

CCME

Canadian Council  
of Ministers  
of the Environment  
Le Conseil canadien  
des ministres  
de l'environnement

# A Protocol for the Derivation of Environmental and Human Health Soil Quality Guidelines

(Excerpt)

## *SECTION 3*

### USE OF CANADIAN SOIL QUALITY GUIDELINES

The soil quality guidelines derived using the protocol replace the Interim Environmental Quality Criteria for Contaminated Sites (CCME, 1991a), where applicable. *Soil quality guidelines represent "clean down to levels" at contaminated sites and not "pollute up to levels" for less contaminated sites. They are not intended to be used to manage pristine sites.*

The Canadian Soil Quality Guidelines are intended to be used for assessing in-place contaminants in soil. They are not intended for evaluating the quality of soil amendments (e.g., compost, synthetic fertilizers, manures, etc.) and are not directly comparable to quality criteria for these types of materials. It is also not recommended that the soil quality guidelines be used for waste management of fill materials (e.g., slags, foundry sands, mining wastes, etc.). Use of the soil quality guidelines for anything other than their intended purpose should only be done with great care and an understanding of the guideline development process and its relevance to the proposed use. Jurisdictions should consider the relationship of these guidelines to soil concentrations that may result from long-term applications of materials to the soil. The soil quality guidelines must also not be considered as permission to contaminate up to a certain level.