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LE CENTRE CANADIEN POUR L'ÉDUCATION EN ENVIRONNEMENT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **New Environmental Program Targets Dual Challenges in Canada's Fastest Growing Sector**

October 18, 2006, Victoria – The challenges of satisfying the growing labour shortage in the fast-growing environment industry and integrating skilled immigrants into Canada are a bit less daunting now that the Canadian Centre for Environmental Education has launched a distance-based certificate program.

The program is the first offering of the new centre, formed March 30 as a partnership between ECO Canada (Environmental Careers Organization) and Royal Roads University. The federally funded initiative aims to offer education, training, professional development, and accreditation for members of the environmental professions—whose sector is the fastest growing in Canada.

The certificate program aims to address common concerns voiced by newcomers—namely, that their previous work experience and academic designations are not properly recognized in Canada. To account for this, up to 50% of credits required to complete the certificate are potentially awarded based on Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR). Through Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR), a Canadian parchment can be earned by immigrants, helping to facilitate their entry into the Canadian environmental workforce.

“All courses in the program are distance-based, allowing potential immigrants to complete the certificate in their home country,” said Grant Trump, President and CEO of ECO Canada. “A Canadian academic credential will help these immigrants find employment in Canada.”

The certificate program is also open to Canadians and landed immigrants in Canada who wish to upgrade their credentials or enter the environmental sector. The program offers courses from post-secondary institutions across Canada and the centre is seeking to have it recognized internationally.

“With this format, we take aim at a lot of targets,” said Dr. Steve Grundy, acting vice-president, academic for Royal Roads University. “We maximize access to education for working professionals and convenience to employers. We improve the national and international mobility of our environmental professionals and at the same time position Canada as an attractive destination for immigrants in this sector. It's a winning model we hope to apply to other sectors.”



Forty-four learners are enrolled in the first two cohorts of the environmental certificate program, which got underway in mid-September and this week. As many as 200 are expected to enrol in the program in 2007.

For more information, see [www.ccee.ca](http://www.ccee.ca)

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### **Background**

ECO Canada is a national, not-for-profit organization that helps to strengthen the Canadian economy by providing a critical link between industry's need for qualified environmental practitioners and those looking for career and skills development in the environment professions.

Based in Victoria B.C., Royal Roads University is designed to meet the needs of learners and the requirements of the global marketplace by offering a combination of highly focused professional programs and an accessible learning model that specializes in innovative, Internet-based program delivery.

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