

Canada told to sober up on environmental policy

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December 02, 2008

Canada is an environmental drunk driver and the UN hopes we sober up for this year's climate conference in Poznan, Poland. That was the message at a news conference at the Ecology Action Centre yesterday. For years, Canada "has been driving drunk on the roads of development, drunk on guilt-free over-consumption," said Sam Littlefair-Wallace, youth member of the Genuine Progress Index for Atlantic Canada.

The eco-groups, scientists and youth activists were adamant that Canada is not meeting its global or local greenhouse obligations.

"Canada is the only country to have accepted a Kyoto target and then decided not to try and meet it," the Pembina Institute: Sustainable Energy Solutions reported. The 2008 UN climate conference gives Canada "an opportunity to restore its credibility and build goodwill with its negotiation partners."

Nova Scotia, too, needs to stop swerving dangerously from behind the wheel, they said.

Tamara Lorincz of the Nova Scotia Environment Network said the province does not have the climate-proofing infrastructure in place to deal with the floods and droughts climate change will bring.

George Foote of the provincial Environment Department said "the government is developing a number of strategies" to deal with climate change. Digital mapping of Halifax Harbour, for example, is a large project underway to study the effects of rising sea levels.

Nova Scotians should be worried about coastline municipalities and Annapolis Valley farms, Lorincz said. Not to mention the warming Gulf Stream and Atlantic fisheries.

The fortress of Louisbourg park could be underwater if sea level rises as much as predicted, Gretchen Fitzgerald of Sierra Club Canada said.

Coastal properties are in danger, Fitzgerald said: The retirement home you buy today might be submerged tomorrow. Insurance is a real concern.