

NRT



NATIONAL
ROUND TABLE ON
THE ENVIRONMENT
AND THE ECONOMY

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

THE LEGACY OF CANADA'S NATIONAL ROUND TABLE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY

A Retrospective Essay by
Bob Page, Past Chair, NRTEE



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BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



**"THE ROUND TABLE WILL BE PROVIDING LEADERSHIP IN THE NEW WAY WE MUST
THINK ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY
AND THE NEW WAY WE MUST ACT."**

— The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, 1988



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Round Table on the Environment and Economy (NRTEE or Round Table) experienced an eventful 25 years (1988–2013) developing, assessing, and interpreting policy options on sustainability for Canadians. It produced over 100 major reports while interacting with Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Launched in the aftermath of the UN's Brundtland Commission report in 1988, it designed and explained the concrete actions necessary to implement the visionary “sustainable development” concept. It exploited the exciting new paradigm for integrating finance and economics into environmental and social considerations.

The NRTEE had four main tasks:

1. delivering groundbreaking policy research,
2. reaching out to inform and stimulate the thinking of Canadians,
3. working to build public consensus on sustainability, and
4. presenting policy options to government.

In most cases those receiving the work appreciated it; in a few cases, they did not.

The members — 16 to 25 at any given time and more than 150 overall — constituted a “Who’s Who” of Canadians leaders. They were drawn from across the country, representing geographic diversity and the full spectrum of environmental and economic interests. Crafting a balance of opinion from members as diverse as leading environmentalists and oil patch CEOs presented an interesting challenge for the successive chairs. The members were supported by an able and experienced secretariat in Ottawa.

The NRTEE built a sound reputation for the quality of its research and the breadth of its sources. Studies combined the latest scientific and economic research with social comments from Canadians. The NRTEE took clear stands independent of the views of NGOs or business lobbies.

The NRTEE reports were the product of thorough research, careful editing, and balanced recommendations. Their strengths reflected their focus on innovation, cost-effectiveness, and viability within the Canadian constitutional framework. The intellectual power and



authority of the reports came not just from the staff and members but also from the input of topic experts and partners. Given the complexity of policy issues today, the path forward required (and still does require) multidisciplinary, balanced solutions.

Each report had features that made it unique. These could include modelling and cost estimates for critical sectors or regions to show the policy implications to decision makers.

NRTEE reports were widely disseminated. The conclusions were usually shared with Canadians in public workshops, and the final product in turn was available to all. Some of the final reports were downloaded by as many as 50,000 Canadians. Senior officials in Ottawa received official briefings as did some provinces and organizations requesting them. Frequently the NRTEE appeared before parliamentary committees that had limited research capacities of their own.

Some of the NRTEE's early contributions included articulating the environmental impacts of the NAFTA proposals and helping implement Canada's obligations from the Rio Summit in 1992. Later on, the NRTEE worked to redesign the assumptions for federal budget making to embed sustainability assumptions — to the dismay of some Ottawa finance officials. It properly warned Canadians about the emerging and future constraints on water supply and quality. It probed deeply into the problems inherent in capital markets, urban design, brownfield redevelopment, rural stability, and sustainable forestry practices to find a way forward. Many issues, including reports on Arctic topics, incorporated the voices of local communities.

NRTEE championed climate change before it was popular and then again toward the end when it was politically controversial. There is a certain irony about this work in that it is once again a focus of the government now that the U.S. President has set out new expectations for Canadian action.

In looking back over the quarter century, it is clear that the Round Table built an impressive reputation for quality, balance, and insight. In some cases government requested the research; in other cases the topics were matters that NRTEE members believed government needed to consider. Some reports influenced policy decisions while others had little impact but contributed to the public policy debate.

Overall, the legacy of the NRTEE's 25 years is its huge contribution to the policy debate and deliberations within Canada. It is a record all chairs, members, and staff can be proud of as the NRTEE closes its door for the final time.



1 ROUND TABLES AND THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

The term *Round Table* has had a long and distinguished history, which makes it so appropriate for our story today. Round tables have possessed mystical, idealistic, patriotic purpose from the days of King Arthur and his chivalrous Knights of the Round Table sustaining the Kingdom. Round tables have been created throughout history to address critical decisions where public consensus was needed. The term first appeared in Canada around 1910 with the Round-table movement that sought to reconcile imperial unity and dominion autonomy. The desired concept lay in the circular design of the table that allowed for direct, face-to-face dialogue for constructive exchange of views to build respect, seek out common ground, and eventually find consensus-based solutions. It was viewed as an important policy-making tool of democracy.

PUBLIC POLICY AND DEBATE

The effectiveness of the democratic process is often said to be in “the vigour and diversity” of public policy debates. While this is the goal of all true democracies, institutional or political barriers often exist to such open dialogue. In this age of complex policy decisions, one requires informed autonomous policy institutions to provide the fodder for that debate.

Public policy debate is a structured two-staged phenomenon involving both the basic generation of concepts and ideas and then their professional refinement into formal policy recommendations, with discussion of strengths and weaknesses in a balanced fashion within economic and regulatory contexts. It is wrongly assumed that this process is always available in departmental or central agency offices. In some cases the resources are limited or the political will is not present.

The historic process of Canadian policy formulation is a long and complex one that includes a variety of structures. There were some early equivalents to the NRTEE, especially the Commission of Conservation (1909–1921) of the Laurier–Borden era. They wrote many large reports on conservation and wise use of natural resources. Of more



immediate vintage was the establishment of a series of Canadian think tanks in the 1960s and 1970s with a whole range of corporate, ideological, academic, social, labour, and environmental agendas. This reflected U.S. initiatives and the rising professionalism of policy studies in universities such as Queen's or Carleton.

Of particular relevance to the NRTEE were the Trudeau years when federal funding launched a series of institutions including the Economic Council, the Science Council, the Law Reform Commission, and the Environmental Council. Each of these was slightly different in structure and mandate but they all reflected two clear government objectives: improve the quality of the public debate on policy and improve the flow of policy proposals to Cabinet and Parliament. Public funding was designed to ensure independence.

While the quality of their reports was uneven, the overall result was that policy analysis in Canada matured significantly as did the content for media and parliamentary attention.

PHILOSOPHICAL DIFFERENCES

Some of these institutions' reports triggered ideological debate and other controversy. When it was claimed there was a *left of centre* bias, the C.D. Howe Institute and the Conference Board of Canada emerged to present alternative views from free market and business perspectives. At the centre were the group of government-sponsored, academically oriented think tanks led by the Economic and Science Councils injecting new innovative ideas for Trudeau's "Just Society," which raised some concern among opposition forces in the early 1980s.

The NRTEE emerged from the intense intellectual debate of the 1980s in North America. The forces at work reflected a profound sense of concern about the projected sustainability of social, economic, ecological, and agricultural systems on which the planet depended. The new computer systems began to allow these detailed interactions to be modelled.

On one side were a group of ecological pessimists. Led by the Club of Rome, they presented strong arguments in compelling detail that the rate of economic growth had to be severely curtailed or stopped. They argued that the rate of economic growth was now placing such strains on biological and other systems that they were under imminent danger of collapse, with huge economic and social consequences. The *Limits to Growth* school attracted huge public attention and support in some quarters, especially academia.



Business organizations rightly responded with a strong counterattack, arguing that *Limits to Growth* would kill jobs and push the western economies into recession. Models varied depending upon the assumptions built into them. They concluded, however, that the solution proposed by the Club of Rome was out of all proportion to the problem and that economic growth was needed to fund the new environmental improvements. Environmental issues, where they existed, could be managed directly without such social cost.

For many in government this now created a policy deadlock between the *Growth* and *No Growth* schools. To address this political impasse, an increasing number of policy watchers now sought a new middle ground.



2 THE NATIONAL TASK FORCE AND THE NRTEE

The birth of the NRTEE was a product of both international and domestic pressures on the sustainable development front. In 1983, the UN created the *World Commission on the Environment and Development* headed by Prime Minister Brundtland of Norway. Canada played a lead role with Maurice Strong as one of the Commissioners and Jim MacNeill heading the Secretariat. Public hearings were held around the world, including in Canada.

After three years of work the final report, *Our Common Future*, became one of the most influential and historic UN Documents. Its central message was a marriage of economic, environmental, and social goals integrated into their new vision of **sustainable development**. Industrial pollution had to be curbed in the North and economic growth had to be nourished in the South to address poverty. The current generation could not despoil the planet at the expense of future generations. This report presented a visionary new call to arms that addressed the *Limits to Growth* impasse and the desperate poverty of the developing world. Its power lay in its revolutionary simplicity and its appeal to both developed and developing worlds. In Canada, discussion groups immediately emerged to chart its political acceptance and implementation.

Even before the Brundtland Report was released, Canadians commenced implementation. In October 1986, the Canadian Council of Resource and Environmental Ministers established a national task force to recommend action. This followed the Brundtland Commission visit to Canada and the release of the *World Conservation Strategy* in June 1986. The task force received strong public and political support wherever it went. The public mood was strongly in favour of action to integrate environment into national economic measures. Dave Buzzelli, President of Dow Chemical, articulated the task force views when he said, “Environment and economic concerns must go hand in hand.”¹

¹ Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers, *Report of the National Task Force on Environment and Economy* (Ottawa: CCREM, September 24, 1987), 3.



At the core of the Task Force report was the concept of intergenerational equity and the future prosperity for Canadians. Environmental management and wise resource use were keys to a long-term, sustainable economy. The report urged that the current “remedial reactive approach” be replaced by “anticipate and prevent.” This was a structural issue of creating an integrated strategy. “The political and economic structures of Canada and the world are awakening to the need to make economic structures sustainable.”² Political and corporate decision making had to devise the means and the processes. Change was needed immediately in the way Canada planned and supervised all economic initiatives in both the public and the private sectors. These goals required new tools for both regulatory and market endeavours, including valuating and pricing natural capital such as water and forests. Canada had to improve its ability to forecast impacts and incent technology change. Canada had to become a leader in clean technologies for resource industries.

In turn, this would provide informed input for more comprehensive planning, management, and sustainable decision making. A key vehicle to deliver these actions and assess the results was to be new round tables on the environment and economy. Here Canadian leaders would debate the issues and advise governments on the needed actions. The Task force report immediately brought positive responses and a call for action in Ottawa and the provinces.

In looking back 25 years, one is amazed at the bipartisan multi-sectoral unanimity of the task force members and the degree to which over 25 years and nearly 100 major reports later, the NRTEE has delivered on their vision. Liberals, Tories, and New Democrats combined with rare unity. This was all occurring during the bitterly partisan free-trade debate and election. Today, in 2013, we can only look back with envy and gratitude.

² Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers, *Report of the National Task Force on Environment and Economy* (Ottawa: CCREM, September 24, 1987), 3.



3 LAUNCHING THE NATIONAL ROUND TABLE

In looking back from 2013, it is now very clear that the Mulroney years were a remarkable period of action on sustainability where divergent components appeared to be coming together. The National Task Force led the way for the creation of round tables at the national and provincial levels and beyond. This was to be a huge new network of interconnected bodies all championing the sustainability vision — a working partnership between industry, government, NGOs, academics, and civil society — to integrate economic, environmental, and social goals. Together they would design the new market and regulatory tools to change industry and work to change consumer behaviour into values-based sustainable consumption.

Other changes were underway in Ottawa. The Minister of the Environment became a senior Minister, one of the members of the inner Cabinet “Planning and Priorities Committee,” as well as one of the designated economic ministers. The Budget became viewed as a key tool for sustainability and environmental incentives. The Green Plan of \$3 billion was to cover all federal departments or agencies with an environmental role to play. Environment Canada, headed at various times by Lucien Bouchard or Jean Charest, played a strategic Cabinet role as never before or never since. Linkages between the environment and the economy were championed by the central agencies of government. This put the newly launched NRTEE in a primary position to be launching the new sustainability vision with Cabinet priorities clearly in line with its objectives.

In October 1988, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney announced the establishment of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. The Prime Minister put his own stamp of approval on this new body. It was to be an “independent multi-sectoral body” that will promote “environmentally sustainable economic development” forging “new ideas and new partnerships” to move Canada “into the new ways we must act.”³ The NRTEE’s mandate was to bring Canadians together to design and implement new sustainability tools, assess the options available, and make recommendations to the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

³ The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, Press Release, 1988.



FORMALIZING THE STRUCTURE

That same month, with a deep sense of urgency, an eight-person executive committee set to work. To capitalize on public awareness from the Brundtland Commission hearing, committee members wished to launch the process quickly. They also recognized the unique challenges for creating such an unprecedented consensus-building public organization. Led by the highly respected Principal of McGill University, David Johnston, they were determined to design innovative terms and conditions. The group included Pierre Marc Johnson, former premier of Québec, as well as Roy Aitkin (INCO) and Dave Buzzelli (Dow Chemical). After establishing the terms and conditions, they proposed the initial membership.

Early in 1989 the members were announced. Membership was drawn from the senior ranks of business, academic, NGO, and other sectors. As leaders, they were expected to provide strategic thinking in defining new innovative policy options. Their mandate was to influence both domestic and international policy. The new body was to be chaired by David Johnston and have two Vice Chairs, Pierre Marc Johnson and Susan Holtz, an NGO leader from Halifax. Jack MacLeod, the President of Shell Canada, led the industry delegation.

In the spring of 1992, the Honourable Jean Charest, Minister of the Environment, rose in the House of Commons to introduce Bill C-72 to establish the National Round Table on the Environment and Economy. The government wished to entrench the powers and independence of the NRTEE in actual legislation to enhance its security. The bill had bipartisan support. When the government of Prime Minister Mulroney fell, the new government led by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien gave the bill priority status and it passed in 1993. This firmly established the NRTEE in the Ottawa scene as an independent but prudent voice for sustainability.

Each of the NRTEE members (25 or less) had a dual role in the mandate. They were to engage in the NRTEE deliberations as independent thought leaders, but they were also to return to their sector to promote consensus building in Canada. Unlike the Task Force Report proposal, the NRTEE was a free-standing institution without joint membership with its provincial round tables. Members were provided with a strong and experienced professional secretariat to support their work and draft reports. The NRTEE benefited from easy access to the senior departmental officials and ministerial staff. Its budget, which was initially through Environment Canada, was modest and constraining. Given the strategic nature of the NRTEE's work, it reported directly to the Prime Minister. The early meetings were lively with an energetic sense of purpose and excitement.



4 EARLY WORK (1988–1993)

The new NRTEE members began their duties with the zeal, excitement, and determination of true believers. From the first, there was a conviction that they were part of a unique experiment in Canadian public policy development. They would set a new strategic direction for the Canadian state with all the complexities and ambiguities that it entailed. Given their seniority in Canadian affairs, members recognized the challenges that lay ahead in forging a new consensus. But, with the Prime Minister's endorsement, they felt they could move mountains. The members exhibited an impatience to get going on policy recommendations even before structures and processes were in place. This created certain process and administrative challenges for Dorothy Richardson, the experienced first Executive Director.

One of the great challenges from the beginning was finding the common ground between business and NGO communities. While the debates were vigorous, members showed good will and respect and a commitment to consensus-based decisions. They believed they were involved in a historic groundbreaking experiment, which muted some of the adversarial drives. With federal ministers present, the proceeding had to be in camera, a situation that made some NGOs uncomfortable. Public statements and communications were a challenge given the variety of the stakeholders around the table.

EARLY FOCUS

Considerable time was spent in early meetings on work plans and structure, the latter of which was very much a work in progress. The executive and members decided on an initial decentralized structure with five Standing Committees in key policy areas. There was a perception that the public momentum for change was easing and there was an urgency to getting started on their work. The Standing Committees covered the following areas:

- a) Changing Socio-Economic Incentives — including fiscal policy, taxation, royalties, subsidies, and regulation
- b) Changing Decision-Making Processes so they reflect the wider principles of sustainable development
- c) Changing Recycling Practices



- d) Changing Individual and Societal Goals, Values, and Behaviour so Canadians could live sustainably
- e) Changing Foreign Policy Approaches — external trade, aid, and other issues

There were also committees dealing with communications and administration. The above were meant to investigate general areas and each had a fair degree of autonomy in final reporting to the plenary.

One of the unique features of the NRTEE as an advisory body was the presence of federal ministers from Environment, Finance, Industry, Science and Technology, and Energy, Mines and Resources. The Minister of the Environment, Jean Charest, was by far the most active participant; others were not fully comfortable with this NRTEE role. Their presence complicated process and drew undue media attention. However, it brought NRTEE work immediately to the attention of ministers and their staff, and senior departmental staff watched NRTEE business closely.

The round-table format created considerable discussion within and outside of Canada. Canada was the most aggressive adopter of this format with links to the Brundtland Commission. Jim MacNeill, the Secretary General, was a very active member of the Round Table. At one point, there were nearly 200 Canadian round tables — federal, provincial, territorial, and others — which allowed for a brisk trade in comparative analysis. The NRTEE secretariat felt obliged to create a Canadian Association of Round Table Secretariats to meet the need to compare experience and avoid duplication of efforts. The message of the National Task Force had clearly been heard and acted upon.

RIO SUMMIT AND NAFTA

The question of their effectiveness is important to consider. Governments normally do not publicly broadcast the sources of policy influence. But two early areas really do stand out — the Rio Summit as an event and free trade as an issue.

The NRTEE played a seminal role in the national planning for Canada's leadership role at the Rio Environment and Development Summit in 1992. It prepared four of the key policy papers for the Prime Minister's participation at Rio. Through its very close links to Minister Charest, the NRTEE played a wider strategic and policy role, and Pierre Marc Johnson and Jim MacNeill were members of the official Canadian delegation. This was a clear instance of the NRTEE's influential role in impacting Canadian policy and actions at Rio and in the post-Rio follow-ups.



The greatest single-issue focus in the first years of the NRTEE was environment and trade in the NAFTA context. The free trade agreement, first with the U.S. and then broadened to include Mexico, led to fierce public battles between some elements in the business community and some environmental groups that believed that environmental protection would be eroded. The NRTEE first fought to entrench appropriate environmental protection in the agreement and then to ensure that the joint Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) could monitor the results of the trade agreement and the enforcement of environmental regulations. NRTEE Vice Chair Pierre Marc Johnson led this work and the CEC ended up being located in Montréal. Later, two NRTEE members represented Canada in the 10-year assessment of CEC's effectiveness. The Government of Canada was less interested in undertaking this work itself and supported the NRTEE role in its place.

EARLY EFFECTIVENESS AND INFLUENCE: OTHER POLICIES

Great progress was made in specific policy areas during the Mulroney years. The major changes came in toxic chemicals with the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act (1988)*, the amended *National Parks Act (1988)* for protected spaces, the revisions to environmental assessment of projects and policies, and the Green Plan, which was a huge \$3-billion government-wide funding of new environmental initiatives. In all these areas, the NRTEE played a role in fine-tuning the initiatives and their implementation.

During this period, the NRTEE was also dealing with the competing role of the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council (with its direct links within Environment Canada) and the direct lobbying of environmental groups or industry to the relevant minister.

The early NRTEE work plan included an impressive breadth of topics and issues that included economic instruments as an alternative to regulation and the curbing of perverse subsidies, forest and pulp and paper round tables, biodiversity and rural sustainability, the decline of East Coast fisheries, the environment and competitiveness, and the implementation of Rio. The NRTEE published a variety of work papers and several books on specific work plan issues. The volume of publications in some cases hurt the quality and the large number of topics eroded focus. NRTEE members felt an urgency to get out basic statements. There were also special youth activities and curriculum development for sustainability curriculum in the schools. Given the modest budget, this was an impressive range of products.



5 THE WORK BEGINS IN EARNEST (1993–2000)

By 1993, the NRTEE was an established force in Ottawa and had a strong image across the country. The structure of the Round Table organization had changed, as plenaries now became the major focus for policy debates in place of the more decentralized Standing Committee structure. Budgets were still tight but the reports were well received and consensus decision making appeared to be working. After five successful years the NRTEE had proved its worth as a player on the Canadian policy scene to both government and public opinion.

In October 1993, the government in Ottawa changed. A change government is by definition a time of stress and uncertainty for special agencies like the NRTEE. Will they survive? Will their key programs be allowed to continue? These were the fears as the NRTEE prepared the briefing binder for the new Prime Minister and staff. Then there was a second round of fears as the first Budget approached where the new government would show its detailed plans for the future. In the previous (1992) Budget, a number of councils had been terminated.

Fortunately, the government led by Prime Minister Chrétien had no surprises for the NRTEE, and it continued with business as usual. The Minister of the Environment, Sheila Copps, was a strong advocate for the environment. Finance Minister Paul Martin, a particularly strong supporter, had already shown his serious interest in the environment and sustainability. The transition was smooth and seamless and a credit to both parties.

Some new members were appointed as others completed their terms. Both the NRTEE Chair George Connell and Executive Director Ron Doering were allowed to complete their five-year terms that ran several years into the term of the new government. In 1995, Connell was replaced by Stuart Smith, former Ontario Liberal leader, who possessed a deep interest and knowledge in science and the environment.



The following seven years saw the NRTEE carried out four main roles in Canada.

1. It was first, and possibly foremost, a dynamic **catalyst** to bring Canadians together in support of sustainability actions through their own actions and through partnerships.
2. It fulfilled an **advisory** role to the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Environment as well as department officials. This required credible and innovative policy reports and recommendations relevant to the government's agenda and capable of being implemented given the ongoing budget deficits.
3. It also had an **advocacy** role to educate the public, move public opinion, build consensus, and prepare the way for government action without offending political sensitivities. This was a fine line for the NRTEE and for the government, which worked reasonably well at this time, but less so later.
4. The NRTEE was also expected to be an **informed research body** accessing the best minds in the country and synthesizing the results into key summaries of science and economics in a format for policy decision making. The sheer volume and diversity of topics was amazing given their limited staff and budget and will be discussed later.

PUBLICATIONS

This author was amazed, for example, by the list of projects and publications in the *Annual Report 1994–1995* from the NRTEE's first four years of full operation — 9 books, 30 working papers, 12 reports, and a variety of other communication products.

The publications averaged more than one per month through this period, many of which I still have in my library. In reviewing all this productivity, I wonder if fewer topics would have allowed greater focus and impact on policy deliberations. However, each of these topics was designed to address a different sector or policy area. Each of these was deserving of support from the NRTEE as a national platform for issues.

A summary of some of the topics would include the following:

- brownfield reclamation and development
- waste reduction and recycling
- sustainable communities
- trade incentives and barriers
- environment and competitiveness
- sustainable policies for unions



- journalism and sustainability reporting
- indicators for corporate reporting
- financial services
- fiscal measures and taxation
- sustainable energy and renewables
- their proposal for a Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development
- forestry, fisheries, agriculture, and rural societies

Many of these publications were widely purchased by Canadians through the government bookstores or used in university courses. Hundreds of individuals from dozens of organizations contributed voluntarily to enhance the quality of their reports. There were also special youth forums and intern programs in the office. The result of all these voluntary contributions was a very cost-effective, high quality-system.

PROGRESS ON SUSTAINABILITY

While all of this was impressive, both the Chair and the Executive Director were unhappy with the rate of progress in the country. The quiet-spoken Chair George Connell warned the Prime Minister:

As proud as we are of Canada's progress toward sustainable development in many different areas, nevertheless it is much too early to be complacent ... in terms of real change our progress has been modest. We have done the easy part in laying the foundations for a sustainable future, but the most difficult choices lie ahead. Our current path is unsustainable.⁴

Executive Director Ron Doering was much blunter in his final report before leaving office:

Although Canada has made some progress toward sustainable development, we continue to run real economic, ecological and social deficits. We continue to mask the reality of the present by borrowing against our future. The crises we face today are the legacies of inadequate decision making of the past.⁵

They were concerned that the sustainability movement in Canada was losing momentum and that the Government of Canada reflected this in its priorities. There was an increased urgency and importance for their work.

⁴ NRTEE, Annual Review 1994–1995. (Ottawa: NRTEE, 1995), 4.

⁵ Ibid, 5.



DEVELOPMENT OF NEW POLICY TOOLS

To address these challenges, the NRTEE explored the development of new policy tools that might break the policy impasse on sustainability. In the 1970s there had been a great faith in government regulation as the tool to deliver environmental goals. However, regulation had created problems of unforeseen consequences from market distortions so the NRTEE wished to explore and develop economic instruments that would operate within market forces, not in opposition to them. This did not mean regulation would be abandoned, for it was essential in areas such as those impacting human health. Rather, market mechanisms could speed progress and lower costs, as had the SO₂ cap-and-trade system in the U.S. after 1990.

ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS, GREEN BUDGETING, AND GREEN PROCUREMENT

From its founding until its demise, the NRTEE played a central role in the Canadian debate over economic instruments to address environmental and sustainability issues. It attempted to bring academic economists, policy wonks, scientists, and business leaders together. While the general concepts were easy to discuss, their application for specific emissions control was much more difficult. With carbon, everything was interconnected and complex with biological, consumer behaviour, technology, and economic drivers. The chances of unintended consequences were always there, so innovation had to be balanced with prudence.

Economic instruments were a synthesis of political left and right — using market drivers for progressive causes. The policy had emerged over a decade earlier but never really taken off. John Dales, an economist at the University of Toronto, had done important work linking pollution volumes to property rights that then could be sold or traded. He also explored pollution taxes as an incentive for technology change.

The NRTEE attempted to apply these economic instruments to the specific challenges of acid rain, ground-level ozone, and greenhouse gases. The U.S. experience with SO₂ emission-credits trading lowered U.S. EPA costs and sped up compliance faster than expected. The NRTEE now focused on a cap-and-trade system to put a price signal into the carbon market. It believed this would provide target certainty to industry and support Canada's international efforts. However, the immediate response from government was limited.

A related area of economic instruments created more immediate official interest. The NRTEE put considerable effort into Green Budgets in which the Minister of Finance would use his annual statement on taxes, penalties, and incentives to give new, more



sustainable direction to investments and the economy. The Budget was the economic compass for the nation, and all business leaders carefully weighed statements and even hints to influence their own investment decisions. This work appeared to attract the Finance Minister's interest and that of his staff. Unfortunately, with the deficit crisis, Paul Martin did not have much room to experiment and the response was confined to a few small measures. In the years following, as the nation's finances improved, the government again showed some interest in Green Budget implementation, and a number of particular items were included in Budgets to incent efficiency and conservation.

If Green Budget was one area of NRTEE attention, Green Procurement was another. Here Ottawa could lead by example as the federal government had the largest supply chain of purchasing in the country. New federal requirements would set in motion adoption by other parties. The task force included the ADM in Environment Canada responsible for all its purchasing. Other members were from Loblaws and Bell. The NRTEE brought together federal purchasers and federal suppliers and co-sponsored the first national conference of the Canadian Environmental Industries Association in Ottawa in March 1995. When the report was completed it was delivered to Treasury Board for implementation.

ECO-EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION

One of the natural areas for NRTEE work was eco-efficiency and conservation because it both lowered costs and cut emissions. In 1996, the NRTEE received a request from the government to work on eco-efficiency targets for business so companies would have benchmarks to strive for. With its partners in the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, the Round Table prepared materials and then had them tested in a joint workshop with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. This forum brought together experts from Canada, the U.S., Mexico, and South America to test the results. The NRTEE then created a series of eco-efficiency indicators for industry to use.

RURAL CHALLENGES

One of the challenges for the NRTEE was to ensure that its work plan was relevant to all Canadians, both rural and urban. Bob Sopuck, now a Manitoba MP, was then a leading figure in that province's Round Table. He led the way for his colleagues in Ottawa with a strongly argued working paper on agriculture, trade, and rural sustainability. His paper stressed the need for food security and rural income sustainability as part of the wider issue of rural sustainability. He showed how farmers suffered from policy silos where their interest fell between the cracks and between federal and provincial responsibility. Farmers needed some return from their services in support of natural capital and environment; economic and social objectives seemed to be at cross purposes. A sustainable rural Canada was eroding.



STATE OF THE DEBATE REPORTS

In 1996 the Round Table launched its major publication series, “State of the Debate” reports, on specific issues. The first report, released that same year, was the *State of the Debate on the Environment and the Economy: Water and Wastewater Services in Canada*. The reports were available in electronic and print forms; the latter sold at cost through the government publications agency, Renouf. They became a standard reference source for many seeking a balanced source of information; this type of reporting continued for the next decade.

Under Stuart Smith’s leadership, the NRTEE came back to some central issues for sustainability with Green Budgets, Ecological Fiscal Reform, and Eco-Efficiency. The Round Table hoped that the Chair’s collegial working relationship with the Finance Minister might bring some breakthrough in these areas. Each year the NRTEE prepared budget recommendations that it presented to the Minister and to the Commons Finance Committee. In 2000 it included the following proposals:

- green energy procurement program
- accelerated capital cost allowance for eco-efficiency technology
- 50% reduction in capital gains tax for gifts of ecological lands for conservation
- creation of a habitat conservation fund to promote biodiversity
- creation of a sustainable solutions network for SMEs
- federal support for sustainable development indicators to measure sustainable development performance



6 THE MIDDLE YEARS (2000–2006)

While Finance and PCO carefully assessed the first five and actually accepted some, the last proposal brought an immediate response in the form of a \$9 million grant over three years and the commitment that Environment Canada and Statistics Canada would work closely with the NRTEE on this project. It was a clear indication of the old management principle: what you do not monitor and measure, you cannot manage. It was also a means of making sustainable development more concrete for business, government, and professions like accounting and engineering. One of the indicators was eco-efficiency, which was discussed earlier.

Another Green Budget item was Ecological Fiscal Reform, “a strategy that redirects a government’s taxation and expenditure program to create an integrated set of incentives to support the shift to sustainable development.”⁶ A variety of fiscal tools could be used to incent the desired outcomes or dissuade non-sustainable practices. For the Department of Finance, this was a subversive deviation from sound fiscal principles and least-cost practices impacting both government and corporate budgets. “Distorting” the country’s finances to meet a particular policy goal was simply not acceptable even if that policy goal was appropriate or desirable. For many who believed that markets — not the tax system — should determine these matters, this was simply unsound fiscal management. In academic circles there was a similar debate between mainstream economists and the breakaway “ecological” economists. This was a battle the NRTEE was unlikely to win. However, its response was to move to market mechanisms that will be discussed in detail later.

THE NORTH AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Through the history of the NRTEE, the North was a matter of focus in both appointments and work plan. Part of this involved land claims, subsistence economy, and broader Aboriginal issues, and part of it was the ecological sensitivity of the North facing the most blatant examples of rapid climate change. As Southern Canadians had heard little about the North since the days of the Berger Inquiry, the NRTEE delivered the report, *State of the Debate: Aboriginal Communities Non-Renewable Resource Development* in 2001.

⁶ NRTEE, *Toward a Canadian Agenda for Ecological Fiscal Reform: First Step* (Ottawa, NRTEE, 2002), vii.



The NRTEE analysis drew into sharp relief the non-renewable and non-sustainable resource development policies in the federal mining and oil/gas regulations and the sustainability of traditional First Nations activities in the North. First Nations and Inuit were expected to participate in the new resource-based economy without the capital resources to do so or the local capacity to manage the environmental and social impacts. This dilemma raised fundamental issues of equity, cultural survival, and the disparity in governance structures. These policy uncertainties made the social relations for companies operating in the North all the more difficult, and federal bodies like the National Energy Board were caught between First Nations governance on one side and territorial authorities on the other. Yet First Nations were the basis for Canadian claims to Northern sovereignty.

The Chrétien years were a period of consolidation and maturing for the NRTEE. The NRTEE continued its progress on delivering State of the Debate reports, including *Capital Markets and Sustainability: Investing in a sustainable future*, which was completed in 2006 and published in early 2007. Financing change was one of the essential topics for consideration but probably one of the least understood. The report found a number of market barriers within the world of stock exchanges, credit ratings, bond merchants, equity and hedge funds, pension funds, as well as banks and near banks. They proposed a series of disclosure and assessment measures. This was not an easy time for Chairs Harvey Mead and then Glen Murray. Both worked industriously on these issues without great response.



7 THE FINAL CHAPTER (2006–2013)

When Stephen Harper followed Paul Martin as Prime Minister after the February 2006 election, the NRTEE continued to face the uncertainty of working under a minority Parliament. Not unnaturally, Chair Glen Murray and the members of the NRTEE were uncertain about their futures. The Reform Party traditions were not enthusiastic about such government-sponsored bodies, but individual MPs like Bob Mills of Red Deer had been deeply involved in environmental issues. In 2006 the Harper Cabinet carefully reviewed the role and the effectiveness of bodies like the NRTEE and confirmed that it was to continue.

The only change was that Round Table now reported to the Minister of the Environment instead of the Prime Minister, which reflected much of the existing status quo. However, it was the final blow in eliminating sustainable development as a central paradigm for government strategy. Glen Murray, the Martin-appointed Chair, was allowed to complete his term that had two years remaining. Existing members completed their terms and the budget funding was allowed to continue. John Baird, the Minister of the Environment, created a public process under the Privy Council Office to select the new Chair. The NRTEE had clearly survived the transition to the new government and it was business as usual for the members and staff.

PARLIAMENTARY REFERENCE

Under Prime Minister Harper, the NRTEE was given a whole new role by the majority opposition parties who wanted to embarrass the government over Kyoto. Under the *Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act* (2007), the government was required to report annually on its measures to implement the Act. In turn, the NRTEE was required under the Act to assess the government's report within 60 days to determine the likelihood of the measures meeting their targets and Canada fulfilling its Kyoto obligations. The NRTEE found overestimations in the governments' emission reduction estimates and successfully promoted methodology improvements. In one sense this was a political game, but in another sense, it opened a whole new, and not necessarily comfortable, role for the NRTEE as a parliamentary watch dog.



CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON PRICING

The main focus of the NRTEE at this time was a series of reports on climate change, greenhouse gases, and carbon pricing. This constituted the most concentrated and innovative volume of work on climate change policy during these years in Canada. The work began in November 2006 with a request from the Minister of the Environment for advice on how Canada could achieve long-term cuts in GHG and other emissions by 2050. The NRTEE delivered extensive reports in the two years following on both short-term (2020) and long-term (2050) strategies. The recommended strategies had five components:

1. in harmony with other global players
2. short- and long-term targets for investor certainty
3. an economy-wide carbon price
4. emission cuts through technology change
5. emission policies complementary with Canadian competitiveness

At the time, all these proposals seemed to coincide with Canadian government strategy.

WATER RESOURCES AND GOVERNANCE

In 2008/2009 the NRTEE commenced work in a major area of sustainability, the water resources of Canada. With climate change, Canadians were facing increased variability in water supply due to both droughts and flooding. This resulted in two major reports in 2010 and 2011 on water management and natural resource industries — agriculture, oil and gas, thermal electricity, mining, and forestry. Water is a deeply emotional policy issue that divides sectors and families. Drought has the potential to devastate the economy.

Water governance, rights to access, and historic policies were all under challenge in some areas. Legal water rights in the West (first in time, first in right) often did not reflect contemporary needs. But attempts to reform the system had been met with intensely bitter opposition. Each resource sector had unique circumstances and needs that could be in conflict. It was clear that reallocating water rights was a political non-starter, but water pricing and the trading of water rights had some promise. The NRTEE proposed a new model for collaborative water governance and stakeholder involvement. There needs to be integrative water planning between sectors as well as watershed modelling and flow data. It was ironic that Canada, with 20% of the globe's freshwater supply, had such challenges in ensuring long-term sustainability in some regions.



NORTHERN INFRASTRUCTURE

Through the whole history of the NRTEE there had been great interest in Canada's huge but desolate North. The interest had been in Aboriginal affairs, economic development, and the environment, especially climate change. After extensive work in the North and the South, the NRTEE released its major report on Arctic infrastructure and climate impacts in November 2009 called *True North: Adapting Infrastructure to Climate Change in Northern Canada*. It included recommendations on community infrastructure; energy, including pipelines; and transportation such as roads, airport, and river crossings. With sea-level rise and storm surges, some Northern communities might have to be relocated. It was a good companion piece to the government's Northern strategy.

ROYAL CANADIAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP

One of the exciting new partnerships was in 2010 with the Royal Canadian Geographical Society on climate change. With many inaccuracies about climate change in the public arena, the two organizations came together to create a map of Canada and chart basic scientific facts like the huge increase in winter temperatures in areas of the Canadian Arctic and its impact on permafrost. This resulted in a special issue of *Canadian Geographic* and its French equivalent, *Géographica*, in October 2010 and a poster and map that was distributed to thousands of Canadian classrooms. Associated Grade 12 curriculum and lesson plans were developed in all provinces. This resulted in a wide distribution of the NRTEE research on climate change in a way the Round Table never would have achieved on its own.

CLIMATE PROSPERITY

The government of Prime Minister Harper, while opposed to Kyoto, was strongly committed to identical policies to their U.S. trade allies. The U.S. in 2009, appeared headed for a cap-and-trade system to curb its CO₂ emissions. When President Obama visited Ottawa in spring 2009, Prime Minister Harper pressed for a Canada-U.S. energy and environment accord in which Canada would adopt similar emission policies to help secure Canadian energy exports. The NRTEE work on Climate Change and Carbon Pricing was perfectly aligned to the government policies and its research appeared to make a valuable contribution to government decision making.



To follow up on the five strategies listed earlier and the Harper-Obama negotiations, the NRTEE embarked upon an ambitious series of six major reports under the banner of *Climate Prosperity*, which were released over two years from 2010 to 2012. The six studies covered the following areas related to Canadian prosperity:

- a) **Canadian Competitiveness** presented a comparative study of Canadian competitiveness and carbon in the G-8 countries. Under the analytical approach used, Canada was found to be behind all but Italy and Russia, which created controversy.
- b) **Canada/United States** compared the circumstances in both countries and concluded that Canadian per capita costs would be higher and targets more difficult.
- c) **Physical Impacts** analyzed the impacts of climate change on ecosystems, water resources, health, infrastructure, and natural resources and how adaptation measures could be applied.
- d) **Net National Costs** detailed sector-by-sector, region-by-region cost estimates for climate change. They were projected to be significantly less than some industry source estimates and would not destroy prosperity.
- e) **Business Resilience** assessed the ability of Canadian business to respond and adapt to the new low-carbon economy to protect competitiveness and prosperity. The changes were expected to be cost effective.
- f) **Policy Pathways to the Low Carbon Transition** proposed the policies and actions required by government and industry to ensure Canada possessed the necessary skills, innovation, investment, and governance to prosper in the transition to a low carbon economy.

These reports documented both the risks and the opportunities for Canada in preparing for a carbon-constrained future given our carbon-intensive fossil-fuel-based economy. Results showed that with timely actions, our energy exports could be protected and our prosperity preserved. But this required a plan of action on carbon management for government and industry. Market mechanisms needed to be mobilized immediately and cost-effective means devised to protect competitiveness. Because climate change was already underway, Canada had to adapt to those impacts as they emerged.

The six major studies involved research never attempted before in Canada. They included sector-by-sector, region-by-region modelling and analysis of costs and competitive trade issues. The studies showed that emission cuts would be more difficult and more costly in Canada than in the U.S., so Canada must begin earlier to meet bilateral targets and dates. Many of Canada's competitors were taking action; if we waited, our products could face carbon-based trade barriers. As a trade-dependent economy, we could not afford to be left behind.



In the course of the design, research, writing, and production of these reports — all of which represented a huge investment of time, money, and expertise to produce — the government's climate policy fundamentally changed. President Obama's climate legislation was stopped in the U.S. House of Representatives, which in turn caused Prime Minister Harper to reverse policy. The Prime Minister denounced the idea of a carbon tax and the NRTEE's earlier carbon pricing work and recommendations suffered from guilt by association.

The research reports that were emerging at that time became unacceptable when government policy reversed.

MINISTERIAL REFERENCES

On the eve of the 2011 federal election, the Minister of the Environment, Peter Kent, met with NRTEE members to deliver a request for two further areas of research and reporting. He stated that the NRTEE was in “unique position to advise the federal government on sustainable development solutions” and asked for “advice on key and emerging issues that will help guide future federal government environmental policies.”⁷

In the first reference, the NRTEE was requested to conduct a comprehensive review of provincial and territorial climate change policies to estimate their contribution to the 2020 national targets. The NRTEE found that only Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia were likely to meet their targets and overall the provinces were likely to deliver 25% of the Canadian target, to combine with an equal amount from the federal action.

The second reference was a request to assess the potential of life-cycle approaches to enhance environmental sustainability in the public and private sectors. The NRTEE found that Canada needed to develop life-cycle analyses in both areas to improve product quality and government and industry processes, and protect products entering international trade.

⁷ NRTEE, *Reality Check: The State of Climate Progress in Canada* (Ottawa: NRTEE, 2012), 122.



8 CLOSING DOWN THE ROUND TABLE (2012–2013)

In the spring Budget of 2012, the government announced the closing of the National Round Table for the end of March 2013. The NRTEE would be allowed to complete existing work and wind down over the course of the ensuing year. There were a number of protests in Parliament and the media, but the government had no intention of backing down. The experiment with the Round Table approach to the development and promotion of policy options on sustainability begun in 1988 would come to an end after almost 25 years.



9 THE LASTING LEGACY OF THE NRTEE

The NRTEE's wide range of reports over 25 years was instrumental in illustrating for Canadians the main component requirements for national sustainability. The reports showed the complexity of the field and the inter-connections between the economic, environmental, and social components. They gave essential, concrete examples of this new paradigm by providing critical sector-by-sector and region-by-region analysis for Ottawa policy makers. Some of these reports were ignored, some carefully considered, and some converted into federal policy or practices.

REPORTS

One of the great areas of NRTEE success was in publicizing the need for sustainable development reporting and refining the methodology for it. These focused on four areas: the purpose of reporting, the data and methodology, the use of indicators to document trends, and post-reporting follow-up to improve performance. The NRTEE worked with a variety of professional bodies such as the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants to ensure these practices became standard across Canadian companies. These advances were part of an international business movement with the sustainability indices of Dow Jones and the *Financial Times*. The result was that by 2010, most major Canadian companies published annually a sustainability report or equivalent for transparency and accountability to shareholders and stakeholders. The NRTEE was the leading driver on this in Canada.

STRUCTURAL CHANGES

In Ottawa the NRTEE's efforts achieved important structural changes. From the time of the Green Plan, most government departments and agencies were expected to provide a sustainability assessment of their operations that unfortunately became just a listing of environmental actions. Of greater importance was the NRTEE recommendation to create a federal Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to report annually on federal activities. When implemented, the Commissioner became part of the Auditor General's office with all its powers and independence. The NRTEE worked closely with this new office supplying data and analysis. This NRTEE proposal became a major structural change in Ottawa with the annual reports of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development attracting major media attention and public interest.



ADVICE

The NRTEE was both an advisor to and a constructive conscience for governments, pointing out new areas for action or improvements in existing practices. The NRTEE played both roles with care and diplomacy. The reports avoided direct criticism of government policy, but their proposing of new options for the future was viewed by some as indirect criticism and by a few as partisan attacks. This was a fine line to tread for every NRTEE Chair, President, and member, given the political sensitivities involved. But it raises the question of why have an NRTEE unless it was to provide new options for government.

CONVENING

Through its 25-year history, the NRTEE exhibited an exceptional convening power to bring interested Canadians from various backgrounds together in a collaborative dialogue on the pressing issues of the day. This varied input created the balance and the comprehensiveness in its analysis and recommendation. It helped to provide richness and nuances usually lost in policy documents. The drive for and culture of consensus blunted adversarial comments and created a culture of respect for alternative views. The resulting product often took considerable time and patience as well as diplomacy from the Chair. Some of the reports were consensus-based clear recommendations and others were not. The State of the Debate reports included differing views. But either approach was useful to government, navigating the shoals of controversy.

The NRTEE reports provided policy insights well beyond any public opinion surveys. The input was from NRTEE members and staff, task force members beyond their ranks, workshops across the country, and expertise from consultants. The NRTEE report process reflected the microcosm of the national debate and made sense of it for government. The convening process was a huge strength of the NRTEE and its reports, allowing it to claim an “honest broker” role and to add considerable value.



10 CONCLUSIONS

The central question for this brief summary of the NRTEE work remains: Was the NRTEE effective in influencing public policy? The answer is mixed. Many reports triggered little response in spite of departmental briefings. However, some reports such as carbon pricing and climate costs had huge uptake in the media and from interested Canadians.

A number of important inputs did not change policy but did change the context for policy discussions. The NRTEE was the first to do the complex modelling of climate change costs, sector by sector and region by region, which was closely considered by senior officials including some in the Privy Council Office and others in the Government of Alberta. It was also the first to propose changing the methodology for counting CO₂ emissions that was adopted by Environment Canada and Natural Resources Canada. This work was completed in the Round Table's last five years. .

The NRTEE had considerable influence in the beginning during the Mulroney years, especially through Jean Charest's deep involvement. This influence continued right to the final months with departmental briefings. In the final year, Peter Kent referred two more issues for assessment reflecting his own interest in the NRTEE's work. The NRTEE was a trusted policy research vehicle, offering unique insights to many in the Ottawa establishment right up to the time of the 2012 Budget.

Outside the federal government, there were many links for policy collaboration. The CEOs and the Chairs made many policy presentations to provincial government bodies and to private sector industrial groups, including the Conference Board of Canada and the Canadian Council of Chief Executives. They worked closely with other organizations such as the Canada West Foundation. All of this was accomplished in a most cost-effective manner with an annual budget of about \$5 million. There is a record of achievement for which NRTEE members can be proud.



APPENDIX 1:

GOVERNANCE AND ROLES

INTERNAL CONTROLS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The NRTEE developed a vigorous program to drive organizational efficiency and cost-effective delivery of its product. From 2004 onward, performance assessment and measurement were cornerstones of management. The NRTEE established benchmarks and indicators to document for the Minister, Parliament, and the public that taxpayer funds were being wisely spent and that it was effectively engaging Canadians in its policy work. Briefings on all reports were developed for key departments and the Privy Council Office.

Over the course of its last five years, there were detailed assessments carried out of the Board and the Chair similar to many corporate boards. The results were shared with the Minister and Treasury Board to execute full accountability. The NRTEE was recognized as a governance leader among federal agencies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CHAIR

The Chair was the public face of the NRTEE, its liaison with the Minister or Prime Minister's Office, and often its media voice.

The role of Chair was a demanding leadership challenge that involved building consensus among the members, guiding the Round Table deliberations on the reports to achieve final approval while balancing the geographic and sectoral interests around the table. This was all delivered for very little remuneration and at some cost in terms of family obligations and career responsibilities.

PRESIDENT AND CEO

The President and CEO had equally demanding responsibilities, being fully accountable for the day-to-day operations of the NRTEE and required many of the same attributes as the Chair. The individual had the responsibility for all staff, budgets, communications,



and research, including external consultants. This included keeping the Minister, the Privy Council Office, and the Treasury Board all fully briefed. Given the absence of the Chair from Ottawa, some of the Chair's duties also fell to the CEO. Each report required detailed final editorial work to reflect member comments. The NRTEE has been very well served by its fine Presidents and CEOs, from Dorothy Richardson to Jim McLachlan.

MEMBERS

The members of the NRTEE have been its heart and soul. More than 150 distinguished Canadians have served from 1988 to 2013 from every region and all walks of life. Appointed by the government of the day for a two-three year term on a part-time basis, they constitute a "Who's Who" of Canadian leaders. Their dedication to the cause has been demonstrated in so many ways, including countless hours in assessing reports, travelling, and attending committee and plenary meetings. Their patience in striving to achieve consensus positions, their intellect, and their creativity in inventing innovative solutions for government consideration always amazed me. There was an *esprit de corps* and pride in what they were doing. They exhibited a perpetual optimism and enthusiasm for their deliberations regardless of the hour.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships played a key role in expanding intellectual resources, limiting costs, and creating communication networks. With each project there was a search for appropriate partners, domestic or international. Marine ecosystems were explored with the Newfoundland and Labrador Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, rural economy was with Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Climate Change and Transportation was linked to Ontario, the Great Lakes International Basin was with President Reagan's Council on Sustainable Development, while a North American ecosystem focus drew in colleagues from the U.S. and Mexico. Later partnerships included the successful collaboration with the Royal Canadian Geographical Society.

Given its modest budget this is the only way the NRTEE could operate in such a wide, yet authoritative, fashion.



APPENDIX 2:

NRTEE LEADERSHIP

(1988–2013)

CHAIR

TENURE AT NRTEE

David Johnston	1988–1990
George E. Connell	1990–1995
Stuart Lyon Smith	1995–2002
Harvey Mead	2002–2005
Glen Murray	2005–2008
Robert (Bob) Page	2008–2012
Robert Slater (Interim)	2012–2013

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / PRESIDENTS & CEO

TENURE AT NRTEE

Dorothy Richardson (Executive Director)	1988–1991
Ronald L. Doering (Executive Director)	1991–1996
David McGuinty (President & CEO)	1996–2004
Eugene Nyberg (Acting President & CEO)	2004–2005
Alex Wood (Acting President & CEO)	2005–2007
David McLaughlin (President & CEO)	2007–2012
Jim McLachlan (Acting President & CEO)	2012–2013



MEMBERS OF THE ROUND TABLE

“TO SAY THAT THE NATIONAL ROUND TABLE’S MEMBERS WERE ITS GREATEST ASSET WOULD HAVE BEEN AN UNDERSTATEMENT. TRULY, THE NATIONAL ROUND TABLE WAS ITS MEMBERS, AND THE NRTEE THANKS THEM HEARTILY FOR THEIR COMMITMENT AND PARTICIPATION.

THEY BRING THEIR KNOWLEDGE, EXPERTISE AND OPEN MINDS TO THE TABLE

— AND WITHOUT THEM, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO NATIONAL ROUND TABLE.”⁸

Harinder P.S. Ahluwalia	The Honourable Benoit Bouchard	George E. Connell
W.R.O. (Roy) Aitken	David Bishop	Elizabeth Jane Crocker
Elyse Allan	Lise Brousseau	The Honourable J. Glen Cummings
Allan F. Amey	The Honourable Pauline Browes	Dianne Cunningham
Paul Antle	Elizabeth Brubaker	Hélène Connor-Lajambe
Edwin Aquilina	Allan Bruce	The Honourable Robert René de Cotret
Louis Archambault	Angus Bruneau	Anthony Dale
R.C. (Reg) Basken	David T. Buzzelli	Douglas B. Deacon
Jean Bélanger	The Honourable Carol Carson	Pat Delbridge
David V.J. Bell	Patrick Carson	Francine Dorion
Janet L.R. Benjamin	Wendy L. Carter	Robert A. Dubé
Guy Bertrand	The Honourable Jean Charest	Terry Duguid
The Honourable Lise Bacon	David Chernushenko	Richard Drouin
Katherine M. Bergman	Linda Coady	G. Martin Eakins
Françoise Bertrand		The Honourable Jake Epp
William J. Borland		

⁸ NRTEE, 1988 -2008: *Recognizing 20 years of contribution to sustainable development in Canada* (Ottawa: NRTEE, 2008), 40 -41.



Janine Ferretti	Lise Lachapelle	Mark Parent
Jean Gaulin	Lester Lafond	Edythe A. (Dee) Parkinson-Marcoux
Johanne Gélinas	Manon Laporte	Carol Philips
Josefina Gonzalez	Leah C. Lawrence	Alfred Pilon
Diane Griffin	Emery P. LeBlanc	Leone Pippard
John V. Hachey	The Honourable John Leefe	Richard W. Prokopanko
Timothy Haig	Anne Letellier de St-Just	Darren Allan Riggs
Sam Hamad	Donald MacKinnon	Florence Robart
Arthur Hanson	Jack M. MacLeod	Wishart Robson
Michael Harcourt	Jim MacNeill	Angus Ross
Dr. Leslie Harris	Diane Frances Malley	Quassi Samak
Marie-Claire Hélie	Cristina Marques	Robert Slater
Christopher Hilkené	Elizabeth May	Irene So
Tony Hodge	The Honourable Donald Mazankowski	Robert Sopuck
Franklin Holtforster	Patricia McCunn-Miller	Stuart Lyon Smith
Susan Holtz	Ken McKinnon	Keith Stoodley
John E. Houghton	Audrey McLaughlin	The Honourable Maurice Strong
Linda Louella Inkpen	The Honourable Bill McKnight	Barry D. Stuart
Raymond E. Ivany	Harvey L. Mead	Sheila Watt-Cloutier
Mark Jaccard	Patrice Merrin Best	John Wiebe
Pierre Marc Johnson	Robert Mills	The Honourable Bernhard Wiens
David L. Johnston	Kerry Morash	Judy G. Williams
William H. Johnstone	Karen A. Morgan	Loreen Williams
Stephen Kakfwi	David Morton	Steve Williams
Geraldine A. Kenney-Wallace	Glen Murray	The Honourable Michael Wilson
Cindy Kenny-Gilday	Kenneth B. Ogilvie	
David Kerr	Lise Ouellette	
Margaret G. Kerr	H. Joseph O'Neill	
Douglas Knott	Robert (Bob) Page	
Robert Kulhawy		