and • Consider using volunteers to collect data.

Source: Favaro & Ferris (1991)

2.2 Purposes of Evaluation

One of the most important purposes of evaluation is to improve programs; however, many obstacles impede this type of usage, such as resource constraints, staff turnover, and conflicting priorities and interests between departments (Weiss, 1998). In particular, since “continuous improvement requires a commitment to learning”, the absence of a learning culture within an organization can prevent evaluation results from being used for program improvement (Preskill, 1994, p. 292 quoting Garvin, 1993, p. 78). A non-learning organization does not recognize the need to evaluate; it is not hungry to reflect on its experience, identify problems and experiment with proposed solutions. Fortunately, a non-learning organization can transform itself into a learning organization through various means. For example, management can adopt and communicate a deep commitment to organizational learning, as evidenced in organizational policies and procedures. Staff members can learn about the benefits associated with this transformation (e.g. risk-taking in a supportive atmosphere) and receive training in conflict resolution, team-building, critical thinking, evaluation and other relevant topic areas (Preskill, 1994). The very act of evaluation, with the active involvement of program staff, can also serve as a means through which an organization can establish and nurture a learning culture (Forss & Cracknell, 1994). Evaluation can bring staff "together to reflect on previous and current practices, engage in dialogue, and plan for future action", all necessary activities for ensuring the development of a learning organization (Preskill, 1994, p. 294).

Setting aside this improvement intent of evaluation, there are, of course, other important reasons for conducting an evaluation, as noted below:

- Evaluation focuses and guides program planning (Suvedi, 2001);
- Evaluation can increase knowledge and understanding about "what [a] program is and does" (Weiss, 1998, p. 24);
- Evaluation can provide lessons learned or "principles of effectiveness" that can be adapted to other programs or organizations (Patton, 1996, p. 133);
- Evaluation identifies unintended negative and positive effects (USAID, 1997);
- Evaluation determines whether or not a program is accomplishing its goals and objectives (Paddock, 2001);
- Evaluation provides information to guide resource allocation (Favaro & Ferris, 1991) so that money is spent on programs that work;
- Evaluation ensures accountability to key stakeholders, such as funders, board members, staff, volunteers, partners and the general public;
- The evaluation results, when they are included in grant applications/proposals, can be used to attract new sources of funding (Lackey et al., 1997);
- Evaluation can improve the reputation and credibility of an organization (Camozzi & Rice, 1995);
- When properly disseminated, 'positive' results (i.e. good news) can motivate staff and enhance public support for the organization's activities (Camozzi & Rice, 1995);
- The mere fact that an evaluation is being conducted can legitimize the program under investigation (Weiss, 1998);
- Staff and other stakeholders engaged in the evaluation process can develop a wide range of skills in such areas as consensus-building, problem-solving, critical-thinking, program planning, data collection/analysis, and report writing; and
- Participating in the evaluation process can improve communication between stakeholders (e.g. between front-line staff and program managers or between program providers and the target audience) (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998).

2.3 Types of Evaluation

There are many different types of evaluation. Most of these types (context evaluation, process evaluation, outcome evaluation, input evaluation, cost-benefit evaluation, cost-effectiveness evaluation and metaevaluation) focus on *what* is being evaluated. Other types (internal evaluations, external evaluations and participatory evaluations) refer to *who* is conducting them. Formative, summative and theory-based evaluations, on the other hand, emphasize *when* evaluations occur as well as the *intention of the evaluator*. The following is a brief description of each of these types of evaluations:

- *Context Evaluation*: This evaluation identifies the external contextual factors (e.g. social and political conditions) and internal contextual factors (e.g. the organizational climate) influencing program implementation and success. It sets the stage for process and outcome evaluations since it "explain[s] why a project has been implemented the way it has, and why certain outcomes have been achieved and others have not" (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 24). Examples of this kind of evaluation include a community needs assessment and an organizational assessment.
- *Process or Implementation Evaluation*: This evaluation examines the operation or implementation of a program (e.g. inputs/resources and outputs such as activities, the number of goods and services provided and the number of people served) (Council of Foundations, 1993). Monitoring, the collection of information "on a regular basis to provide feedback about the level of performance…without questioning the logic or structure of the programme design", is a key component of this type of assessment (Clarke & Dawson, 1999, pp. 5-6). Examples of questions asked during a process evaluation include, "How many workshops did we provide?", "How many people participated in our program?", "What are the strengths and weaknesses of our program?", "Is our target audience being served?", and "Is our program being implemented as intended?"
- *Outcome or Impact Evaluation*: This evaluation investigates whether or not a program achieved its short-term, intermediate and/or long-term objectives (Murray & Balfour, 1999; HCU, 2001). These objectives may refer to changes in individuals or participants (e.g. "Did the attitudes, knowledge or behaviour of the target audience change as a result of our program?") or changes in the larger community/environment (e.g. "What impact or effect did our program have on water quality?") (HCU, 2001). They may even refer to impacts on the staff/organization that delivered the program (e.g. What new skills did our program staff acquire?") (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998).
- *Input Evaluation*: This evaluation examines the financial, human and technological inputs or resources devoted to a project (e.g. "How much money was spent?" or "How much staff time was invested?") (Murray & Balfour, 1999).
- *Cost-Benefit Evaluation*: This evaluation measures program costs and benefits in monetary terms (HCU, 2001).
- *Cost-Effectiveness Evaluation*: This evaluation measures program costs in monetary terms and results in non-monetary terms (HCU, 2001).
- *Metaevaluation* (as termed by Scriven, 1969): This is an evaluation of an evaluation (Cook & Gruder, 1978 citing Orata, 1940). A metaevaluation can assess any aspect of an evaluation such as its data collection methods and final evaluation report (Shadish, 1998).

- *Internal Evaluation*: This evaluation is conducted by a person (i.e. internal evaluator) who works for the organization responsible for carrying out the program (Clarke & Dawson, 1999).
- *External Evaluation*: This evaluation is undertaken by an independent consultant who is not directly related to the program being assessed. This 'external evaluator' is hired by a funder or the organization that carried out the program (Clarke & Dawson, 1999).
- *Participatory Evaluation*: This evaluation is carried out by multiple program stakeholders (i.e. program staff, target audience and funders) with the assistance of an evaluation coordinator or facilitator, usually someone external to the organization (Aubel, 1999).
- *Formative Evaluation*: The collection of process and/or outcome information (Clarke & Dawson, 1999 citing Scriven, 1996) in order to guide program improvements. Data can be collected *during* a program in order to improve it while it is underway (concurrent formative evaluation), or *after* a program with the intent to use the findings to improve future programs (post-program formative evaluation) (Chambers, 1994). A formative evaluation "often rel[ies] heavily on process data" to generate recommendations for improvements (Patton, 1990, p. 95).
- *Summative Evaluation*: The collection of process and/or outcome information (Clarke & Dawson, 1999 citing Scriven, 1996) *during* a program (concurrent summative evaluation) or *after* a program (post-program summative evaluation) in order to make a judgement about its success, effectiveness, merit or worth (Chambers, 1994).
- *Theory-Based Evaluation (TBE)*: This type of evaluation "explores the how and why of program success and failure" (Birckmayer, 2000, Introduction, ¶1). It does this by examining the theory of a program (the underlying "set of beliefs or assumptions…about how [program] activities are expected to bring about desired changes") (Weiss, 1997, Problem 1 Section, ¶3). This program theory is identified while a program is being planned, and then "the theories [are used] to help structure the evaluation" (Problem 5 Section, ¶2). Information is collected during program implementation (i.e. process evaluation) to determine if the theories are realized in practice (Birckmayer, 2000). TBE is still in the early stages of its development and application; consequently, it is not routinely practiced in the evaluation community, despite its significant explanatory potential (Weiss, 1997).

Given their variable intentions, these evaluation types are not mutually exclusive. For instance, an external evaluator (i.e. external evaluation) can be hired by an organization to collect information about the implementation of a program (i.e. process evaluation) in order to make a judgement about its success or effectiveness (i.e. summative evaluation).

2.4 The Evaluation Process

One of the best ways to ensure a high-quality (i.e. credible and useful)[4] evaluation is by carefully designing and implementing an evaluation (Robson, 2000) with the assistance of program staff and other interested stakeholders (e.g. the target audience, funders and board members) (Aubel, 1999; W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998). For this reason, the evaluation literature is replete with various steps to help guide organizations through the process of planning and implementing an evaluation while a program is underway and/or upon completion. Table 3 depicts thirteen of the most commonly-cited stages found in the evaluation literature. These stages are intended to be followed in sequence *from within an organization*; however, budgetary constraints, lack of time and personnel, and other "real world" circumstances such as a "program's history and organizational climate" may necessitate their flexible application (Milstein et al., n.d., p. 5).

Table 3: The Stages in the Evaluation Process

STAGE	EVALUATION ACTIVITY
1	Describe the Program to Be Evaluated
2	Overcome Resistance to Evaluation
3	Budget for Evaluation
4	Select the Evaluator/Facilitator
5	Identify the Stakeholders
6	Create an Evaluation Team
7	Identify the Evaluation Questions
8	Determine the Indicators
9	Select the Evaluation Design
10	Choose the Data Collection Methods
11	Collect the Data
12	Analyze the Data
13	Disseminate and Use the Findings

Sources: Milstein et al. (n.d.), HCU (2001), W.K. Kellogg Foundation (1998) and USAID (1997)

2.4.1 Stage 1: Describe the Program to Be Evaluated

According to Milstein et al. (n.d., p. 8), "how a program is described sets the frame of reference for all future decisions about its evaluation." As such, the program that will be evaluated must be clearly and

[4] As noted in Chapter 1, a credible evaluation contains information that is perceived "by stakeholders as believable, trustworthy, and relevant to answer *their* [evaluation] questions" (Milstein et al., n.d., p. 14). A useful evaluation provides "information that project staff and other stakeholders can utilize directly to make decisions about the program" (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 99).

logically outlined.[5] Summarizing what a program is attempting to accomplish involves three steps: (1) identifying its goals, objectives, resources/inputs, activities and target audience; (2) determining the context of the program; and (3) using a program logic model to visually demonstrate the sequence of these elements.

Identify the Scope of the Program

Every program requires at least one goal (other commonly-used terms include mission, long-term objective and long-range impact). Essentially, a goal is the overall purpose or intention of a program (Reisman & Clegg, 1999; Camozzi & Rice, 1995), for example, ‘to improve the natural environment in urban areas’. It is typically “beyond what one program can achieve alone” (Reisman & Clegg, 1999, p. 30). Objectives, on the other hand, indicate “what you are going to do to reach that goal and how you are going to get there” (Camozzi & Rice, 1995, p. 13). Based on a consideration of available resources (e.g. inputs such as staff time, funding, equipment, and expertise), they are ideally designed to be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable/attainable, realistic/relevant and time-limited (Camozzi & Rice, 1995).

Objectives are usually categorized into two types: implementation objectives and outcome objectives. Implementation objectives identify the specific activities that will occur as well as the target audience that will be served (Rush & Ogborne, 1991). Typically, this information is expressed numerically, for instance, ‘to deliver five one-day training workshops with an average attendance of fifteen community residents per session’. Outcome objectives, whether short-term or intermediate, indicate how a program will impact or change the target audience, the broader community, the natural environment and/or the staff/organization running the program (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Examples include ‘an increase in wildlife habitat in the city of Vancouver’ and ‘an increase in the target audience’s stream reclamation skills’.

Determine the Context of the Program

A program does not operate in isolation from the real world. A number of external and internal contextual factors always hinder or support program success. Thus, in order to accurately interpret the evaluation findings and understand the conditions required for program replication, it is necessary to identify the exact context of the program being evaluated (Milstein et al., n.d.). External factors to consider include an “area’s history, geography, politics, and social and economic conditions,

[5] Of course, all programs should be comprehensively described during the planning stage, regardless of whether or not an evaluation is intended to take place in the future.

and…what other organizations have done" (Milstein et al., n.d., p. 9). Internal factors have to do with the organization that planned and implemented the program being evaluated. These factors include the organization's available resources, mission, culture, partnerships, leadership styles and staff characteristics (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998).

Create a Program Logic Model

Once the program goals, objectives, resources/inputs, activities, target audience and contextual factors have been identified, it is advisable to display the sequence of these elements in a program logic model (PLM) (Milstein et al., n.d.). A PLM is a framework (i.e. a table, flow chart or diagram) that illustrates how inputs/resources and outputs (e.g. program activities) logically link together to cause short-term, intermediate and long-term change.[6] It is often used in health and social services (Cummings, 1997) and, more recently, it has been applied in the environmental sector (see, for example, Pinho, 2001). The basic structure of a PLM is presented in Table 4 and an example of how it should be filled out with respect to an environmental list development project is presented in
Table 5.

Ideally, the design of a PLM should be based on the theory of a program (Reisman & Clegg, 1999). Program theory refers to the beliefs, assumptions and "hypotheses on which people, consciously or unconsciously, build their program plans and actions" (Weiss, 1997, Problem 1 Section, ¶3). Every program has a theory; for example, the theory underlying an environmental education program may be as follows: the program increases *knowledge* about the biophysical environment and associated environmental problems, and this knowledge leads to *changed attitudes* about the value of the natural environment, and these changed attitudes generate *environmentally responsible actions* (e.g. recycling), and these actions *improve the state of the natural environment*. The premise behind thinking through the theory of a program is to ensure that the PLM accurately describes the program. In other words, by considering the beliefs and assumptions underlying a program, necessary components in the PLM will be retained or added, and conversely, unnecessary elements will be

[6] Other frameworks that are used in Canada to illustrate the interconnection between all elements of a program include the Logical Framework Approach (usually used in the area of international development) (Cummings, 1997), Outcome Mapping (a new model to assess contributions made by development organizations) (IDRC, 2001), and the Results-Based Management Approach (originating from management sciences) (Cummings, 1997).

Table 4: The Basic Structure of a Program Logic Model

PROCESSES			OUTCOMES	
INPUTS	**OUTPUTS**			
RESOURCES *What does this program need to function?*	**ACTIVITIES** *What do we have to do to achieve our intended results?*	**IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES** (e.g. to provide, give, deliver) *How much do we do for how many people? Who do we serve?*	**SHORT-TERM and INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME OBJECTIVES** (e.g. to increase, decrease, expand, reduce, improve, maintain, prevent, provide) *So what? What difference does our program make?*	**GOALS (LONG-TERM OUTCOME OBJECTIVES)** (e.g. to increase, decrease, expand, reduce, improve, maintain, prevent, provide) *Broadly speaking, what does this program hope to achieve?*
• Staff • Volunteers • Training • Expertise • Funding Sources • Supplies • Equipment • Technology • Timeframe • Partners or Linkages • Setting	• Projects • Seminars • Conferences • Presentations • Meetings • Publications • Media • Workshops • Training • Mapping • Nature Walks • Telephone Hotline • Research	• Number of Goods and Services Provided (Countable Indicators of Activities) • Type and Number of Clients Served	• Change in Target Audience (Skills, Awareness, Knowledge, Attitudes, Decisions, Aspirations, Behaviour) • Organizational Change • Environmental Change • Community Change	• Environmental • Social • Political • Economic • Technological
CONTEXTUAL FACTORS (External and Internal)				

Sources: Suvedi (2001), Reisman & Clegg (1999), and Rush & Ogborne (1991)

Table 5: A Sample Program Logic Model for an Environmental List Development Project

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">PROCESSES</th><th colspan="2">OUTCOMES</th></tr>
<tr><th>INPUTS</th><th colspan="2">OUTPUTS</th><th rowspan="2">SHORT-TERM and INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME OBJECTIVES</th><th rowspan="2">GOALS (LONG-TERM OUTCOME OBJECTIVES)</th></tr>
<tr><th>RESOURCES</th><th>ACTIVITIES</th><th>IMPLEMENTATION OBJECTIVES</th></tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff:
- 1 Project Director
- .5 FTE Database Manager

Volunteers:
- Database entry
- Phone calling

Setting:
- Office space with 4 or more phones

Linkages:
- Other environmental organizations

Service Technologies:
- Voter turnout lists
- Environmental membership lists
- List merge software

Funding:
- Foundation grants</td>
<td>Obtain membership lists from coalition organizations

Merge membership list with voter turnout list

Two-hour training workshops for coalition members on using enhanced lists

Distribute enhanced lists to coalition members

Mail campaign and absentee voter information to enhanced list

Get-out-the-vote phone calls to enhanced list

Meet with political candidates and legislators to show magnitude of registered environmental voters</td>
<td>One merged membership list for the 32 environmental organizations in the coalition

Five half-day large group training workshops with 25 coalition members each

Technical assistance manual distributed to 12 environmental organizations

One enhanced list for 32 coalition member organizations

Mailing to merge list with information on environmental issues/candidates, and absentee voting

Phone contact with individuals with perfect or near perfect voting records

10 personal meetings with candidates in key races

20 face-to-face meetings with legislators</td>
<td>Increased turnout among low frequency voters on merged list

Increased percentage of voters on merged list who vote absentee

Increased political strategic thinking skills of workshop participants

Improved ability of coalition members to develop new uses for enhanced lists

Increased use of list technology by coalition members for ballot issues and elections

Increased contact between environmentally concerned constituents and their legislators</td>
<td>Increased election and retention of legislators supportive of environmental policies

More active and effective citizen participation in environmental efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">CONTEXTUAL FACTORS: Innovative project; enthused coalition members; sufficient financial resources; upcoming election; economic boom; extensive media coverage re: environmental problems; insufficient human resources; difficulty in overcoming political allegiances</td></tr>
</table>

Source: Reisman & Clegg (1999)

eliminated. For instance, with respect to the above example, the theory guiding this program calls for the design and implementation of an activity that teaches individuals about the biophysical environment. Consequently, the PLM should include a strategy that takes this into account (e.g. nature walks lead by a biologist).

With or without concerted attention to program theory, using a PLM to describe a program is advantageous for several reasons. First, the process of creating a PLM enhances staff understanding about a program (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998), especially if the model is adopted at the beginning of a program rather than mid-way or upon completion (Framst, 1995). Second, a PLM can be used to quickly explain a program to funders (e.g. in grant proposals), board members, the target audience, the general public, the media and other interested individuals or groups (Rush & Ogborne, 1991; W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Third, a PLM can guide and improve program planning (Rush & Ogborne, 1991). It does this by highlighting "vague, unrealistic or conflicting objectives" (Rush & Ogborne, 1991, p. 105), thus ensuring that changes to the program are made based on a "logical process rather than on personalities, politics, or ideology" (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 36). Lastly, a PLM can provide a working "frame of reference" for the evaluation of a program (Milstein et al., n.d., p. 10). This model, including its subsequent updates as the evaluation is carried out, provides an evaluator with an understanding of the program, including its underlying assumptions (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998) and intended outcomes. It can also help to identify and prioritize the evaluation questions that need to be answered, thus ensuring that resources are efficiently employed and the findings end up being used (Rush & Ogborne, 1991).

2.4.2 Stage 2: Overcome Resistance to Evaluation

Evaluation is not a top priority in many organizations, despite the benefits associated with its adoption (as noted in Section 2.2). Reasons for this include the following:

- A lack of resources (e.g. time, money, personnel and expertise) to devote to evaluation;
- A fear of being judged (Bennett, 1988-89);
- A fear that evaluation drains resources from service delivery (Posavac & Carey, 1997);
- A fear that the program will be terminated once problems are identified (Posavac & Carey, 1997);
- Reactions of avoidance caused by the perception that evaluation is a complex and time-consuming endeavor (Bennett, 1988-89);
- The evaluation is "usually imposed or mandated" (Favaro & Ferris, 1991, p. 6 citing Pancer, 1985) by, for example, upper management and funders;
- It is a difficult and time-consuming endeavor to develop indicators (see Stage 8) which accurately reflect program goals and objectives (Murray & Balfour, 1999); and

- The organization does not recognize the value of program evaluation; in other words, it lacks a "culture of evaluation" (Perkins & Trask, 2001).

These obstacles lead to a lack of commitment to the evaluation process, resulting in a poor quality assessment or none at all, even if more than enough resources are available (Favaro & Ferris, 1991). As such, resistance to evaluation needs to be addressed by the evaluator at the beginning of the evaluation process, as well as throughout it, as the need arises. Strategies that can be taken to overcome opposition to evaluation include the following:

- Conduct meetings with people to identify those who are likely to feel threatened by evaluation and encourage them to express their opinions (Lee & Sampson, 1990);
- Involve as many staff as possible in making decisions about the evaluation process (e.g. defining the evaluation questions, gathering the evaluation data), so that they feel that the assessment reflects their interests, issues and concerns (Lee & Sampson, 1990; W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998);
- As explained in detail in Section 2.2, ensure that the top level of the organization (such as the executive director and program managers) adopt and communicate a deep commitment to and enthusiasm for learning and reflection;
- While the evaluation is underway, keep staff members informed by providing them with concise reports outlining the evaluation's progress; and
- Reward staff members that attempt to use the evaluation findings.

2.4.3 Stage 3: Budget for Evaluation

In order to evaluate a well-described program, an organization requires funds to pay for evaluation staff, travel, communications, equipment, printing and other expenses (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998 citing Worthen and Sanders, 1987). Consequently, a portion of its budget must be set aside, in advance, to cover pending evaluation expenses. As such, an organization needs to request evaluation funds in their grant applications when they apply for project funding (even if their funders do not ask them to include this as a line item in their proposed budget). Suggested amounts to cover the cost of evaluation planning, data collection and data analysis range from 5-7% (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998) to 10% of a program's total budget (Pinho, 2001). An additional 10% of the overall budget should also be requested for the dissemination of the results to stakeholders and the public at large (Hutchinson, personal communication, 2000), in order to safeguard against the 'shelving' of the evaluation findings.

2.4.4 Stage 4: Select the Evaluator

The next step is to determine who is going to conduct the evaluation. As presented in Table 6, there are two types of evaluators to choose from: an internal evaluator, a person who works for the

Table 6: The Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Internal or External Evaluators

ADVANTAGES Internal evaluators will be: • familiar with the history, background, policies, issues and culture of the organization; • likely to be more committed to implementing evaluation recommendations, having been responsible for producing them; • likely to focus on the central concerns as perceived by management. External evaluators have: • an independent stance and offer a fresh perspective; • an objective, critical approach; • an overview of numerous organizations to serve as comparisons; • a knowledge and experience of a wide range of evaluation techniques; • a resilience to intimidation by management.
DISADVANTAGES Internal evaluators may: • have a vested interest in a particular outcome; • often be over-influenced by the history and knowledge of organizational issues; • sometimes be over-influenced by the known views of management; • be unlikely to have had experience of a broad range of evaluation techniques; • be less committed to the need for evaluation; • be inclined to favour programs developed within their own unit or section; • find it difficult to encourage stakeholders in their own organization to actively participate in the evaluation process. External evaluators may be: • ignorant of internal matters so that judgements may not reflect the complex reality of the situation; • unaware as to who are the key players in a particular setting and thus more easily misled by interested parties; • more interested in a report than its implementation; • influenced by the need to secure future contracts; • insensitive to organizational norms and internal relationships; • primarily responsible to an external organization.

Source: Copied from Clarke & Dawson (1999) who adapted it from Feek (1988) & Love (1991) organization responsible for carrying out the program (e.g. an executive director, program manager or staff member), and an external evaluator, "an independent consultant who is commissioned to undertake an evaluation on behalf of a service providing agency [i.e. the organization implementing the program] or funding organization" (Clarke & Dawson, 1999, p. 22). When an assessment is carried out from within an organization, an internal evaluator can be hired to take on full responsibility for conducting the evaluation (e.g. identifying the evaluation questions, selecting the data collection methods, collecting and analyzing the information, and writing the final report). If resources permit, he or she may obtain the services of an external consultant, so that the organization can take advantage of the strengths of both types of evaluators (and, conversely, minimize the weaknesses associated with the use of only one type). For example, an internal evaluator can plan and carry out the entire evaluation, while an external consultant can help collect some of the data, statistically analyze the findings, and write the final evaluation report (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Or, an external evaluator can take on the role of an evaluation coordinator/facilitator who "works *in partnership* with program 'stakeholders' in *all phases of the evaluation process*" (Aubel, 1999, p. 11, italics added by the researcher).

When interviewing a potential evaluator, an organization should ensure that the evaluator has certain characteristics, skills and qualifications such as flexibility and problem-solving abilities (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998), as well as formal evaluation training, experience conducting evaluations, a professional background related to the program's subject matter, previous work experience (especially in similar settings), and personal characteristics that "fit" with the organization (e.g. honesty and reliability) (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 62 citing Worthen & Sanders, 1987). Other skills that an organization desires in an evaluator will vary according to the nature of the program to be evaluated, as noted in Table 7.

2.4.5 Stage 5: Identify the Stakeholders

Next, it is necessary to identify the stakeholders, those individuals or organizations that have "a stake, or interest, in an evaluation (in the sense that they are involved in or affected by it)" (Robson, 2000, p. 16). In addition to the internal and external evaluators, they include program staff, volunteers, funders, policy-makers, the target audience, board members, partner organizations and anyone else "who ha[s] something to gain or lose from what will be learned from an evaluation, and also in what will be done with that knowledge" (Milstein et al., n.d., p. 6).

Table 7: Challenges Requiring Special Evaluator Skills

SITUATION	CHALLENGE	SPECIAL EVALUATOR SKILLS NEEDED
Highly controversial issue	Facilitating different points of view	Conflict-resolution skills
Highly visible program	Dealing with program publicity; reporting findings in a media-circus atmosphere	Public presentation skills Graphic skills Media-handling skills
Highly volatile program environment	Adapting to rapid changes in context, issues and focus	Tolerance for ambiguity Rapid responsiveness Flexibility Quick learner
Cross-cultural or international program	Including different perspectives, values; being aware of cultural blinders and biases	Cross-cultural sensitivity Skilled in understanding and incorporating different perspectives
Team effort	Managing people	Identifying and using individual skills of team members Team-building skills
Evaluation attacked	Preserving credibility	Calm Able to stay focused on evidence and conclusions
Corrupt program	Resolving ethical issues/upholding standards	Integrity Clear ethical sense Honesty

Source: Copied from W.K. Kellogg Foundation (1998, p. 61) who adapted it from Patton (1997)

2.4.6 Stage 6: Create an Evaluation Team

After the stakeholders have been identified, an evaluation team, committee or task force needs to be created. An evaluation team is responsible for making the decisions throughout the entire evaluation process. It consists of the internal and/or external evaluator and any other stakeholder representatives (e.g. a program manager, key staff members and a board member) that would like to be involved in the evaluation process, as long as they are familiar with the organization, interested in participating in the evaluation process, and willing to share information (Ellis et al., 1990). Resource constraints, of course, will limit the size of an evaluation committee, since committees are costly and time-consuming to operate (O'Brecht, 1992). Ideally, however, the team should consist of a representative yet manageable number of individuals (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998). In addition, if possible, the committee should meet on a regular basis, preferably in person (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998), in order to sustain the momentum of the evaluation and resolve problems as soon as they arise.

2.4.7 Stage 7: Identify the Evaluation Questions

Once the evaluation team has been created, it is up to the members to determine the questions that the evaluation should answer. Table 8 presents examples of possible questions to ask, as well as the type of evaluation they each correspond to (thus revealing that the evaluation type, as noted in Section 2.3 of this chapter, becomes apparent once the evaluation questions are finalized).

Table 8: Some Possible Evaluation Questions About a Program

1. What are the external and internal contextual factors influencing the program? (context evaluation)
2. Does the program meet the needs of the target audience? (process/implementation evaluation or outcome/impact evaluation)
3. What happens while the program is being implemented? (process/implementation evaluation)
4. Did the program attain its goals? (outcome/impact evaluation)
5. Did the program attain its short-term/intermediate outcome objectives? (outcome/impact evaluation)
6. How do costs and benefits compare? (cost-benefit evaluation)

Source: Robson (2000)

Some questions may need to be broken down into more specific questions in order to arrive at an answer (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998). For instance, to answer Questions #2-5, the following sub-questions[7] may need to be asked:

- *Evaluation Question #2*: Does the program meet the needs of the target audience?
  - *Sub-Question:* Did the program increase contact between environmentally concerned constituents and their legislators?
  - *Sub-Question:* Has the program increased turnout among low frequency voters on the merged list?
- *Evaluation Question #3:* What happens while the program is being implemented?
  - *Sub-Question:* Did we deliver five half-day training workshops as originally planned?
  - *Sub-Question:* How many people with near perfect voting records did we contact?
- *Evaluation Question #4:* Did the program attain its goals?
  - *Sub-Question:* Did the program result in the goal of increased election of legislators supportive of environmental policies?
- *Evaluation Question #5:* Did the program attain its short-term/intermediate outcome objectives?
  - *Sub-Question*: Did the workshop participants improve their political strategic thinking skills?

In order to determine which questions to ask, and to ensure that the findings will not be rejected or criticized at a later date (Milstein et al., n.d.), it is necessary to solicit information from a wide variety of sources (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998). Possible sources of information to consider include the

[7] These questions refer to the example of a completed PLM presented in Table 5.

following[8]: existing documents (e.g. the initial project proposal, commitment letter from funders containing their evaluation questions, the PLM, etc.); program managers, staff, and volunteers; the program's target audience; board members; community leaders; collaborating or partner organizations; relevant literature; or similar programs (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998).[9]

Since the list of possible questions to ask is enormous (Robson, 2000), some organizations may wish to narrow and prioritize their evaluation questions. This can be accomplished by considering the following three factors:

- *The evaluation budget*: The number of questions that can be addressed will be influenced by available resources (i.e. time, money, personnel and expertise). Generally, the more resources the evaluator has, the more questions can be asked.
- *The main users of the evaluation findings*: All or most of the questions should address the information interests of the main users of the evaluation results. For instance, if the evaluation is required by a program manager and key staff members in order to guide program improvements, then the questions should meet their information needs. Conversely, if the evaluation is required by a funder, then the questions need to provide answers that the donor expects (Ellis et al., 1990).
- *The PLM:* The evaluation questions must be relevant to the objectives of the program as detailed in the PLM (which is, as noted earlier, a visual representation of how various components of a program interconnect). Consequently, the PLM should be used to help the evaluator (and other stakeholders) prioritize the evaluation questions (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998).

2.4.8 Stage 8: Determine the Indicators

For each evaluation question, one to three indicators need to be identified (Reisman & Clegg, 1999). An indicator is "a marker that can be observed to show that something has changed" (Suvedi, 2001, Slide #14). Indicators should be "understandable by stakeholders; realizable, given time, dollars and resources; conceptually well founded; limited in number; [and] easy to use and interpret…" (Suvedi, 2001, Slide #15). Examples of questions to consider when attempting to formulate indicators include: "How will you know if you accomplished your objective?" and "What change is expected?" (HCU, 2001, p. 19). Table 9 presents some examples of indicators with respect to the specific evaluation sub-questions presented in Stage 7.

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[8] Some of these information sources may be the stakeholders that were identified in Stage 5.
[9] Obviously, it may not be possible to consult all of these sources, given a lack of money, time and personnel, and difficulty accessing certain individuals and documents.

Table 9: Examples of Indicators for Specific Evaluation Questions

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	INDICATORS
Did the program increase contact between environmentally concerned constituents and their legislators?	Legislators will report increased contact with environmentally concerned constituents.
Has the program increased turnout among low frequency voters on the merged list?	Number and percentage of low frequency voters on our merged list that vote in the next election.
Did we deliver five half-day training workshops as originally planned?	Number of training workshops provided.
How many people with near perfect voting records did we contact?	Number and percentage of people with near perfect voting records that we contacted.
Did the program result in the goal of increased election of legislators supportive of environmental policies?	Number and percentage of environmentally supportive legislators that were elected after the program.
Did the workshop participants improve their political strategic thinking skills?	Participants in the workshops will report increased political strategic thinking skills.

2.4.9 Stage 9: Select the Evaluation Design

An evaluation design is "the master plan" for collecting data from the people who have the information you need to answer the evaluation questions (Reisman & Clegg, 1999, p. 40). There are two types of designs to choose from: the analytical or experimental design and the descriptive, non-experimental or pre-experimental design. The decision as to which type of design to use is governed by two factors: (1) the availability of resources (i.e. time, money, personnel and expertise), and (2) whether you want to demonstrate that a program directly *caused* an outcome (i.e. show cause and effect) or whether you want to *describe* program process and outcome (HCU, 2001).

The Analytical/Experimental Design

To determine if a program directly *caused* a particular outcome, impact or result, the analytical or experimental design can be used. There are two types of experimental designs: true experimental designs and quasi-experimental designs, both of which aim to maximize the "impartiality, accuracy, objectivity, and validity of the information generated" (Little, 2002, A Few Questions Explained #2).

As depicted in Figure 1, true experiments involve comparing changes in randomly selected individuals who participated in the program (i.e. the experimental group) with changes in randomly assigned individuals who did not participate in the program (i.e. the control, comparison or non-treatment group). These groups, which usually share certain demographic characteristics, may be studied before *and* after the program (the pre-program/post-program design), or only after a program (the post-program design).

Figure 1: Types of Experimental Designs

(1) The Pre-Program/Post-Program Design

Experimental Group	R	O	X	O
Control Group	R	O		O

(2) The Post-Program Design

Experimental Group	R	X	O
Control Group	R		O

R = Random Assignment   O = Observation or Measurement   X = Program

Sources: (1) HCU (2001), (2) Singleton & Straits (1999)

Due to randomization, this type of experimental design is the best way to demonstrate that a program (as opposed to external factors such as what other organizations have done or the current political climate) directly caused an outcome. However, certain practical considerations can limit their use in an applied setting (HCU, 2001). For example, this design is costly and time-consuming to implement, and the very practice of random assignment may not be feasible, as is the case when measuring intact groups such as school classes (Singleton & Straits, 1999).

Another option is to adopt a quasi-experimental design. As shown in Figure 2, this type of design, like a true experiment, involves comparing experimental and control groups before *and* after a program (the pre-program/post-program design or the multiple time series pre-program/post-program design) or simply after a program (the post-test only design). This design still allows for the measurement of outcomes to prove the existence of a cause and effect relationship, but it has the advantage of being cheaper and easier to implement than the true experimental design. Thus, for cash-strapped and time-crunched organizations that require cause and effect information, a quasi-experiment can be an extremely valuable design option (see Pinho, 2001 for an example of its use in an environmental context). However, since the random selection of individuals is not a feature, it is more difficult to determine to what extent observed changes are caused by the program itself (as opposed to external factors) (HCU, 2001).

Figure 2: Types of Quasi-Experimental Designs

(1) The Pre-Program/Post-Program Design

Experimental Group	O	X	O
Control Group	O		O

(2) The Multiple Time Series Pre-Program/Post-Program Design

Experimental Group	O	X	O		
Control Group	O		O	X	O

(3) Post-Test Only Design

Experimental Group	X	O
Control Group		O

O = Observation or Measurement   X = Program

Sources: (1&2) HCU (2001), (3) Clarke & Dawson (1999)

The Descriptive/Non-Experimental/Pre-Experimental Design

To *describe* program process/implementation and outcomes in-depth, including participants' experiences with a program, the descriptive, non-experimental or pre-experimental design is used (HCU, 2001). Figure 3 depicts a couple of these design types. One type describes a group at one point in time (the post-program design) and the other kind describes a group before *and* after a program (the pre-program/post-program design).

Figure 3: Types of Descriptive Designs

(1) The Post-Program Design (or One-Shot Case Study)

Experimental Group	X	O

(2) The Pre-Program/Post-Program Design (or Before and After Study)

Experimental Group	O	X	O

O = Observation or Measurement   X = Program

Source: HCU (2001)

Typically, this type of evaluation design is based on qualitative information obtained through interviews, focus groups and observations. It is the most commonly-used evaluation approach, since it is the cheapest and easiest to carry out. However, due to the non-random selection of individuals and the absence of a control group, the evaluator cannot determine the extent to which the observed changes were caused by the program itself or external factors beyond the control of the organization carrying out the program. As such, in a descriptive study, a cause and effect relationship should not be claimed (HCU, 2001).

2.4.10 Stage 10: Choose the Data Collection Methods

Once the evaluation design is selected, it is necessary to decide which data collection method (or methods) to use. There are many data collection strategies to choose from, such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, document review, observations, and standardized questionnaires. As depicted in Table 10, some of these strategies are qualitative, that is, they produce detailed descriptions from a small number of individuals about "how your project functions and what it may mean to the people involved" (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 72). Other methods, as shown in Table 11, are quantitative in that they "use standardized measures so that the varying perspectives and experiences of [a large group of] people can fit into a limited number of predetermined response categories to which numbers are assigned" (Patton, 1990, p. 14).

When choosing which methods to use, methodological familiarity and popularity should not be the deciding factors (Milstein et al., n.d.). Rather, data collection strategies must be matched to each indicator; in other words, they should provide information that will answer the evaluation questions (HCU, 2001). Additionally, if resources permit, more than one data collection method should be used during the same evaluation (this is called methodological triangulation or the mixed method approach), so that the strengths of one method can compensate for the biases and limitations of another (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). Other critical aspects to consider when deciding which strategies to adopt include the following:

- *The available resources (e.g. time, money, personnel and expertise)*: Some data collection methods, like in-depth interviews, are more expensive than other strategies, like reviewing existing documents (HCU, 2001; W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998).
- *The people you need to obtain information from:* Factors such as language, culture and level of education will have a bearing on which data collection strategies can be used (HCU, 2001). For instance, individuals with language difficulties should be personally interviewed rather than mailed standardized surveys.
- *The degree of validity (accuracy) and reliability (consistency) desired*: Observations and semi-structured interviews, for example, offer the greatest validity, whereas surveys and cognitive assessments tend to provide more reliable information, no matter who collects the data, or where it was collected (Reisman & Clegg, 1999).
- *When the information is required*: Some methods, like focus groups, can provide a great deal of information in a short period of time, while others, like mailed questionnaires, may take weeks to collect from respondents.

Table 10: Strengths and Weaknesses of Qualitative Data Collection Methods

METHODS	DESCRIPTION	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
In-depth Interviews	• A small number of individuals are interviewed in person or on the phone • Mainly open-ended questions are asked • There are three types: the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide approach and the standardized open-ended interview	• Provides large amounts of detailed information about participants' perspectives, opinions, expectations and actions in a short period of time • Implementation and analysis requires a minimum of specialized skills • Unanticipated issues can be explored • Immediate clarification is possible • Provides a confidential environment	• Data collection is time-consuming • Data is difficult to analyze • Potential for interviewer bias • Participants may be uncomfortable sharing what the interviewer wants to explore • Interviewer must have excellent listening skills
Document Review	• The review of existing documents produced by the organization or target audience (e.g. letters, newspapers, minutes of meetings, brochures, diaries, logs, pictures, posters)	• Provides contextual information • Data is easy to manipulate and categorize for analysis • Unobtrusive and non-reactive method • Good source of historical information • Inexpensive to collect documents	• Documents may be inaccurate, incomplete or unavailable • Data is restricted to what already exists • What is recorded is influenced by social, political and ideological factors • Data is open to multiple interpretations
Focus Groups	• A semi-structured discussion with 8-12 stakeholders • Lead by a facilitator/moderator who follows an outline and manages group dynamics • Proceedings are usually recorded on video or tape	• Provides a great deal of in-depth information in a short period of time • Can be inexpensive to implement • Unanticipated issues can be explored • Immediate clarification is possible • Atmosphere is more relaxed than in a one-to-one interview	• Participants may influence one another • Potential for facilitator bias • Information can be difficult to analyze and interpret • Difficult to assemble participants • Requires specialized training in moderating techniques
Observations	• The recording of events, behaviours or objects in their natural setting • The researcher makes no special effort to take on a particular role	• Can view complex interactions in natural social settings • A useful way to gather information from subjects who are unable to communicate (i.e. very young children)	• Data is often subject to observer effects • Costly in terms of time and money • Can be difficult to interpret seen behaviours • Complex to categorize observations
Case Studies	• The in-depth analysis of unique and notable programs	• Fully depicts a person's experience with a program	• Time-consuming to collect, organize and describe data

Sources: Marshall & Rossman (1999), Clarke & Dawson (1999), McNamara (1998), Patton (1990) and HCU (2001)

Table 11: Strengths and Weaknesses of Quantitative Data Collection Methods

METHODS	DESCRIPTION	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Standardized Questionnaires, Surveys or Checklists	• Administered to a probability sample of the population by telephone, mail, email, fax or in person • Mainly contain close-ended questions which require the respondent to select their answers from pre-determined response categories (e.g. yes, no, maybe) • Includes tests and assessments designed to measure social and psychological variables (e.g. personality tests, knowledge tests and attitudinal assessments)	• Data analysis is simple • Responses can be directly compared and easily aggregated • Data can be statistically analyzed • Many questions can be asked in a short period of time • Provides a confidential environment • Results are generalizable to an entire population • Interviewer bias is minimized • Information can be obtained from a large number of respondents • Convenient • Easy to administer	• Respondents must fit their knowledge, experiences and feelings into the researcher's response categories • May be perceived as impersonal, irrelevant and mechanistic • By limiting their choice of responses, it can distort what participants really mean or have experienced • Rarely provides comprehensive understanding of respondents' perspectives, experiences and opinions • Time-consuming to design and pilot test close-ended questions • If mailed, emailed or faxed, respondents must be able to read and write • Poorly worded questions can lead to low response rates • Unanticipated issues cannot be immediately explored • Clarification is not possible
Process Tracking Forms/Records	• Collection of information about the process/implementation of a program using a standardized recording form and standardized procedure • Usually incorporated into a program's routine	• Fairly straightforward to design and use • Can provide very accurate and detailed process information • Can be incorporated into normal routine	• Staff and volunteers must be thoroughly trained and continuously updated on the tracking system • Can be seen as an extra burden on staff and volunteers • There is a risk that the forms/records will not be completed regularly or accurately

Sources: HCU (2001), Marshall & Rossman (1999), Clarke & Dawson (1999) and Patton (1990)

2.4.11 Stage 11: Collect the Data

Using the agreed-upon data collection method (or methods), information is collected from the “unit of analysis”, those “people [e.g. program participants], objects [e.g. documents], or events” that can provide answers to the evaluation questions/indicators (USAID, 1997, Data Collection and Analysis Section, ¶5). More often than not, an evaluation involves gathering information from people, which then poses the challenge of identifying the sample size—that is, *who* and *how many* individuals will be interviewed, mailed surveys and so forth. When attempting to figure out *who* to gather information from, it helps to keep in mind the following question: “Which people can provide me with the information to answer my evaluation questions/indicators?” In order to determine the *number* of people to contact, the following should be considered:

- If an evaluation seeks to generalize from a sample to a population (as occurs with an experimental design), then a large number of people have to be selected using a random probability sampling technique such as simple random sampling (Patton, 2002). Table 12 depicts a standard sampling formula that can be used to determine the correct sample size for this purpose. For instance, if a program to be evaluated involved 100 people, 80 of these people need to be randomly selected to arrive at a confidence level of 95%.
- If random selection is not possible (as occurs with a quasi-experimental design) or an evaluation seeks to describe “something” in-depth (as occurs with a descriptive design), then a small number of “information-rich” people are chosen using a non-probability sampling technique known as purposeful sampling. There is no rule specifying how many people should be purposefully sampled; it can be as low as 1 (to seek greater depth) or as high as 30 (to seek greater breadth) (Patton, 2002).

Table 12: Sample Sizes and Confidence Levels

SAMPLING ERROR	**± 3%**	**± 5%**	**± 10%**
Population size			
100	92	80	49
250	203	152	70
500	341	217	81
750	441	254	85
1000	516	278	88
2500	748	333	93
5000	880	357	94
10000	964	370	95
25000	1023	378	96
50000	1045	381	96
100000	1056	383	96
1000000	1066	384	96
100000000	1067	384	96

Source: Copied from Reisman & Clegg (1999) who copied it from Salant & Dillman (1994)

2.4.12 Stage 12: Analyze the Data

After the information is collected from the unit of analysis, the next step is to make sense of all of the raw evidence as it relates to the evaluation questions/indicators. Methods of data analysis differ according to whether the data is qualitative (i.e. words) or quantitative (i.e. numbers). The analysis of qualitative data involves coding or categorizing the information into patterns or themes. These themes may be theory-based, which means that they are quite well-developed at the start of an evaluation. Or, if the evaluation is more exploratory in nature, themes may emerge during its implementation; this is known as the grounded theory approach (Robson, 2000). Quantitative information, on the other hand, is statistically analyzed. This is not always a complicated endeavor; for example, the data can be easily converted into percentages or averages (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998). However, it should be noted that when an analytical or experimental design is employed and inferences are to be made from a sample, a statistical test must be performed using specialized computer software packages, such as SSPS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) (Robson, 2000). Under this circumstance, then, an inexperienced internal evaluator would benefit from statistical training and/or the services of an external consultant skilled in this area.

2.4.13 Stage 13: Disseminate and Use the Findings

Once the information has been coded and/or statistically analyzed, the evaluation findings (and any other internal and external contextual factors that may have influenced the program) should be communicated to various stakeholders to ensure that the findings are used. Program staff, for example, can use the information to meet their funders' accountability standards and improve their programs while they are underway. Funders, as well, can use the findings to improve their grantmaking process, assess the impact of their funded programs and hold their grantees accountable (McNelis & Bickel, 1996). Findings that are presented to board members and the general public can be used to increase their understanding of a program, thus generating further support for and involvement in the organization's work.

Typically, the findings are presented in interim/progress reports and final reports (see Table 13 for an example of how to organize a formal evaluation report).[10] Progress reports are developed during program implementation, in order to present information and action recommendations about program benefits and challenges while the program is underway. Final evaluation reports are produced near

[10] The findings are usually presented in this format because funders often require their grantees to submit evaluation reports for accountability purposes.

Table 13: The Structure of a Formal Evaluation Report

- Heading (and subheading if necessary)
- Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary/Abstract (preferably one page, no more than two)
    - The most important part for first-time readers and busy stakeholders
    - Summary of key findings and conclusions/recommendations
    - Limit each point to a short paragraph, including a relevant fact or example

2. Background and Purpose
    - 2.1 Background/Rationale (why the evaluation was carried out, what questions you are seeking answers to and why the findings are likely to be of interest)
    - 2.2 Literature Review (if done)
    - 2.3 Description of the Program/Service/Resource that was evaluated

3. Methodology and Procedures
    - 3.1 Development of Data Collection Instruments (e.g. surveys)
    - 3.2 Sampling Protocol (e.g. purposeful sampling, random sampling)
    - 3.3 Data Collection Procedures
    - 3.4 Data Analysis
    - 3.5 Limitations of the Evaluation

4. Results/Findings
    - Provide answers to your evaluation questions
    - Start with your most important information
    - Include unanticipated findings
    - Logically organize the findings with bullet points or numbers (e.g. 4.1, 4.2, etc.)
    - Use charts, tables, graphs and diagrams to illustrate your main points

5. Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion
    - Draw together the report's main themes and, most importantly, their implications.
    - Clearly structure recommendations/lessons learned using bullet points or numbers (e.g. 5.1, 5.2, etc).
    - Prioritize those recommendations/lessons learned which are most important and feasible to implement

Appendices

- Include any information needed by the audience to understand or substantiate the material in the report (e.g. interview questions, bibliography). Use coloured paper to downplay the length of the main report.

NB: Include names, addresses, telephones, faxes and emails

Sources: HCU (2001) and Robson (2000)

the end of a program or soon after its completion, to summarize information collected during the program and provide recommendations, lessons learned and conclusions based on these findings. Both types of reports can vary in length and style, depending on the reporting needs of the stakeholders and the purpose for communicating the report. No matter what the format of the report, however, it should always be concise, unbiased, professionally presented and clearly written, preferably in the audience's language (Robson, 2000), as well as relatively devoid of academic terminology (Patton, 2002). As noted by one funder, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (1998, p. 97), "a concise, well-written report of ten pages is more likely to influence our programming than one hundred pages of raw data." Of course, the evaluation findings do not have to be presented in a written report, especially if the evaluation is conducted to improve a program (Patton, 2002). The results can be shared during ad-hoc personal discussions with stakeholders or by distributing executive summaries (of the written progress and/or final reports). Other creative forms of communication include memos, workshops, presentations, conferences, meetings, newsletters, brochures, press releases, media articles, posters, videotapes and web pages (Robson, 2000; HCU, 2001).

2.5 Summary

Certainly, there are many compelling reasons to evaluate. Not only can the findings lead to improved programs, but they can also ensure accountability to funders and other stakeholders, attract new sources of funding, improve an organization's credibility, and motivate staff, amongst other uses. Most importantly, once an organization is familiar with the evaluation process, it is not difficult to carry out an assessment. In fact, an evaluation can produce high-quality information even if it is conducted with limited time, money, personnel and expertise. The next chapter will consider the extent to which the evaluation concepts, tools and practices that were discussed in this chapter are applied by the Canadian non-profit sector in general, and by ENGOs in particular.

CHAPTER 3: EVALUATION IN ENGOs

There is a distinct lack of research on evaluation practice in environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) in Canada. Despite this situation, some information sources exist which offer a useful starting point for an exploration of this topic. This chapter draws upon these few sources to investigate the current evaluation strategies, needs and challenges in the Canadian non-profit environmental community, starting with an analysis of their present funding circumstances (since funding is an absolute necessity for evaluation). First, however, the same topic areas in non-profit organizations at large will be examined, in order to provide an understanding of the broader environment in which ENGOs operate.

3.1 Non-Profit Organizations[11]

Little is known about the non-profit sector in Canada (Hall & Banting, 2000; CCP & CPRN, 1998; CPRN, 1997). Research about this important aspect of the economy has been hampered by incomplete government data. Statistics Canada, for example, does not distinguish between for-profit groups and non-profit organizations in their records (CCP & CPRN, 1998), and the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency does not require non-profit organizations lacking charitable status and those with annual revenues of less than $10,000 or total assets of less than $100,000 to file tax returns (Hall & Banting, 2000). Consequently, what little information is available about non-profit organizations is mainly derived from a small number of sources: (1) the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's data on registered charities[12] and a few other legally incorporated non-profit groups[13], (2) summaries of workshop proceedings involving relevant stakeholders working in the non-profit sector (e.g. PAGVS, 1999), and (3) a few literature reviews (e.g. Hall & Banting, 2000;

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[11] There is a lack of agreement as to what terminology should be used to describe the sector that these organizations belong to (Hall & Banting, 2000). In addition to such commonly-used terms as 'nonprofit sector', 'voluntary sector', and 'third sector', other labels that have been employed include the 'charitable sector', 'social sector', 'civic sector', 'community sector', and 'social economy'.

[12] However, this information is not checked for validity or reliability (Hall & Banting, 2000). Furthermore, the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's method of data classification "hides" certain types of registered charities; for example, ENGOs, food banks and human rights organizations do not have their own category code (Sharpe, 1994).

[13] Unfortunately, many legally incorporated non-profit groups are not even aware that they are required to file tax returns; for instance, out of an estimated 100,000 of these organizations (Hall & Banting, 2000 citing Quarter, 1992), only 4,490 filed returns in 1994 (CCP & CPRN, 1998). In addition, these groups are not expected to provide as much information as registered charities, nor is the data available to the public in its entirety (Hall & Banting, 2000).

CCP & CPRN, 1998) and surveys (e.g. Kane, 2002; CCP, 2000) that attempt to capture the essence of this sector despite existing gaps in knowledge.

3.1.1 A Definition of Non-Profit Organizations

Non-profit organizations in Canada consist of registered charities, legally incorporated non-profit groups, and unincorporated non-profit organizations (CCP & CPRN, 1998). According to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, there were approximately 75,000 registered charities as of February 1998 (CCP & CPRN, 1998) and 4,500 other legally incorporated non-profit organizations as of 1994 (CCP & CPRN, 1998 citing Day & Devlin, 1997). Furthermore, Quarter (1992) estimates that there are another 100,000 non-profit groups in this country that are not registered by the government, thus bringing the total number of non-profit organizations in Canada to approximately 180,000 (CCP & CPRN, 1998).

Several different types of non-profit organizations operate in Canada, for example, public and private foundations, hospitals, teaching institutions, religious organizations, environmental groups, food banks, international development agencies, libraries, museums, arts organizations, human and civil rights groups, and amateur athletic associations. Notwithstanding this diversity, however, they do have certain characteristics in common. As noted by PAGVS (1999, p. 119), a non-profit group "serves a public benefit, depends on volunteers at least for its governance, has limited direct control by governments, other than in relation to tax benefits, and [unlike market-driven enterprises and government agencies and departments] is not profit making, thus eligible for exemption from paying income taxes."[14]

Non-profit organizations are a significant component of Canadian society and a major source of employment for many Canadians. Based on data from registered charities, the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy estimates that the non-profit sector received $90.5 billion in annual revenues in 1994 (Hall & Banting, 2000 citing Hall & Macpherson, 1997). The sector employs 1.3 million Canadians (approximately 9% of the Canadian labour force) and provides more than $40 billion annually in salaries and benefits (Sharpe, 1994). In fact, "the charitable sector accounts for more of Canada's employment, salaries and benefits than a number of other important sectors of the economy (e.g. finance, insurance, and real estate; and construction)" (Sharpe, 1994, p. 14).

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[14] The definition of the non-profit sector is more complex than can be presented in this study. Exactly how to establish the boundaries of this sector has been regularly debated in the academic literature and policy circles (see, for example, *Sectoral Framework and Definition* in Appendix 1, CCP & CPRN, 1998).

3.1.2 The Funding of Non-Profit Organizations

Revenue Sources

Non-profit organizations receive funds from three main sources: government grants and contracts; earned income from investments, membership fees, the sale of goods and services, and other organizational activities; and cash and/or in-kind donations from individuals, foundations and/or corporations. Not surprisingly, the proportion of income received from each funding source varies according to the type of non-profit organization. Canada's 75,000 registered charities, for example, are extremely dependent on government support; as such, they are "particularly vulnerable to cutbacks in government spending" (Sharpe, 1994, p. ix). With respect to their total revenues, government funding (mainly provincial) constitutes 60% of monies received, with 56% of this amount going to hospitals and teaching institutions (even though they only comprise 6% of the entire sector). Earned income accounts for 26% of total revenues, and 14% is derived from private giving (i.e. funds from individuals, corporations, business associations, trade unions, etc.) (CCP & CPRN, 1998 citing Hall & Macpherson, 1997).[15] In contrast, the approximately 100,000 non-profit organizations that are not registered charities are more dependent on revenues from earned income. These groups receive 14% of their total revenues from government grants and 72% from earned income derived through membership fees/dues, sales and other organizational activities (CCP & CPRN, 1998 citing Day & Devlin, 1997).

New Trends in Non-Profit Funding

In recent years, the funding environment for non-profit organizations has undergone some changes. Three transformations, in particular, have received substantial, often negative, coverage in the non-profit literature:

- A decline in the *level* of government funding, prompted by policies to reduce public deficits and limit the role of the state in Canadian society (Juillet et al., 2001);
- A change in the *timing* of government funding; and
- A change in the *form* of government funding.

[15] Individuals are more charitable than corporations (9.5% of donations vs. 1%, respectively) (Sharpe, 1994). As well, it appears that most individuals are inclined to donate this 9.5% to health-related non-profit organizations. According to a recent Ipsos-Reid poll that asked 800 individuals from British Columbia to name, "off the top of their head", which charitable/non-profit organizations they would donate funds to, 30% said health-related organizations, 20% said social/community organizations, 17% said churches/religious organizations, 12% said children's charities/organizations, 6% said wildlife/environmental organizations, and 3% said international organizations (Kane, 2002).

With respect to the first transformation, many authors assert that the reduction in government funding is compromising the very 'health' of non-profit organizations (particularly those that are heavily dependent on government support). For the most part, they point to the fact that this loss of government income has increased competition between non-profit groups for contributions from other revenue sources, namely private donors and corporations (PAGVS, 1999).[16] This increased competition, in turn, is affecting non-profit organizations for the worse, in various ways. First, fundraising costs are escalating (Hall & Banting, 2000 citing Hall & Reed, 1998), thus driving resources away from program delivery, strategic planning and other critical organizational activities. Second, as more and more groups find it necessary to attract corporate funding, they risk losing the credibility that they currently enjoy (Hall & Banting, 2000 citing Hall & Reed, 1998).[17] Third, non-profit organizations are more likely to accept donations with "priorities determined by the funder rather by than the organization or its constituency" (PAGVS, 1999, p. 5), thereby raising concerns about their ability to fulfil their own organizational mandates. Fourth, in order to attract funds, non-profit groups are 'watering down' their programs, so that "society loses important alternative voices and social agents committed to social change" (Juillet et al., 2001, p. 26 citing Reading, 1994 & Abrams, 1980). Lastly, non-profit organizations are, in general, working harder despite less money, resulting in "staff burnout, and an inability to keep pace with technological advancements or to invest in the training required for staff and volunteers to deal with more clients with complex needs" (PAGVS, 1999, p. 5).

Some authors are also critical of changes in the timing of government funding. Increasingly, governments are approving funds at the last minute, thus forcing non-profit organizations to adapt to budgetary increases and/or reductions with little advanced warning. This situation causes financial hardship for some groups, while others are managing to overcome this dilemma by, for example, acquiring "bridge financing from financial institutions" (Juillet et al., 2001, p. 36).

Another transformation that has received criticism in recent years has been the change in the form of government funding. The shift from the awarding of grants/core funding to the awarding of project funding, increasingly in the form of contracts (Hall & Banting, 2000; Juillet et al., 2001), has negatively affected non-profit groups in three ways. First, since contracts, unlike grants, do not cover

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[16] Non-profit organizations are also competing with the government which is increasingly raising private money to fund public initiatives (PAGVS, 1999).

[17] According to a study titled *Talking About Charities: Canadians' Opinions on Charities and Issues Affecting Charities*, 76% of Canadians trust charities "some" or "a lot" and 84% believe that charities are honest about the way they spend their funds (CCP, 2000, p. ix).

all core operating costs, organizations are being forced to reduce their overhead expenses by eliminating administrative support, or increase their fundraising efforts (and hence, their fundraising costs) to obtain enough contracts to pay their overhead bills (Juillet et al., 2001). Second, some government contracts require non-profit groups to deliver programs according to government priorities, rather than their own organizational objectives. This has resulted in program changes related to the types of services provided and the kinds of target audiences served (Hall & Banting, 2000 citing Rekart, 1993). Lastly, since contracts have more "extensive" accountability requirements than the awarding of core funding, non-profit groups are spending more and more of their increasingly limited resources on evaluation activities, in particular, the measurement of performance (Juillet et al., 2001, p. 27 citing Knapp, Robertson & Thomason, 1990), thus leading "to the reorientation of an agency's mission towards activities that are easier to quantify [e.g. the number of services provided] and where success is more likely (Juillet et al., 2001, p. 27 citing James, 1989; Weisbrod, 1998; Ware, 1989).

3.1.3 Evaluation in Non-Profit Organizations

In recent years, non-profit organizations have been increasingly pressured by all types of funders to evaluate their programs. Governments, corporations and foundations are all demanding more formal accountability requirements for their non-profit grantees, to ensure that their donations are being used to benefit society (Juillet et al., 2001; PAGVS, 1999). Some of these funders expect more reporting on easily-measured items such as financial details and the products/outputs of services (Juillet et al., 2001), while others are more interested in basing their decision to award money on the assessment of outcomes, impacts or results.[18] Individual funders, as well, would like to receive more information about how non-profit groups are operating. According to the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy's telephone survey of 3,863 Canadians (18 years of age or older), "more than two-thirds…said charities should be providing more information about their programs and services, how they use donations, their fundraising costs and the impact of their work on Canadians" (CCP, 2000, p. ix). Hall & Banting (2000, p. 20) echo this same sentiment, while adding that this public demand for information is based on "less trusting attitudes" shaped by media exposure about the misuse of funds (e.g. Donovan, 2002A & 2000B) and the labeling of many non-profit organizations as irrational "special interest" groups.

[18] This is "a move some of the leading evaluation theorists term as 'foolish'" (PAGVS, 1999, p. 37 citing The Muttart Foundation) since "Done badly, linking outcomes to funding can shift resources from service delivery to measurement with no offsetting benefit to programs, penalize prevention and development programs and others with harder-to-measure outcomes, promote 'creaming' (selecting participants who are more likely to succeed), inhibit innovation, punish risk taking and discourage interprogram cooperation" (PAGVS, 1999, p. 36 quoting Plantz et al., 1997, p. 12).

In response to these demands for greater accountability, non-profit groups are evaluating their programs, and distributing the information to their funders and other stakeholders, such as board members and other non-profit groups. Additionally, they are using the findings to improve the effectiveness of their programs and inspire staff and volunteers (PAGVS, 1999). Most of their evaluations produce information that focus on program process: resources/inputs (e.g. staff, computer equipment and partnerships) and outputs (e.g. the number of goods and services provided, and the number of people served). Outcomes, particularly long-term impacts, are, unfortunately, infrequently assessed (Murray & Balfour, 1999)[19], for the following reasons:

- Measuring outcomes requires more time, money and expertise than assessing process (PAGVS, 1999);
- Compared to indicators for process, outcome indicators can be difficult to identify (PAGVS, 1999; Murray & Balfour, 1999);
- It can be difficult to prove that a program resulted in the achievement of certain outcomes, since outcomes are also influenced by social, political, cultural, economic and environmental factors beyond the control of the organization that delivered the program (Murray & Balfour, 1999);
- The trend towards project funding, which is typically short-term, does not encourage the measurement of long-term (i.e. post-program) outcomes (PAGVS, 1999); and
- Many non-profit groups do not have a "simple, doable model" to guide them on how to conduct outcome assessment in a timely fashion (PAGVS, 1999, p. 37 citing an unidentified participant in the Halifax convention).

Additionally, some non-profit organizations are not evaluating as often or as 'expertly' as they would like to. As noted by Murray & Balfour (1999, p. 4), evaluation in the non-profit sector is, in general, "…still more talked about than practiced, and…when it is carried out, it is often sporadic, short lived and flawed." Some of the reasons for this situation include a lack of resources to devote to evaluation activities (e.g. time, money, personnel and internal expertise) (Juillet et al., 2001; Murray & Balfour, 1999; PAGVS, 1999); the absence of a "culture of accountability" within the organization, which involves accepting responsibility for improving programs, the organization itself, and society at large (Murray & Balfour, 1999, p. 3); and programs that are not well-suited to evaluation (e.g. indirect services such as research, advocacy and coordination activities) (Juillet et al., 2001).

[19] In contrast, 56% of evaluations completed in the past three years and 80% of current evaluations by non-profit groups in the United States were conducted to measure outcomes, primarily in order to meet the accountability standards of their funders (Fine et al., 2000).

3.2 Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations[20]

As is the case with the non-profit sector as a whole, there is very little research on ENGOs in Canada. As such, this section is based on information from only a handful of sources, including: (1) the executive summary of a feasibility study on funding gaps in the environmental community (Dale, 1997), (2) a Master's thesis on the evaluation of twelve environmental stewardship programs in British Columbia and Washington State (Pinho, 2001), and (3) an article that assesses the impact of the changing funding environment on eight non-profit groups, including two ENGOs (the Canadian Environmental Network and the Canadian Nature Federation) (Juillet et al., 2001).

3.2.1 A Definition of ENGOs

Of the approximately 180,000 non-profit organizations in Canada, 2,471 of these are ENGOs (Deegan, email communication, 2001).[21] Roughly 500 of these organizations are located in British Columbia (BCEN, 1998). Canadian environmental groups, which range from small volunteer-run community organizations to large networks of institutions, tackle local, national and international environmental problems related to a host of issues such as air quality, climate change, biodiversity, water resources, waste, deforestation, toxic substances, agriculture, transportation and land use planning.

Practically non-existent before the 1960s, ENGOs now play a significant role in Canadian society and economy. Through their research, education, fundraising, monitoring, advocacy, litigation, lobbying, communication, activism, rehabilitation and coalition-building activities, they have become effective watchdogs of government and industry, as well as successful protectors and regenerators of the natural environment. They also contribute jobs to the environmental sector, which is, according to Statistics Canada, now the third largest sector in the country (Gallon, 2001). In fact, "with 221,000 workers [in ENGOs, as well as environmental industries, government, academia and other private sector industries], the environmental sector employs more people than either the steel industry or the oil extraction sector, and rivals the large resource extraction and manufacturing sectors for job creation" (Gallon, 2001, p. 22).

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[20] Other terms used to describe ENGOs include stewardship groups, grassroots organizations, and wildlife organizations.

[21] This is the number of ENGOs that were registered with the Canadian Environmental Network (CEN) as of March 2001. The exact number of ENGOs in Canada is unknown, since: (1) not all ENGOs are members of the CEN and their provincial networks (Deegan, 2001); (2) not all ENGOs are captured in government data; in other words, many do not file returns with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency; and (3) those ENGOs that do file returns with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency are not assigned their own category classification (i.e. they are relegated to "not elsewhere classified" categories), and hence, their identity is "hidden" (Sharpe, 1994).

3.2.2 The Funding of ENGOs

Revenue Sources

Like other organizations in the non-profit sector, ENGOs depend on funds from government grants and contracts (e.g. Environment Canada); earned income from investments, membership fees, the sale of goods and services, and other organizational activities; and cash and/or in-kind donations from individuals, foundations (e.g. Vancouver Foundation), private businesses (e.g. Chevron Canada) and/or public institutions (e.g. University of British Columbia). Of course, the proportion of funding from each revenue source varies from group to group. Some ENGOs are heavily dependent on government and corporate funds, such as the Recycling Council of BC (RCBC, 2002). Other groups obtain most of their funding from individual donors and foundations. The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), for instance, currently derives 40% of its revenue from individual donors and another 40% from Canadian and American foundations. Only 3% of its funding comes from corporations and less than 1% is provided by governments (CPAWS, 2002).[22]

New Trends in Green Funding

The current funding situation for ENGOs is similar in many respects to that facing the entire non-profit sector at large. The effectiveness of the Canadian environmental community is being threatened by the following three changes to the green funding environment:

- A decline in the *level* of funding from governments and foundations;
- Changes in the *form* of funding; and
- A shift with regards to *who* is receiving funding.

Despite strong public concern for the environment[23], funding levels for the environmental sector have declined since the heyday of environmentalism in the 1980s. With respect to government funding, the provinces have scaled back their environmental budgets by an average of 30%, and the federal government has reduced its environmental spending by the same amount since elected to office in 1993 (Bailey, 1999). Foundations, too, are awarding fewer funds to environmental groups, with the exception of some U.S. foundations, which tend to be “less risk adverse” than their Canadian

[22] The author of this project could not find a study presenting a breakdown of total revenue sources for the entire non-profit environmental sector.

[23] According to Angus McAllister, research director for Environics International, “nine in ten [Canadian] respondents consistently say they are at least ‘concerned’ about the environment, while 35 percent report they are ‘concerned a great deal’” (Bailey, 1999, p. 4).

counterparts (Dale, 1997, p. 4). Core funding, in particular, has born the brunt of this assault. Government and foundation funders are just not as willing to provide funds to ENGOs to help them pay for critical operational expenses (e.g. salaries, professional development activities, equipment, office rent, telephone bills) as they once used to be.[24]

This reduction in funding levels is of great concern to small and medium-sized ENGOs and newly emerging groups. As funding levels decline, ENGOs are experiencing increased competition for a smaller piece of the funding pie; consequently, they are devoting more time and money to fundraising activities.[25] For many of the larger and older ENGOs, this does not pose a major hardship. Nurtured by core funding from governments during their early years of operation, these groups are able to handle an increase in their fundraising costs, without compromising or abandoning their other essential organizational activities (e.g. program delivery and evaluation). However, most small and medium-sized ENGOs, and newly emerging groups, did not benefit from this influx of core funding. As such, these types of organizations currently lack the resources to increase their fundraising activities and, at the same time, maintain the very nature of their organization. For instance, these ENGOs are spending as much as 70% to 90% of their time on fundraising efforts, at the expense of other critical organizational activities such as program delivery, communication functions, education, strategic planning (Dale, 1997) and evaluation.

In addition to a decline in funding levels, the form of funding has also changed in two main ways. First, all kinds of funders, but especially governments, are increasingly asking for the matching of funds. This means that funders will provide financial support as long as a certain percentage of their grantee's overall budget comes from another revenue source. Unfortunately, this is difficult for ENGOs to arrange "since other sources will often not commit until some sort of seed funding is provided" (Dale, 1997, p. 3). Second, government funding is shifting from core funding on a grant

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[24] It appears that corporate funding is unlikely to pick up the slack. Currently, as noted in Section 3.1.2, only 1% of revenues for charitable non-profit organizations are derived from private industry (Sharpe, 1994). Furthermore, there is little to suggest that this figure will increase anytime soon, since corporate donations, in comparison with rising profitability, have plummeted during the last generation (Dale, 1997).

[25] Evidence of the growing focus on fundraising can be found in a recent training needs assessment of ENGOs, in British Columbia, in which 49% of the respondents identified fundraising as a key training need, surpassed only by technical capacity (53%) and slightly ahead of communications/media (46.7%) and strategic planning (46.7%) (BCEN, 2001).

basis (which covers all operational expenses) to project/single issue funding on a contract basis (which covers only a small portion of operational expenses, if at all) (Dale, 1997). This trend is resulting in "the proliferation of short-term projects administered by weak institutions" (Shuman, 1999, p. 33). For instance, some ENGOs, like other types of non-profit organizations, are reducing their operational expenses by eliminating "core administrative support" (Juillet et al., 2001, p. 36). Others are spending more time fundraising and less time delivering programs and conducting other necessary organizational activities (e.g. evaluation), in order to secure more contracts (Juillet et al., 2001), since each new contract provides a little more money to cover their overall operational expenses.

ENGOs are not only being affected by changes in the level and form of funding. There has also been a shift with respect to who is receiving financial support. Increasingly, funds are being allocated to ENGOs working on more conservative issues. For example, ENGOs that focus on the 'safe' issue of conservation are receiving more financial support than those that deal with more controversial topics such as bear hunting and food safety/biotechnology. Fewer funds are also available for those groups that concentrate on such issues as northern and aboriginal concerns, gender and sustainable development, public policy, and advocacy (Dale, 1997). In addition to a decline in the diversity of issues being funded, more money is being given to the large, membership-based and older ENGOs, as opposed to the small and medium-sized organizations, and especially newly emerging groups. This is because large and well-established ENGOs can raise funds more easily, since they possess the resources to devote to fundraising, a high-profile status, and more personal contacts in the funding community (Dale, 1997).

Overall, then, due to these three changes in the green funding environment, Canada is witnessing the growth of an environmental sector that consists of mainly large, well-funded and conservative ENGOs. This may be counterproductive to the effectiveness of the Canadian environmental movement as a whole, given that resolving today's complex environmental problems requires a diversity of approaches and viewpoints (Dale, 1997; Shuman, 1999).

3.2.3 Evaluation in ENGOs[26]

As one type of organization belonging to the non-profit sector, ENGOs are, not surprisingly, experiencing the same evaluation pressures as other non-profit groups, that is, their funders are

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[26] Since there is very little research on the topic of evaluation in ENGOs, this section is based on the findings from two studies: (1) Pinho's (2001) investigation of evaluation for twelve environmental stewardship programs in British Columbia and Washington State, and (2) Juillet et al.'s (2001) one-section consideration of program

increasingly expecting them to report on the implementation and effectiveness of their environmental programs (Juillet et al., 2001). In order to meet these accountability standards, as well as to inform strategic planning and advance knowledge in their field (e.g. through the dissemination of their evaluation findings to various stakeholders through written papers and conferences), ENGOs are evaluating their work (Pinho, 2001). Most of their evaluations tend to concentrate on the measurement of process: resources/inputs and outputs (e.g. the number of goods and services provided, or the number of people served). Very few ENGOs are assessing short-term, intermediate or long-term outcomes, impacts or results (e.g. measuring the achievement of 'more active and effective citizen participation in environmental efforts') (Pinho, 2001; Juillet et al., 2001). Some of the reasons why this may be the case include the following:

- It is difficult to isolate a project's long-term impacts from external factors, that is, from factors beyond the control of the organization that implemented the project (e.g. political, social and cultural change) (Pinho, 2001); and
- There is a lack of post-project (i.e. long-term) funding to allow for the measurement of a project's impacts months or years after its completion (Pinho, 2001).

To collect evaluation information, ENGOs are using internal evaluators/program staff more than external evaluators. This is because internal evaluators are less costly, and the evaluation is planned from the inside, thus creating staff ownership of the evaluation process, and hence, greater utilization of the results (Pinho, 2001). These internal evaluators are collecting most of their information at the end of a program, that is, upon completion or near-completion. This means that many groups are not gathering data during program implementation, despite their understanding that the findings can be used to improve their work while it is underway (Pinho, 2001).

Some of the information that they collect is formally gathered in observations, surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, and the review of newspaper articles, minutes of meetings and other documents. Most of the time, however, information is informally obtained during ad hoc conversations or interviews with staff, volunteers, program participants, members, the target audience and other stakeholders. These encounters take place in a variety of settings; for example, during a conference, after a workshop, in a staff meeting, or on the telephone. Most of the time, the information is not recorded (Pinho, 2001) and/or systematically disseminated, nor is it particularly valid (accurate) or reliable (consistent); nevertheless, it is often used to motivate staff, demonstrate effectiveness, identify problems and improve programs (Pinho, 2001).

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evaluation while examining the impact of the changing funding environment on the Canadian Environmental Network and the Canadian Nature Federation, and six other non-environmental non-profit groups.

Notwithstanding these efforts to obtain feedback about their work, evaluation is still, overall, not widely practiced in the environmental community (Juillet et al., 2001). It appears that the main reason for this is a lack of funds to cover evaluation costs and a lack of in-house evaluation expertise (Juillet et al., 2001). This is why the most “comprehensive” evaluations are conducted by organizations with “stable sources of public funding” (i.e. quasi-governmental groups, like the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the International Development Research Centre) or, lacking this, those organizations that have established partnerships with other groups that can provide them with evaluation resources (Pinho, 2001). Other reasons cited in the literature that explain why evaluation is not more common include: the absence of clear program goals and objectives (which lay the foundation for evaluation), perhaps due to a lack of in-house expertise in program planning, and a perception within the organization that evaluation will not yield “useful” results (Pinho, 2001).

3.3 Summary

According to what little literature exists on evaluation practice in the non-profit environmental sector in Canada, many ENGOs, like most other non-profit groups in this country, are struggling with transformations in the green funding environment that jeopardize their capacity to evaluate their programs. Due to cutbacks in funding levels, for example, many ENGOs, especially resource-constrained small and medium-sized groups or newly emerging organizations that address controversial issues, are not evaluating as often or as expertly as they would like to, especially with respect to program outcomes, impacts or results. After the methodology for this project is presented in Chapter 4, this topic will be further explored in Chapter 5, when the findings from the interviews and document review conducted for this study will be presented.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research framework, data collection techniques, data sources, data analysis procedures and methods of verification for this study. Most of the information contained in this chapter originates from the United States, where evaluation has been an established profession and field of study for the past thirty years.

4.1 Research Framework

This study is following the framework of evaluation research, a term that is, according to some evaluation theorists, distinguishable from 'evaluation' (Clark & Dawson, 1999) yet also overlapping. Evaluation involves investigating and judging the effectiveness of programs, projects, policies, practices, products, interventions, initiatives, activities, innovations or services (Patton, 2002; Clarke & Dawson, 1999). Evaluation research, on the other hand, "systematically and empirically" examines this effectiveness "through careful data collection and thoughtful analysis" (Patton, 2002, p. 10). Its focus is derived from questions that are formulated at the very start of the evaluation process, preferably as a result of discussions with individuals who intend to use the findings (Patton, 2002). The identification of these questions is, ideally, based on a consideration of the theory of a program. This is because evaluation research, unlike auditing or monitoring, is expected to identify and test program theory, those beliefs and assumptions underlying how a planned program is expected to bring about change (Clarke & Dawson, 1999). These beliefs and assumptions "can be expressed in terms of a phased sequence of causes and effects" (Weiss, 1997, Introduction, ¶3). For example, the theory underlying a wilderness survival program that aims to motivate students to act to resolve environmental problems may be as follows: an increase in knowledge of environmental issues and the development of outdoor skills will result in a more positive attitude about the environment and improved self-esteem, and this change in attitude and increased self-confidence will lead to more environmentally responsible behaviours (e.g. recycling). An evaluation research process would determine whether or not these changes or "little theories" occurred, by collecting information throughout the implementation of the program (Birckmayer, 2000, Introduction, ¶4).

Although a theory-based approach helps to identify the evaluation questions and clarifies "the how and why of program success or failure" (Birckmayer, 2000, Introduction, ¶1), amongst other valuable functions, it is not commonly practiced by evaluators, since it takes an extensive amount of time, money and knowledge to collect, analyze and interpret the information (Weiss, 1997). Nor does it have to be the focus in every evaluation research endeavor. For instance, if there is no interest in learning why and how a program succeeds or fails, or if resources are in short supply, as is the case in a small-scale evaluation, then this approach is unnecessary (Weiss, 1997).

Evaluation research not only judges effectiveness on a systematic basis or, sometimes, identifies and tests program theory. As a form of applied research, it also aims to "inform action, enhance decision-making, and…solve human and societal problems" (Patton, 1990, p. 12). However, as Weiss (1998) points out, in the real world, certain organizational conditions such as budget cuts, rigid operating rules and high staff turnover, can impede this *instrumental* use of the results. Nevertheless, even when the evidence is not instrumentally used, the information can be used in other ways. In some cases, the results are *persuasively* used as when managers use the information to gain support for their ideas about how to change a program. Sometimes, the findings are disseminated to individuals, institutions and events outside of the program being studied; in this situation, evaluation acts as an instrument of *enlightenment* (Weiss, 1998). Increasingly, the findings from evaluation research are being *conceptually* used; that is, the results are intended to increase knowledge and understanding about a program or evaluation under investigation (Patton, 1996), in the hopes that, at a later date, "when organizational conditions become favorable, they [the program staff] can then use their new conceptual understandings in instrumental ways" (Weiss, 1998, p. 24). This is the type of use that was pursued in this study: the information presented here is intended to increase knowledge about evaluation practice in the environmental sector, in the hopes that the results will be instrumentally used at some point in the future by ENGOs, green funders and other interested parties.

Within this framework of "knowledge-generating evaluation research for *conceptual* use" (Patton, 1996, p. 132), a case study approach guided the design of this study. A case study is the qualitative or quantitative investigation of a bounded system/subject/case such as an individual, group, program, institution, organization, community, culture, process, activity, incident, event, entity or time period (Gillham, 2000; Burns, 2000; Patton, 1990; Yin, 1994). As noted by Burns (2000, p. 460), a 'case' "can be simple and specific such as 'Mr. Brown, the Principal', or complex and abstract [and hence less well-defined], such as 'Decision-making within a teacher union'." A case study is an appropriate research strategy to use when the investigator wants to ask 'how', 'why' or 'what' questions in order to describe, explore or explain "a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life [i.e. naturalistic] context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1994, p. 13).

The case study can focus on one case (single-case design) or several cases (multiple-case design) (Yin, 1994). Methodological triangulation (the use of multiple data collection strategies) and data triangulation (the use of multiple data sources) to gather qualitative and/or quantitative information are key characteristics of this approach (Gillham, 2000; Burns, 2000; Yin, 1994). This study is a single case study, as the unit of analysis or 'case' is one "complex and abstract" activity: program evaluation in non-profit ENGOs in the Lower Mainland. In particular, *recent* evaluation activities (i.e. those occurring at the time of the interview and/or those completed in the past three years) were studied. Like most single case studies, this study used multiple qualitative data collection strategies (literature review, interviews and document analysis) and multiple data sources (ENGOs, green funders and documentary materials).

4.2 The Role of the Researcher

As case study data is interpreted by the researcher, it is necessary to identify how my experiences and perspectives may bias data analysis. My perception of evaluation practice in the non-profit environmental sector was shaped by my contract work with an environmental organization in the Lower Mainland. From June to August 2000, I designed outcome evaluation strategies for this group's projects, publications, web site and advocacy initiatives. I believe this experience enhanced my knowledge and sensitivity about the challenges, decisions and issues surrounding the implementation and practice of evaluation in small organizations with limited time, money, personnel and evaluation expertise.

Due to this work experience, I brought certain assumptions to this study. For example, I commenced this research from the perspective that ENGOs are interested in and need to improve their evaluation efforts in order to meet the accountability standards of their funders and their internal information needs. I also presumed that green funders play a key role in enhancing or compromising evaluation practice in ENGOs, and that they would like to help their environmental grantees improve their evaluation efforts.

4.3 Research Methods

From January 2001 to August 2002, data was gathered using a three-phase qualitative methodological approach: a literature review throughout the research process, standardized interviews from April to June of 2001, and an analysis of documentary materials after the interviews. Thus, methodological triangulation (also known as 'between-method' or 'across-method' triangulation) was a key feature of this study (Denzin, 1989, p. 244). This approach ensures that the biases and limitations associated with one method are compensated by the strengths inherent in other methods (Clarke & Dawson, 1999).

4.3.1 Literature Review

Throughout the research process, literature on evaluation, the non-profit sector in Canada, ENGOs, and qualitative research was collected and analyzed. The literature review shaped the research design and clarified the underlying assumptions of the research enterprise. It also established the need for this study by revealing gaps in previous research, and it clarified the purpose statement and research questions[27], which, in turn, influenced the choice of data collection methods. Finally, it guided the content and design of the interview questions, and it presented ideas for the interpretation, analysis and presentation of the survey findings (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

4.3.2 Interviews

The interview is one of the most important sources of information in case study research (Yin, 1994). The interview is appropriate to use when the researcher aims to investigate a sensitive topic with a small number of 'key' individuals using mainly open-ended questions (Gillham, 2000). It is also a preferred strategy "when extensive data is required on a small number of complex topics" (Burns, 2000, p. 583). The interview is a flexible method (Burns, 2000), as probes can be used to explore unanticipated issues, clarify answers and deepen responses to open-ended questions (Patton, 1990). Additionally, the researcher can immediately clarify questions that the participant does not understand (Singleton & Straits, 1999). Interviews also exhibit high response rates, probably due to the novelty of participating in an interview, the opportunity to talk about oneself, and the difficulty of refusing the interviewer's request (Singleton & Straits, 1999). Other factors contributing to high response rates may be an interest in the topic being explored, and remuneration, such as money or a copy of the completed study.

As with all data collection methods, interviews have some disadvantages. Compared to mail questionnaires, telephone interviews and focus groups, interviews are more expensive and time-consuming to conduct (Burns, 2000; Singleton & Straits, 1999; HCU, 2001). Varied responses to open-ended questions can be difficult to analyze, interpret and compare (Fink & Kosecoff, 1998). As well, response validity (accuracy) may be compromised by certain interview procedures such as a lengthy interview and improper wording and/or ordering of the questions, as well as an interviewer's

[27] The purpose statement and research questions were also clarified as a result of telephone and one-on-one discussions with two evaluation consultants and a green funder.

lack of training and poor listening skills. Finally, the participant may jeopardize response validity through faulty memory, lack of knowledge, indifference, a reaction to the interviewer's personality or gender, or an inclination to respond to questions in a socially desirable way (Weiss, 1975).

To gather data for this study, the standardized interview approach was adopted. In the standardized interview, information is collected using an interview schedule (or questionnaire) which "consists of instructions to the interviewer together with the questions to be asked, and, if they are used, response options" (Singleton & Straits, 1999, p. 254). All participants are asked the same pre-determined open-ended and/or close-ended questions (and probes) in the same order (Robson, 2000). The primary rationale behind this rigidity is to expose the participants to the same "stimulus" in order to ensure that their responses can be compared across the board (Clarke & Dawson, 1999; Burns, 2000). This approach is appropriate to use when: (1) it is important to limit interviewee time, and (2) it is desirable to obtain the same information from each interviewee in order to minimize interviewer bias, improve the credibility of the data, and simplify data analysis (Patton, 1990). It is also adopted when the interviewer knows what questions to ask, courtesy of a pre-interview review of related literature and unstructured, exploratory discussions with stakeholders (Clarke & Dawson, 1999).

Unfortunately, the standardized interview approach can be inflexible, as the interviewer is not able to explore unanticipated issues which may emerge during the course of the interview (Patton, 1990). To remedy this problem, and unbeknownst to the participants, this study adopted an informal conversational interview approach immediately after the interview schedule was administered (see Patton, 1990, p. 287 and Robson, 2000, p. 92 for details regarding the acceptability of this practice). Thus, in some of the interviews, a few spontaneous questions were asked to expand upon information that the participants provided during the administration of the standardized interview.

4.3.3 Document Review

The analysis of documentary materials is a relevant and useful data collection strategy in most case studies (Yin, 1994). Documents are "almost always *available*, on a low cost (mostly investigator time) or free basis [and]…they are a *rich* source of information, contextually relevant and grounded in the contexts they represent" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 276-277). They also provide a wealth of information without disturbing the setting under study (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). As such, the findings from documentary evidence can effectively supplement and verify information derived from other data collection methods such as interviews and observations (Burns, 2000; Yin, 1994). Unfortunately, as with any data collection method, document analysis has its limitations. For example, the researcher may not be able to gather all relevant documents due to closed or restricted access and/or accidental or intentional destruction (Scott, 1990). As well, the information contained in the documents may be inaccurate, biased, incomplete and outdated (Patton, 1990; Scott, 1990).

4.4 Data Sources

This study is based on information retrieved from three data sources: ENGOs, green funders and documentary evidence.

4.4.1 ENGOs and Green Funders

Case study researchers typically use a non-probability method of sampling known as purposeful or criterion-based sampling (Burns, 2000). Purposeful sampling involves the non-random selection of "information-rich cases" (Patton, 1990, p. 169) according to the presence of specific criteria defined by the researcher. In this study, ten ENGOs, and key informants within these organizations (Appendix I), were purposefully sampled according to the following criteria:

- The ENGOs were expected to be variable in size. In this analysis, attempts were made to include small, medium and large-sized organizations; however, most large-sized ENGOs declined to be interviewed, citing a lack of time or an unwillingness to discuss funding arrangements with someone external to their organization;
- The organizations, as a whole, were expected to represent a diversity of environmental topics, such as recycling, urban transportation, naturalization, and environmental education; and
- Within these ENGOs, key informants were required to be knowledgeable about evaluation and fundraising in their organization.

In addition, five green funders, and key informants within these organizations (Appendix II), were purposefully sampled according to the following criteria:

- The green funders, as a whole, were expected to be variable in type. In this study, attempts were made (with success) to include many different kinds of donors found in the Lower Mainland (i.e. a private business, co-operative, community foundation, corporate foundation, and federal government agency);
- In the past three years, they required one or more ENGOs selected for this study to submit interim and/or final evaluation reports to account for the expenditure of donated funds; and
- Within these organizations, the interview participants were expected to have reviewed evaluation reports by ENGOs as a requirement of their employment.

Prior to the interview, each participant received an interview schedule in order to familiarize them with the issues that were to be explored in the interview. The interview schedule was developed after consulting some of the literature, two evaluation practitioners, and one green funder. The ENGO interview schedule (Appendix VI) elicited information about *recent* evaluations (those occurring at the time of the interview and/or those completed in the past three years). Specifically, the schedule revealed their evaluation needs and activities, their perceptions regarding the effectiveness/quality of their evaluations, certain barriers to evaluation use and suggestions on how to strengthen evaluation practice in ENGOs. The funder interview schedule (Appendix VII) elicited information about their evaluation requirements for environmental grantees, as well as their views on the effectiveness/quality of ENGO evaluation reports that were completed in the past three years. Both schedules contained open-ended questions to provide detailed insight, as well as a few close-ended questions to enhance the reliability of the responses (Fink & Kosecoff, 1998), to remind the participants of all possible answers, and to simplify data analysis (Gray & Guppy, 1994).

At the start of the hour-long interview, the participants received a one-page project description (Appendix III) and a consent form (Appendix IV & V), in compliance with Simon Fraser University's Research Ethics Regulations. The purpose of the consent form was to: (1) inform the participants of the nature of their involvement, (2) obtain their written permission to be interviewed, and (3) allow them to determine how they wanted to be identified in the study. Given the need to exchange 'sensitive' funding information, 50% of the ENGOs (5 out of 10) and 40% of the green funders (2 out of 5) requested anonymity in the final write-up of this study.

The interviews were tape-recorded in order to maintain researcher attentiveness, avoid researcher selectivity of responses, sustain interviewer-participant rapport, and accurately capture complex and detailed information for subsequent data analysis (Gray & Guppy, 1994; Patton, 1990; Weiss, 1975). In most cases, it appeared that the presence of the tape recorder did not inhibit responses from participants. The tapes were transcribed verbatim by the researcher and a transcriber using a word-processing program.

4.4.2 Documentary Evidence

The ENGOs provided evaluation plans, evaluation forms/surveys/questionnaires, newsletters, brochures, annual reports, financial statements and summaries of survey results. The green funders provided grant application forms, interim/progress report forms, final report forms, annual reports and in-house 'how-to' evaluation guidebooks and fact sheets. These documents were obtained directly from the participants during the interview process. Unfortunately, most of these materials were incomplete, outdated or unavailable, so all relevant documents could not be reviewed.

4.5 Data Analysis

Case studies produce large amounts of information which are analyzed to address the initial research questions (Yin, 1994). In this study, a content analysis of the verbatim transcripts of the interviews and documentary evidence was performed. A content analysis "involves identifying, coding, categorizing, classifying, and labeling the primary patterns [and themes] in the data" (Patton, 2002, p. 463). For example, one pattern that was revealed from the qualitative findings was, "Most environmental groups are not satisfied with their evaluation capacity", while the corresponding theme was "evaluation capacity". With respect to the quantitative evidence (i.e. numbers) arising from the fixed-choice, close-ended questions asked in the interviews, this information was displayed in tables (see Chapter 5).

4.6 Methods for Verification

4.6.1 Reliability

A reliable study produces consistent information if it is repeated following the exact same procedures described by the initial researcher (Yin, 1994). In this study, reliability was improved by incorporating some close-ended questions into the interview schedule (Fink & Kosecoff, 1998) and carefully documenting the steps involved in conducting this work so that it can be replicated in the future (Burns, 2000). Reliability was also enhanced through reporting the researcher's bias (as noted in Section 4.2), using methodological triangulation (Section 4.3) and adopting data triangulation (Section 4.4) (Burns, 2000).

4.6.2 Internal Validity

An internally valid study generates accurate information; that is, the findings should match reality (Creswell, 1994 citing Merriam, 1988). However, it should be recognized that attention to internal validity is not as important in a qualitative case study as it is in a quantitative study, as noted by Burns (2000, p. 476):

> …if the major assumption underlying qualitative research is that reality is ever-changing, subjective in interpretation and holistic, and not a single fixed entity, then it is not feasible to try and measure congruence between the data collected and some notion of reality. In a case study what is being observed is a participant's notion or construction of reality, their understanding of the world What seems true may be more important than what is true.

Still, qualitative case study researchers attend to internal validity using a variety of techniques (Burns, 2000). In this study, for example, accuracy was enhanced by adopting methodological and data triangulation (Burns, 2000), having the interview guides peer-examined by an independent evaluation consultant and two Master's students with the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University (Burns, 2000), pilot testing (or pre-testing) the interview guides (Fink & Kosecoff, 1998), and administering a standardized interview schedule (Patton, 1990). Additional ways to improve the accuracy of the evidence (which were not used in this study) include using a three-interview structure for each interviewee (Seidman, 1998) and confirming the researcher's interpretation of the interview findings with the participants (Burns, 2000).

4.6.3 External Validity

External validity refers to the generalizability of a study's findings beyond the immediate case (Yin, 1994). If a study uses random sampling techniques to identify data sources, then confident generalizations from the sample to the larger population are permissible (Patton, 2002). In contrast, if a study uses purposeful sampling strategies to select a case for in-depth analysis, then generalizability takes on a whole different meaning. Within this context, a generalization becomes, according to some researchers, "a working hypothesis, not a conclusion" (Cronbach, 1975, p. 125) that should "be tested again in the next encounter and again in the encounter after that" (Guba, 1978, p. 70). With respect to how the findings can be used beyond the immediate case under investigation, a generalization can be considered as an *extrapolation* (Patton, 2002 citing Cronbach & Associates, 1980), the meaning and intent of which is nicely summarized by Patton (2002, p. 584) as follows:

> Extrapolations are modest speculations on the likely applicability of [study] findings to other situations under similar, but not identical, conditions. Extrapolations are logical, thoughtful, case derived, and problem oriented rather than statistical and probabilistic. Extrapolations can be particularly useful when based on information-rich samples and designs, that is, studies that produce relevant information carefully targeted to specific concerns about both the present and the future. Users of evaluation, for example, will usually expect evaluators to thoughtfully extrapolate from their findings in the sense of pointing out lessons learned and potential applications to future efforts.

Since this study involves purposeful sampling, the findings are not generalizable in the scientific sense. Rather, they are working hypotheses that should be repeatedly tested at some point in the future. As well, attempts were made to extrapolate from the results by offering recommendations for strengthening the future practice of evaluation in environmental groups.

4.7 Summary

Guided by the framework of evaluation research, this single case study explores the practice of evaluation in non-profit environmental groups in the Lower Mainland. It uses three sources of information to investigate this topic: ENGOs, green funders and documentary evidence. The next chapter will present the findings from these data sources, thus demonstrating the extent to which this study was able to answer the research questions directing this project.

CHAPTER 5: STUDY FINDINGS

After some general organizational information about the interview participants is presented, this chapter introduces the main findings from the interviews and document review, arranged according to the topic areas covered by the research questions guiding this study: the purposes of evaluation, evaluation activities in ENGOs, the effectiveness of ENGO evaluations, ENGO evaluations for green funders, and the evaluation capacity of ENGOs.

5.1 General Organizational Information

The date of establishment of ENGOs interviewed for this study ranges from 1974 to 1993. Three organizations were established in the 1970s, four in the 1980s, and three in the 1990s. From a list of issues derived from the *BC Environmental Directory* (1998), these groups were asked to identify the major topics that they currently focus on. All of the ENGOs felt that their organization addresses more than one environmental topic, and so they selected two or more options. Environmental education was the most frequently mentioned topic area, followed closely by urban issues. Table 14 lists all of the topics presented to the ENGOs and the number of times each topic was selected by the ten respondents.

Table 14: The Environmental Issues Supported by the ENGO Interviewees

OPTIONS	NUMBER OF GROUPS
Environmental Education	8
Urban Issues	7
Wildlife	5
Parks & Wilderness	4
Health/Toxins	3
Atmosphere/Ozone	3
Waste Reduction/Recycling	2
Water Quality	2
First Nations	2
Transportation	1
Tourism	0
Fisheries	0
Forestry	0
Other	0

Five different types of green funders were also interviewed for this study: a private business, co-operative, community foundation, corporate foundation, and federal government agency. These funders were asked to identify the major issues that they financially support. Most of the donors (4 out of 5) selected two or more options. The environment was the most common topic of support, followed by (in order of frequency of selection) community development, health, education, social services, youth activities, sports and recreation, religion, First Nations, and arts and culture. Table 15 depicts these options and the number of times each option was selected by the five funders.

Table 15: The Major Issues Supported by the Green Funder Interviewees

OPTIONS	NUMBER OF GROUPS
Environment	5
Other (Community Development)[28]	3
Health	2
Education	2
Social Services	2
Youth Activities	2
Sports and Recreation	1
Religion	1
First Nations	1
Arts & Culture	1

5.2 Purposes of Evaluation

When ENGOs were asked the question, "What are the primary reasons why your organization conducts evaluation?", all of the groups provided more than one answer. As noted in Table 16, the majority of respondents (9 groups) emphasized that the evaluation findings are used to make program improvements, and slightly fewer organizations (8 groups) highlighted the need to produce evaluation reports in order to meet the accountability standards of their funders. Some ENGOs (4 groups) perform evaluation to determine their program's long-term outcomes, while others (3 groups) conduct assessments to attract future funding (e.g. by including their evaluation findings in grant proposals). To a lesser extent, the evaluation results are used by ENGOs to inform strategic planning (2 groups), generate ideas about how to design new programs (2 groups), enhance staff morale (1 group)[29], and improve the credibility of the organization (1 group).[30]

Table 16: The Purposes of ENGO Evaluations

PURPOSES OF EVALUATION	NUMBER OF GROUPS

[28] The groups that chose the category of 'other' all cited the issue of community development as a key area of support.

[29] According to this ENGO: "I like feeling satisfied that we're doing a good job…You find out what you're doing right and it's a really good re-enforcement for staff and for myself…Sometimes in NGOs, you think you're working so bloody hard and nobody notices and you know you're not getting paid what anybody else is in the private sector, so when you get some really positive feedback from evaluations and somebody says, 'This is just the kind of programming that we need!', that's great."

[30] As noted by this ENGO, "My perception as an outsider to ENGOs is fairly suspicious. Like I kind of wonder, are they actually spending the money well? Is it going into administrative costs or high salaries…or is it actually getting results on the ground? And I imagine that a lot of other people feel that way. So being forced to do it [evaluation] gives you the opportunity then to communicate that to people, to say, 'Here are our successes'."

Make program improvements	9
Meet funders’ evaluation requirements	8
Determine long-term outcomes	4
Attract future funding	3
Inform strategic planning	2
Generate ideas	2
Enhance staff morale	1
Improve ENGO credibility	1

Although more ENGOs use their evaluation results for internal purposes (i.e. to make program improvements, according to 9 groups) than for external reasons (i.e. to meet their funders’ information needs, according to 8 groups), this does not mean that evaluation is initiated by the organization first and then, at some point in the future, the results are disseminated to their funders. Rather, the main catalyst for evaluation is still the funder; that is, funders compel ENGOs to collect information, as noted by a few of the interviewed environmental groups:

> …[funders] force us to do an evaluation where we might let it slide otherwise.
>
> …if funders didn’t require evaluations, in certain cases, we probably wouldn’t do them or we wouldn’t do them as comprehensively, or…we wouldn’t collect certain information.
>
> …[funders] make us at least be gathering the information that doesn’t get lost because I don’t have the time to think about it.

Once this information is ‘forcefully’ collected, the data is used to improve programs, if the evidence is considered to be helpful for this purpose in the first place. For some ENGOs (3 groups), these funder-driven evaluations always produce findings that can be used to improve their programs. However, the majority of ENGOs (6 groups) feel that the evaluations they carry out for their donors do not always meet their own information needs. In other words, these organizations would like to ask and answer some different evaluation questions. Only one group reported that these funder-driven evaluations never provide information that they can use to guide program improvements.

5.3 Evaluation Activities in ENGOs

5.3.1 Types of Evaluations

All of the ENGOs interviewed for this study reported that informal and formal evaluations are both valuable sources of information about program implementation and/or outcome.[31] As depicted in Table 17, half of the groups indicated that they conduct an equal amount of both evaluation types. Three of the organizations perform more informal than formal assessments, while two groups conduct more formal than informal evaluations. All of the groups verbally expressed a strong interest in conducting more formal assessments.

Table 17: The Frequency of Informal and Formal Evaluations

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF ENGOs
Entirely informal	0
More informal than formal	3
Equally informal and formal	5
More formal than informal	2
Entirely formal	0

In addition to the use of both informal and formal evaluations, all ENGOs surveyed for this study, as shown in Table 18, conduct a mixture of process/implementation evaluation (e.g. the measurement of inputs/resources and outputs such as the number of goods and services provided and the number of people served by the program) and outcome assessments (e.g. the identification of changes in individuals, the larger community/environment and the staff/organization carrying out the program). Some ENGOs (3 groups) spend an equal amount of time collecting process and outcome information. However, most organizations (7 groups) favor process evaluation.

Table 18: The Frequency of Process and Outcome Evaluations

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF ENGOs
Entirely process-oriented	0
More focused on process than outcome	7
Equally focused on process and outcome	3
More focused on outcome than process	0
Entirely outcome-oriented	0

[31] The interviewer verified the participants' understanding of the difference between an informal and formal evaluation by asking them to provide examples of these two types of evaluation. According to the respondents, asking impromptu questions such as "How is the program going?" in a staff meeting, at a conference or out in the field constitutes an informal assessment. A formal evaluation is more systematic and pre-planned; for example, it involves using a database to generate statistical reports on a monthly basis, or delivering on-site questionnaires after every workshop, classroom presentation, or other regularly scheduled activity.

Most ENGOs are assessing process more often than outcomes for the following reasons:

- Some funders are more interested in hearing about numbers than learning about outcomes, as noted by one ENGO:

> They want numbers. They're less concerned about whether everyone is happy at the end and more concerned about there were 14 people there. So we tend to spend a lot of time documenting how much money was spent, where it was spent, how many people showed up, that kind of thing, and less than on the outcome.

- Providing numbers is easier than measuring outcomes, as noted by one environmental group:

> …we can go back to our books, count the number of students that have been on the tours, count the number of tours that we've done. I think it's easy to keep track of, and it's simpler.

- It is difficult to determine to what extent an environmental program results in a certain outcome, since outcomes are also influenced by social, political, cultural and other external factors beyond the control of the organization carrying out the program. As explained by one ENGO:

> Basically our outcome would be cleaner air and a cleaner ecosystem and more livable communities because of shifts of people from cars to other forms of sustainable transportation. It's a bit harder to apply that outcome evaluation to our work because there are a number of other factors that are going to determine those, or have an impact on those outcomes…for instance, the advertising budgets of the big three automakers which is in the hundreds of millions per year…and the economy…

Many of the ENGOs reported that they would like to conduct more outcome evaluations, but they lack the requisite resources (i.e. time, money, personnel and expertise) to do so. For a significant number of ENGOs, then, a lack of resources, rather than a lack of interest, prevents them from performing more outcome assessments.

ENGOs are also conducting internal evaluations (assessments performed by someone who works for the organization that delivered the program) and external evaluations (assessments conducted by an outside evaluation consultant hired by the organization or its funder). When environmental groups were asked the question "Who collects information about your organization's programs, projects or services?", all of them reported using an internal evaluator/staff member (see Table 19). Only one group has used an external evaluation consultant during the time frame covered by this study (the past three years).

Table 19: The Collectors of Information for ENGO Evaluations

COLLECTORS OF INFORMATION	NUMBER OF ENGOs
Staff	10
Funders (e.g. site visits)	5
Volunteers	4
External evaluation consultant	1
Board members	1
Other	1
Target audience	0

Some of the reasons why an internal evaluator is used more often than an external evaluator include the following:

- An internal evaluator is more familiar with and involved in the program that is being evaluated:

> I think there's merit for having staff do the lion's share of evaluation because they're involved in the programs…
>
> I want staff to do it…staff are the people who are implementing the programs and need to have that feedback in order to make the programs successful.

- They do not have the funds to hire an evaluation consultant.

Interestingly, many groups indicated that they would like to combine both evaluator types. They want an internal evaluator to lead the evaluation process, but they would also like to hire an external evaluation expert to provide guidance and advice to the internal evaluator throughout the entire assessment process, on an as-needed basis.

5.3.2 Data Collection Methods

On the whole, ENGOs use a wide range of data collection strategies to gather information about their programs. As noted in Table 20, one of the most frequently used methods of data collection is the on-site or mail questionnaire/survey. Informal telephone, email or in-person conversations with the target audience, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders are the next most popular data collection techniques. Other commonly used methods include the review of documentary sources (e.g. in-house documents such as minutes of meetings as well as materials produced by the target audience such as thank you letters and posters), observations, phone surveys, one-on-one interviews, media hits/profiles, focus groups, staff feedback questionnaires/self-evaluations, database statistics, and case studies.

Table 20: The Data Collection Methods Used by ENGOs

DATA COLLECTION METHODS	NUMBER OF ENGOs
Questionnaire/Survey	10
Informal Conversations	7
Document Review	6
Observations	4
Phone Surveys	3
Interviews	2
Media Profiles	2
Focus Groups	1
Self Evaluations	1
Database	1
Case Studies	1

Using these data collection methods, ENGOs collect qualitative and/or quantitative information (i.e. words and numbers, respectively) from their unit of analysis, those "people, objects, or events" that can provide data to answer their evaluation questions (USAID, 1997, Data Collection and Analysis Section, ¶5). As shown in Table 21, most groups (7 out of 10) feel that they collect a fairly equal amount of both types of information. The other three organizations indicated that their evidence is more quantitative than qualitative.

Table 21: The Type of Information Collected by ENGOs

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF ENGOs
An equal amount of qualitative and quantitative data	7
Quantitative data only	3
Qualitative data only	0

According to some of the organizations, the decision as to which type of information to collect is primarily determined by two factors:

- *The kind of project being evaluated*: For example, to evaluate a telephone hotline, quantitative information (e.g. the number of calls per month) is considered to be more appropriate. Alternatively, to assess the effectiveness of a training workshop, qualitative data (e.g. narrative feedback from participants) is deemed more suitable.
- *Who is going to use the evaluation findings*: If a funder is more interested in receiving quantitative than qualitative information, then the evaluation will be primarily numerical in focus. Likewise, if a funder wants an ENGO to gather perceptions about an event, then the content of the evaluation will be more narrative.

It should be emphasized that many groups believe that qualitative data is a particularly useful way to obtain impressions about a program and/or to determine short-term shifts in the attitudes, behaviours and knowledge of the target audience. However, at the same time, some ENGOs expressed reservations about the credibility and accuracy of this type of information.[32] As such, these groups stated that they prefer to collect numbers and then use their qualitative findings to back them up, as explained by one respondent:

> I need the quantitative. I want the qualitative, but I want to be able to use it somehow. And if I'm writing a grant proposal, it's very easy for me to say '4500 kids came to our program last year' and throw a couple of quotes in to give them that feel of the program and that builds confidence than if I just had a bunch of feel and no numbers to back it up, so it's got to be a mix [of quantitative and qualitative data].

5.3.3 Users of Evaluation Information

Once the information is collected, who looks at it? Not surprisingly, staff members[33] are the most popular audience for the results, as shown in Table 22. Most of the time, staff members learn about the evaluation findings in office meetings or through ad hoc, one-on-one conversations in the workplace. To a lesser extent, they acquire evaluation information by reading written evaluation reports, financial statements, annual organizational reports, copies of completed surveys, and other documents that cite the evaluation findings one way or another.

After this information is distributed to staff members, what do they do with it? All of the organizations interviewed stated that they communicate their findings to various stakeholders. Most groups (9 out of 10) send their evaluation results to their current funders. Typically, the information is communicated in interim and/or final evaluation reports (8 groups), and to a lesser extent, through financial statements (4 groups), informal in-person and telephone conversations (5 groups), site visits by funder representatives (4 groups), and letters (1 group). Additionally, most ENGOs (8 out of 10) communicate their findings to potential funders, by citing some of their past program successes in their grant proposals. Other audiences for the evaluation findings are board members (5 groups), the program's target audience (4 groups), the media (2 groups), consultants/researchers (1 group) and other ENGOs (1 group).

[32] As noted in Section 4.6 of this study, qualitative information (which forms the basis of this research) can be considered credible and accurate/valid *on its own*, as long as certain measures are adopted (see Patton, 2002 for more information).

[33] The term 'staff', as it is used here, does not include internal evaluators.

Table 22: The Users of Evaluation Information

USERS OF EVALUATION INFORMATION	NUMBER OF ENGOs
Staff	10
Current funders	9
Potential funders	8
Board members	5
Target audience	4
Media	2
Consultants/researchers	1
Other ENGOs	1

Some groups admitted that after the evaluation findings are communicated to their stakeholders, they are often put into a box or filing cabinet and then ignored or forgotten. In other words, the results are rarely used in the distant future, either as a tool for comparing and assessing the organization's activities over time or as a guide to help them evaluate a similar program. This is, according to one ENGO, a function of a lack of long-term organizational memory. In other words, since staff turnover is so high, in large part due to the current financial precariousness of many organizations, nobody remembers that 'X' evaluation was conducted, say, five years ago:

> I've stumbled across many [evaluation] reports…that were done in 1995 or in the early 90s. There's no one who works here who was around in the early 90s. In fact, there's no one who works here who was around 4 years ago. So that's a real issue. I think that, as an organization, at least as a staff, we don't have a long-term memory…We always feel like we're starting from scratch even though I've found a whole bunch of [evaluation] things that have been done before, even stuff by consultants.

5.4 The Effectiveness of ENGO Evaluations

In this project, an effective evaluation is defined as a high-quality evaluation. A high-quality evaluation, in turn, contains content that is credible and useful. As such, ENGOs and green funders were asked to rate the effectiveness of the content of ENGO evaluations according to these two concepts.

5.4.1 Credibility

A credible evaluation contains information that is perceived "by stakeholders as believable, trustworthy, and relevant to answer *their* [evaluation] questions" (Milstein et al., n.d., p. 14). When ENGOs were asked to rate the credibility of the content of their evaluations, five organizations selected the option of 'extremely credible' and the other five groups selected the option of 'moderately credible', as depicted in Table 23. No organizations chose the option of 'not credible'.

Table 23: ENGO Perceptions of the Credibility of ENGO Evaluation Content

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF ENGOs
Extremely credible	5
Moderately credible	5
Not credible	0

Many reasons were provided to explain why they believe the content of their evaluations is extremely or moderately credible. Some of these are provided below:

- The information to answer the evaluation questions is collected from many individuals (e.g. the evaluation surveys twenty people instead of two);
- The evaluation occurs immediately after the project ended (rather than months later) so that the recall of the target audience is fresh;
- The evaluation includes both quantitative and qualitative information;
- All of the information is quantified;
- A repeat client of the program provides qualitative information;
- The information provided by a client is unsolicited by staff;
- People are able to respond to surveys and questionnaires anonymously;
- The interview and survey questions gather information that can be used;
- The feedback is honest, especially with respect to what did not work;
- The ENGO has the financial resources to conduct an evaluation;
- The evaluation is conducted by an internal evaluator;
- The internal evaluator has evaluation experience/expertise;
- Someone external to the organization reviews the internal evaluation process; and
- The evaluation includes financial information.

Interestingly, when green funders were asked the same question, that is, to rate the credibility of the content of the evaluations they receive from their environmental grantees, most of them had difficulty choosing one of the response categories, thus indicating that the descriptors used were not appropriate for this topic of inquiry and/or that it is difficult to judge several evaluation reports aggregately on one scale. For example, according to two funders, ENGO evaluations are "between moderately and extremely credible." Another funder indicated that some of these evaluations are extremely credible, while others are not so credible. As shown in Table 24, only two funders used the ranking scale that was provided, with one choosing the 'extremely credible' option, and another selecting the category of 'moderately credible'. No funders chose the option of 'not credible'.

Table 24: Funder Perceptions of the Credibility of ENGO Evaluation Content

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF FUNDERS
Extremely credible	1
Moderately credible	1
Not credible	0

According to the funders, the content of ENGO evaluations is considered to be credible for the following reasons:

- The group has “press”, that is, a tangible, well-publicized deliverable (e.g. the Great Bear Rainforest conservation initiative);
- The evaluation is produced by a group with dedicated staff, regardless of the size of their organization;
- The evaluation contains statements from those people who directly participated in the project (i.e. target audience);
- The evaluation is honest about program difficulties (e.g. challenges, delays and areas of improvement); and
- The evaluation answers the funders’ evaluation questions.[34]

As well, it should be emphasized that, for a significant number of funders, the main reason why the content of ENGO evaluations loses credibility is because program successes are noticeably exaggerated, as explained by one funder interviewed for this study:

> They run on. They kind of make mountains out of molehills, you know, sort of, ‘Oh, this has really been a big finding’, and we kind of knew that before we even did the project. So I think some of them aren’t very credible…when they’re clearly padded and when they really become an exercise in photocopying.

5.4.2 Usefulness

A useful evaluation provides “information that project staff and other stakeholders can utilize directly to make decisions about the program” (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 99). When ENGOs were asked to rate the usefulness of their evaluation content, two of the ten groups selected ‘extremely useful’, five chose ‘moderately useful’ and none chose ‘not useful’ (see Table 25). The other three organizations deviated from the ranking scale provided. Two of these ENGOs described their evaluations as “between moderately and extremely useful”, while one stated that “it depends on the project”.

Table 25: ENGO Perceptions of the Usefulness of ENGO Evaluation Content

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF ENGOs
Extremely useful	2
Moderately useful	5
Not useful	0

[34] It was acknowledged by some funders that an ENGO’s inability to accomplish this may be the fault of the kinds of evaluation questions they ask environmental groups to answer (e.g. perhaps their information needs are not clearly laid out in layman’s terms, or the questions are too complex for ENGOs to answer, given limited time, money, personnel and evaluation expertise).

As with the issue of credibility, ENGOs provided many reasons to explain why they believe the content of their evaluations is useful, as follows:

- The evaluation contains a mixture of qualitative and quantitative information;
- The information collected is specifically numerical and narrative, instead of general like "overall, they really liked the program";
- The information collected answers the pre-planned evaluation questions;
- The evaluation includes negative feedback from the target audience;
- The evaluation is conducted by an internal evaluator;
- The evaluation has a set format over the years, so that change over time is readily apparent and trends can be easily identified;
- The evaluation contains questions that make a person truly reflect on his or her experience with the program; and
- The evaluation is conducted soon after a project ends so that the target audience's recall is fresh.

Alternatively, ENGOs admitted that a number of factors limit the usefulness of the content of their evaluations, such as: (1) the evaluation does not provide information about the outcome of the program; (2) the evaluation is incomplete (i.e. not everything about a program is assessed, due to resource constraints); (3) they are not always sure how to analyze or make sense of the information once it is collected; (4) the internal evaluator has not been formally trained in evaluation; (5) the evaluation is not pre-planned, but rather, ad hoc and sporadic; and (6) the evaluation findings do not feed into the bigger picture of how the program is supposed to operate.

Green funders were also asked to rate the usefulness of the content of ENGO evaluations according to the same ranking scale given to the ENGOs. As shown in Table 26, most of the funders (4 out of 5) chose the option of 'moderately useful', while one funder selected the category of 'extremely useful'. No funders chose the option of 'not useful'.

Table 26: Funder Perceptions of the Usefulness of ENGO Evaluation Content

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF FUNDERS
Extremely useful	1
Moderately useful	4
Not useful	0

Funders consider the content of ENGO evaluations to be extremely or moderately useful for the following reasons:

- The evaluation makes it possible for them to ascertain the overall quality and success of the grant/program;
- The evaluation demonstrates that their donations were spent as originally intended;

- They can use the information to meet the accountability standards of their donors, board members and other stakeholders;
- The information informs their strategic planning and documentation process, as well as the way they grant funds;
- The information is shared with other parties (e.g. community agencies)[35];
- The evaluation reports are concise and clearly written; and
- The evaluation reports are honest about shortcomings and challenges, so that they learn ‘something’, as the following quote illustrates:

> An evaluation that…challenges its original assumptions and says, ‘Here’s what we’ve learned, here’s what we haven’t learned, here’s where we could have improved, here’s an area we didn’t even think about but it came out of one of the findings and it’s got us thinking’, those are the evaluations that are really helpful for me because then it helps me assess the next group of projects that come in the door…a good evaluation teaches you something and a poor one doesn’t.

5.5 ENGO Evaluations for Green Funders

5.5.1 The Evaluation Requirements of Green Funders

As noted in Chapter 3, ENGOs are increasingly being required to conduct evaluations for their funders. This begs the following question: “What exactly are green funders’ evaluation requirements for ENGOs and how do they compare from funder to funder?” As depicted in Table 27, all of the funders expect some form of a written evaluation report, and, in most cases, a financial statement. The majority of funders (4 out of 5) allow ENGOs to determine the format of the evaluation report. This flexibility is much appreciated by environmental groups, who would be further administratively burdened if they had to adhere to different evaluation formats for each of their funders. To varying degrees, the funders expect the evaluation reports to identify program process (e.g. the number of goods and services delivered, or the number of people served by a workshop) and outcomes (e.g. changes in the behaviour or actions of people being served by the program). To help ENGOs gather this information, some funders (2 out of 5) provide written evaluation tips or resources to guide their grantees through their internal evaluation process. However, most funders (3 out of 5) do not provide ENGOs with additional funds to cover the cost of conducting evaluation, even though they require assessments from their environmental grantees.[36] In fact, many funders do not invite ENGOs

[35] In fact, some of the funders mentioned that they are considering the implementation of specific dissemination initiatives to distribute the evaluation findings to their entire organization, its members and/or the public at large. Potential initiatives mentioned included posting the “better” ENGO evaluations on their web site or creating a library where people can review the ENGOs’ evaluation reports.

[36] These funders expect ENGOs to set aside, at their discretion, a certain percentage of the awarded project funds for evaluation-related expenses. Most ENGOs, however, discover that they need to use all of the funds they receive just to pay for program delivery.

Table 27: The Evaluation Requirements of Green Funder Interviewees

FUNDERS	EVALUATION REQUIREMENT	WHO DETERMINES THE FORMAT OF THE EVALUATION REQUIREMENT?	ARE WRITTEN EVALUATION TIPS OR RESOURCES PROVIDED BY FUNDER?	DOES FUNDER PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO COVER EVALUATION COSTS?
A	Progress reports (for large projects only), final (i.e. end-of-project) report with financial statement	ENGOs determine the format of the report but are asked to consider a checklist of points they may like to address	Yes	Yes
B	Final report with financial statement	ENGOs determine the format of the report but are required to answer a small number of funder-defined questions	No	No
C	Quarterly reports and quarterly financial statements (for long projects only), final report with financial statement	Funder determines the format of the report (ENGOs are required to complete 'fill-in-the-blank' reports)	Yes	Yes
D	Progress report, final report with financial statement	ENGOs determine the format of the report but are required to address a small number of funder-defined questions	No	No
E	Progress reports and final report for large grants (no evaluation reports for small grants)	ENGOs determine the format of the report but are required to answer a small number of funder-defined questions	No	No

to request evaluation funds in their grant proposal[37] because they consider their evaluation requirements to be simple, informal, and flexible (and so they should take very little time to complete) and/or it is simply not their policy to fund organizational capacity.

5.5.2 Impressions of the Evaluation Requirements of Green Funders

Given that ENGOs are required to meet their funders' evaluation requirements, whether or not they are provided with the funds to do so, the question remains, "Exactly how do ENGOs feel about these requirements?" As such, ENGOs interviewed for this study were asked to identify their likes and concerns about their funders' evaluation requirements. For comparative purposes, funders, too, were asked to speculate on ENGOs' likes and concerns about their requirements.

As depicted in Table 28, some ENGOs and funders share certain likes about the evaluation requirements. For example, they both appreciate that they force ENGOs to examine their work, that ENGOs can determine the format of the evaluation report, and the evaluation questions are, in most cases, simple, clear and specific. Additionally, some of the ENGOs and funders had common concerns. They mentioned that the funders' expectations are not always very clear and the evaluation requirements can be too complex and time-consuming when small amounts of money are awarded. Not surprisingly, however, most of those who were interviewed had different likes and concerns about the evaluation requirements, as also noted in Table 28. Most likely this is due to the fact that the ENGOs and funders targeted in this study have variable evaluation capacities and evaluation requirements, respectively.

Despite their concerns, the majority of ENGOs feel, on the whole, quite positive about their funders' evaluation requirements, as the following quotes illustrate:

> I feel pretty good about them…I think that they're very understanding of the need to set priorities within the context of the project.
>
> I'm glad that it [evaluation] is part of the requirements of the funders.
>
> For the most part, they're reasonable.

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[37] As such, many ENGOs do not request evaluation funds or they do so inconsistently. Overall, six out of ten ENGOs interviewed for this study ask for evaluation money once in a while (usually 10% of the total project budget). Only one ENGO interviewed asks for evaluation funds all of the time.

Table 28: The Likes and Concerns About Green Funders' Evaluation Requirements

	ENGOs AND FUNDERS	ENGOs	FUNDERS
LIKES	• ENGOs are forced to examine their work • ENGOs can determine the format of the evaluation report • The funders' evaluation questions are simple, clear and specific	• The requirements help ENGOs organize/focus their program • Funders gather some of the information that they need • The funders' evaluation questions are not imposed; in other words, ENGOs can design the evaluation questions • Asking for an evaluation demonstrates that the funder is professional and credible • Interim reporting catches unintended problems • The evaluation meets some of their internal information needs	• ENGOs are provided with evaluation guidelines to help them complete their report • ENGOs are asked to provide honest answers • The timelines are open; in other words, the evaluation does not have to be completed by a specific date • The requirements are easy to meet
CONCERNS	• Sometimes the funders' expectations are unclear so that ENGOs are not sure what information to provide and what format is preferred • The requirements are too complex for small amounts of money	• It is time-consuming to answer the funders' evaluation questions • ENGOs do not have to submit interim reports which means that unintended problems are not identified and remedied • ENGOs waste time collecting information that does not help the organization; in other words, the funders' information needs differ from the grantees' information needs • The evaluation instructions and terminology are too complicated and "academic" • ENGOs have to provide a lot of detailed information that makes report writing onerous • ENGOs have to worry about meeting their funders' information needs • Funders are not required to provide ENGOs with feedback about the quality of the evaluations	• Different funders have different evaluation requirements • ENGOs have to provide the final report before they get the last installment of their funding • ENGOs do not like doing evaluations • Funders will not consider another grant application from an ENGO they funded until that ENGO provides the final evaluation report from the first grant

As well, ENGOs believe that they are satisfying their funders' evaluation requirements. This opinion is based on the fact that they have not received any negative feedback from their donors about the quality of their reports, and they are still granted funds after they submit their evaluation findings.

Funders, too, feel "pretty good", "good" and "all right" about their evaluation requirements for their environmental grantees. However, they believe that some measures could be taken to improve these ratings. For example, they could make their evaluation questions less ambiguous; accept ENGO annual reports and publications as a final evaluation report; provide more evaluation guidance (e.g. written 'how-to' evaluation publications or guidebooks with examples that specifically refer to environmental programs); ask for feedback from ENGOs about the evaluation requirements, and make changes accordingly; eliminate the requirement to submit quarterly progress reports; regularly review and assess their evaluation expectations to determine what is working and what is not working, and then make adjustments; and reduce the amount of written information required by ENGOs by collecting more data through site visits.

When funders were asked, "Is there anything that the entire green funding community can do to improve its evaluation requirements?", most of their answers made reference to the issue of standardization. However, this is not considered to be a viable option at the present time, given the variety of funding organizations in operation, and their different mandates and accountability needs, as explained below:

> It [standardization] is not going to happen because our donors want X, their donors want Y, and we're really more about responding to the community and less about figuring out common mutual application forms…We haven't actually come together and said, 'Let's develop evaluation standards for environmental groups in BC.' We haven't done it, and I think you'll find that's going to be really hard especially with a lot of the US money having its own contract and its own deliverables.
>
> I was just at a funders' forum…trying to find where we might be able to achieve some time savings for groups and some consistent stuff amongst us. And, I mean, we're all living within certain rules so it makes it really difficult to do. Some of them can't be changed overnight. They can be changed, maybe some of them, but later…It will take years to get everybody on board because everybody's going to have to fight their way through their own bureaucracy to change things. So we're struggling with it.

5.6 The Evaluation Capacity of ENGOs

5.6.1 Rating Evaluation Capacity

As noted in Chapter 1, the term 'evaluation capacity' refers to the ability of ENGOs to allocate resources (i.e. time, money, personnel and expertise) to evaluation activities. When ENGOs were asked to rate their evaluation capacity, most groups (4 out of 10) chose the 'barely acceptable' option, as noted in Table 29. A total of three organizations deviated from the rating scale provided, by describing their evaluation capacity as "between good and barely acceptable". With respect to the rest of the organizations, one ENGO selected 'good', another chose 'poor' and the final group did not provide an answer. Some of these responses and related comments are noted below:

Table 29: Rating of ENGO Evaluation Capacity by ENGOs

RESPONSE CATEGORIES	NUMBER OF ENGOs
Very good	0
Good	1
Barely acceptable	4
Poor	1
Very poor	0

> I would say that it [evaluation capacity] is in between barely [acceptable] and good because we know what we want to do and we do a moderately good job at doing it, but our capacity is pretty crappy to be able to do it. We don't have the time or the money or the energy.
>
> Barely acceptable is the one that jumps to mind…It's like most of the things we do…the resources are just so tight…
>
> …somewhere between good and barely acceptable…I think we need to allocate some more resources to doing good evaluation. Right now we don't have the time, money or personnel to do it. We basically throw out the piece of paper and hope for the best.
>
> We're doing a bare minimum to meet funder requirements and to meet our own requirements, but we don't have the capacity right now to be systematic [i.e. formal] about it.
>
> I think we're doing a good job with the resources that we have…but I really feel constrained and frustrated.
>
> I feel that what we do now is good in terms of meeting those minimum [funder] requirements. I think that the quality of the evaluation that we do is good, but we'd like to do a lot more.

Overall, ENGOs are disappointed with their evaluation capacity. This is because they are unable to implement more formal evaluations, carefully plan their assessments before their programs are implemented, and address their own evaluation questions (that is, during those times when the answers to their funders' evaluation questions will not satisfy all of their internal information needs). Due to a lack of evaluation training, they do not possess in-house evaluation expertise, especially with respect to the measurement of program outcomes. Nor are these groups able to afford to hire external consultants who can advise and assist their internal evaluators on an as-needed basis. Some ENGOs, as well, do not possess a solid organizational commitment to evaluation, that is, they do not recognize the extent to which on-going learning and reflection can improve the effectiveness of their work. As such, staff members are not always fully committed to engaging in the evaluation process.

There appear to be two reasons why they lack resources for evaluation. First, as noted earlier in this chapter, most funders do not provide ENGOs with additional funds to cover their evaluation costs. The second reason has to do with the decline in core/organizational funding in favor of single-issue/project funding. With single-issue project funding, groups have to devote an excessive amount of their resources to: (1) re-framing their on-going programs so that they look like new projects to funders, and/or (2) looking for funds to keep their organization running, that is, to find "money to turn the lights on". This leaves little time, money and personnel to devote to evaluation efforts, let alone, even, for other critical organizational functions such as program delivery and strategic planning.

When green funders were asked the question, "Overall, how do you feel about the evaluation capacity of ENGOs?", most of them felt that it is good, because for the most part, ENGO evaluations are meeting their information needs. However, they did comment on the fact that there is a 'evaluation capacity discrepancy' in the environmental community, with larger or well-funded groups better able to allocate resources to evaluation activities than smaller or under-funded organizations, as the following quotes illustrate:

> For the larger groups, [their evaluation capacity is] very good. Smaller groups? There's room for improvement.
>
> …they're under capacity, they're overworked and…they don't get funded for it [evaluation] so there is a capacity issue there…so it's logical that the evaluation is sometimes a weakness…with the exception of [the David] Suzuki [Foundation] or Sierra Legal Defense, Sierra Club, who are very well-funded…

5.6.2 Strengthening Evaluation Capacity

According to both ENGOs and funders, there are a few things that can be done to strengthen the evaluation capacity of environmental groups. When ENGOs were asked the question, “Is there anything that your organization can do to increase its evaluation capacity?”, the majority of organizations mentioned the need to allocate more time to learning, and this means cultivating an organizational commitment to evaluation practice. As noted by one respondent, “Evaluation and accountability [is] freeing up time. It’s recognizing it’s an important part of the job.” In many cases, this requires a directive from the top of the organization, such as the development of an organizational policy requiring evaluation for every program that is implemented. Several groups also indicated that their evaluation capacity would be enhanced if they provided evaluation training to their staff, either by hiring independent consultants or employees from well-respected training organizations, such as TREC (Training Resources for the Environmental Community) in Seattle, Washington.

There were other interesting, although less frequently mentioned, suggestions from ENGOs. For example, ENGOs believe that they should:

- Include evaluation as a budget component in their grant applications, even when the funder does not ask for it;
- Hire more permanent staff who have, as one of their main duties, responsibility for program evaluation;
- Encourage, support and participate in initiatives by funders to provide evaluation capacity-building project funding;
- Become more self-sufficient, that is, less dependent on money from funders;
- Improve their current data collection instruments (e.g. surveys and questionnaires);
- Improve their fundraising efforts; and
- Attract long-term staff so that the organization can build on its evaluation knowledge or ‘memory’ over time.

When funders were asked the same question, that is, “Is there anything that ENGOs can do to increase their evaluation capacity?”, some of their responses were identical to those provided by the ENGOs. For example, one funder indicated that groups could offer their staff more evaluation training, while another funder noted that grantees should ask for evaluation funds in their initial grant proposal: “…I think they just have to think about it and ask for it and put some money behind it.” However, their other suggestions were different from those provided by the environmental groups, and they tended to focus on the actual process of evaluation more than anything else. They believe, for instance, that ENGOs should:

- Plan for their evaluation while they design their program;
- Be clear about their program objectives;
- Collect evaluation information while the program is being implemented so that the data is at their fingertips when they need to write an evaluation report;
- Assign staff specific evaluation tasks to complete;
- Ask their funders questions if they are confused about the evaluation expectations/requirements; and
- Share their evaluation techniques with other ENGOs in order to generate evaluation knowledge within the environmental community.

In addition to being asked if they could do anything to increase their evaluation capacity, ENGOs were also asked the question, "Is there anything that your funders can do to increase your evaluation capacity?". The most popular response was that funders need to provide their grantees with sufficient funds to cover the cost of conducting evaluation. This may involve one or a combination of the following initiatives:

- Consistently provide evaluation funds equaling at least 10% of the total project budget;
- Fund organizational capacity-building projects in the areas of evaluation (as well as strategic planning and fundraising); and/or
- Provide more core/administrative/organizational funding and less project-based/non-organizational funding (that is, unless project funding provides evaluation funds and/or solely aims to strengthen evaluation capacity/practice).

Many groups also indicated that they would like more evaluation guidance from their funders. For instance, ENGOs would like their funders to provide them with: (1) examples of completed evaluations (i.e. templates); (2) written 'how-to' evaluation tips, guides and other helpful publications; (3) simple evaluation forms or 'check-off' lists; and/or (4) an independent evaluation consultant that they can speak to about their internal evaluation process without having to worry that what they say will jeopardize their funding. Other important, although less popular, responses from ENGOs were that funders need to be more clear about their evaluation expectations (either in written form or through personal contacts), and remind ENGOs to ask for evaluation funds in their grant proposals by including this requirement as a line item in their budget.

Green funders were also asked to comment on what they could do to strengthen the evaluation capacity of ENGOs. Interestingly, the majority of their ideas, except for the last two, mirror those proposed by ENGOs:

- Provide more evaluation guidance (e.g. formal evaluation training or ‘how-to’ evaluation toolkits, guides and other written resources);
- Meet more often with groups to make their evaluation expectations, and the reasoning behind them, clearer;
- Increase funding for the administrative portion of the grant; in other words, provide additional funds to cover evaluation costs;
- Hire more administrative staff in their funding organization to handle the grantmaking process (e.g. so that more site visits can be accomplished, thus reducing the amount of paperwork currently expected from ENGOs); and
- Link up with different organizations belonging to the Canadian Environmental Grantmakers’ Network to explore how funders’ evaluation requirements for environmental grantees can become more consistent or standardized.

5.7 Summary

The findings presented in this chapter reveal a number of patterns with respect to the practice of evaluation in the environmental community in the Lower Mainland. First, ENGOs are mainly evaluating their programs in order to meet their funders’ accountability standards and guide program improvements. Typically, these evaluations are funder-driven, that is, funders compel ENGOs to initiate an evaluation that aims to answer their funders’ evaluation questions. According to some ENGOs, these efforts always produce information that can be used to guide program improvements. For most organizations, however, these assessments do not always result in information that can be used to make their programs better. Second, ENGOs are conducting many different types of evaluations—informal, formal, process, outcome, internal and external—although the extent to which each of these are carried out varies. For example, process and internal evaluations are more common than outcome and external assessments. Third, ENGOs are using a variety of data collection strategies to gather fairly high-quality (i.e. credible and useful) qualitative and/or quantitative information. However, despite these evaluation efforts, ENGOs are not satisfied with their capacity to evaluate because they lack resources to implement more formal and outcome evaluations; to address, when necessary, their internally-designed evaluation questions; and to develop in-house evaluation expertise, amongst other reasons. Fortunately, ENGOs and their funders can take certain steps to overcome this situation; ENGOs, for example, can develop and nurture an organizational commitment to learning and reflection, and funders can provide ENGOs with additional project funds to cover the costs associated with program assessment.

CHAPTER 6: THEMES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter discusses the findings from this study. First, a number of key themes are presented, followed by a series of recommendations for strengthening evaluation practice in ENGOs. Lastly, suggestions for future research, a few limitations of this study, and some final conclusions are offered.

6.1 Key Themes

During the course of this study, a number of inter-related themes were tested and verified that deserve to be highlighted. These themes—the evaluation process, green funders' evaluation expectations and ENGO evaluation capacity—are presented below.

6.1.1 The Evaluation Process

Most ENGO evaluations are funder-driven

Most evaluations by ENGOs are prompted by the accountability demands of their funders, rather than by the information needs of the ENGOs themselves. That is, funders compel ENGOs to evaluate, using their evaluation questions (even though these questions do not always produce findings that will benefit the grantee). If the information that is acquired is deemed useful by ENGOs, then the findings are used to improve programs, as well as attract new sources of funding, motivate staff and enhance their organizational credibility, amongst other valuable applications.

Most ENGOs want to design their own evaluation questions

Given that their funder-driven evaluations do not always meet their internal information needs, most ENGOs interviewed reported that they prefer to conduct evaluations that address the evaluation questions *they want to answer*, rather than only those developed by their funders. They feel that evaluations driven by questions designed from within are more likely to contribute to organizational learning, address the right issues, produce exactly the kind of information and feedback required for program improvement, and generate greater staff ownership over the evaluation results, and hence, greater interest in and use of the evaluation findings.

ENGOs want to conduct more formal evaluations

ENGOs are, not surprisingly, informally evaluating their programs. However, they would like to perform more formal, systematic evaluations to complement their usage of informal assessments. This is due to two main reasons: (1) their funders expect them to conduct formal evaluations for accountability purposes, and (2) there is a clear understanding amongst ENGOs that the findings from systematic, pre-planned evaluations can significantly improve the effectiveness of their work.

ENGOs want to conduct more outcome evaluations

ENGOs are focusing most of their evaluation efforts on easily-measured program processes (i.e. inputs/resources and outputs such as the types of activities carried out, the number of goods and services provided, and the number of people served) rather than program outcomes (i.e. changes in individuals, the larger community/environment, and the staff/organization that delivered the program). ENGOs, however, want to know more about the outcomes of their work, especially since some donors are basing their funding decisions on the receipt of outcome assessments.

ENGOs want to improve the quality of their internal evaluations

ENGOs prefer to conduct internal evaluations to collect information for their funders, program staff and other stakeholders, but they do not feel 100% confident that their assessments are 'good enough'. They wonder, for instance, if they are asking the right evaluation questions, gathering enough information, using the most appropriate data collection methods, and collecting information at the right time during the project's lifecycle. Consequently, they would like to receive more training in evaluation and/or the services of an external evaluation consultant who can provide them with periodic guidance/input during their internal evaluation process.

6.1.2 Green Funders' Evaluation Expectations

Green funders expect ENGOs to evaluate their programs

Like ENGOs, green funders are accountable to their board members, donors and other stakeholders. Understandably, then, they require their grantees to provide evaluations documenting the implementation and effectiveness of the programs they fund. Despite this requirement, however, many funders (especially those who define their evaluation requirements as 'informal' or 'low maintenance') do not provide additional funds to ENGOs to cover their evaluation costs. Even fewer funders provide ENGOs with funds to cover the cost of disseminating their evaluation findings to other stakeholders (e.g. the media, the environmental community at large and policy-makers) through, for example, long-distance telephone calls, publications, and presentations at conferences.

Green funders want honest evaluations from ENGOs

Many ENGOs are afraid that they will not be able to attract future funding if they are completely honest and open about minor and/or significant program difficulties. However, funders interviewed for this study indicated that they want to learn about project successes *and* weaknesses or areas of improvement so that they, too, can find out what exactly works and does not work. Funders, then, have to be clear about this preference in their grant application forms, grant acceptance letters and/or personal interactions with their grantees. In other words, they have to admit to ENGOs that they know that projects do not always happen as planned[38], and they have to assure ENGOs that being honest will not negatively affect their bottom line.

Green funders want informative yet concise evaluations from ENGOs

Green funders do not want to read lengthy evaluation reports, since their time is also in short supply. They prefer concise and jargon-free assessments that clearly summarize the program, including the objectives that were met (i.e. the successes), what did not work, what would be done differently, and what new things were learned. Photographs, in particular, are an appreciated supplement to an evaluation report.

Green funders do not want to burden 'action-oriented' ENGOs with more paperwork

As noted earlier, green funders need to know what ENGOs are doing with their money, since they, too, are accountable to certain stakeholders. Yet, at the same time, they do not want to burden groups with massive amounts of paperwork. One way that funders are getting around this is by requiring ENGOs to complete only a small number of evaluation questions (i.e. typically less than ten) in a format decided upon by their grantees. Another way is by reducing the number of interim/progress evaluation reports required for projects that are short in duration (i.e. six months or less).

The standardization of green funders' evaluation requirements for ENGOs is unlikely

Although some funders are interested in exploring this issue, ENGOs should not expect the funding community to standardize their evaluation expectations anytime soon, if at all. To many funders, this appears to be a particularly daunting task, if not impossible, given the variety of funding organizations contributing revenue to the environmental sector (e.g. the federal government, provincial governments, private businesses and community foundations), all with different mandates and accountability needs.

[38] According to some of the ENGOs interviewed, the Vancouver Foundation does a particularly good job of this.

6.1.3 ENGO Evaluation Capacity

Most ENGOs are not happy with their evaluation capacity

Overall, ENGOs are producing fairly credible and useful evaluations for their funders and program staff. They are, however, dissatisfied with their capacity to allocate resources to evaluation activities. For example, they are having difficulty conducting more formal/systematic evaluations, implementing outcome assessments, developing in-house evaluation expertise, and hiring external evaluation consultants to assist their internal evaluators.

Most green funders feel good about ENGO evaluation capacity

Since the evaluations that they receive from ENGOs are, overall, meeting their information needs, the majority of funders interviewed for this study feel pretty good about the evaluation capacity of their environmental grantees. However, they did note that there is an 'evaluation capacity discrepancy' within the environmental sector. Those ENGOs that are well-funded, whether they are large or small, newly emerging or well-established[39], typically possess the administrative capacity to plan and implement high-quality evaluations on a regular basis. This is because well-funded ENGOs can devote more time to evaluation, hire external evaluation consultants for assistance, if desired, and retain staff for longer periods of time, thus cultivating long-term evaluation expertise within their organization.

6.2 Recommendations for Strengthening Evaluation Practice in ENGOs

Throughout the course of this study, it became apparent that ENGOs and their funders can take certain steps to strengthen evaluation practice in the environmental sector. As noted below, some of these key recommendations refer to the evaluation process itself, while others focus on the issue of evaluation capacity.

6.2.1 Improving the Evaluation Process of ENGOs

ENGOs can take certain steps to improve their ability to carry out an evaluation. Two key suggestions are noted below:

- *Learn more about evaluation*: Gain familiarity with the evaluation process (as described in Chapter 2 of this study). Resource-constrained organizations, in particular, need to recognize that evaluation does not have to be complex or resource-intensive. As noted by one funder interviewed for this study, "…it [evaluation] isn't rocket science, but it can be if you want it to."

[39] Although, typically, well-funded ENGOs tend to be the larger and well-established/older groups.

- *Collect information during program implementation*: As often as possible, gather data while a program is underway, so that unintended negative effects are immediately identified and resolved soon after they occur, and information is readily available when it comes time to write interim and/or final evaluation reports for funders and other stakeholders.

Green funders, too, can take action to simplify the evaluation process for their environmental grantees. For example, they could:

- *Make their evaluation reporting requirements less onerous*: Allow ENGOs to determine the presentation format of the evaluation report. Also, design different evaluation reporting requirements according to the following factors: (1) the length of the project (e.g. short projects should not require the same amount of paperwork as long projects), and (2) an ENGO's annual budget (e.g. a group with a budget of less than $200,000/year should have "lesser reporting requirements than larger organizations whose annual budgets exceed this amount") (PAGVS, 1999, p. 31).

- *Be clear about their evaluation expectations*: Funders need to clearly explain their reporting preferences in detail *before* the program they fund is implemented. ENGOs, for example, want to know ahead of time if the evaluation report should be two pages or ten pages in length, or if photographs are acceptable. Also, avoid using unfamiliar evaluation jargon or terminology (e.g. gap analysis).

- *Keep updated on debates and developments in the evaluation field and make changes to their evaluation requirements accordingly*: For example, many funders want their grantees to determine definitively the extent to which their programs cause a certain outcome (e.g. improved air quality). However, claiming attribution is "usually not possible, even with a carefully designed evaluation study" (e.g. true experimental or quasi-experimental design) (Mayne, 2001, p. 6). This is because so many other uncontrollable social, political, cultural and environmental factors influence program outcomes. As such, funders should not ask ENGOs to claim direct cause and effect. Rather, they should expect environmental groups to report on *progress towards outcomes* (i.e. how their actions *may have contributed* to certain results).

6.2.2 Improving the Evaluation Capacity of ENGOs

There are a few steps that ENGOs can take to improve their evaluation capacity, that is, their ability to allocate resources to the practice of evaluation. These include the following:

- *Ask for funds to cover evaluation expenses*: When requesting project funding in a grant application, ask for an additional 10% of the total project budget to cover the cost of internally planning and conducting an evaluation. As well, ask for at least 5% more to cover the cost of disseminating the evaluation findings (e.g. in newsletters, at conferences and through on-line services) to other ENGOs, scientists, the federal government, etc.[40] As well, if they are made available by funders, request evaluation capacity-building funds and core/operational funding.

[40] This will ensure that key players in the environmental movement can fill in their existing gaps in knowledge regarding the state of the environment in Canada and abroad, thus ensuring that environmental action is not impeded by a lack of access to data (Zraket & Clark, 1997).

- *Create a learning culture*: An ENGO will not continuously allocate available resources to evaluation unless it is committed to learning. Therefore, management must take steps to create a learning organization, one that is consistently committed to the process of reflection, dialogue and action planning. Given adequate resources, this entails accomplishing the following tasks, amongst others (Preskill, 1994, p. 293):

  > …*assess and communicate…management's commitment* to organizational learning [e.g. by developing an organizational policy requiring evaluation for every program that is planned and implemented, so that assessment becomes as natural an activity as budgeting] and the benefits that individuals and the organization may experience as a result of this transformation…then *provide training* to employees in the areas of coaching, conflict management, group process facilitation, performance feedback, team building, negotiation, critical thinking and evaluation.

- *Request evaluation training*: Ask funders to provide organizational learning and evaluation training workshops, seminars and conferences. Encourage environmental associations (e.g. the British Columbia Environmental Network), training organizations (e.g. Training Resources for the Environmental Community) and independent evaluation consultants to deliver organizational learning and evaluation seminars to ENGOs.

- *Establish partnerships*: Join forces with well-funded ENGOs or other types of organizations with evaluation resources (e.g. as was the case when the Comox Valley Citizen's for Action on Recycling and the Environment partnered with the University of BC's Institute of Health Promotion Research) (Pinho, 2001).

- *Investigate and participate in initiatives that aim to provide ENGOs with a long-term stable funding base that is not tied to single-issue project funding*: For example, a new initiative called the National Environmental Treasure (NET) is "designed to develop a long-term sustainable endowment fund for the environmental community" (Dale, 1997, p. 2). The trust fund for this public charitable foundation is currently being raised through campaigns encouraging each Canadian to donate $1 for the environment (Dale, 1997). In total, 50% of the money raised will be distributed to ENGOs to help them build their capacity in such areas as research, education, communications and evaluation (NET, 2000).

Green funders, as well, can change certain aspects of their grantmaking process, as noted below:

- *Provide evaluation funds along with project-based funding*: Award funds to ENGOs to cover their evaluation expenses, as follows: an additional 10% of the total project budget to pay for internal evaluation planning and implementation, and at least another 5% of the total project budget to cover the cost of disseminating the evaluation findings to various stakeholders.

- *Provide evaluation capacity-building funds*: These funds could be used to pay for professional development activities in organizational learning and evaluation, as well as the application of this new evaluation expertise to on-going or new projects. ENGOs could report on these efforts to their funders in writing and/or through meetings or workshops.

- *Provide more core/operational funding*: If project funding does not cover evaluation costs or build evaluation capacity, then core/operational funding could pay for evaluation expenses.

- *Provide more evaluation guidance*: Distribute written evaluation resources, examples of completed evaluations (i.e. templates) and/or simple evaluation forms or 'check-off' lists to environmental grantees. Hire an independent evaluation consultant who can assist one or more environmental groups during evaluation planning and implementation.

- *Diversify their grantmaking practices*: Distribute funds to environmental associations (e.g. the British Columbia Environmental Network), training organizations (e.g. Training Resources for the Environmental Community) and independent evaluation consultants so that they can deliver organizational learning and evaluation training workshops to ENGOs.

6.3 Suggestions for Future Research

Throughout the course of this research, it became apparent that there is a lack of research on: (1) the Canadian non-profit sector at large, especially the non-profit *environmental* sector and, in particular, ENGOs' current evaluation efforts and funding circumstances, and (2) the role of evaluation in the Canadian funding community. In order to obtain a richer understanding of these two topics, the following studies would be extremely useful:

- A study of the non-profit sector in Canada, in particular "the strengths and weaknesses of the…sector, its contributions to Canadian life, the factors that constrain its role, the impact of current government strategies toward the sector, the attitudes of the public, and so on" (Hall & Banting, 2000, pp. 23-24).
- A study comparing the funding levels for ENGOs with other types of non-profit organizations (e.g. health, education, international development), given claims that the funding levels for ENGOs are not as generous as for other kinds of non-profit groups (Dale, 1997).
- A study of the breakdown of total revenue sources for the Canadian environmental sector.
- An overview of current evaluation approaches and needs in ENGOs in the rest of Canada, with special attention paid to the differences between well-funded and under-funded groups, large and small organizations, old and young ENGOs, and high-profile and low-profile groups.
- Case studies examining how current or previous environmental programs have been evaluated by ENGOs or evaluation consultants.
- A study investigating how the decline in core funding in favor of project funding has impacted the 'health' of the environmental sector in Canada.
- The extent to which ENGOs are focusing on organizational learning activities, since the use of evaluation is rooted in an organization's culture of learning.
- A survey of US and Canadian funders to determine which Canadian ENGOs are being funded, the criteria for funding, regional disparities, etc. (Dale, 1997).
- A comparative study of evaluation in Canadian funding organizations, including such topics as their interest in evaluation, their evaluation knowledge/expertise, their evaluation requirements for grantees, and the role that grantee evaluations play in their work.

6.4 Study Limitations

There are four key limitations associated with this study. First of all, this project does not represent the opinions of the majority of large, well-funded and high-profile ENGOs in the Lower Mainland. Attempts were made to incorporate their perspectives but these groups declined to be interviewed, citing a lack of time or an unwillingness to discuss their evaluation and funding circumstances with someone who does not work for their organization. Second, this study does not include the viewpoints of the Government of British Columbia, one of the major funders of environmental organizations in the Lower Mainland. Third, the ENGOs and funders interviewed for this study were purposely selected according to certain criteria (as outlined in Chapter 4). As such, the findings are not representative of a larger population. However, in keeping with Cronbach & Associates (1980), the information can be considered to be an extrapolation, a "modest speculation on the likely applicability of [the] findings to other situations under similar, but not identical conditions" (Patton, 2002, p. 584). Lastly, the use of methodological triangulation, the practice of using two or more data collection strategies (e.g. interviews and document review) so that the strengths of one technique can compensate for the biases of another (Clarke & Dawson, 1999), had limited impact in this study. Although the interviews generated a wealth of information, the evaluation documents provided by the interviewees did not. These materials were not always accessible, up-to-date and/or complete, and they only corroborated a small portion of what the interviewees reported (i.e. with respect to the data collection methods of ENGOs and the evaluation requirements of green funders).

6.5 Conclusions

Through a literature review, standardized interviews with ten ENGOs and five of their funders, and the analysis of documentary evidence produced by the interviewees, this research project aimed to identify and understand current evaluation activities in ENGOs, determine the quality of ENGO evaluations, and develop recommendations for strengthening formal evaluation practice in the environmental community in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. The findings show that ENGOs are informally and formally evaluating their environmental programs in order to meet their funders' evaluation requirements, improve their work, attract future funding, inform strategic planning, motivate staff, and enhance their organization's reputation, amongst other valuable reasons. Most of their evaluations, which tend to be internal rather than external, focus on easily-measured program details such as inputs/resources and outputs (e.g. the number of goods and services provided, and the number of people served). The qualitative and/or quantitative information that is collected is considered fairly high-quality (i.e. credible and useful), according to the ENGOs and funders interviewed for this study. This research, however, also revealed some problems with respect to evaluation practice in ENGOs. For one thing, most of their evaluations are driven by their funders' evaluation requirements as opposed to their internal information needs. This means that their assessments do not always address those issues that are most applicable to making program improvements. This is of particular concern to ENGOs since they want to evaluate to meet their funders' accountability standards *and* to identify ways to improve their programs. Environmental groups also lack resources to implement more formal evaluations, assess the extent to which their programs are resulting in certain outcomes, develop in-house evaluation expertise, and hire external evaluators to assist program staff during their internal evaluation process.

Fortunately, ENGOs and funders can take certain steps to overcome these limitations. Environmental groups, for instance, can cultivate an organizational commitment to learning and reflection, a precondition to the systematic usage of evaluation. They can ask for evaluation funds, request training in organizational learning and evaluation, establish partnerships, and investigate initiatives that aim to provide ENGOs with a long-term stable funding base for capacity-building purposes. Funders, too, can make their evaluation reporting requirements less onerous, ask realistic evaluation questions, provide more evaluation guidance, and distribute additional funds to cover evaluation expenses. Other options deserving further exploration include the development of capacity-building projects and the awarding of more core funding for organizational strengthening purposes, in keeping with the understanding that strong organizations are more capable of delivering effective programs. These and other actions will ensure that ENGOs can fully meet their funders' evaluation requirements *and* their internal information needs, thus ensuring accountability as well as the design and implementation of programs that can effectively tackle the pervasive environmental issues affecting the world today.

APPENDIX I: LIST OF ENGOs INTERVIEWED

The following organizational/program profiles contain direct citations from the ENGOs' web sites, annual reports, newsletters and/or brochures.

1. Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST)

Participant: Mr. Dave Thompson, Executive Director
Address: 822-510 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1L8
Phone: (604) 669-2860
Email: best@best.bc.ca
Web: www.best.bc.ca

BEST is a non-profit society that fosters a higher quality of life through the promotion of sustainable and appropriate forms of transportation. Through education, policy work and other activities, BEST raises awareness about urgent transportation issues and works with decision-makers to promote progressive alternative transportation policies and better urban planning.

2. Burns Bog Conservation Society

Participant: Ms. Eliza Olson, President
Address: 202-11961 88th Avenue, Delta, BC V4C 3C9
Phone: (604) 572-0373/1-888-850-6264
Email: burnsbog@uniserve.com
Web: www.burnsbog.org

Through the delivery of environmental education tours, programs, workshop and special events, the Burns Bog Conservation Society promotes the conservation of Burns Bog, the largest estuarine raised peat bog on the West Coast of North America.

3. Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society, BC Chapter (CPAWS)

Participant: Ms. Eva Riccius, ParkWatch Coordinator
Address: 502-475 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 2B3
Phone: (604) 685-7445
Email: parks@cpawsbc.org
Web: www.cpawsbc.org

CPAWS is a national non-profit organization devoted to protecting Canada's parks and wilderness. Together with other regional chapters, the BC chapter has played a key role in establishing new parks and maintaining conservation values in existing parks.

4. Delta Recycling Society (DRS), Earthwise Education

Participant: Ms. Elizabeth Quinn, Earthwise Education Manager
Address: 7046 Brown Street, Delta, BC V4G 1G8
Phone: (604) 946-9828
Email: igenereux@drsociety.bc.ca
Web: www.drsociety.bc.ca

Through the delivery of workshops, tours, lesson plans and educational resources, the DRS Earthwise Education Program raises awareness about recycling/waste management, water conservation, organic gardening/composting and pesticide reduction.

5. Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA)

Participant: Mr. Doug Ragan, Manager
Address: 305-119 West Pender Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1S5
Phone: (604) 689-4463
Email: eya@eya.bc.ca
Web: www.eya.bc.ca or www.vcn.bc.ca/eya/

EYA is a youth-driven non-profit charity dedicated to helping youth develop a greater understanding and appreciation of the natural environment. Projects include building rooftop gardens, developing urban agriculture options, initiating community mapping exercises, and creating education resources and workshops.

6. Evergreen

Participant: Ms. Denise Philippe, Program Manager
Address: 404-134 Abbott Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 2K4
Phone: (604) 689-0766
Email: infobc@evergreen.ca
Web: www.evergreen.ca

Together with the Toronto office, Evergreen establishes and preserves urban outdoor spaces on school grounds, publicly accessible lands and home landscapes. This is accomplished through the delivery of education/naturalization programs, regional workshops, conferences, and practical “how-to” resources and guides.

7. Northwest Wildlife Preservation Society (NWPS)

Participant: Ms. Sandra Lostritto, Education and Communication Coordinator
Address: 707-1112 West Pender Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 2S1
Phone: (604) 713-6686
Email: NWPS@direct.ca
Web: www.northwestwildlife.com

NWPS is dedicated to preserving healthy wildlife and wildlife systems in northwestern North America largely through the delivery of interactive wildlife presentations, educational walks and stewardship programs for audiences of all ages.

8. Recycling Council of BC (RCBC)

Participants:	Ms. Tina Neale, Director of Information Services (Primary)
	Ms. Natalie Zigarlick, Executive Director (Secondary)
Address:	10-119 West Pender Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1S5
Phone:	(604) 683-6009
Email:	rcbc@rcbc.bc.ca
Web:	www.rcbc.bc.ca

RCBC is a multi-sectoral non-profit organization working towards waste avoidance. It supports waste management solutions by conducting research, facilitating the exchange of ideas and providing information services such as the BC Recycling Hotline.

9. Richmond Nature Park Society

Participant:	Ms. Lori Bartley, School Program Coordinator
Address:	11851 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC V6X 1B4
Phone:	(604) 718-6188
Email:	None
Web:	None

The Richmond Nature Park Society works with the City of Richmond to organize year-round nature programs for school-age children interested in experiencing the Richmond Nature Park, one of the last remnants of Lulu Island's once extensive bogs.

10. Stanley Park Ecology Society (SPES)

Participant:	Ms. Kristine Lampa, Executive Director
Address:	PO Box 5167, Vancouver, BC V6B 4B2
Phone:	(604) 257-6908
Email:	info@stanleyparkecology.ca
Web:	www.stanleyparkecology.ca

The Stanley Park Ecology Society (SPES) is a community-based charity dedicated to encouraging stewardship of the natural world through environmental education and action. SPES encourages stewardship by fostering an awareness of the fragile balance that exists between urban populations and nature. SPES provides public programs for adults and families; school programs for elementary school children; and wildlife information and resources promoting coexistence between people and our wild neighbours.

APPENDIX II: LIST OF GREEN FUNDERS INTERVIEWED

The following organizational/program profiles contain direct citations from funders' web sites, annual reports, newsletters and/or brochures.

1. Environment Canada, EcoAction

Participant:	Ms. Karen Lyons, Community Outreach Advisor
Address:	Pacific & Yukon Region, 700-1200 West 73rd Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6P 6H9
Phone:	(604) 664-9093/1-800-667-7779
Email:	ecoaction2000.pyr@ec.gc.ca
Web:	www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction

Environment Canada is a federal government agency with a mandate to preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment, including water, air and soil quality; conserve Canada's renewable resources, including migratory birds and other non-domestic flora and fauna; conserve and protect Canada's water resources; carry out meteorology; enforce the rules made by the Canada-United States International Joint Commission relating to boundary waters; and coordinate environment policies and programs for the federal government.

EcoAction (formerly called Action 21) is an Environment Canada funding program that helps non-profit, non-government groups implement projects that protect or enhance the environment in their community. Priority for funding is given to projects that will achieve results in the areas of clean air and climate change, clean water, and nature.

2. Mountain Equipment Co-op, Environment Fund

Participant:	Ms. Christina De Haas, Environment Program Coordinator
Address:	149 West 4th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Y 4A6
Phone:	(604) 707-3343
Email:	cdehaas@mec.ca
Web:	www.mec.ca

Mountain Equipment Co-operative (MEC) is a member owned and directed retail consumer co-operative which provides products and services for wilderness-oriented recreational activities such as hiking and mountaineering. MEC's Environment Fund supports Canadian-based environmental and conservation groups engaged in activities, projects, research and education concerned with environmental conservation and wilderness protection.

3. TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

Participants:	Ms. Jennifer Taylor, Coordinator, Western Canada Ms. Amanda Perry, Manager, Western Canada
Address:	TD Tower, 700 West Georgia Street, 3rd Floor, Vancouver, BC V7Y 1A2
Phone:	(604) 654-8832
Email:	perry.amanda@td.com
Web:	www.fef.ca

Headquartered in Toronto, the TD Bank offers a full range of financial products and services to approximately 13 million customers worldwide. As of January 25, 2001, TD Bank was Canada's second largest bank in terms of market capitalization and had more than $284 billion in assets. Established in 1990, the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation is a non-profit organization that provides funding for local community-based environmental initiatives that make a positive difference to the Canadian environment.

4. Vancouver City Savings Credit Union, EnviroFund

Participant: Ms. Hedy Rubin, Community Programs Specialist
Address: VanCity Centre, 183 Terminal Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6A 4G2
Phone: (604) 877-7620
Email: hedy_rubin@vancity.com
Web: www.vancity.com

As Canada's largest credit union with $6.4 billion in assets, VanCity offers a full range of financial products and services to 262,000 members in the Greater Vancouver Regional District, the Fraser Valley and Victoria. Established in 1990, VanCity's EnviroFund supports environmental initiatives that are non-profit, local, action-oriented, and innovative.

5. Vancouver Foundation

Participant: Mr. Mauro Vescera, Program Director
Address: 1200-555 West Hastings Street, Box 12132, Harbour Centre, Vancouver, BC V6B 4N6
Phone: (604) 688-2204
Email: info@vancouverfoundation.bc.ca
Web: www.vancouverfoundation.bc.ca

The Vancouver Foundation is Canada's largest community foundation. It administers over 690 endowment funds with total capital exceeding $600 million and distributes some $26 million a year to community organizations in British Columbia. Fields of interest include animal welfare, arts and culture, education, the environment, health and social development, medical research, religion and children, youth and families.

APPENDIX III: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

STRENGTHENING EVALUATION PRACTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE LOWER MAINLAND

by
Michelle Rose, B.Ed.
Master's Candidate
School of Resource & Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University
Phone: (604) 736-4016
Email: mjrose@sfu.ca

1. Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to (1) ascertain and understand evaluation activities and needs in environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs), (2) determine the effectiveness of ENGO evaluations, and (3) generate recommendations to strengthen evaluation practice in non-profit environmental groups in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. At this stage in the research, evaluation refers to the collection, analysis, and reporting of information about a program, project, service, activity, innovation or intervention. Evaluation capacity refers to the ability of organizations to allocate resources (i.e. time, money, personnel and expertise) to the practice of evaluation on an on-going, systematic basis.

2. Research Participants

Ten ENGOs in the Lower Mainland will be interviewed. These participants must be knowledgeable about evaluation and fundraising in their organization.

Key informant interviews will also be conducted with five green funders. These participants must have reviewed evaluation reports by ENGOs as a requirement of their employment.

3. Significance of the Research

The significance of this research lies in three areas. First, given that few studies explore evaluation in the non-profit environmental sector in Canada, this study represents one step towards building a better understanding of this issue. Second, even though some literature investigates the role of funders in the non-profit sector in Canada (e.g. PAGVS, 1999) and the United States (e.g. Shuman, 1999), few studies specifically explore how green funders influence the use of evaluation in ENGOs. Third, although a handful of studies provide recommendations for improving evaluation in the larger non-profit sector (e.g. PAGVS, 1999; Murray & Balfour, 1999), few studies include strategies for strengthening evaluation practice in the non-profit environmental sector, with one exception being Pinho (2001).

APPENDIX IV: ENGO CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONSENT FORM

Simon Fraser University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection of all times of the interests, comfort and safety of all research participants. This form and the information it contains are given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures the researcher will be using in your interview. Your signature on this form will signify that (1) you have read a project description (2) you have received adequate opportunity to consider this form, and (3) you voluntarily agree to participate in the project.

Any information that is obtained during this study will be held in a secure location and will be destroyed after the completion of the study. However, it is possible that, as a result of legal action, the researcher may be required to divulge information obtained in the course of this research to a court or other legal body.

Having been asked by Michelle Rose from the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University to participate in this interview, I have read the project description and I understand the procedures to be used in this research. I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time. I also understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior to my participation in a study such as this.

I understand that I may register any complaint I might have about the interview with the researcher, Michelle Rose (ph: 604-736-4016 or email: mjrose@sfu.ca), or with Dr. Peter Williams, Director, School of Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University (ph: 604-291-3103 or email: peterw@sfu.ca).

I would/would not ***(select one)*** like a copy of the results of this study upon its completion.

I have/have not ***(select one)*** been informed that the research material (e.g. transcriptions of the interview) will be held confidential by the researcher.

I understand that some of my funders may receive a copy of the results of this study. Therefore, when the researcher cites information collected from me in this interview and any subsequent discussions, I wish to be identified ***(please check as many as apply)***:

____ by name (the researcher will contact me prior to quoting me directly)
____ as a representative of my organization, where the organization is named
____ as a participant or respondent

I agree to participate by providing my personal perspectives and suggestions on those issues outlined in the project description provided to me prior to reading this consent form.

Name & Title: ____
Work Address: ____
Phone: ____________________ Email: ____________________
Signature: ____________________ Date: ____________________

APPENDIX V: GREEN FUNDER CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONSENT FORM

Simon Fraser University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection of all times of the interests, comfort and safety of all research participants. This form and the information it contains are given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures the researcher will be using in your interview. Your signature on this form will signify that (1) you have read a project description (2) you have received adequate opportunity to consider this form, and (3) you voluntarily agree to participate in the project.

Any information that is obtained during this study will be held in a secure location and will be destroyed after the completion of the study. However, it is possible that, as a result of legal action, the researcher may be required to divulge information obtained in the course of this research to a court or other legal body.

Having been asked by Michelle Rose from the School of Resource and Environmental Management at Simon Fraser University to participate in this interview, I have read the project description and I understand the procedures to be used in this research. I understand that I may withdraw my participation at any time. I also understand that my supervisor or employer may require me to obtain his or her permission prior to my participation in a study such as this.

I understand that I may register any complaint I might have about the interview with the researcher, Michelle Rose (ph: 604-736-4016 or email: mjrose@sfu.ca), or with Dr. Peter Williams, Director, School of Resource and Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University (ph: 604-291-3103 or email: peterw@sfu.ca).

I would/would not ***(select one)*** like a copy of the results of this study upon its completion.

I have/have not ***(select one)*** been informed that the research material (e.g. transcriptions of the interview) will be held confidential by the researcher.

I understand that some of my environmental grantees may receive a copy of this study. Therefore, when the researcher cites information collected from me in this interview and any subsequent discussions, I wish to be identified ***(please check as many as apply)***:

____ by name (the researcher will contact me prior to quoting me directly)
____ as a representative of my organization, where the organization is named
____ as a participant or respondent

I agree to participate by providing my personal perspectives and suggestions on those issues outlined in the project description provided to me prior to reading this consent form.

Name & Title: ____
Work Address: ____
Phone: ______________________ Email: ______________________
Signature: ______________________ Date: ______________________

APPENDIX VI: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ENGOs

STRENGTHENING EVALUATION PRACTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE LOWER MAINLAND

by

Michelle Rose, Graduate Student
School of Resource & Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University
Phone: (604) 736-4016 Email: mjrose@sfu.ca

Name & Title: ____

Organization: ____

Date of Interview: ________________________

INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this interview is to ascertain and understand the use (or non-use) of evaluation in your organization, including the effectiveness/quality of your evaluations, the common barriers that your organization confronts in using evaluation and the role of your funders with respect to your evaluation activities. The information from this interview will be used to generate recommendations to strengthen evaluation practice in environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

When you answer these questions, please consider your *recent* evaluations. Recent evaluations are those occurring at the time of this interview and/or those completed in the past three years.

DEFINITIONS

ENGOs	Environmental non-governmental organizations
Evaluation	The collection, analysis, and reporting of information about your programs, projects, services, activities, innovations or interventions (I will use the phrase 'programs, projects or services' to refer to all of the above terms, but feel free to substitute whatever term makes the most sense to you).
Evaluation Capacity	The resources (i.e. time, money, personnel and expertise) required to conduct evaluation in order to satisfy the evaluation requirements of your funders and the information needs of your organization.
Evaluation Requirements	Information requested by your funders about the implementation and/or impact of your programs, projects, or services.
Funders	Government agencies/departments, foundations or businesses that fund your organization.

YOU AND YOUR ORGANIZATION

1. What are the *major issues* your organization is working on? *(Please check all that apply)*

❑	Transportation	❑	Parks & Wilderness
❑	Environmental Education	❑	Wildlife
❑	Urban Issues	❑	First Nations
❑	Waste Reduction/Recycling	❑	Health/Toxins
❑	Tourism	❑	Atmosphere/Ozone
❑	Fisheries	❑	Other *(Please specify):*
❑	Forestry		____________________________
❑	Water Quality		____________________________

2. What year was your organization incorporated as a non-profit society?

3. How many permanent full-time and part-time staff does your organization have?

3. What is the nature of your involvement in evaluation in your organization?

4. Have you personally received formal training in evaluation? If yes, please describe the type of training you received.

RECENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

5. (a) What are the *primary* reasons why your organization conducts evaluations?
   (b) In your opinion, what do *you* think are the most important reasons for conducting evaluations?

6. (a) Evaluations by ENGOs can be informally or formally implemented. Informally implemented evaluations are *sporadic, ad hoc* and *short-lived*. Formally implemented evaluations are more *disciplined*, *systematic* and *on-going*. How would you describe the implementation of evaluation in your organization? *(Please check the appropriate description)*

   ❑ Entirely informal ❑ More informal than formal ❑ Equally informal & formal ❑ More formal than informal ❑ Entirely formal

   (b) Please provide an example of when your organization informally and/or formally implemented an evaluation.

7. (a) Process evaluations measure *how* a program, project or service is implemented (e.g. Did the program operate as planned?). These evaluations often include information about the *number* of goods and services provided (e.g. How many tours did we provide?) or the *number* of people served (e.g. How many people participated in our program?). Outcome evaluations, on the other hand, measure the overall *impact* or *effect* of a program, project or service (e.g. Did our clients' knowledge increase? Did the program achieve its goals and objectives?). How would you describe evaluation in your organization? *(Please check the appropriate description)*

❑ Entirely process-oriented	❑ More focused on process than outcome	❑ Equally focused on process & outcome	❑ More focused on outcome than process	❑ Entirely outcome oriented

(b) Please explain your selection.
(c) How would you describe your funders' evaluation requirements for your organization's programs, projects or services? *(Please check the appropriate description)*

❑ Entirely process-oriented	❑ More focused on process than outcome	❑ Equally focused on process & outcome	❑ More focused on outcome than process	❑ Entirely outcome oriented

8. (a) What *methods* does your organization use to *collect* information about its programs, projects or services?
(b) What methods do *you* prefer to use to collect information? Please explain your answer.
(c) Methods used by ENGOs can be informal (e.g. asking questions after a workshop or tour) or formal (e.g. carefully designed surveys). How would you describe the data collection methods used by your organization? *(Please check the appropriate description)*

❑ Entirely informal	❑ More informal than formal	❑ Equally informal & formal	❑ More formal than informal	❑ Entirely formal

(d) Please provide an example of an informal and/or formal method used by your organization.

9. (a) What kinds of information does your organization collect?

❑ Quantitative data only (e.g. numerical information)
❑ Qualitative data only (e.g. interviews, focus groups)
❑ A mixture of quantitative and qualitative data

> ❑ Mainly quantitative data
> ❑ Mainly qualitative data
> ❑ An equal amount of quantitative and qualitative data

(b) What kinds of information do *you* prefer to collect? Please explain your answer.

10. (a) When does your organization collect information? *(Please check all that apply)*

❑ Before a program, project or service is implemented
❑ During the implementation of a program, project or service
❑ After the completion of a program, project or service

(b) When do *you* prefer to collect information? Please explain your answer.

11. (a) Who collects information about your organization's programs, projects or services? *(Please check all that apply)*

- ❑ Staff
- ❑ External evaluation consultant
- ❑ Board members
- ❑ Clients/participants/target audience
- ❑ Funders (e.g. site visits)
- ❑ Organizational volunteers
- ❑ Other *(Please specify)*: ______________________________ ______________________________

(b) Ideally, who would *you* prefer to collect information? In other words, who should be involved in evaluation? Please explain your answer.

12. To the best of your knowledge, who uses your evaluation findings? *(Please check all that apply)*

- ❑ Staff
- ❑ Board members
- ❑ Clients/participants/target audience
- ❑ Other ENGOs
- ❑ Current funders
- ❑ Potential funders
- ❑ Other *(Please specify)*: ______________________________ ______________________________

13. (a) How are your evaluation findings communicated to your staff? *(Please check all that apply)*

- ❑ They are not communicated at present
- ❑ Review of interim and/or final evaluation reports prepared for your funders
- ❑ One-on-one in-person or telephone conversations
- ❑ Staff meetings
- ❑ I don't know
- ❑ Other *(Please specify)*: ______________________________ ______________________________

(b) What happens to your evaluation findings once they are communicated to your staff?

14. How are your evaluation findings communicated to your funders? (*Please check all that apply)*

- ❑ They are not communicated at present
- ❑ Interim and/or final evaluation reports
- ❑ One-on-one in-person or telephone conversations
- ❑ I don't know
- ❑ Other *(Please specify)*: ______________________________ ______________________________

15. (a) In your grant proposals, how often does your organization specifically request funds to cover the cost of conducting evaluations?

- ❑ Always
- ❑ Sometimes
- ❑ Never *(Please go to Q 16)*
- ❑ I don't know *(Please go to Q 16)*

(b) How much do you request in your grant proposals?
(c) To what extent are your requests for funds to cover evaluation costs granted?

16. How do you know when your program, project or service is a success?

17. What are some examples of things done differently as a result of conducting evaluations?

IDENTIFYING LIKES, DISLIKES AND CHALLENGES

18. What do you *like* about your evaluations?

19. What do you *dislike* about your evaluations?

20. What are the barriers to conducting more evaluations?

21. (a) What are your funders' evaluation requirements?
(b) How have these requirements changed over the years?

22. (a) What do you *like* about your funders' evaluation requirements?
(b) What do you *dislike* about your funders' evaluation requirements?

23. To what extent are you able to satisfy the evaluation requirements of your funders?

24. Do the evaluations you conduct for your funders meet the information needs of your organization? Please explain your answer.

HOW TO IMPROVE EVALUATION

25. (a) In your opinion, how credible (believable) is the information in your evaluations?

❑ Extremely credible ❑ Moderately credible ❑ Not credible

(b) Please explain your answer.
(c) In general, what factors or characteristics make an evaluation credible to you?

26. (a) In your opinion, how useful is the information in your evaluations?

❑ Extremely useful ❑ Moderately useful ❑ Not useful

(b) Please explain your answer.
(c) In general, what factors or characteristics make an evaluation useful to you?

27. How can your organization's evaluations be improved?

28. Describe an *ideal* evaluation process.

29. Evaluation capacity refers to the resources required to permit your organization to produce evaluation information that will, for example, guide strategic planning or satisfy the evaluation requirements of your funders. Please rate your organization's current evaluation capacity.

❑ Very good ❑ Good ❑ Barely acceptable ❑ Poor ❑ Very poor

30. Is there anything that your organization can do to increase its evaluation capacity?

31. Is there anything that your funders can do to increase your evaluation capacity?

CONCLUSION

32. Overall, how do you feel about your organization's evaluations?

33. Overall, how do you feel about your funders' evaluation requirements?

34. Is there anything else you would like to comment on regarding your organization's evaluation or your funders' evaluation requirements?

Thank you for your participation in this interview. Would it be possible for me to obtain the following information: (1) the names of some of your funders who expect you to use evaluation to account for expenditures, (2) your most recent annual report, and (3) any non-confidential documentation concerning your evaluation plans/activities (e.g. examples of surveys/questionnaires, formal evaluation plans)?

APPENDIX VII: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR GREEN FUNDERS

STRENGTHENING EVALUATION PRACTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE LOWER MAINLAND

by

Michelle Rose, Graduate Student
School of Resource & Environmental Management, Simon Fraser University
Phone: (604) 736-4016 Email: mjrose@sfu.ca

Name & Title: ____

Organization: ____

Date of Interview: __________________________

INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this interview is to (1) gain an understanding of your organization's evaluation requirements for environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs) in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, (2) identify your opinion regarding the effectiveness/quality of evaluations by ENGOs, and (3) determine how evaluation practice in ENGOs can be strengthened.

When you answer these questions, please consider *recent* evaluation reports by ENGOs. Recent evaluation reports are those completed in the past three years.

DEFINITIONS

ENGOs	Environmental non-governmental organizations
Evaluation	The collection, analysis and reporting of information *by ENGOs* about their programs, projects, services, activities, innovations or interventions in order to meet your accountability standards.
Evaluation Capacity	The resources (i.e. time, money, personnel and expertise) required to permit ENGOs to conduct evaluation in order to satisfy your evaluation requirements and the internal information needs of ENGOs.
Evaluation Requirements	Information requested by your organization about the implementation and/or impact of an ENGO's programs, projects, services, activities, innovations or interventions.

YOU AND YOUR ORGANIZATION

1. For private businesses or co-operatives: *Please go to Question 2*

   For government agencies: What level of government do you represent?

   - ❑ Municipal
   - ❑ Provincial
   - ❑ Federal

   For foundations: How would you characterize your foundation type? *(Please check all that apply)*

   - ❑ Family
   - ❑ Community
   - ❑ Special Purpose
   - ❑ Corporate
   - ❑ Government
   - ❑ Other *(Please specify)* ______________

2. What are the major issues your organization financially supports? *(Please check all that apply)*

   - ❑ Arts & Culture
   - ❑ Religion
   - ❑ First Nations
   - ❑ Social Services
   - ❑ Environment
   - ❑ Other *(Please specify):* ______________
   - ❑ Health
   - ❑ Sports & Recreation
   - ❑ Education
   - ❑ Youth Activities

3. What is the nature of your involvement in evaluation in your organization?

EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

4. What are the *primary* reasons why your organization requests evaluations from ENGOs?

5. (a) What are your organization's evaluation requirements for ENGOs?
   (b) How have your organization's evaluation requirements changed over the years?

6. Overall, are ENGOs able to meet your organization's evaluation requirements? In other words, do ENGOs meet your information needs? Please explain your answer.

7. (a) To the best of your knowledge, what do ENGOs *like* about your organization's evaluation requirements?
   (b) To the best of your knowledge, what do ENGOs *dislike* about your organization's evaluation requirements?

8. (a) Is there anything that your organization can do to improve its evaluation requirements?
   (b) Is there anything that the entire green funding community can do to improve its evaluation requirements?

EVALUATIONS BY ENGOs

9. (a) In your opinion, how *credible* (believable) are evaluations by ENGOs?

   ❑ Extremely credible ❑ Moderately credible ❑ Not credible

   (b) Please explain your answer.
   (c) In general, what factors or characteristics make an evaluation by ENGOs credible to you?

10. (a) In your opinion, how *useful* are evaluations by ENGOs?

    ❑ Extremely useful ❑ Moderately useful ❑ Not useful

    (b) Please explain your answer.
    (c) In general, what factors or characteristics make an evaluation by ENGOs useful to you?

11. What does your organization do with evaluations by ENGOs? In other words, what use does your organization make of the evaluation findings?

12. How do ENGOs cover the cost of conducting evaluations for your organization?

THE EVALUATION CAPACITY OF ENGOs

13. Is there anything that ENGOs can do to increase their evaluation capacity?

14. Is there anything that your organization can do to increase ENGOs' evaluation capacity?

CONCLUSION

15. Overall, how do you feel about your organization's evaluation requirements for ENGOs?

16. Overall, how do you feel about the evaluations you receive from ENGOs?

17. Overall, how do you feel about the evaluation capacity of ENGOs?

18. Is there anything else you would like to comment on regarding your evaluation requirements or evaluations by ENGOs?

Thank you for your participation in this interview. Would it be possible to obtain documentation about your evaluation requirements for ENGOs (e.g. grant applications, evaluation guidebooks, interim and/or final report forms)?

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