

Welcome to *Eco-Connections*, a weekly e-bulletin to update our members and supporters on various environmental actions, events, announcements, resources, funding, awards and job opportunities, and to provide a venue for communication across the province. Sent by the Nova Scotia Environmental Network (NSEN). To add an item to the next e-bulletin or to unsubscribe, please email nSEN@cen-rce.org

** Today is the deadline to submit a nomination for the NSEN Eco-Hero Awards. More info on our web site. Be sure to CONNECT with NSEN.ca and add your event, job, announcement and action alert directly to our web site.*

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I. Resources

- I1. Important Environment Canada FAQ on climate change (HTTP AND PDF)

A. Actions

A1.

Watch and read "Time for a green industrial revolution now!"

By UK Economist Sir Nicholas Stern and author of "The Economics of Climate Change"

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20126926.600-comment-time-for-a-green-industrial-revolution.html>

A2.

Check out the federal Commissioner of Environment & Sustainable Development's latest report

http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_cesd_200812_e_31872.html

B. Environmental Events and Capacity-Building Workshops

B1.

"Fishermen and Scientists Research Society 16th Annual Conference" Truro, February 20-21, 2009

More details here: <http://www.fsrs.ns.ca>

B2.

4th National Stewardship & Conservation Conference in Calgary, July 2009

4th National Stewardship & Conservation Conference 'Strengthening Stewardship - Investing at Every Step' - Taking place in Calgary next July, the 4th Stewardship and Conservation is the national conference where Canada's stewards can meet to discuss emerging issues and solutions for strengthening stewardship across the country. The program will open with a summary of the State of Stewardship in Canada report, which will review adopted policy directions, conservation tools, strategies of various communities of stewardship interest including governments, resource industries, and NGOs, and conclude with gaps and remedial actions required. Conference delegates will be part of creating a Road Map for future Stewardship investment in Canada. Please visit www.stewardship2009.ca for more information.

B3.

4th annual Renewable Energy Conference 2009 on May 27th & 28th at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Please note the website agenda, sponsor and exhibitor information is being updated to reflect the 2009 conference and will be completed by mid December. For more info, call Catherine Dennison at (902) 237-7010 catherine@energyconsultant.ca

B4.

Environmental Education Caucus Meeting Friday, February 20, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

At the Department of Natural Resources , 1701 Hollis St., Halifax. For those with an interest in environmental education. Organized by the Nova Scotia Environmental Network. For more information, please call (902) 454-6846, email nsen@cen-rce.org or visit our web site: www.nsen.ca

B5.

"Research at the top of the world - the changing climate and the International Polar Year" Mar. 2

Time: 7:30pm on 2 March 2009

Location: Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History

Speaker: Glen Lesins, Dalhousie University

Organized by the Nova Scotian Institute of Science: <http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Science/NSIS/meetings.html>

B6.

Canadian Environmental Network Annual General Assembly in Edmonton June 12-14, 2009

Stay tuned for more details: <http://www.cen-rce.org/eng/index.html>

B7.

Celebrating the Past, Recognizing the Present, Envisioning the Future - 2009 Outdoor Practitioners Conference

Organized By NSHPP and DNR

Location St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia Event Starts May 29 & May 31st, 2009

Interested in the outdoors? If your area of interest is in education, recreation, community programming, or adventure you will want to join us at this exciting conference. We will come together as an outdoor community to recognize past contributions, acknowledge current realities facing outdoor practitioners, and develop new directions for the future. Building on the success of the 2001 Sharing the Outdoors Conference, this will be an opportunity for fun, learning, and celebration. The conference will include hands-on experiential sessions, a trade show, an engaging series of keynote speakers, entertainment, magic and much more including the Outdoors! For more information contact Jody Conrad: 424-7589, Jody.Conrad@gov.ns.ca or Sandra Fraser: 424-5481, frasersx@gov.ns.ca

B8.

Foundations of Board Governance at the Tatamagouche Centre, March 19, 2009

Effective Board governance rarely happens by accident - it is generally the result of proactive and intentional efforts to build capacity and enhance performance. This workshop provides an overview of the key elements of a strong Board, and introduces a framework and tools for participants to assess their own Board strengths and areas for improvement. A participatory approach facilitates knowledge-sharing, and a workbook is provided. This workshop will be of interest to individuals who serve on not-for-profit Boards and seek greater effectiveness!

Leadership: Bruce Smith, Bruce is an organizational consultant, mediator and facilitator based in Liverpool, NS. He works with not-for-profit Boards on all aspects of governance, including Board-Executive relations, monitoring and evaluating performance, and strategic planning.

Program Start: March 19, 2009 10:00 A.M.

Cost: \$105 (\$85 tuition + \$20 meals/snacks)

<http://tatacentre.ca/programs/details/70>

B9.

SENSE Public Meeting on “Social Sustainability in NS” in Halifax on Feb. 18

The public is invited to the Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia For Everyone Working Group networking meeting focused on “Social Sustainability” on Wednesday, February 18, 2009 from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs (CCEPA) in Halifax with lunch provided. Keynote: Lynn Hartwell, NS Community Services who will talk about the Social Perspectives of Sustainable Prosperity (Linking environment-economic-social): http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/departement/documents/Weaving_the_Threads.pdf If you are interested in attending please RSVP by e-mail: esd_novascotia@lsf-1st.ca or by calling 454-6846 to ensure adequate catering. Organized by SENSE: Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia For Everyone Working Group and NSEN: Nova Scotia Environmental Network. More info here: www.nsen.ca

B10.

SENSE Meeting “Sustainability Education in the Antigonish area” at St. FX on March 6

Friday, March 6, 2009 from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier University, Keating Building in Antigonish with lunch provided. Keynote: Julie Stinson, Community Sustainability Officer for the Town of Antigonish. We will have speakers on sustainability in the schools and in the community from the region. If you are interested in attending please RSVP by e-mail: esd_novascotia@lsf-1st.ca or by calling 454-6846 to ensure adequate catering. Organized by SENSE: Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia For Everyone Working Group and NSEN: Nova Scotia Environmental Network. More info here: www.nsen.ca

B11.

ACORN Conference & Trade Show “Organics: Good for You, Good for the Planet” Truro, NS, Feb. 26-28

Theme is Organics: Good for You, Good for the Planet. Thursday the 26th kicks off with a special film presentation and discussion on the health benefits of organic food. Everyone is welcome, cost is \$10 at the door. The ACORN Conference will also feature author of the Eco-Foods Guide, Cynthia Barstow. Workshops include how to go organic, season extension, raising organic sheep, alternative farm energy, organic landscaping and much more! Check the website for details and full conference program. Beth McMahon

Executive Director, ACORN

1-866-322-2676

admin@acornorganic.org

Looking for local organic food? www.acornorganic.org

B12.

NSEN ENGO ROUNDTABLE: ELECTION READINESS & AWARD CEREMONY ON FEB. 27

Full day strategy meeting for NSEN members from 9:00-4:00 PM at the Nova Scotia Public Archives, 6016 University Avenue, Halifax. This meeting is to network, learn and strategize as an environmental movement. Come to hear about our caucuses, to plan for the upcoming municipal, provincial and federal elections and to discuss challenges such as the OHV. At the end of the day will be our Annual Eco-Hero Award ceremony. Let's make sure the environment is a top priority in 2009! NSEN Members are free (Representatives of environmental groups only). Non-members (representatives of environmental/health groups) must pay \$45 (includes cost of membership). (Storm date Monday, March 2). Space limited. To attend, please RSVP to Tamara at nsen@cen-rce.org

B13.

Dollars to Sense Energy Management Workshops

Natural Resources Canada's Office of Energy Efficiency will be offering three Dollars to Sense Workshops in Halifax: “Energy Efficiency Financing (Public Sector)”, January 29, 2008, “Spot the Energy Savings Opportunities”, February 17, 2009, and “Energy Monitoring”, February 18, 2009. The “Energy Efficiency

Financing” workshop helps participants calculate the financial benefits of energy efficiency projects and how to build a convincing business case for senior management. “Spot the Energy Savings Opportunities” will help companies understand energy basics and how to identify and rank energy-saving opportunities. The “Energy Monitoring” workshop teaches participants how to collect and analyze utility data, how to identify achievable energy savings opportunities, and how to set energy-saving targets. For more information on these workshops or to register, please visit: <http://oeenrcan.gc.ca/industrial/training-awareness/index.cfm?attr=24> or contact Johanne Renaud at 613-996-6585 or jrenaud@nrcan.gc.ca.

B14.

Demolition & Waste Management Symposium, Halifax NS - February 19, 2009

Participate to learn about the Nova Scotian demolition and waste management industry. Discussion and presentation topics are sure to include the status of regulatory governance, current and best demolition and dismantling practices, the 3R's approach for minimizing the deposition of CRD waste into landfills, and more... Information here: <http://www.esans.ca/events.html#demo>

B15.

THE STORY OF STUFF: TOWARD SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION FILM & DISCUSSION Mar. 10

*Spring Garden Road Memorial Library, 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax
Tuesday, March 10, 2009 from 7:00-8:30 p.m.*

We live in a society that is obsessed with the production and consumption of stuff. But what we don't see are the consequences. "The Story of Stuff" is a 20-minute, fast-paced, fact-filled look at the underside of our production and consumption patterns. The Story of Stuff exposes the connections between a huge number of environmental and social issues, and calls us together to create a more sustainable and just world. Join us for the screening of this popular film followed by a discussion to explore ways we can become more sustainable. Participants will also learn about the new Nova Scotia Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act and how citizens can become more environmentally and socially responsible. Participants will receive resources to help them take action in their homes and communities. There will also be draw prizes for the new book "Go Green: How to Build an Earth-Friendly Community." Organized by the Nova Scotia Environmental Network. A project of SENSE: Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia for Everyone Working Group. For more information, visit us online: www.nsen.ca

B16.

BOOK CLUB: Go Green: How to Build an Earth-Friendly Community Saturday, April 4

10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Alderney Gate Library

NSEN's First Annual Book Club. Read the book and attend the study circle to discuss ways we can make our communities in Nova Scotia more earth friendly. The book can be borrowed from Halifax Public Libraries or purchased from P'lovers Environmental Store, 5657 Spring Garden Road, or Outside the Lines Bookstore on 6297 Quinpool Road. For more information about the book, visit: <http://nancyhtaylor.com> All welcome.

B17.

The St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association Community Forum March 28 -29

A two day forum for Bay residents to create a positive vision for development in Tantallon Village. Friday night will feature a slide show summary of the current state of the Crossroads and an expert panel discussion. Saturday morning will consist of discussion groups to vent and vision. Admission Free. Lunch provided. HRM Staff will audit the process. A schedule for Watershed Studies in the area is also under discussion; it has been suggested that the two processes could occur concurrently. More info: community@heartofthebay.ca Visit: [/www.heartofthebay.ca](http://www.heartofthebay.ca)

B18.

Conference Announcement: *What Is Plan C?* on Feb. 21

Looking beyond the status quo to engage the power of community to prepare for and respond to climate change, decreasing energy supplies and economic meltdown. *Sat. Feb. 21 10am-6pm at Exhibition Hall, Medjuck Building, DalTech, Spring Garden Rd.* Since it has become increasingly clear that the trajectories of climate

change, diminishing energy supplies, and economic meltdown will before long impact and disrupt our societies in perhaps negative and uncertain ways, it seems logical to question whether contingency plans exist. We know that certain civil agencies (e.g. the Red Cross) have some disaster plans; we all by now accept insurance as a type of disaster plan, and of course most of us don't question the logic of seat-belts or lifejackets. The point, of course, is that we all at some level acknowledge that situations can turn nasty sometimes, and so we prepare. And yet apart from, for example, a 72 hour home emergency kit, perhaps stocking up the pantry and getting a generator, and expecting that "they" will rescue us in time of need, what else might we do? This question of how we can make long-term plans in times of uncertainty is the premise of the "What is Plan C?" conference. Cost is: \$25 with lunch (catered by Local Source)/ \$10 BYOLunch To register, please send an email to: plancns@gmail.com
Registration deadline: Feb. 16, 2009

Contacts:

Alex Denicola: alexdenicola@hotmail.com

Nicole Arsenault: nicole.arsenault@gmail.com

Mary Grace Koile: jerry2911@hotmail.com

B19.

Environmental Law & Policy Meeting. Friday, February 20, 12:00-1:30 p.m. with lunch.

At the Ecology Action Centre, 2705 Fern Lane, Halifax. Organized by the Nova Scotia Environmental Network. For more information, please call (902) 454-6846, email nsen@cen-rce.org or visit our web site: www.nsen.ca

B20.

5th World Environmental Education Congress May 10-14 in Montréal

The 5th World Environmental Education Congress, from May 10-14 in Montréal, will bring together environmental educators working in diverse settings and allow them to identify new and persistent challenges in the field of environmental education. Intended for all educators and all actors in environmental education, this event will gather international socio-scientific experts to present their ideas and to discuss with others, through presentations in the form of workshops, oral presentations, round tables and posters. Additionally, a unique forum for NGOs and NPOs will allow delegates to come to know organizations active in environmental education. The deadline for early-bird registrations is February 15, 2009. Visit <http://www.5weec.uqam.ca/EN/> for more information.

B21.

Fifth Annual Sable Island Meeting, 7:00 – 9:30, Weds March 4th, 2009, Room 201, Sobey Building, Saint Mary's University Campus. Event will include four short illustrated talks and a question and answer session followed by a reception. For more information click here:

http://www.greenhorsesociety.com/Synergy/Sable_Island_Update_2009.htm

B22.

Sustainable Action: Turning Challenges into Opportunities February 11–13, 2009

Dalhousie School of Planning Conference | February 11–13, 2009

Pier 21 | 1055 Marginal Road | Halifax

This year's conference, "Sustainable Action: Turning Challenges into Opportunities," will take place from February 11-13, 2009 at Pier 21. It will explore the increasingly popular topic of sustainability and the economy. Through engaging speakers and interactive workshop sessions, we will explore how the future development and growth of our municipality, province, and nation can be sustainable. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Marc Weiss, will discuss the opportunity to engage Halifax as a pilot community in developing a "Climate Prosperity Strategy" developed by the International Economic Development Council. Such a progressive strategy could act as a lasting legacy of the conference and its sponsors. For more information, please visit the conference website. Admission is free – we do ask that you register by February 9 to secure a spot. <http://planningconference.dal.ca>

B23.

Envisioning a Community Garden for Mainland Common Meeting with Marjorie Willison. Feb. 21.

Saturday, February 21, 2:00-4:00 p.m., Rm. C, Keshen Goodman Library, 330 Lacewood Dr., Halifax

Come and "plant a seed" to help us bring to life the first community garden in Halifax West, next to the new

Mainland Common Community Centre. All are welcome to this free public meeting. Featuring inspirational special

guest, Marjorie Willison CBC gardening extraordinaire! Draw prizes. Organized by the Nova Scotia Environmental Network. For more information, please call (902) 454-6846, email nsen@cen-rce.org or visit our web site: www.nsen.ca

B24.

Tri-County Local Food System: "Exploring the Possibilities Together" on February 20th, 2009

Time: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Who: Anyone with an interest in local food

Where: Yarmouth Lion's Club, 58 Parade St.

Registration is FREE

Purpose of the day:

- Explore local food systems
- Connect people who have ideas about local food, local food systems and a sustainable food supply
- Create opportunities to move forward together

See attached flyer for details. Please RSVP to Ruthie Allen Hamilton by

February 13th. Call 749-1994 or email thisistheday@ns.sympatico.ca

A delicious local lunch will be catered by Gary Kent and the Old World Bakery.

B25.

Musicians For Farmers: a celebration of local food! on February 21st

Come for your fill of local food and music in support of HelioTrust, an Ecology Action Centre affiliate, whose projects include: farmland conservation, sustainable farming practices, biodiversity, and conserving and imparting rural wisdom. www.heliotrust.ca

Performers include:

Caledonia

Erin Costelo

Zumbini Circus

Mary-Grace Koile

Alamo Defenders

Grand Sass Parilla

Guest Speaker: Norbert Kungl of Selwood Green Organic Farms

\$15 includes cover and a delicious locally-sourced meal by Terroir Local

Source Catering with menu by Jason and Meghan of Waldegrave Farm. All

farmers get in for free of course! All Ages Welc www.ecologyaction.ca

www.musiciansforfarmers.ca See a video of a previous M4F:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eRUIft9Rk4>

Local food in February is for real and it will warm your soul! Event Co-ordinator/Press contact: Jeff Torbert - Food Action Committee, Ecology Action Centre jeff_torbert@hotmail.com 902.240.7605

B26.

4th annual Renewable Energy Conference 2009 :Emerging Opportunitites" May 27th & 28th, 2009

Westin Nova Scotian Hotel, Halifax, NS. You may now register online by February 21st at the Early-Bird

Registration rate of \$475.00. For AGENDA and REGISTRATION information, go to www.ENERGYEVENT.ca

or contact Catherine at 902-237-7010 or

Email at Catherine@energyconsultant.ca

B27.

ATLANTIC CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2009, Halifax - March 10-11, 2009

Location: Westin NS, 1181 Hollis Street. The winter of 2008-2009 brought changing economic conditions, the Federal and Provincial government budgets, the NS Energy Strategy and Climate Change Action Plan, and some new initiatives. Admission: \$150 for ESANS Members, \$200 for Non-Members. More info:

esans.ca/events.html#acc09

B28.**Adaptations and Actions - Tools for Rural Communities Facing Climate Change, NB February 27 - March 1**
Mount Allison University, Sackville NB

All are welcome to attend this conference, designed for rural and community leaders (municipalities, local service districts, NGO's, etc), planners and decision-makers. This is an opportunity to learn about green and sustainable planning, to network, and to develop collaborative approaches in the face of climate change. Resource people from: Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Efficiency New Brunswick, Mount Allison University faculty, Tantramar Planning Commission, etc.

Workshops on: land use planning, green plans, energy efficiency, sources of funding, etc. Overall, it is hoped that people and municipalities will be enabled to meet the challenges of planning for climate change together, as we will inevitably have to! Note that this event is generously being sponsored by the federal government, through Canadian Rural Partnerships; by the NB provincial government, through the Environmental Trust Fund; by Mount Allison University; by the Tantramar Planning Commission; as well as by six municipalities - all of whom took part in making sure that this conference will meet our needs. Special thanks to the staff of EOS Eco-Energy Inc. and Cape Jourimain Nature Centre for coordination. For conference information, see <http://eos-eco.net/whatsNew%20.html> or call Katie Friars at 506-360-0063.

B29.**Andrew Nikiforuk - The Alberta Tar Sands-Dirty Oil and the future of a Continent.* NS Tour March 2-6**

Calgary based journalist/speaker Andrew Nikiforuk, one of Canada's foremost nonfiction authors and an award winning business reporter will be hosting a series of free public lectures in Nova Scotia on The Alberta Tar Sands-Dirty Oil and the future of a Continent.* March 2-6. Dates, Places, Times:

1. Sydney: Monday March 2: Membertou Trade and Convention Centre 7-9pm
2. Antigonish: Tuesday March 3, St. Francis Xavier University, 7-9pm
3. Bible Hill: Wednesday March 4, Nova Scotia Agriculture College, 12-1pm
4. Halifax: Wednesday March 4, Dalhousie's College of Sustainability, Kenneth Rowe Management Bldg. 7-9pm
5. Wolfville: Thursday, March 5, Acadia's Arthur Irving Academy for the Environment 7-9pm
6. (not-confirmed) Chester: Friday, March 6, Forest Heights Community School 1-2 pm
7. Mahone Bay: Friday March 6, Mahone Bay Community Centre, 7-9pm
For information updates and details see <http://www.andrewnikiforuk.com/>

B30.**11th Annual Friends of McNabs Island Society Dinner and Silent Auction on Feb. 28**

Enjoy the ambiance of the Officers Mess at Royal Artillery Park, Halifax (Queen & Sackville Streets, across from the Halifax Citadel) Saturday February 28, 2009 Doors open at 5:30pm, Dinner at 6:30pm

Full Service Meal (for vegetarian plate, specify when you purchase your ticket)

Get your tickets now! Early Bird price \$40 until February 10th, 2009. \$45 Regular Price after February 10th, 2009

Tickets on sale until February 19th - only 80 spaces available! For details and to purchase tickets call:

Faye Power at 443-1749 or email fayepower@hotmail.com

B31.**WildernessAid will be showing "Forbidden Forest", on Feb. 24 at SMU, Halifax**

A documentary focused on the importance of conserving Canada's natural environment. Come early to meet the members of SMUES and CPAWS, pick up a hike registration package, enter to win prizes, and learn about the ways in which YOU can help protect Nova Scotia's wilderness. Tuesday, February 24th, from 6-9pm at the McNally Theatre Auditorium at Saint Mary's University. Reception 6pm, Movie starts 7pm.

Admission by Donation. Draw prize ballots only available during reception. On another note, the registration packages and pledge sheets for the WildernessAid HIKE on March 6th, are now available! You can pick one up at the Info Desk in the lobby of the Saint Mary's Student Centre between 9am and midnight, Monday to Friday. A copy of the package will be available for downloading from www.smues.ca by Friday.

For those of you who aren't familiar with Saint Mary's, you can view a copy of the campus map here:

<http://www.smu.ca/administration/international/documents/campus-map.pdf>

"SC" stands for Student Centre and there is parking directly behind the building.

See you there! Laura Simms: simms.laura@gmail.com

C. Non-Environmental Events

C1.

'BLOOMING TEA' to Support Adsum for Women & Children Thursday, March 19th, 2009, 2 - 4 pm

Adsum for Women & Children will mark the arrival of spring with a celebratory Blooming Tea at The Prince George Hotel, Halifax. This event is a wonderful opportunity to raise funds for Adsum, and at the same time honor important women in our lives, including mothers (and mothers-in-law), daughters, grandmothers, aunts, nieces, friends and colleagues. This is an exceptional afternoon. Tickets are \$20. Please call Ellen at 422-3389 for more information.

C2.

YES WE CAN! Rally on Thursday, February 19 from 12:00-12:30 p.m.

Halifax Public Library, 5381 Spring Garden Rd. Halifax. On the First Official Visit of US President Obama YES WE CAN: Stop the War in Afghanistan & Stop the Bombing of Pakistan; Take Urgent Action on Climate Change; Bring Omar Khadr Home; Meet our Millennium Development Goals; and Give Pay Equity to Women. Please come to our public rally to welcome U.S. President Barack Obama to Canada, his first official international visit of his presidency. Across the country, Canadians will be sending the President and our Prime Minister Stephen Harper the message that "YES WE CAN" have a world without war and that we can work together to take action on climate change and create a truly sustainable future. Organized by the Halifax Peace Coalition. Web: <http://www.hfxpeace.chebucto.org/> Email: hfxpeace@chebucto.ca

C3.

How to Make Poverty History in the Maritimes - Training of Community Organizers Feb 27 – Mar 1

Feb 27 – Mar 1; Fri 7pm to Sun 1pm

Tatamagouche Centre

Welcome to this internationally-renowned movement of activism against poverty!

This workshop will explore how local groups and individuals can help to make poverty history in their communities, province and globally. The workshop will involve participants in collectively drawing a picture of poverty in the Maritimes and in the world, identify the policy changes that are needed to realize a world without poverty and explore online and media action strategies, lobbying and political action tools, and popular education approaches to raising public awareness. Participants will design and develop action strategies for provincial poverty reduction to Make Poverty History in the Maritimes and plans for campaigns on global poverty in relation to the G8 Summits. Leadership: Dennis Howlett is the Coordinator of Make Poverty History which is campaigning for more and better aid, trade justice, cancelling the debt and ending child poverty in Canada. He is the former Executive Director of the National Anti-Poverty Organization where he initiated a national campaign for making the minimum wage a living wage and for action on youth poverty. For over 30 years he worked for a number of ecumenical social justice coalitions including Ten Days for Global Justice and KAIROS where he led successful campaigns for cancellation of Third World debt, fair trade coffee, and ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change. He is the author of several books including Ah-hah! A New Approach to Popular Education and From Resistance to Transformation: Social Movement Coalitions in Canada, Philippines, South Africa and Mexico.

Maria Recchia is a Quaker, environmentalist, and social justice advocate, working among fishing communities in New Brunswick. Cost: \$335 (\$180 tuition + \$155 meals/accommodation)

Some bursaries are available.

For more information, or to register, please contact Tatamagouche Centre at www.tatacentre.ca or 1-800-218-2220.

C4.

Centre for Faith and the Media: "The Media and Muslims" on Feb. 19

Thursday, February 19. 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. University of King's College. KTS lecture hall. 2nd floor, New Academic Building. A roundtable discussion between local media and Muslim leaders. Kelly Toughill - Journalism Professor, University of King's College Dr. Jamal Badawi - Board member, CAIR-CAN and Muslim speaker Saleem Ahmed - Former President, Islamic Association of Nova Scotia Dan Leger - Journalist, The Chronicle Herald Rob Gordon - Journalist, CBC Halifax. www.faithandmedia.org

C5.

Film Screening and Discussion: IF WOMEN COUNTED on Mar. 15

Sunday, March 15, 2009, 2:30-5:00 PM, Helen Creighton Room, Alderney Public Library, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth, NS. Free public event. All welcome. Women don't miss this! In celebration of International Women's Day. Come to watch the powerful documentary "Who's Counting: Marilyn Waring on Sex, Lies and Global Economics" (1995). About this film, David Suzuki said, "I give the film and Ms. Waring every superlative – riveting, revealing, inspiring, etc... It penetrates to the heart of the global, ecological, and social crisis that afflicts the world... required viewing for all who know we are on a destructive path and want to get off." After the film, engage in a moderated interactive discussion about women's role in society and the importance of women in politics and business. If women counted, how would our world be different and better? Light refreshments. Draw Prizes. Organized by Equal Voice Nova Scotia. For more information, please call 902-445-0187 or visit: <http://equalvoicenovascotia.googlepages.com/home> Email equalvoicenovascotia@gmail.com

C6.

"Canada as Leading Middle Power and Child Soldiers" Hon. Romeo A. Dallaire, Lt. General (ret.d) Mar.5

March 5th at 9am in the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium, Dalhousie Arts Centre. The Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, in conjunction with the 5th Annual Graduate Symposium on Geopolitics and Global Governance. Tickets can be purchased online at: www.artscentre.dal.ca or by telephone at 1-800-874-1669. Early Bird Price (to Feb 18) \$17.50 Reg, \$13.50 Student From Feb. 19: \$20.00 Reg. \$15.00 Student / Discounts apply to students and early bird tickets purchased before February 19th. Information on the event can be obtained by calling the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies at Dalhousie at 494-6846 or e-mail: cfpsddir@dal.ca All proceeds will go to the Child Soldiers Initiative www.childsoldiersinitiative.org, a non-profit organization dedicated to the eradication of child soldiers globally.

C7.

"Obama, Canada and Peace" Dinner and Silent Auction on Tuesday, March 31st, 2008

Time: 6pm - Reception, 7pm – Dinner Location: Saint Mary's University, 923 Robie Street, Halifax. Ticket price: \$100/each. "Obama, Canada and Peace" will examine the recently-inaugurated Obama administration, Canada's evolving relationship with the United States, and what it all means for peace in our world. Timely, engaging, and thought-provoking, this talk will give us all a fresh perspective on things to come. Pugwash Peace Exchange Phone: (902) 243-2328, Fax: (902) 243-2328, Email: mail@pugwashpeaceexchange.org

C8.

Can We Be Good Without God? * Wednesday February 25th, 7pm - 9pm

Is Religion Foundational to our Collective Sense of Right and Wrong?

Can a Purely Secular Society Maintain its Moral Grounding?

A *Just in Time* presentation by the *Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs*

Featuring: Eric Beresford, President, Atlantic School of Theology; Justin Trotter,

Executive Director, Centre for Inquiry Canada; Moderated by: Kevin Kindred, Legal Counsel, Bell Aliant Scotiabank Theatre Auditorium*

Saint Mary's University*

Free Admission*

Chris Stover . General Manager*

Canadian Centre for Ethics in Public Affairs (CCEPA) 630 Francklyn Street Halifax, NS, B3H 3B4

Telephone: (902) 428-4731 Fax: (902) 428-4776 www.ccepa.ca <<http://www.ccepa.ca/>>

D. Announcements

D1.

On-Line Trip Diary Survey launched to help shape future Transit Service

Metro Transit is in the process of developing a new five year strategic operations plan for transit services in the region. As a component of this ongoing process, an on-line trip diary survey and campaign entitled "Which Way HRM ?" has just been launched and will run until Friday, March 6th, 2009. Transit passengers and HRM citizens alike are being asked to provide their feedback on what their daily trip patterns are in and around HRM, to help shape the future of public transit. Everyone who completes Metro Transit's on-line trip diary survey will be

automatically entered in a contest to win one of 5 iPod nanos, gift certificates or Metro Transit passes! Contest details are available on -line. To fill out the survey, just go to www.hrmlistens.com and follow the on-screen instructions; or check for the on-line survey banner on the bottom of the Metro Transit Home Page at www.halifax.ca/metrotransit. Look for the "Which Way, HRM ?" advertising bus boards, transit shelter posters and flyers in your household mail over the next few weeks or call the HRM Call Centre at 490-4000 for more details.

D2.

CSAE Nova Scotia Chapter Luncheon/Education Session at the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel Feb. 17

1919 Upper Water Street on Tuesday February 17th

You can choose from one of these round tables: Work Place Safety; Quick Hit Advocacy; Fraud in the Workplace; Board/Staff Relations; Strategic Plan Implementation and Association Management Systems. Bring along your senior staff and/or volunteers so that your organization can benefit from more than one of the. There is no extra charge for guests! Once a year, we like to shake things up a bit. This month, we'll still have an opportunity to network with our sector colleagues and share a fabulous lunch at our host hotel. But . . . instead of one presenter, we have six sector experts in various specialties that will over our meal lead us in lively discussion and debate on various topics. We'll learn from our experts and each other.

- To register, complete and submit the form found below and email it to csae@ns.aliantzinc.ca or fax it to 482 3380
 - Registration is \$25 per person and includes full luncheon and presentation.
(NO extra charge for non-members)
 - Payment at the door by cash or cheque -- sorry no credit cards.
 - Non-Members welcome at no extra charge.
 - Please note: No shows will be billed as lunches are ordered in advance.
- You must register by Friday February 13th at 12 noon.

D3.

Debert Industrial Waste Management Facility Decision released

On February 3, 2009 the Minister of Environment released a decision on the expansion of the Debert Industrial Waste Management Facility. The Minister has decided that the registration information is insufficient to allow him to make a decision and that additional information is required in accordance with Section 13 (1)(a) of the Environmental Assessment Regulations. For more information please go to

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/ea/ais.debert.asp>

D4.

ENGO Views on the Convention on Biological Diversity

To ensure that ENGO contributions are included in Canada's 4th National Report for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the RCEN is conducting a short survey on behalf of Environment Canada.

Organizations currently working on biodiversity related issues and those with past experience or a marked interest in biodiversity are encouraged to share their views with respect to progress, challenges, lessons learned and biodiversity priorities in the post 2010 period. Deadline is Weds. Feb. 25

Complete the survey: <http://www.cen-rce.org/IBD/2009/survey.html>.

D5.

PUBLIC COMMENTS WANTED ON SOCIOECONOMIC EFFECTS OF WILDERNESS AREAS-Feb. 27

Members of the public are invited to review and comment on a study assessing the socioeconomic effects of designating three new wilderness areas within Crown land parcels at Blue Mountain-Birch Cove Lakes, Ship Harbour Long Lake (both in Halifax County), and Shelburne River (in Queens County). To view the discussion paper, prepared by Jacques Whitford Limited, and a summary of the results please visit:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/protectedareas/socioeconomic.analysis.asp>

This web page includes links to background information on all three candidate areas. Printed copies of all of these materials can be obtained by contacting protectedareas@gov.ns.ca or by calling (902) 424-2117. Written comments on the discussion paper will be accepted until February 27, 2009, and can be submitted online, by email, or by mail to Nova Scotia Environment, Protected Areas, P.O. Box 442, Halifax, NS, B3J 2P8.

Thank you for participating in this important opportunity to help shape these new wilderness areas!

Protected Areas Branch
Nova Scotia Environment
Box 442, 5151 Terminal Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
B3J 2P8
Tel; (902) 424-2117
Fax; (902) 424-0501
protectedareas@gov.ns.ca
www.gov.ns.ca/nse/protectedareas

D6.

Winter Walk Day - Any day in February, 2009

Schools or youth groups may register at <http://www.taketherooffwinter.ca> and receive a kit along with ten free toques. Winter Walk Day is a partnership of Active & Safe Routes to School and Take The Roof Off Winter, which promotes healthy outdoor winter activity in Nova Scotia.

E. Jobs & Internships

E1.

Short Contract Offer: Forest Discovery Hike Coordinator at the Ecology Action Centre

Ecology Action Centre's Forestry Program in Halifax

The Ecology Action Centre is offering a short-term contract with its forestry program. The contractor's main responsibility is to help coordinate a series of educational hikes for students and adults. Duties will include developing appropriate educational material, helping with travel logistics, participating in the hikes, securing media coverage, and reporting on the project. The contract will likely include other duties, and may grow to include more projects. Please send a résumé and cover letter to Jamie Simpson (forests@ecologyaction.ca), Forestry Program Coordinator, by February 20th.

Wage: \$15 / hour

Timeframe: 100 hours

10 – 35 hours / week depending contractor's preference

For more information on the EAC's forestry program, visit www.novascotiaforests.ca. Contact Jamie Simpson (429 1335) with any questions.

E2.

Vision 20/20 Residential Program Leaders at the Adventure Earth Centre, Halifax Regional Municipality

<http://www.earthed.ns.ca>

ABOUT THE ADVENTURE EARTH CENTRE

Located in Flemming Park on the picturesque North West Arm in Halifax, the Adventure Earth Centre has been offering outdoor recreation and earth education programs for over twenty years. As part of Halifax Regional Municipality's Community Recreation Services, the AEC has been working towards building a healthy and sustainable future for our children/youth, our communities and the earth. Our belief in education through hands-on learning and providing environmental leadership opportunities for youth is the foundation for the programs and services offered through our Centre.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Exciting job opportunities await you at the Adventure Earth Centre. Each job has a specific list of qualifications, but in general we are looking for:

- * enthusiasm and motivation
- * strong leadership and communication skills
- * positive role model
- * sound judgement
- * commitment to safety and risk management

In our late spring/summer jobs, you will:

- * develop your leadership skills

- * develop your employment skills for the future
- * be challenged
- * meet new people

VISION 2020 CAMP PROGRAM LEADER

Vision 2020 is an Earth Education Program for Grade 8 students, in a residential camp setting. For the job description, wage details and information on how to apply, please download and read our employment booklet thoroughly: <http://www.earthed.ns.ca>.

OTHER JOB OPPORTUNITIES

We are also hiring for a variety of other outdoor recreation and earth education programs. Positions include: AEC Summer Manager, AEC Youth Leadership Coordinator and AEC Summer Camp Leaders. Application deadlines and start dates vary. For job descriptions, wage details and information on how to apply, please download and read our employment booklet thoroughly: <http://www.earthed.ns.ca>

F. Volunteer Opportunities / HelpWanted

F1.

Call for Hike Nova Scotia Board Members

Hike Nova Scotia, formed in 2007, is looking for board members who love hiking and want to help create a culture of hiking in our beautiful province. Hike Nova Scotia encourages and promotes hiking, walking and snowshoeing throughout Nova Scotia. Learn more about our projects at www.hikenovascotia.ca. Hike NS wants active board members who have the time and energy to devote to running this volunteer-driven organization and help it achieve its mandate. Contact Hike NS at info@hikenovascotia.ca to express your interest in becoming a board member.

F2.

Interested in climate change and want to make a difference? GREAT OPPORTUNITY!

The Climate Change Centre, a program of the not-for-profit Clean Nova Scotia, is partnering with the Museum of Natural History to put on a skit over their March Break period (Mar.14-22). The presentation will address things WE can do in our own lives to take action against climate change! We are looking for keen, committed individuals to help deliver the skit between Saturday, Mar.14 and Sunday, Mar.22. We meet Monday evenings from 5.30-7pm, and you will be required to attend a few rehearsal sessions (~2) leading up to the March Break period. Please note: we are NOT looking for people who can commit to the entire period! Please contact us and we can discuss what your contributions might be. Presentations happen at 11am, 12pm, 2pm, 3pm, & 4pm during the day.

Below is the promotional blurb for the presentation:

“Join us in our Climate Change Quest. Together, our mission is to figure out what we can do to make a difference and how to inspire others to action! This 20-minute theatrical foray for families is fun-filled, funny, and interactive. You’ll be plotting ways to help our colourful characters in their pursuit to take back the power.”

If you are interested, please contact Rebecca McQuaid at the Climate Change Centre [rmcquaid@clean.ns.ca, 902-420-6597]. It would be great if you could indicate your interest in participating by Feb.13, 2009.

G. Funding & Awards

G1.

Announcement: Upcoming RBC Blue Water Leadership Grants Deadline is March 6

The RBC Blue Water Project Leadership grants are directed to organizations that are leaders in providing programs in North America and other countries where RBC does business. They have recently narrowed their focus to two areas:

1. Watershed protection. Programs and projects that focus on:

- Watershed awareness
- Community-based watershed stewardship
- Protection and restoration of sensitive natural areas, or
- Sustainable water use and conservation

2. Access to clean drinking water. Programs and projects that focus on making sure communities have access to clean, safe drinking water, when and where it is needed.

The next deadline for application is March 6th. For details about the first round of grants and to download the application go to: <http://www.rbc.com/donations/blue-water-pre.html>

G2.

Trail Maintenance Grants Information

Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/physicalactivity/publications/Trail-Maintenance-Program.pdf>

G3.

NSEN ECO-HERO AWARDS: CALL FOR NOMINATIONS – DUE FRIDAY, FEB. 16

In celebration of our 15th anniversary in 2007, the Nova Scotia Environmental Network launched new annual environmental awards. These awards will recognize groups and individuals who have made a significant contribution to environmentalism in our province. There are seven award categories for both individuals and groups. The awards will be given out at our ENGO Roundtable on Friday, February 27 (snow date is March 2). Nomination forms are attached and more information is available at <http://www.nsen.ca/ecohero.php> or please contact NSEN at nsen@cen-rce.org

1. Nickerson Lifetime Achievement (Individual)

Awarded to an individual with an impressive and long legacy of environmental stewardship and leadership in NS.

2. Eco-Heroes Group of the Year (Group)

Awarded to the community group that has taken determined environmental action, which has resulted in positive in Nova Scotia.

3. Eco-Hero Environmentalist of the Year (Individual)

Awarded to an individual who has shown inspiring environmental initiative in Nova Scotia.

4. Cole Award for Excellence in Environment and Health (Group or Individual)

Awarded to an individual or group who has passionately promoted the link between environment and health in Nova Scotia.

5. Marshall Award for Aboriginal Environmental Leadership (Group or Individual)

Awarded to a First Nations individual or group who has demonstrated great environmental leadership in NS.

6. Youth Environmental Leadership Award (Group or Individual)

Awarded to an individual youth (Under 30 years old) or youth group who has shown enthusiastic environmental leadership in Nova Scotia.

7. Award for Environmental Political Will (Group or Individual)

Awarded to an elected official/politician(s) at any level of government who has exhibited a genuine commitment to protect the natural environment, advance sustainability and show eco-leadership in the last year.

G4.

The Co-operators Youth Conference for Sustainability Leadership - Deadline Feb. 27

Impact: The Co-operators Youth Conference for Sustainability Leadership

180 university and college students from across Canada

Explore real sustainability solutions with national business and sustainability leaders

September 24-27, 2009 Guelph, Ontario

All conference expenses paid! Apply before February 27, 2009

If you are between 19-25 and attending a Canadian university or college in any discipline, apply now for this extraordinary opportunity. All conference, transportation, accommodation and meal expenses will be fully covered. Your contribution is one of time and commitment - time to prepare and collaborate prior to the conference and the commitment to initiate change going forward. More info: <http://www.impactyouthsustainability.ca/en/>

H. News

H1.

New forestry spending: smart, green and effective

By JAMIE SIMPSON

Thu. Feb 5 Chronicle Herald

The province recently gave some \$2.52 million to forest industries in Nova Scotia, thanks to funding from Ottawa. In all likelihood, there's more federal money coming for Nova Scotia's forestry industry as part of the massive "stimulus" budget.

How best to use this influx of cash? With wise spending, the government can help the forestry industry reduce clearcutting, while bolstering our market competitiveness. Here are five things the provincial government must do to promote forest health, employment and economic viability.

- Plan for climate change:

Climate change is already devastating some forests in North America. Top forest scientists recently discovered that tree death in western North American forests has doubled because of climate change-caused stresses such as increased and new insect attacks. Without a doubt, Nova Scotia's forests are also at risk.

To be proactive, the government must fund forest management (silviculture) that promotes natural diversity and high quality trees. Simply put, naturally diverse and healthy forests deal better with climate change. This funding must go hand-in-hand with adequate outreach work to land owners.

Amazingly, only three per cent of current government silviculture spending promotes "selection harvesting," while the remainder supports activities that depend on clearcutting.

- Buy land:

Right now, forestry companies have tens of thousands of hectares of land for sale in Nova Scotia. By buying this land, the government helps forestry companies generate badly needed revenue, without triggering accusations of subsidy under the softwood trade agreement with the U.S. Some of this land can be kept in active forestry, and some can be protected to help Nova Scotia meet its 12 per cent protected areas commitment.

Buying land also keeps it out of the hands of "timber investment management organizations," such as Wagner Forest Management Ltd., which tend to liquidate the forest resource, then divide and re-sell the land for development and ship the profits out of Nova Scotia. This disturbing trend is already happening in parts of Nova Scotia and is likely to increase as large chunks of the province are sold off by struggling forestry companies.

- Invest in efficient biomass energy technology:

Sawmills and pulp and paper mills are energy-intensive operations. It makes sense to enable these companies to access the most efficient and low-pollution technology available to produce electricity, heat and other energy products from wood and milling wastes, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Invest in training:

The forestry industry needs more skilled on-the-ground forest workers who know how to improve forest quality and how to get the most value from harvested trees. The industry also needs skilled manufacturers and entrepreneurs who can create value-added products from valuable trees. The result is more employment per unit of harvested wood.

- Get "green" FSC certification for Crown land and private woodlots:

About one-third of Nova Scotia's Crown land is already certified under the FSC, the most recognized standard for responsible forestry in the world.

Getting the rest of Crown land certified makes our wood more competitive in the global market. The province can also promote certification by increasing its current financial support of FSC-certified woodlots.

Making wise spending decisions can be a win-win situation for Nova Scotia's forests and our economy. Wise government investment in the forestry industry can help in the shift away from clearcutting and toward a quality-

management approach to forestry. This shift takes intelligence and creative thinking, but in the face of job losses and climate change, we cannot afford to simply prop up the status quo.

Jamie Simpson is the forestry co-ordinator, Ecology Action Centre.

H2.

Halifax is one of Canada's top Sustainability Cities.

Check it out:

<http://huffstrategy.com/MediaManager/release/Corporate-Knights/31-12-69/Corporate-Knights-Magazine-announces-Canadas-most-sustainable-cit/1498.html>

Check the report out: <http://static.corporateknights.ca/SustainableCities2009.pdf>

H3.

Global warming 'underestimated'

Prof Field said the IPCC was running behind forecasts <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7890988.stm>

The severity of global warming over the next century will be much worse than previously believed, a leading climate scientist has warned. Professor Chris Field, an author of a 2007 landmark report on climate change, said future temperatures "will be beyond anything" predicted.

Prof Field said the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report had underestimated the rate of change. He said warming is likely to cause more environmental damage than forecast.

Speaking at the American Science conference in Chicago, Prof Field said fresh data showed greenhouse gas emissions between 2000 and 2007 increased far more rapidly than expected. "We are basically looking now at a future climate that is beyond anything that we've considered seriously in climate policy," he said.

Prof Field said the 2007 report, which predicted temperature rises between 1.1C and 6.4C over the next century, seriously underestimated the scale of the problem. He said the increases in carbon dioxide have been caused, principally, by the burning of coal for electric power in India and China.

Wildfires

Prof Field said the impact on temperatures is as yet unknown, but warming is likely to accelerate at a much faster pace and cause more environmental damage than had been predicted. He says that a warming planet will dry out forests in tropical areas making them much more likely to suffer from wildfires. The rising temperatures could also speed up the melting of the permafrost, vastly increasing the amount of carbon in the atmosphere, Prof Field warns. "Without effective action, climate change is going to be larger and more difficult to deal with than we thought," he said.

H4.

Feds can't prove their costly green programs work: commissioner

Thursday, February 5, 2009

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2009/02/05/enviro-commissioner.html>

The federal government is spending billions to curb greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution but is largely unable to show the measures work, Canada's environment commissioner warns.

"The government cannot demonstrate that the money it is spending on some important environmental programs is making a difference," Scott Vaughan, commissioner of the environment and sustainable development, said in the prepared text of the speech accompanying his report, which was tabled in the House of Commons Thursday.

"The government needs to know what works, what doesn't and why. However, our audit work for this report found gaps in the information...."

In cases where information was available, the report suggested Canadians sometimes got little value for their money.

Vaughan's report, his first since being appointed to the post in May 2008, found that:

Provinces weren't required to report how they spent \$1.5 billion distributed to fight climate change.

The new public transit tax credit was "disappointing relative to the \$635-million cost" at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Environment Canada doesn't have an effective way to verify nationally the timeliness and accuracy of the 10,000 severe weather warnings it issues each year.

There is little data on the results of \$370 million spent to reduce pollution from farming.

The government has no way to determine whether its own departmental sustainable development strategies are meeting their goals.

Clean air, climate change audit 'disappointing'

Much of Vaughan's criticism about the government's environmental programs was targeted at its efforts to fight air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

The report examined the \$1.5-billion Clean Air and Climate Change Trust Fund, which distributed money to the provinces and territories.

Vaughan, who is part of the office of the auditor general, noted provinces are not required to report how the money was spent or what results were achieved. In addition, he found that Environment Canada used flawed analyses and assumptions to estimate that the program would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 megatonnes between 2008 to 2012.

"In order to be credible to Canadians and the rest of the world, the government's plans for reducing air pollution must be able to produce measurable results," Vaughan said in a statement. "In that respect, most of what our audit found was disappointing."

Transit tax credit ineffective

The report also looked at the public transit tax credit, which was introduced in the 2006 budget and is expected to have cost the government \$635 million by the end of the 2008-2009 fiscal year. In 2007, Environment Canada predicted the tax credit would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 220,000 tonnes, but a year later, it later lowered its estimate by 84 per cent, to 35,000 tonnes.

"Given the lowered figure, the tax credit will have a negligible impact on Canada's greenhouse gas emissions," Vaughan's report said.

'Well, if you can't measure it, ... you can't manage it, so we're not managing the climate change file effectively.'

— Aaron Freeman, Environmental Defence
In addition to greenhouse gas reductions, the report looked at new regulations to reduce the release of toxic and carcinogenic emissions such as benzene, a chemical that is released from gas pumps and acrylonitrile, which is used to manufacture synthetic rubber.

In the case of acrylonitrile, it found the government didn't verify reporting by the private sector on compliance, and emissions saw a "rapid increase" in the three years after the new regulations were introduced. It also largely isn't enforcing benzene regulations and doesn't know whether they are achieving results, the report said.

The report was originally scheduled to be tabled in December, but its release was postponed when Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean prorogued Parliament at Prime Minister Stephen Harper's request. Parliament resumed on Jan. 26.

Minister Prentice defends transit tax credit

After the report was tabled, Environment Minister Jim Prentice said the government has already begun taking action on the environment commissioner's recommendations.

"We'll evaluate what's been said and take the necessary action," he said.

When asked about the questionable carbon reduction estimates criticized by the commissioner, Prentice said the government was working with the best available information at the time.

He also defended the transit tax credit, saying it wasn't intended just as an environmental measure but as a tax cut for students, seniors and other transit users.

"It needs to be measured in light of both those public policy objectives," he said.

Opposition MPs said they weren't surprised by the report.

"Unfortunately, that's what we've come to expect from this government," said NDP Leader Jack Layton.

He said the government should have thought ahead before giving away money for greenhouse gas reductions.

"I think it's essential that when you launch into a program, you at the same time have an evaluation system set up so that you know whether it's working. We don't have time to waste here," Layton said.

Ottawa South Liberal MP David McGuinty said he had raised questions a year ago about whether the transit tax credit was good value for money. He added the government should have set out criteria and objectives before distributing greenhouse gas reduction money to the provinces through the Eco-Trust program, which he called the "Eco-fraud."

Aaron Freeman, policy and campaigns director for the environmental group Environmental Defence, said he found the report disturbing.

"What we're seeing time and time again is an absence or a total inadequacy when it comes to enforcement, monitoring and accountability," he said, adding that that doesn't bode well for Canada's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"Well if you can't measure it, ... you can't manage it, so we're not managing the climate change file effectively."

I. Resources

II.

Important Environment Canada FAQ on climate change (HTML & PDF)

One of the best government sources of strong statements about climate change that we can contrast with weak government policy:

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/scitech/default.asp?lang=En&n=2A953C90-1>

(html)

http://www.ec.gc.ca/scitech/2A953C90-CC12-42B2-BD0A-B51FECC2AEC3/FAQ_e.pdf

(pdf)

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