

# Sustainability Solutions Group



2009

Sustainability  
Assessment



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## Illustrations by Laurel Sprengelmeyer

A 4th generation painter, Laurel's work has been shown internationally. She currently lives and works in Montreal where she runs Studio 218. She really enjoyed doing these illustrations for SSG, particularly the ones of birds that she completed while listening to episodes of "My SoCalled Life" on youtube. Examples of her fine art paintings can be found at:

[www.laurelsprenglemeyer.com](http://www.laurelsprenglemeyer.com)

# Executive Summary

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Sustainability Solutions Group (SSG) is a worker co-operative that nurtures and embodies a holistic understanding of sustainability and works with clients and collaborators to meaningfully integrate social, ecological and economic practices in their organisations and work.

SSG believes that a transparent, comprehensive, integrated and far-sighted approach to planning and decision making is the best way to achieve its goals. By allowing SSG to reflect on its ecological, social and economical impacts, the annual sustainability assessment is an important tool that informs this process. Reporting on its activities and practices also allows SSG to share its successes and challenges with clients, partners, collaborators, and the broader community. A few highlights for the 2009 reporting period include:

- Full-time equivalents (FTEs) increased from 3.8 in 2008 to 4.16 in 2009;
- 1 new worker member joined the SSG team and 1 associate member is on track to becoming a worker member;
- Total revenue increased from \$276, 838 in 2008 to \$283,976 in 2009;
- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being perfect, SSG worker members' overall happiness increased from 7.9 in 2008 to 8.2 in 2009;
- On the same scale, SSG worker members' overall work-life balance decreased from 6.7 in 2008 to 6 in 2009;
- The percentage of collaborative projects (where SSG collaborated with other individuals or firms) substantially increased from 11.54% in 2008 to 45% in 2009;
- The number of research projects initiated by SSG increased from 0 in 2008 to 6 in 2009;

- On a 10-point index, the 2009 SSG Client Satisfaction rating was 7.05;
- On the same index, the 2009 SSG Partner and Contractor rating was 7.95;
- The total kilometres travelled for work-related purposes by SSG workers decreased between 2005 and 2008, but slightly increased in 2009 to reach a total of 73,078 km. The tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents emitted per FTE also increased from 3.3 in 2008 to 3.7 in 2009;
- Departing from SSG's donation strategy, all donations by worker members were waived for 2009;
- Strategic directions established in 2008 that translated into action during 2009 included:
  - o The Vancouver Office obtaining a grant to undertake a feasibility study for the creation of a hub;
  - o All worker members being on salary as of January 2009;
  - o Developing a strategy to diversify SSG's work in regards to community planning;
  - o Laying the foundation for the creation of a think tank by incrementally building capacity and undertaking preliminary research, and
  - o Continuing to solidify SSG as an organisation.

# Methodology

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SSG members believe in organizational transparency and accountability to its members, associate members, partners, clients and the public. That's why we report annually on the ecological, social and economic dimensions of our operations – the interrelated pillars of sustainability. Measuring enables us to evaluate, manage, and improve our performance; reporting allows us to engage others in our journey.

Our sustainability assessment reports are up front and honest. They contain the full spectrum of our activities, from the areas in which we could improve to those in which we exceed our greatest expectations! We hope that our assessments are insightful and inspire organizations towards similar reporting for their own benefits and as a show of openness and trust to those with whom they work.

## About this report

This report covers the period from the 1st of January 2009 to the 31st of December 2009. The 2009 report is more inclusive than the abridged 2008 assessment in accordance with SSG's aim to allocate more resources to this process every other year while maintaining annual data collection and reporting. Consequently, approximately a quarter of the 2009 indicators can only be compared to 2007 data -the most recent complete SSG sustainability assessment. The remaining three quarters may be compared to data collected in all past reports.

## Who's included

During the reporting period, the SSG team had 5 worker members: Lindsay Cole, Yuill Herbert, Jeremy Murphy, Geneva Guerin and Melissa Garcia-Lamarca. After 18 months as an associate member, Jeremy joined SSG as a full time worker member in 2009. Rebecca is on track to becoming a worker member and, given her substantial contributions throughout 2009, is accounted for as a worker member for the purposes of this report. Thus, throughout this report, the term "worker member" includes Lindsay, Yuill, Jeremy, Geneva and Rebecca. As Melissa did not take part in SSG's 2009 professional activities, she is not included in this report. The term "associate member" refers to all others involved with SSG during the reporting period.

## Assessment framework and indicators

SSG's sustainability assessment framework was not substantially modified in 2009. Indicators 7 and 9 were refined by obtaining data for SSG clients, contractors and partners through two surveys instead of one common survey, as has been done in the past.

## Data

Quantitative data for this report was obtained by reviewing internal records. Qualitative data was collected from:

- 1 online survey of worker-members;
- 1 online survey of associate-members;
- 1 online survey of SSG clients, and,
- 1 online survey of SSG partners and contractors.

## Sources of error

In October 2008, SSG adopted a new payroll and hours management system. Overall, it has facilitated more accurate record keeping. As 2009 was the first complete year using the system, sources of reporting error may include a lack of consistency in worker members' hours reporting. This possibility has been addressed for future assessments.

The accuracy of some of the data collected in the client and partner surveys is limited due to the survey response rates:

- 5 of 13 client representatives responded to the client survey (38.5%);
- 5 of 15 partners and contractors contacted responded to the partner and contractor survey (33.3%);
- 9 of 16 associate members responded to the associate member survey (56.3%), and,
- 9 of 12 active associate members responded to the associate member survey (75%).

# Organisational Profile

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## Vision

SOG envisions a just, happy and healthy world where the well-being of one is connected to and reliant upon the well-being of all.

## Mission

SOG is an innovative Canadian worker co-operative. We nurture and embody a holistic understanding of sustainability, helping clients and collaborators to meaningfully integrate socially, ecologically and economically responsible and progressive practices in their organisations and work.

## Service offerings

SOG's work is guided by three elements:

1. Ensuring work has integrity, is leading edge, and is of high quality;
2. Building capacity within the organisations with which we work, and,
3. Creating tools and process that are inclusive and innovative.

## Specific services include:

- *Sustainable Building and Integrated Design* - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) consulting and project management, integrated design process (IDP) facilitation and training, and operations planning.
- *Sustainability Management* - Multi-stakeholder approaches, indicator development, measurement and assessment of impacts, strategy development and implementation planning, sustainability reporting, green and sustainable operations planning, policy development and creation of sustainability management systems.
- *Strategic Consulting* - Policy research, micro-generation, carbon offsetting, land use planning, organisational greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts, energy planning, and building related energy use.
- *Sustainable communities* - Integrated community sustainability planning (ICSP), community energy planning, co-op and social enterprise development,

affordable housing research and development, community economic development, facilitation, research and policy development, and sustainability indicator development and reporting.

- *Training and Education* - Course design and delivery, educational tools and resources.

## Incorporation classification

SOG is federally incorporated as a worker's co-operative.

## Membership:

- Canadian Workers Co-operative Federation (CWCF);
- British Columbia Co-operative Association (BCCA);
- Canada Green Building Council;
- Climate Action Network (Can-net);
- Cascadia Green Building Council, and,
- Vancity.

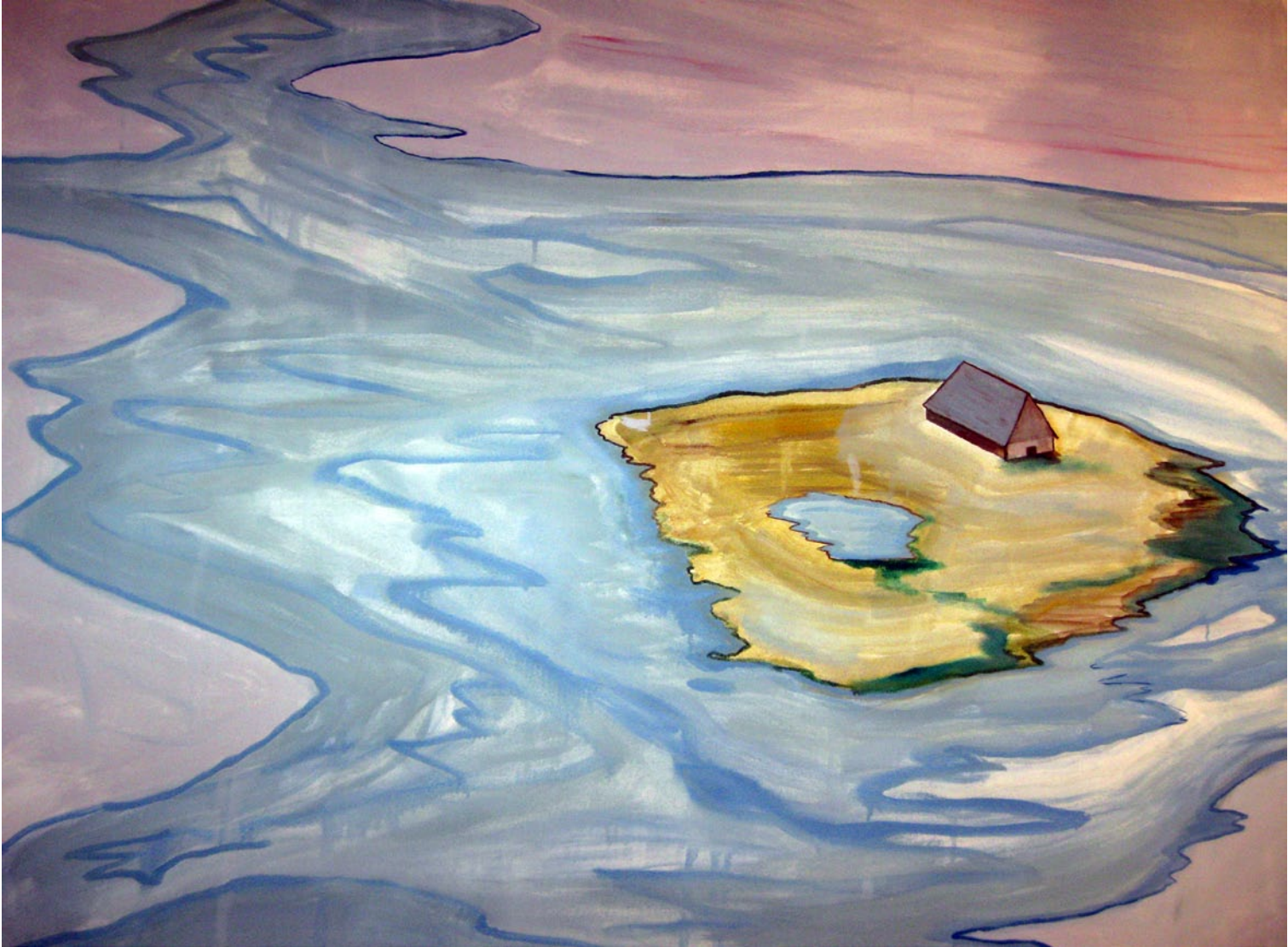
## Organisation and decision-making

SOG has a flat, horizontal structure, meaning that all worker members earn the same salary for the hours that they work, and share the responsibility of running the co-op. Consensus based decision-making is used for governance and operations.

## SOG member values:

- We want to make a difference;
- We believe that society needs better ways to do business;
- We want meaningful lives and work;
- We believe in fairness and respect to those present today and to future generations;
- We want to increase the sustainability of communities, to make the world more sustainable and equitable;
- We believe that we have a responsibility to do our very best, and,
- We want to have a positive impact, to address the root causes of societal problems.





12 Active associate members

7,987 Hours worked by all SSG members

1,099 Hours worked by SSG associate members

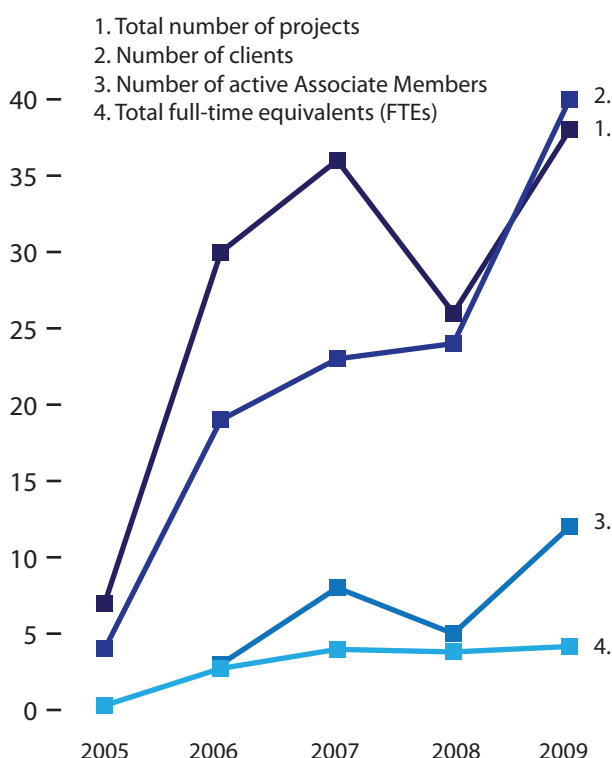
14% of hours worked by associate members

Chart 1 illustrates SSG’s Organisational Indicators and chart 2 illustrates SSG’s Financial Indicators for the 2005 to 2009 period. The figures specific to 2009 are discussed below.

## Members

SSG strives to provide meaningful work to its members. All members of SSG share the same pay rate. The co-op is rooted in a high level of trust among members, helping to create a strong foundation for exploration and creative thinking. One of the on-going goals of the co-op is to cultivate a working environment where members are encouraged to explore their ideas and develop projects they are passionate about as opposed to focusing on profit making. SSG provides its members with flexible hours, therefore not all of its worker member work full time. This facilitates worker members being able to take the time they need to engage in advocacy or other non-work related pursuits.

Chart 1: Organisational Indicators



In 2009 SSG experienced an increase in average full-time equivalents (FTEs). Total FTEs climbed to 3.97 in 2007, decreased to 3.8 in 2008, and peaked at 4.16 in 2009. This can be explained by the significant increase in hours worked by SSG associate members, which augmented from a total of 370 hours in 2008 to 1098 hours in 2009. Also, SSG transitioned to a salary based structure for worker members as of the beginning of January 2009.

## Associate members

The number of active SSG associate members peaked in 2009, an increase from 5 in 2008 to 12 in 2009. As seen above, the total hours worked by associate members nearly tripled in 2009. This is due in part to SSG’s deliberate attempt to include associate members with valuable expertise by creating a space for more flexible employment.

### New Directions for SSG, by member Jeremy Murphy:

The early SSG projects focused the skills of its founding members to realize sustainability efforts primarily on university campuses, research projects, sustainability assessments and in green building practices. These areas are still a major focus for SSG and have been joined by efforts in community planning, land use planning for climate change, and policy making.

For the first time, SSG partnered in 2009 with urban planning firms for official community plan reviews, contributing expertise in sustainability indicator development, sustainable land use direction, community economic development and sociocultural sustainability. We initiated policy research projects including one for the BC provincial government’s green building policy and another on sustainable municipal planning policies. Both involved scans of several government jurisdictions worldwide. We explored community energy plans and integrated community sustainability plans in BC, Ontario and the Atlantic Provinces and helped start up social enterprises in Quebec.

SSG members feel that it is across all of these areas that we can best work to achieve on the ground community sustainability. We hope that by making our efforts on these projects open and accessible to communities that our project work will help community organizers and governments achieve meaningful change in their neighbourhoods.

**Chart 2: Projects and Contracts (initiated or carried through in 2009)**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Client</b>
Broad-based Sustainability Strategy for the College	Algonquin College
Community Sustainability Plan and Economic Development Plan	Village of Slocan
Official Community Plan	Town of View Royal
GHG Land-Use Model for Small and Medium Communities	Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation and Fraser Valley Regional District
Creative and Sustainability Consultants	Wa\$ted television series
VCCEP - LEED Platinum Development Project	Vancouver Convention Centre Expansion Project
Residential Condo Development - targeting LEED GOLD	Proment
Le Vistal, Residential Condo Development - targeting LEED GOLD	Proment
Fidelity Investment Renovation - LEED CI	Marfoggia
GHG Inventory for Corporate Buildings	The Co-operators
Development of a proposal for an energy strategy	Agency for Co-op Housing
Strategic Consulting - Targeting LEED GOLD	BC Housing general
LEED Consulting - Targeting LEED GOLD	BC Housing & Look Out Emergency Aid Society
LEED Consulting - Targeting LEED GOLD	BC Housing and Atira Women's Resource Society
LEED Consulting - Targeting LEED GOLD	BC Housing and PHS Community Services Society
LEED Consulting - Targeting LEED GOLD	BC Housing and McLaren Housing Society
LEED Consulting - Targeting LEED GOLD	BC Housing Look Out Emergency Aid Society
Better Than Best: Innovative green building and climate change policies from around the world	BC Government
Integrated Design Process Training for Project Managers	Alberta Infrastructure and Alberta Green Building Council
Vancouver Convention Centre LEED EBOM	Vancouver Convention Centre
Integrated Design Process Learning Module	Royal Architectural Institute, Athabasca University, Donald Ardiel Architects
Feasibility Study for Cooperative Financing of Affordable Housing in Victoria BC	CDI proposal - affordable housing
Review of a Multi-Criteria Tool for Sustainability	SAOS.co
Integrated Design Process Facilitation Training	Recollective
Ledcor Marine Project - LEED Project	Ledcor Marine Project
Vancouver Greenest City Action Team	Vancouver Greenest City Action Team
Comox Official Community Plan Review	Town of Comox
Currents - LEED Development Projects	Currents Development
Evaluation of the Quartier Verts Pilot Project in Montreal	Urban Ecology Centre
LEED Development Project - LEED Platinum	Currents Development
Mauricie Sustainability Assessment	Quebec Ministry of Health for the Mauricie region
Greening our Company	Novalis
Sustainability Strategy Evaluation	Soder
View Royal OCP Review	Town of View Royal
Sustainable Cities Policy Research Project	Capital Regional District
Revising the USGBC LEED for homes rating system for the Canadian context	CaGBC
Sustainable Cities Policy Research Project	City of Calgary
Carbon Neutral Buildings Course	Vancity and the Real Estate Foundation



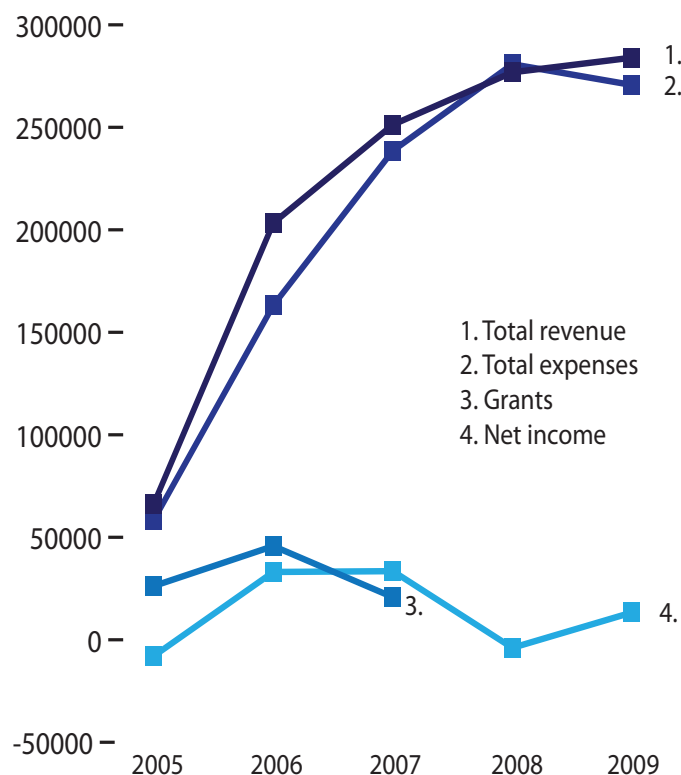
### SSG clients and projects

The number of clients increased from 24 in 2008 to 40 in 2009. The number of projects (billable contracts) went from 36 in 2007 to 26 in 2008, and rose to 38 in 2009 (chart 3). SSG continues to offer sliding scale rates to its clients, thereby making its services available to a variety of organisations.

### Finances

Chart 3 outlines SSG's financial indicators. However, it should be pointed out that these numbers have yet to be verified by SSG's accountant. It can also be noted that total revenue increased while total expenses decreased, with a net income of \$13,313.00.

Chart 3: Financial Indicators



### Associate Members

SSG aims to be an inclusive organisation with impacts that reach beyond the capacity of our worker members. The associate member arrangement allows individuals to work with SSG on a part-time basis, and gives SSG a pool of colleagues that can be drawn upon with the ebb and flow of work. Associate members are chosen for their skills, location, capacity, diversity and co-operative ethic.



## Section One: Toward co-operation, collaboration & community

<b>Chart 4: Section One Indicators</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
1. Percent & dollar amount of revenue to community support fund	10%	10%	11%, \$28,335	5%, \$11,100	1.4%, \$3,828
2. Number of projects engaging more than one worker-member (measured by percent in 06-07)	0	74%	69%	15	17
3. Percent of collaborative projects with other individuals/firms	13%	12%	31%	12%	45%
4. Number of projects initiated	-	1	1	0	6
5. Number of SSG presentations per full-time equivalent	0.20	2.60	3.00	3.95	1.92
6. Percent of clients/partners responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference	70%	100%	100%	Not surveyed	Clients: 80% Partners: 100%
7. Percent of worker members responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference	100%	100%	88%	Not surveyed	100%
8. Average rate of client and partner satisfaction (2007-09, out of 10)	-	82%	7.4	Not surveyed	Clients: 7.05 Partners: 7.95
9. Percent of clients that rehired or engaged SSG on another project	-	-	22%	23% (6 projects)	18% (7 projects)

Co-operation, collaboration and community are key to SSG's operations. In order to promote positive change, SSG continues to seek opportunities to work with, support or inspire other like-minded individuals and organisations. The figures specific to section one are discussed below.

### 1. Community Support Fund

As a worker cooperative responsive to the needs of its members, SSG continues to evolve and seeks to embrace opportunities to evaluate, adjust and improve its ways of doing business. SSG remains committed to helping achieve social change by sharing revenue generated through its business activities. Since its creation, SSG has

donated over \$56,000 to various grass roots organisation through its Community Support Fund.

However, it has become clear that SSG will need to assess its existing donation strategy, under which SSG commits to reinvest 10% of before tax revenue into grass roots, community based organisations. In 2009, worker members decided not to make this 10% contribution for the year. This is mainly due to two reasons: First, SSG has been investing more time and resources into making itself a more stable, functional, and happy workplace (e.g. providing offices for members) and, subsequently, has had a reduced cash flow causing a lag in making quarterly

**20** Projects engaged more than 1 worker member

**17** Projects involved collaboration with other partners

**8** Presentations were given by worker members

**7** Clients rehired or engaged SSG on another project

### In 2009, associate members donated:

\$2,400 to the Montréal Urban Community Sustainment, a home for community building and a centre for urban sustainability.

\$1,428 to the National Environmental Treasure, a people's trust fund devoted to the exclusive funding of Canadian environmental organisations.

donations. Second, members were not able to dedicate the time required to research the organisation they wished to support through the fund. Feeling burdened and overwhelmed with catching up on donations, worker members decided to start afresh at the beginning of 2010.

To address this, SSG members have agreed to choose the receiving organisation at the beginning of each financial quarter as opposed to waiting until the end of the financial quarter, when worker members tend to be busier.

Of the 12 active associate members, 2 associate members contributed a total of \$3,828 to the Community Support Fund, which corresponds to 1.4% of total 2009 contract revenue. Other associate members returned their surplus earnings into the co-op, doing additional, noncontractual work with SSG. The survey circulated to associate members showed overall support for SSG's donation strategy. However, it also indicated that 4 out of 9 respondents did not fully understand and/or were not actively part of the donation allocation process

In 2008, SSG contributed 4% of total contract revenue to the Community Support Fund. While SSG expressed its intention in the 2008 report to retroactively allocate donation funds so as to achieve the 10% target, it was not able to do so for the reasons outlined above.

In past years SSG has partnered with the Tides Foundation

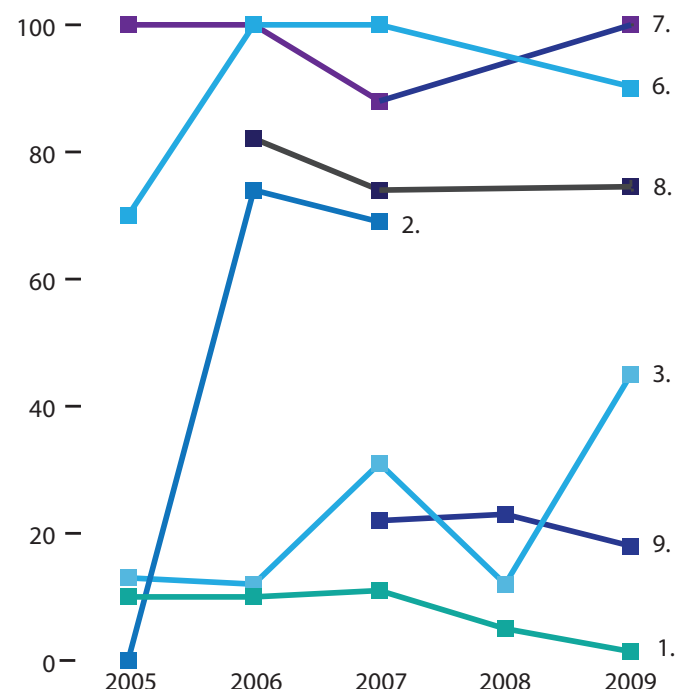
### What associate members had to say about SSG's donation strategy:

*"I have requested a meeting to discuss this. For me, \$25/hr is not sustainable. I aim to earn about \$50,000 through 25-30hrs of paid work per week which works out to \$35-40/hr. At least one day each week I do unpaid work. It is a combination of activism/volunteerism and developing paid work projects through partnerships, proposal writing, meetings, attending conferences, etc. I really like the donations fund and I also really like seeding projects that everyone get's jazzed about. I like the donations and internal projects fund. I have lots to say about this and I look forward to the meeting."*

*"I think this policy is very innovative and works to engage more AMs in work they chose to do. It might make more sense for AMs to be paid slightly more than SSG members as they go without benefits or tax deductions."*

*"I like the donations policy. The one project I did for SSG, I didn't hear about how the money was used..."*

Chart 5: Section One Indicators



1. % of revenue to community support fund
2. % of project hours worked engaging more than one worker-member
3. % of collaborative projects with other individuals/firms
6. % of clients/allies responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference
7. % of worker-members responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference
8. Average rate of client and partner satisfaction
9. % of clients that rehired or engaged SSG on another project

### An excerpt from SSG's donation strategy:

*"...Associate members will be compensated at an amount equal to what SSG members' aim to pay themselves (as of 2006, \$25 per hour). The total amount of paid hours for a given contract will be negotiated by SSG and the associate member at the beginning of a contract. SSG will take 15% of the associate billable rate to cover SSG's administrative costs. The remaining amount from an associate's total billables can be either (1) contributed to the SSG Community Donations Fund, (2) directed to fund an internal SSG project or to generally support SSG, or (3) donated to the organisation of their choice subject to approval by members based on a donations screen."*

—SSG Policy for External Contractors and Associate Membership, conditionally adopted July 28, 2006



Social Justice Fund to leverage its charitable donations. Matching donations made through this fund were put on indefinite hold at the beginning of 2008 due to reduced capital available from the wider donor community. As of 2009, the total funds leveraged by SSG through its partnership with Tides was \$7,088. The partnership with the Foundation essentially allowed for the total donated funds to “grow” to over \$63, 000: \$56, 863 donated by SSG worker and associate members, and \$7,088 matched by the Tides Foundation.

## 2. Projects engaging more than 1 worker member

In 2009, 52.63% of projects involved more than 1 worker member. This is slightly less than the 58% recorded in 2007 and 2008.

## 3. Collaborative work

Collaboration with other organisations or companies on given projects reached an all time high of 45% in 2009.

## 4. Initiated projects

In accordance with SSG’s strategic direction of building capacity and undertaking preliminary research as steps towards the establishment of a think tank, SSG initiated 5 projects in 2009. These are:

- “Better than the Best: Innovative green building and climate change policies from around the world”, for the British Columbia government;
- The “Land Use Greenhouse Gas Model”, a tool to manage emissions through informed land use decision making, for the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Fraser Valley Regional District;
- “Carbon Neutral Buildings Course”, a half-day workshop introducing carbon neutral buildings targeted at building owners and managers, project managers, architects, government policy makers and engineers. Funded by the Vancity/Real Estate Foundation Green Building Grant Program;
- “Sustainable Cities”, a Strategic Review of Sustainability Policies and Instruments from Leading International Municipal Jurisdictions;
- “Carbon Account”, a carbon audit and reduction program for nonprofit organisations, small/medium sized enterprises and other cooperatives, spearheaded by Dale Hildebrand, a new associate member, and,
- The creation of a partnership with the Victoria Community Social Planning Council, as well as with Queenswood Consulting, to develop a project idea and

## Land Use Greenhouse Gas Model, by Lindsay Cole:

In 2007, SSG partnered with Holland Barrs to create a tool that would enable Salt Spring Island to map out future land use scenarios and evaluate their relative GHG emissions. Since then, SSG was awarded a prestigious External Research grant from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and partnered with the Fraser Valley Regional District, to develop and pilot an open source modelling tool for use by local and regional governments.

The tool allows municipalities to input their current land uses, including transportation, buildings, waste, and biomass (agriculture and forestry) and output their baseline GHG emissions associated with their current land use. They can then develop and model potential future scenarios, evaluate specific development projects, back cast against their reduction targets to determine potential courses of action, all with the aim of reducing their GHGs from land use.

Considerable energy and resources are required to construct and support human settlements. Municipal land use decisions determine the difficulty or ease with which society can achieve the emissions reductions required in the near and long-terms to mitigate climate change and air pollution.

Communities can plan and act now for different energy usage and transportation patterns that reduce emissions, save money and foster healthy communities. Significant emissions reductions can be achieved through actions at the municipal level and many municipalities are signing declarations and initiating programs to this end.

## A Sustainability Strategy for Algonquin College, by Rebecca Foon:

SSG has been working extensively with Algonquin College over the last year on a broad-based sustainability strategy for the entire college. The college is committed to integrating sustainability into its operations as well as into its curriculum.

It has been very inspiring and exciting to witness the college work together and move forward -challenging itself to be innovative, creative and cutting edge in its sustainability plan. The college is beginning to unite with other colleges and universities to help each other grow and share lessons learned.

I believe Algonquin College is at the forefront of a campus sustainability movement that is beginning to completely change the way universities and colleges think, educate and operate.



proposal to examine the feasibility of a co-operative financing fund that would invest in affordable housing in the Victoria region. This project is currently seeking funding support.

5. SSG presentations

SSG presentations per FTE decreased from 3.95 in 2008 to 1.92 in 2009. In 2009, SSG presented at:

- The “International Co-operative Alliance All General Meeting”, CICOPA (International Organisation of Industrial, Artisanal and Service Producers’ Co-operatives) conference, and,
- The “In Our Backyards: Defending the Environmental Commons”, 2009 Cooperative Education and Training Institute, NASCO (North American Students of Cooperation) Institute.

In previous assessments, SSG defined “presentations” as “Planning and delivering presentations and workshops”, which has been interpreted in different ways. SSG will review and refine this definition for the 2010 sustainability assessment so as to be more precise and increase consistency in reporting on presentations.

6 & 7. Making a positive difference

As reflected in SSG’s mission, one of SSG’s raison d’être is to have a positive impact on the world through the work it accomplishes, and the relationships that it builds. Accordingly, in 2009, 80% of SSG clients, 100% of contractors and partners, and 100% of worker members agreed with the statement “SSG is making a positive difference”.

What our partners and contractors say about working with SSG:

*“I often question how my work really makes a difference compared to the global situation. We need to work more on changing people’s behaviour.”*

*“Can’t wait for more!”*

*“Lindsay Cole offers strong leadership and creates trust in a working relationship. Good work.”*

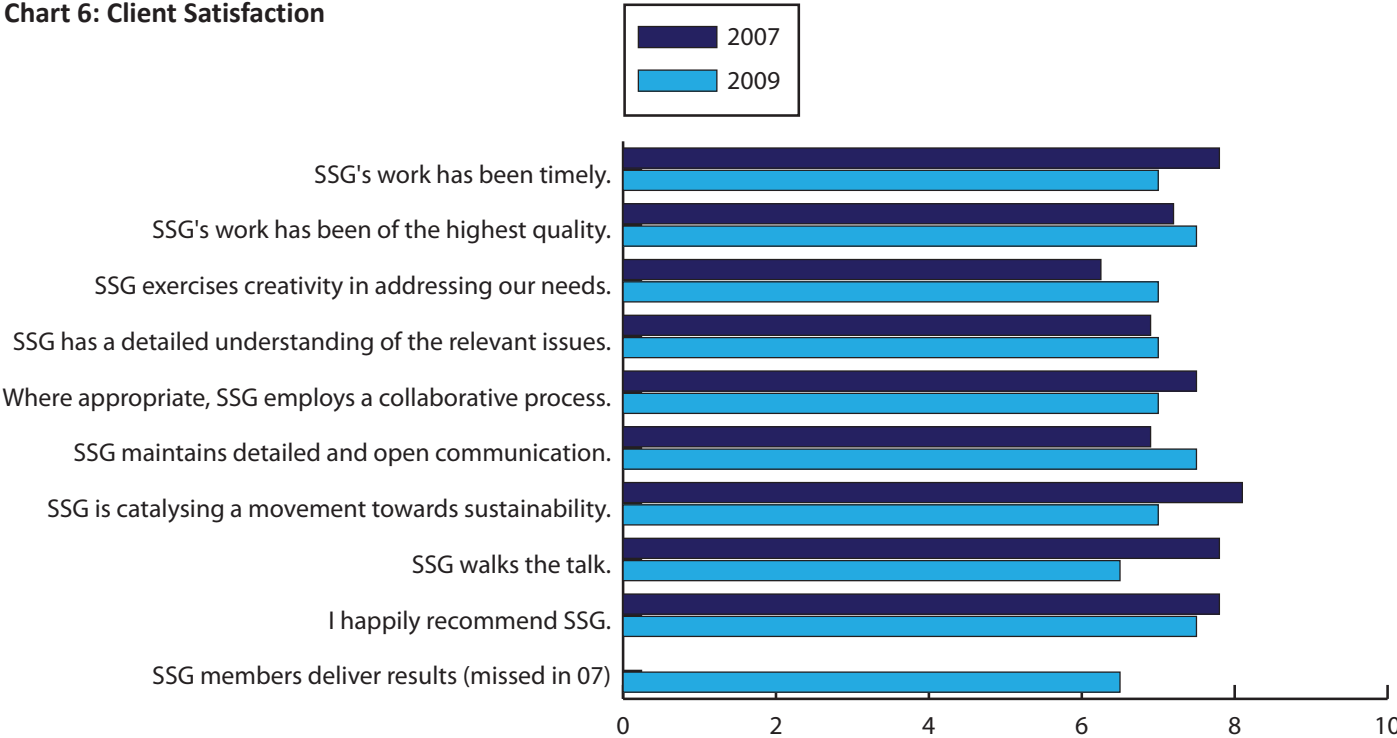
8. SSG client, partner and contractor satisfaction

In order to obtain a comparable satisfaction rate for SSG clients, partners and contractors, individuals representing their respective organisation are asked to rate several statements. The responses obtained were converted into an index ranked from 1 to 10, with 1 being poor and 10 being excellent. The client satisfaction rate was 7.05 while the contractor and partner satisfaction rate was 7.95. However, the 2009 results cannot be compared directly to 2007 results since clients, partners and contractors were previously surveyed as one group.

2009 is the first year for which SSG surveyed clients separately from partners and contractors. This was done to obtain a perspective more specific to the surveyed group, consequently allowing for more focus in developing a strategy to respond to the feedback obtained and ultimately improve, in a targeted approach, SSG’s performance.

Partners and contractors assigned the lowest scores

Chart 6: Client Satisfaction



to timeliness and maintaining detailed and open communication. The highest scores were obtained for SSG members employing a collaborative process, SSG members having a detailed understanding of the relevant issues, and partners and contractors happily recommending SSG.

Clients assigned the lowest scores to SSG “walking the talk” and SSG members delivering results. Highest scores were obtained for clients happily recommending SSG, maintaining detailed and open communication, and SSG’s work being of the highest quality.

#### 9. Percentage of clients in assessment year that have rehired or engaged SSG on another project

The number of clients that rehired or engaged SSG on another project decreased to 16% in 2009. This is largely due to a considerable increase in the total number of projects and to SSG’s new strategic directions.

#### Discussion and analysis

As a way to improve the satisfaction rate of clients, partners, and contractors, and in order to increase the quality and amount of feedback, SSG plans to integrate

in-person wrap-up meetings to the project management process. SSG will also formalize its surveying process by consistently asking clients, partners, and contractors to fill in an evaluation form upon the completion of a project or contract.

SSG aims to improve client satisfaction by employing better management practices, focusing on establishing and consistently meeting clear timeliness, and improving communications.

SSG will also assess its donation strategy and adjust the donation allocation process so as to facilitate it’s undertaking for worker members. Finally, SSG will review and streamline its definition of what constitutes a presentation so as to track this indicator more accurately and consistently.

#### What our clients say about SSG:

*“Positive, pro-active, creative and intelligent team.”*

*“It has been a pleasure working with SSG.”*



## Section Two: Toward healthy workplace, healthy lives

**Chart 7: Section Two Indicators**

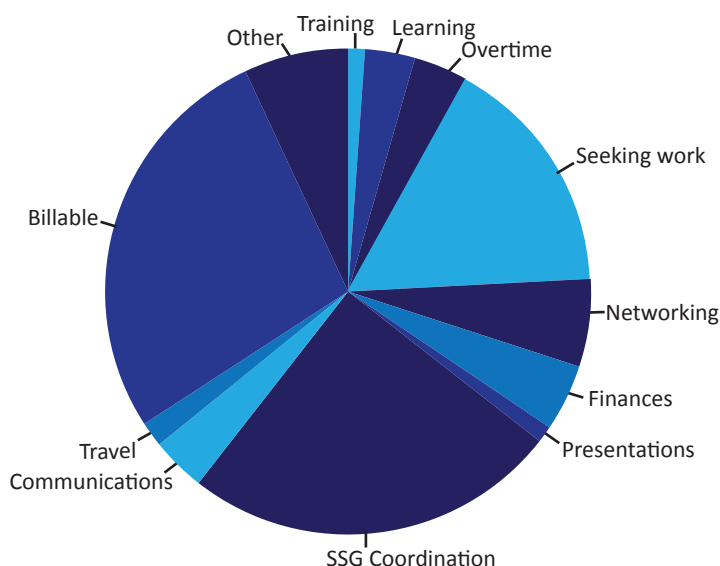
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
10. Percentage of hours to: training, Learning, Advocacy, Overtime(over 40 hours per week), Volunteering	-	1.4%;	0.8%;	3.5%;	1.3%;
	-	7.4%;	7.7%;	5.2%;	3.4%;
	-	-	0.8%;	0.3%;	0%;
	-	-	2.7%;	2.4%;	4.0%;
	-	-	0%	0.2%	1.3%
11. Work-personal life balance, on a scale of 1(poor) to 10(excellent)	55%	73.3%	5	6.7	6
12. Overall worker happiness, on a scale of 1(poor) to 10(excellent)	-	79.2%	6.5	7.9	8.2
13. Percent of workers with extended health benefits	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Providing meaningful and stable employment is key to members of a workers' co-operative. As such, SSG's primary purpose is to not only meet the common needs of its members, but to actively contribute to their happiness and sense of balance in relation to their work. The figures specific to section two are discussed below.

### 10. Percentage of hours to training, learning, advocacy, overtime (defined as time over 40 hours in a week), and volunteering

Chart 8 illustrates the distribution of worked hours in 2009. 28% of hours worked in 2009 were billable hours and 72% were non-billable hours. Therefore, billable hours continued to decrease from 43% in 2007 and 35% in 2008. This trend can be explained by a few factors: first, more associate members are taking on billable hours, resulting in a relative increase in non-billable hours for worker members. Second, SSG is intentionally working towards initiating new projects, resulting in more work hours that fall under the "non-billable" category.

**Chart 8: Distribution of Hours**



### The Vancouver Hub, by Jeremy Murphy:

I have been spearheading an exciting effort to establish a co-working space in Vancouver - temporarily dubbed the Vancouver Hub. The Hub will be a collective workspace for small NGOs, business, and individual and self-employed workers. Here, they can share business machines and have a place to work away from home (or the office!). But the Hub is much more than this.

The rationale for creating such a space stems from a changing worker demographic and new societal challenges that are not being solved by people working in regimented silos like those often found in corporations and governments. New ways of working are emerging. Mobility is increasing. Entrepreneurship is rising. Work is becoming more flexible. Self-employment is growing. The desire to pursue meaningful work is rapidly expanding. The resultant cross-cutting ideas and efforts evolving from unsuspected, dynamic collaborations are the trim tabs that will create significant solutions to our greatest issues.

The Hub will be a place that bridges the gap between ideas and their realization - an innovation lab. Operating as a think and do tank, it will be designed to encourage creative thought and relationships between people, organizations, projects and ideas that wouldn't necessarily happen in other environments. The Hub has had two public visioning events. A dedicated team of 15 volunteers have kept the momentum up on various tasks. A feasibility study was launched in March 2010 with funding from Vancity Credit Union. It is hoped that the physical designs, operational preferences, preferred locations, accepted business model, and initial tenants will all coalesce over the summer of 2010 to establish an inclusive, functional and social space rooted in sustainability, flexibility and dynamic balance - a champion in co-operative working environments, offering creative yet professional spaces to meet, work, play, perform, build, listen, recharge and generate socially innovative outputs!

Chart 9: Work-Personal Life Balance



**Engaging with the co-operative sector, by member Yuill Herbert:**

A major focus this year has been engaging the co-operative sector in sustainability. SSG has been working for some time with the Canadian Cooperative Association (CCA) on a pro-bono basis to develop a policy on environmental sustainability.

Last year I was elected as a board member of the Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation (CWCF) and this spring I was elected a board member of the Canadian Co-operative Association as a representative of CWCF; CCA is a major national organisation representing 9 million co-op members and 2000 co-operative organisations.

This year I helped establish a sector committee on environmental sustainability and we are working on initiatives related to energy efficiency financing, climate change advocacy and engagement of the members around sustainability.

Percentage of hours dedicated to training decreased by half: from 3.5% in 2008 to 1.3% in 2009. Hours dedicated to learning also decreased from 5.2% in 2008 to 3.4% in 2009. No hours were reported dedicated to advocacy. Overtime hours increased by nearly two thirds in 2009<sup>1</sup>, up to 4% of total hours worked. On the other hand, volunteering increased from 0.2% in 2008 to 1.3% in 2009, demonstrating that SSG’s approach of allowing flexible work schedules to encourage volunteering is starting to bear fruit.

It is also worth mentioning the significant increase for the work category “SSG Coordination”, which rose from 15% of

total hours in 2008 to 26% in 2009. In order to address this increase and better track the aggregate work hours, SSG will revise its hour categories to more comprehensively define the scope of internal & billable work categories.

**11. Work-personal life balance**

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being poor and 10 being perfect, SSG worker members rated their overall work-life balance at 6, a decrease from 6.7 in 2008. Chart 9 compares the 2007, 2008 and 2009 results for each question in the index. In 2009 all worker members agreed that “SSG has a sincere interest in the well being of its employees”. 4 out of 5 worker members agree that they feel they have “sufficient involvement in decisions that involve them”, while 1 worker member disagreed with that statement. 3 worker members agreed that they “can deal with urgent family or personal issues without hassles or reprisals”, while 1 worker member indicated neutrality towards that statement and another strongly disagreed.

SSG recognises the need to improve the work-life balance of its worker members. The results obtained from this survey will be further discussed and analysed at the next SSG retreat so as to develop a strategy to increase work-life balance.

1,937

Non-billable worker member hours

88.5

Hours dedicated to training

232

Hours dedicated to learning

0

Hours dedicated to advocacy

266.5

Hours of overtime work

92

Hours dedicated to volunteering

<sup>1</sup> Overtime hours per week were derived from total monthly hours, as opposed to being tracked, as in 2008, on a week by week basis. This is largely due to SSG’s transition to a new time management system.



**Chart 10: Overall Worker Happiness**



## 12. Overall worker happiness

On a scale of 1 to 10, SSG worker member overall happiness rose slightly for the third year in a row, from 7.9 in 2008 to 8.2 in 2009. Chart 10 illustrates the 2007, 2008 and 2009 scores obtained for each question. Overall, compared to 2008, more SSG worker members felt “empowered to take initiative”, “supported in dealing with new challenges”, and “a strong sense of collaboration amongst SSG members”. On the other hand, fewer SSG worker members felt that “their work is in line with their values” and that they “are satisfied with their individual capacity to communicate effectively with colleagues.”

## 13. Health care benefits

SSG members have yet to be covered by extended health care benefits. However, the interim health insurance policy that came into effect in 2007 is still in effect and the monthly contribution of \$25 to the SSG member personal well-being fund has been increased to \$30 dollars per month as of march 1st 2009. SSG researched health care plans in the fall of 2009 and committed to enrol all members consistently working more than 20 hours per week in a plan in the beginning of 2010.

## Discussion and analysis

In its fifth year of operation, SSG continues to evolve: by streamlining and strengthening the administrative aspects of its internal operations, the worker’s co-op is in a better position to track, and be responsive to, the needs of its worker members. The results from the worker member surveys indicate that while SSG worker members are increasingly happy with the work they do, they also continue to struggle in attaining their desired work-life balance. As mentioned above, the SSG retreat will provide a dedicated space to further explore this trend and to discuss potential strategies to improve work-life balance.

## The Greenest City Action Team, by Lindsay Cole:

In 2009, Lindsay was invited by the Mayor of Vancouver to participate on the 18 member Greenest City Action Team (GCAT), alongside fellow members including David Suzuki, Mike Harcourt, CheeYing Ho, and David Boyd. The mandate of this group was to come up with a set of 1-year quick starts, as well as a 10 year action plan, that would guide Vancouver in becoming the greenest city in the world by 2020.

The work was fast paced, supported by both elected officials and staff, and quickly began to transform the way that the city did it’s work.

Vision 2020: A Bright Green Future, the 10 year action plan, was released in October 2009 and includes a set of the most comprehensive and ambitious targets ever set by a city:

1. Create 20,000 new green jobs;
2. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions 33% from 2007 levels;
3. Build all new construction to be carbon neutral and improve efficiency of existing buildings by 20%;
4. Make the majority of trips (over 50%) on foot, bicycle and public transit;
5. Reduce per capita solid waste going to landfill or incinerator by 40%;
6. Plan for every person to live within a five-minute walk of a park, beach, greenway, or other natural space; plant 150,000 additional trees in the city;
7. Reduce per capita ecological footprint by 33%;
8. Always meet or beat the strongest of B.C., Canada, and World Health Organisation drinking water standards; reduce per capita water consumption by 33%;
9. Always meet or beat World Health Organisation air quality guidelines (stronger than Canadian guidelines), and,
10. Reduce carbon footprint of our food by 33%.

## Section Three: Toward diversity, equity and justice

Chart 11: Section Three Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
14. Ratio of female to male to other active worker members	3:2:0	2:2:0	3:2:0	Not surveyed	3:2:0
15. Percent of worker members self-identifying as a minority	0%	0%	0%	Not surveyed	0%
16. Ratio of female to male to other active associate members	0	1:2:0	2:4:0	Not surveyed	5:4:0
17. Percent of active associate members self-identifying as a minority	0%	0%	0%	Not surveyed	0%

Diversity and equality are key principles in a holistic sustainability approach. In SSG's work and in SSG's workplace the representation, diversity and equity of gender and minority groups is an important and ongoing consideration. The data specific to this section are discussed below.

### 14. & 15. Active worker members

In 2009, there were 3 female and 2 male active worker members. This is the same ratio as in 2007 when it was last measured. No active worker members self-identified as being part of a minority group (i.e. relating to ethnicity, disability, etc.).

### 16. & 17. Associate members

Out of 12 active associate members, 9 completed the

associate member survey. Of these, there were 5 female and 4 male active worker members. None of the respondents self-identified as being part of a minority group.

### Discussion and analysis

Despite the addition of 1 new worker members to the SSG team and another associate member being on worker member track, no SSG members self-identify as belonging to a minority group. Similarly, even though the number of active associate members has increased from 5 in 2008 to 12 in 2009, none of the 9 respondents self-identified as being part of a minority group. Increasing diversity within the organisation remains a desirable and important goal for SSG.



## Section Four: Toward ecological sustainability

**Chart 12: Section Four Indicators**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
18. Total square metres of new LEED and green/sustainable building consulting projects in 2007	558,810 (total 05-06)		14,010	32,620	11,000
19. Total kilometres travelled, by mode	14,413	67,389	83,675	66,423	73,077
20. GHG travel emissions per FTE, in kilograms (kgs) of carbon equivalents (CO <sub>2</sub> e)	2,927	6,322	3,703	3,296	3,693
21. Percentage of GHG emissions that have been carbon taxed	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
22. Individual member ecological footprint	See chart 15				

SSG seeks to be aware of and work towards reducing its ecological footprint. The figures specific to section four are discussed below.

### 18. Total square metres of new LEED and green/sustainable building consulting projects

In order to provide an indicator of SSG's impact on the building industry nationwide, SSG reports on the total square metres of new Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and other green/sustainable building consulting projects that are initiated each year. While this measure had nearly doubled from 2007 to 2008, it decreased from 32,620 square metres in 2008 to 11,000 square metres in 2009, a reduction of 66.3%. As SSG continues to diversify its service offerings, green and sustainable building remains a core service offered, but it is becoming more balanced with planning and assessment services.

#### Thermalwise.ca, by Yuill Herbert

SSG was contracted by the Canada Green Building Council to revise the "US LEED for Homes" standard for the Canadian context. In this process, SSG developed a relationship with Eco-habitation (situated in Montreal, QC) to offer LEED Canada for Homes certification services in the Maritime Provinces. Since this was a key focus area of SSG, we worked with Jordan MacDonald and Dale Murphy to incorporate a multi-stakeholder co-operative called Thermalwise Co-operative. Dale and Jordan had previous experience with energy modelling in the residential sector and are experienced energy-modellers. In 2009, Thermalwise was awarded a license to provide "LEED Canada for Homes" certification services in the Maritimes and a number of LEED for Homes projects are underway.

#### SSG and the Vancouver Convention Centre, by member Lindsay Cole

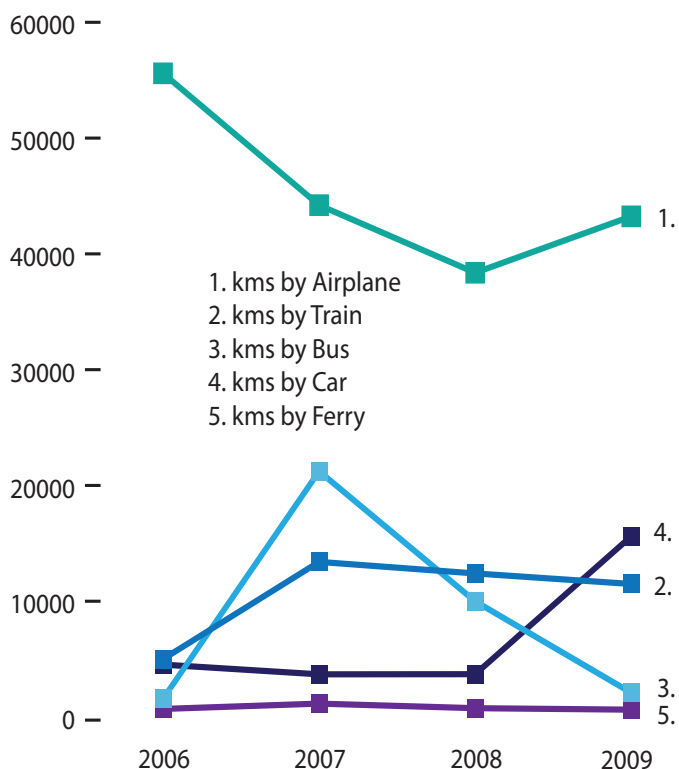
SSG served as the sustainability and LEED consultant for the Vancouver Convention Centre from 2005-2010. In February 2010, VCC was awarded a LEED Platinum certification by the Canada Green Building Council. It is the first convention centre in North America to earn this top designation, and one of just ten buildings in Canada to achieve this credential. VCC includes more than 400,000 square feet of indoor space.

Highlights of the project include:

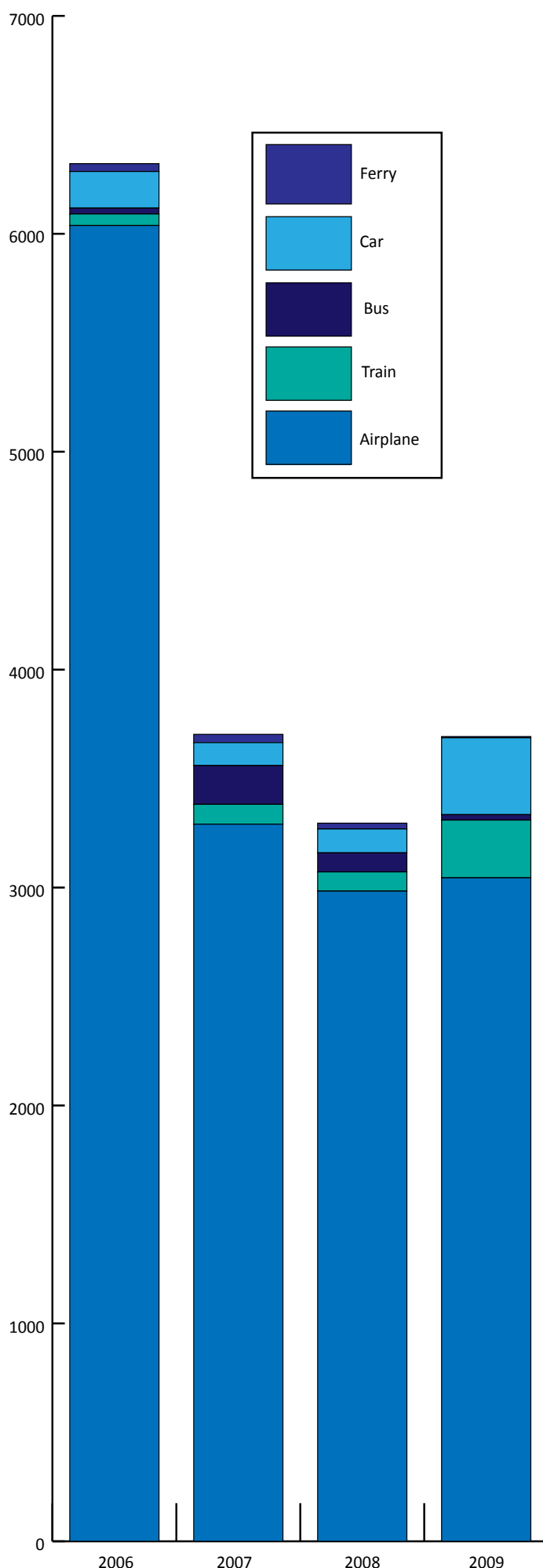
- A 6.5 acre living roof, one of the largest of its kind in the world, and home to 20 varieties of plant life that are native or adapted to the Vancouver climate. The roof is pollinated by bee hives, and was designed to provide nesting grounds for local birds;
- A marine habitat skirt is integrated into the buildings foundation, and provides new habitat for marine flora and fauna;
- A seawater heating and cooling system that makes the convention centre one of the most energy efficient buildings in Vancouver, and,
- On-site treatment of grey and black water for reuse in roof irrigation and toilet flushing.

SSG has worked on more than 40 green and sustainable building projects, including the first LEED certified building in Canada. We have been the LEED consultants on three Platinum-level projects including VCC, the Vento in Calgary and the Currents in Ottawa. We have supported the design and construction of two other Platinum projects in Canada including Dockside Green in Victoria, and the Water Centre in Calgary.

**Chart 13: Travel by Distance (kms)**



**Chart 14: Travel GHG Emissions (kgs of CO2 Equivalency)**



#### 19. Total kilometres travelled by mode of transportation

SSG worker members are very conscious of the environmental consequences of their travel and transportation choices. Consequently, ongoing efforts are made to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by minimizing travel and by favouring low carbon alternatives whenever travel is required. Although total kilometres travelled decreased between 2007 and 2008 it increased in 2009 reaching an SSG record high of 73,078 kilometres. The most significant increase came from car travel, which more than quadrupled between 2008 and 2009. Total kilometres travelled by train decreased slightly, while all other categories (airplane, bus and ferry) increased. Chart 13 illustrates SSG's travelling patterns for 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

#### 20. Greenhouse gas emissions by mode of transportation

A total of 15.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents were emitted in 2009, an increase from 12.5 tonnes in 2008. Correspondingly, emissions per full-time equivalent (FTE) increased from 3.3 tonnes in 2008 to 3.7 tonnes in 2009.

#### 21. Percentage of GHG emissions that have been carbon taxed

SSG has yet to develop a strategy to internally tax carbon equivalent emissions and has therefore not taxed any greenhouse gas emissions in 2009.



### Taxing versus offsetting GHG emissions

The idea of 'self-taxing' emissions came from a considered rejection of the idea of offsetting, which SSG realised was not really the best way of improving its environmental performance. Instead, SSG hopes to eventually 'tax' GHG emissions, thus internalising the costs associated with GHG emissions into the cooperative's decision making, and then using the money generated by the tax on donations that are relevant to climate change, such as adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

### 22. Worker members' Ecological Footprints

For the third year in a row, worker members calculated and reported their ecological footprint related to their individual lifestyles and activities (excluding the ecological demands associated with work). The results can only be compared to

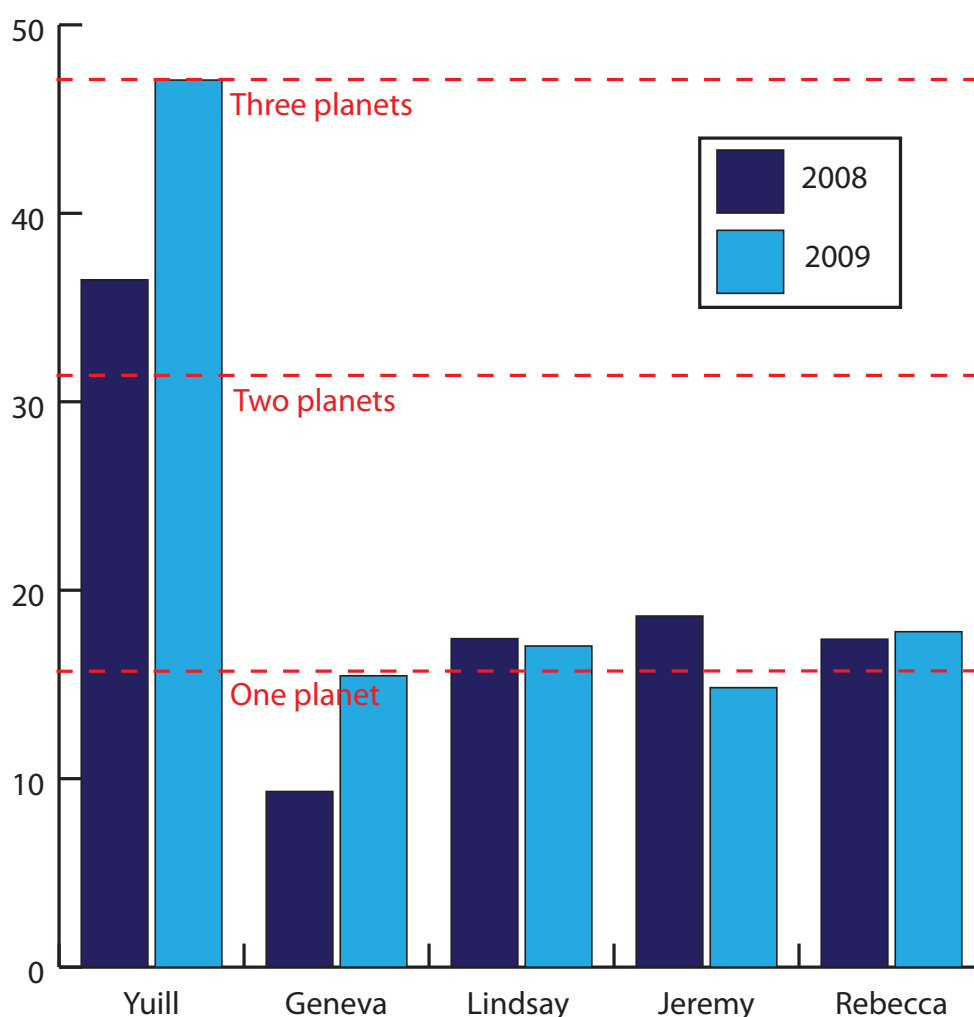
2008 since a different calculator was used in 2007. For both 2008 and 2009, worker members used an on-line calculator available from Redefining Progress<sup>1</sup> at [www.myfootprint.org](http://www.myfootprint.org). Overall, three of the worker members increased their ecological footprint and two reduced it.

### Discussion and analysis

SSG is a growing organisation: its services are becoming more diverse and are gradually balancing out the overall hours dedicated to LEED and green building work. As the number of clients and projects has increased so has the necessity to travel. This trend is reflected both in the increase in total kilometres travelled and in greenhouse gas emissions generated by this work-related travel. Ongoing efforts are made by worker members to use, as often as possible, teleconferencing technologies and employ less carbon intensive means of transport.

<sup>1</sup> Redefining Progress is a leading public policy think tank dedicated to smart economics. See <http://www.rprogress.org/index.htm> for more information.

Chart 15: Ecological Footprints (Hectares)



## Conclusion

SSG's fifth year of operation can be characterized by investing in building networks and partnerships with other organisations, individuals, potential clients, and other co-operatives. It has also included efforts to stabilize and formalize the management and organisation of the co-operative, including improvements in communication tools and technologies and better physical office environments.

By pointing out challenges, opportunities and successes, this assessment process continues to inform and guide the development of SSG. For 2010, SSG worker members are committed to work towards implementing the following strategic directions.

- Continue working towards developing and streamlining administrative processes, including (but not limited to): the yearly sustainability assessment; the new payroll and hours management system, and other tools to assess client and partner satisfaction, such as in-person wrap-up meetings and more targeted evaluations;
  - Further develop SSG's marketing and communication strategy;
  - Demonstrate leadership by initiating more ground-breaking projects;
  - Manage SSG's operating budget more strategically;
  - Build on successes by applying lessons learned and models developed to other similar contexts;
  - Explore ways to improve worker-members' work-life balance at the next SSG retreat, and,
  - Enrol all eligible SSG members in a health care plan.
- Thank you for reading SSG's 2009 sustainability assessment. Please share any questions, comments or feedback by writing to us at [info@sustainabilitysolutions.ca](mailto:info@sustainabilitysolutions.ca).



## Appendix I: Indicator Data Overview

Section One Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
1. Percent & dollar amount of revenue to community support fund	10%	10%	11%, \$28,335	5%, \$11,100	1.4%, \$3,828
2. Number of projects engaging more than one worker-member (measured by percent in 06-07)	0	74%	69%	15	17 (out of 38)
3. Percent of collaborative projects with other individuals/firms	13%	12%	31%	12%	45%
4. Number of projects initiated	-	1	1	0	6
5. Number of SSG presentations per full-time equivalent	0.20	2.60	3.00	3.95	1.92
6. Percent of worker members responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference	100%	100%	88%	Not surveyed	100%
7. Percent of clients/partners responding that SSG's work is making a positive difference	70%	100%	100%	Not surveyed	Clients: 80% Partners: 100%
8. Average rate of client and partner satisfaction (2007-09, out of 10)	-	82%	7.4	Not surveyed	Clients: 7.05 Partners: 7.95
9. Percent of clients that rehired or engaged SSG on another project	-	-	22%	23% (6 projects)	18% (7 projects)
Section Two Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
10. Percentage of hours to: training, learning, advocacy, overtime(over 40 hours per week), volunteering	- - - - -	1.4%; 7.4%; - - -	0.8%; 7.7%; 0.8%; 2.7%; 0%	3.5%; 5.2%; 0.3%; 2.4%; 0.2%	1.28%; 3.37%; 0%; 4.02%; 1.34%
11. Work-personal life balance, on a scale of 1(poor) to 10(excellent)	55%	73.3%	5	6.7	6
12. Overall worker happiness, on a scale of 1(poor) to 10(excellent)	-	79.2%	6.5	7.9	8.2
13. Percent of workers with extended health benefits	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Section Three Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
14. Ratio of female to male to other active worker members	3:2:0	2:2:0	3:2:0	Not surveyed	3:2:0
15. Percent of worker members self-identifying as a minority	0%	0%	0%	Not surveyed	0%
16. Ratio of female to male to other active associate members	0	1:2:0	2:4:0	Not surveyed	5:4:0
17. Percent of active associate members self-identifying as a minority	0%	0%	0%	Not surveyed	0%
Section Four Indicators	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
18. Total square metres of new LEED and green/sustainable building consulting projects in 2007	558,810 (total 05-06)		14,010	32,620	11,000

<i>continued...</i>	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
19. Total kilometres travelled, by mode				(missing Melissa)	
<i>Train</i>		5,001	13,398	12,400	11,490
<i>Airplane</i>		55,594	44,208	38,369	43,242
<i>Bus</i>		1,569	21,225	9,992	2,096
<i>Car</i>		4,526	3,687	3,699	15,615
<i>Ferry</i>		698	1,157	763	635
<i>TOTAL</i>	14,413	67,389	83,675	66,423	73,077
20. GHG travel emissions per FTE, in kilograms (kgs) of carbon equivalents (CO <sub>2</sub> e)				(missing Melissa)	
<i>Train</i>		53	91	88	265
<i>Airplane</i>		6,038	3,291	2,984	3,045
<i>Bus</i>		27	178	87	25
<i>Car</i>		168	105	110	352
<i>Ferry</i>		36	38	27	6
<i>TOTAL</i>	9,759	17,196	14,701	12,523	15,362
<i>TOTAL per FTE</i>	2,927	6,322	3,703	3,296	3,693
21. Percentage of GHG emissions that have been carbon taxed	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
22. Individual worker member ecological footprint in global hectares (between 2007 and 2008, footprint calculators were changed)				Center for Sustainable Economy Calculator	Center for Sustainable Economy Calculator
<i>Number of hectares per person the earth can support</i>		-	1.8	15.7ha	15.7ha
<i>Melissa</i>		-	4.8	18.8	n/a
<i>Yuill</i>		-	3.5	36.5	47.1
<i>Geneva</i>		-	3.8	9.3	15.5
<i>Lindsay</i>		-	2.7	17.4	17.0
<i>Jeremy</i>		-	-	18.6	14.8
<i>Rebecca</i>		-	-	17.4	17.8
<b>Organisational Indicators</b>	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
1. Total numbers of project	7	30	36	26	38
2. Number of clients	3	19	23	24	40
3. Number of active associate members	0	3	8	5	12
Total full-time equivalents (FTE's)	0.30	2.72	3.97	3.80	4.16
<b>Financial Indicators</b>	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
1. Total revenue	\$66,410	\$203,341	\$251,275	\$276,838	\$283,976
2. Total expenses	\$58,514	\$163,185	\$238,569	\$280,769	\$270,663
3. Net income	-\$7,896	\$33,081	\$33,472	-\$3,931	\$13,313
4. Grants	\$26,225	\$45,705	\$20,766		



## Appendix II: Worker Member Profiles

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### **Geneva Guerin**

Geneva has worked in the field of sustainability for a decade. Her skills in the area include program coordination, process facilitation, assessing and reporting, research and communications. She has experience coordinating LEED green building projects, participating in and facilitation of integrated design processes and charettes, formation and coordination of multi-stakeholder groups, development and use of sustainability indicators, project coordination of multiple person teams across large geographic areas, public presentations and trainings on sustainability, and the use of multi-media (video and web) for producing resources and communicating messages. She has varied experience in course and training programme development, related to sustainability, including production of training materials. She is also a Continuing Education instructor in Montreal, where she is based.

### **Jeremy Murphy**

Jeremy is an urban planner and sustainability specialist who continues to generate cutting-edge community solutions. Creative public engagement and facilitation, Integrated Design Process delivery, LEED certification, sustainable community design and innovative policy creation are among Jeremy's greatest skills. His experience with community planning, sustainability expertise, facilitation and sustainable building design allow Jeremy to make useful contributions to any project. Jeremy combines big idea sustainability thinking with on the ground application, ensuring his projects are on target, enjoyable and effective.

### **Lindsay Cole**

Lindsay is a veteran of sustainability work in Canada and beyond. She works with organizations, builders, municipalities and institutions to engrain sustainability frameworks into their projects and organizations. She is an expert at developing sustainability indicators and is an experienced facilitator of Integrated Design Processes. Lindsay developed the Campus Sustainability Assessment Framework currently being used to assess and report on sustainability issues for over 30 Canadian university and college campuses across Canada and the US. Lindsay has played a leading or support role on over 30 LEED projects, giving her expertise in many different project types, climates, and sites.

### **Melissa Garcia Lamarca**

Melissa brings to SSG her extensive experience working in different facets of sustainability in Canada and internationally with governments, universities, non-governmental and community organizations. Her greatest skills include creating and coordinating sustainability assessments, plans, programmes and projects; facilitating participatory, multi-stakeholder processes and conducting cross-disciplinary research. Melissa effectively combines a strong and critical understanding of sustainability with on-the-ground application, and is passionate about helping urban communities and organizations embrace and embody positive change.

### **Rebecca Foon**

Rebecca is a versatile urban planner who is dedicated to integrating a holistic understanding of sustainability in growing healthy communities. She is an accomplished organizer and facilitator, sustainability management systems creator, sustainability assessment leader, and green building consultant. Her projects are diverse: from evaluating neighbourhood quality-of-life monitoring systems to consulting for the Discovery Channel urban environment program Wa\$ted to performing municipal sustainability assessments. Rebecca's creative thinking and whole systems approach ensure genuine sustainability outcomes.

### **Yuill Herbert**

Yuill is one of Canada's leading sustainability experts. He has pioneered diverse climate change, green building, lifecycle costing, greenhouse gas assessment, energy and water assessment, renewable energy, appropriate transportation, and agricultural policy projects, to name a few. Yuill helped introduce the LEED for Homes rating system in Canada and co-developed the Integrated Design Process course used throughout Canada and the US. His high calibre research publications and extensive policy contributions to all levels of government put him at the forefront of sustainability innovation. Yuill's determination to achieve real community sustainability plus his comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter ensure project innovation, integrity and success.

## Appendix III: Associate Member Profiles

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### **Aaron Foster**

Aaron is a LEED accredited professional with varied experience designing and drafting architectural projects, developing campus master plans, coordinating a wide range of professional marketing proposals and developing graphics for community and client meetings. He has conducted the LEED documentation for numerous projects. Aaron embraces a holistic view of sustainability, which he applies to all of his projects and explores with his clients.

### **Alex Fletcher**

Alex's academic training in Human Ecology is based in interdisciplinary studies, which influences his approach to addressing sustainability issues. Since graduating, Alex has divided his time between small scale organic vegetable farming and sustainability consulting. Alex has worked with SSG on the Algonquin College Sustainability Strategy project: delivering World Cafes, developing a sustainability assessment framework, and collecting data for the assessment report. Previously, Alex worked with Lester B. Pearson College to obtain funding and develop their broad based sustainability initiative, The Oikos Project, which involved developing a campus sustainability policy, establishing a greenhouse on campus to supply fresh vegetables to their cafeteria, and advancing other initiatives directed at energy and water conservation. Alex wants to combine his farming interest and sustainability work to address farmland access and affordability, food security, and community health.

### **Ann Dale**

Ann is a professor with the School of Environment and Sustainability, Faculty of Social and Applied Sciences at Royal Roads University and holds a Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Community Development ([www.crcresearch.org](http://www.crcresearch.org)). She chairs the Canadian Consortium for Sustainable Development Research (CCSDR), a consortium of all the heads of research institutes across Canada, and is active in the Canadian environmental movement. Dr. Dale chairs an organisation she created, the National Environmental Treasure (the NET) and is the Executive Coordinator, Research and Public Policy for the Canadian Biodiversity Institute. From 1998-2000, she led an energy efficiency program on behalf of the Association of Canadian

Community Colleges. Previously, she was an Executive with the Federal Government, and was one of the two public servants behind the creation of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE). Dr. Dale is a Trudeau Fellow ([www.trudeaufoundation.ca](http://www.trudeaufoundation.ca)), as well as a Fellow of the World Academy of Art and Sciences. She is also a Board member of the World Fisheries Trust, and the Advisory Committee to the Montreal Institute for the Environment. Dr. Dale holds degrees in psychology and public administration from Carleton University, and a doctorate in Natural Resources Sciences, McGill University. Current research areas include governance, social capital and sustainable community development, biodiversity policy, and deliberative electronic dialogues ([www.e-dialogues.ca](http://www.e-dialogues.ca)). She is a recipient of the 2001 Policy Research Initiative Award for Outstanding Contribution to Public Policy for her book, *At the edge: sustainable development in the 21st century*.

### **Dale Hildebrand**

Dale is a strategic planner and sustainability specialist with extensive experience providing leadership and innovation to nonprofit organisations. Within the field of ecological sustainability, Dale's strengths include strategic planning and evaluation, organisational change, policy development/analysis and climate change education. Dale specializes in designing and directing programs that result in organisational and social change at the local, national and international level in the areas of ecology, human rights and sustainable energy.

### **Jens Münch**

Jens has a background in journalism and photography but transferred to the field of IT in 2007. Since then he has worked as a consultant on online communications, internal and external, to a number of organisations. One of them was SSG where he did a large project to restructure the platform in 2008. He has also worked with SSG on smaller research assignments where his knowledge of Germany and the Nordic countries proved useful in gaining access to information. Since 2008 he works for Google but continues to partner with SSG when his services are needed. His specialities are social media, online communications & advertising, website analysis and IT strategy.

**Kim Hardy**

Kim Hardy is a Community Economic Development (CED) Practitioner with extensive experience in rural and sustainability planning in BC and the Yukon. Kim is an advocate for community-based approaches to local economic development and takes a participatory and appreciative approach to facilitating planning and projects. Kim has ten years experience working with First Nations, development corporations and rural communities on asset based planning and creating solutions for rural and remote economic development challenges. Originally from Vancouver Island, Kim spent four years living and working in the Yukon Territory. Here, she had the opportunity to work with many different communities in capacity building, social enterprise/community-business development and local economic diversification planning processes. As a CED Planner with Ecotrust Canada for over a year, Kim had the opportunity to work closely with First Nations and communities in developing conservation-based economies along the Pacific coast of BC. Kim studied psychology at the University of Victoria and then completed the Community Economic Development certificate at Simon Fraser University. From here, Kim completed her Masters in Business Administration in Community Economic Development at Cape Breton University. Kim has been an active member of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network participating on the BC/Yukon Council and is currently contributing to Genuine Progress Indicators Pacific as a Board Member.

**Nicole Chaland**

Nicole is the BC/Yukon Coordinator for Canadian Community Economic Development Network and Program Director for Simon Fraser University Certificate Program for Community Economic Development (CED) Professionals. Nicole also teaches CED Approaches to Affordable Housing for this certificate program. She is a co-op activist and educator who worked in the Philippines learning co-operative development and community building from her peers in the social economy in the Philippines. Upon returning to Canada, she continued to work in the co-operative sector as a researcher at the BC Institute for Co-operative Studies. She is a founding member of Roofs and Roots Housing Co-op which converts private rental buildings to co-operative ownership and green buildings over time. For the last five years Nicole has worked with the Canadian Community

Economic Development Network (CCEDNet), initially as the research coordinator who coordinated the first national survey of CED organisations across Canada. She regularly gives workshops on a wide range of CED and housing related topics, and also taught a CED course in Brazil in 2002. Nicole coauthored CED in Canada: Review of Definitions and Profile of Practice in Community Economic Development: Building for Social Change. She has a deep commitment to supporting solutions that come from communities themselves.

**Spencer Mann**

Spencer works with SSG on contracts related to integrated design process (IDP) facilitation, co-op development, participatory planning and decision-making, and conflict resolution. He has given numerous trainings on IDP facilitation to groups including the Canada Green Building Council, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the Montreal Solar Decathlon, and McGill and Concordia University. Since 2003, Spencer has designed, developed, and coordinated the Integrated Sustainable Design Process for the Montreal Urban Community Sustainment (MUCS) Project; an action-research IDP effort which has involved hundreds of academics, community stakeholders, and design professionals. Over the last year Spencer designed and managed the design process of two teams in the CMHC Net Zero Energy Healthy Housing initiative and co-taught a McGill architecture seminar on Community-Based Integrated Sustainable Design Processes. After applying the IDP approach to a variety of planning and design opportunities in the community, academic, and professional sectors, Spencer brings knowledge, skill sets, and practical experience specific to the intersection of community facilitation and integrated sustainable design processes.

**Virginie Lavallée-Picard**

Virginie has worked on both sustainability in food systems and educational institutions. Virginie has been involved with SSG on the Algonquin College Sustainability Strategy project which included a Best Practices Report, stakeholder engagement events and a baseline Sustainability Assessment. She has also worked with Lester B. Pearson College to obtain funding and develop their broad based sustainability initiative, The Oikos Project. Her position as project coordinator involved developing a campus sustainability policy, establishing a greenhouse on campus to supply fresh vegetables to their cafeteria, and

advancing other initiatives directed at energy and water conservation. Throughout her studies in Human Ecology, Virginie focused on food systems, climate policy, and social justice. Her interests also include the development of innovative strategies to make healthy, locally produced food accessible to our communities. Virginie's approach is deeply rooted in her interdisciplinary background.

### **Will McDowall**

Will is currently Research Associate with the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE), based in Ottawa. At the NRTEE, Will is developing recommendations on carbon pricing policy for Canada and is developing a research program on the economics of climate change. Until 2008, Will was the Research Manager at the Community Energy Association, where he advised local governments on climate and energy policy, and a Policy Associate of Centre for Health and Environment Research at UBC. Before coming to Canada from the UK, Will was a Research Fellow at the Policy Studies Institute in London. His research areas have energy policy, innovation and long term technological change, and local government climate change policies.



