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# **Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Thursday, February 18, 2016**

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**Chair**

**Mrs. Deborah Schulte**



## Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

Thursday, February 18, 2016

• (1100)

[English]

**The Chair (Mrs. Deborah Schulte):** Welcome all to meeting three of our committee. I hope everybody's ready to roll. We have a very full agenda today.

I want to thank a large number of people who are coming forward in front of the committee to share their wisdom with us.

I'd like to start by welcoming the Office of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, with Julie Gelfand, the commissioner; Andrew Ferguson, principal; and Kimberley Leach, principal.

I'd also like to welcome the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada. There's quite a list. We have Mike Beale, who's the assistant deputy minister of the environmental stewardship branch; Karen Dodds, assistant deputy minister, science and technology branch; Dan McDougall, assistant deputy minister, strategic policy branch; Louise Métivier, assistant deputy minister and chief negotiator for climate change; John Moffet, director general, legislative and regulatory affairs; and Carol Najm, assistant deputy minister, finance branch.

From Parks Canada we have Jane Pearse, chief administrative officer. Welcome.

As well, from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, we have Heather Smith, vice-president of operations.

Thank you to all of you, and welcome to the committee.

Just so it's clear to all of us—because some of us are new to this process—we're going to start off by hearing from all the witnesses. There will be 10 minutes for the Office of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, 20 minutes for the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada, 10 minutes for Parks Canada, and then 10 minutes for the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. We're going to hear from all of them and then we'll move to questions. Thank you.

Welcome, Julie Gelfand. Thank you. You have the floor.

[Translation]

**Ms. Julie Gelfand (Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

We are very happy to appear before your committee this morning. It is very important to us that parliamentarians take an interest in our work.

With me today are two audit principals, Ms. Kimberley Leach and Mr. Andrew Ferguson.

With your permission, I would like to begin by providing a bit of historical context about the function of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

The idea of having some form of environmental auditor general for Canada had its origins in 1987 with the landmark Brundtland Commission report that introduced the concept of sustainable development.

• (1105)

[English]

In 1989, when I was a young lass, I worked on a document called the *Greenprint for Canada*. *Greenprint for Canada* was signed by a whole bunch of environmental, aboriginal, and social justice groups in 1989, and it presented to Brian Mulroney a recommendation that we establish an environmental auditor general. I have come full circle, because I was working on the media relations for this document, and now it's me.

I just think it's a great story. I still have the Cerlox-bound document.

[Translation]

The idea of having an environmental auditor general was again discussed at the 1992 Rio Summit.

[English]

After much discussion and consideration by Parliament and others, the position of Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development was created in 1995, and it was made part of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada by amendment to the Auditor General Act. The amendments to the act also created two new government processes, namely departmental sustainable development strategies and environmental petitions, which I will touch upon briefly.

Let me give you an overview of our mandate. The commissioner is appointed by the Auditor General and provides parliamentarians with objective, fact-based information and expert advice on the federal government's efforts to protect the environment and foster sustainable development. We carry out these responsibilities under two acts.

[Translation]

First, under the Auditor General Act, our office conducts performance audits and monitors departmental progress on whether activities designed to implement federal environment and sustainable development policies and programs are being implemented effectively and are delivering results.

[English]

When I joined the office I didn't know what a performance audit was. Performance audits are done by the Auditor General and by me, and I thought it would be great to try to describe what a performance audit is.

Essentially when the government sets a goal, the auditors come in to see whether or not the government is achieving the goal.

If the goal were to build a rocket and get to the moon, the auditor would ask how that rocket was going. Was it built? Yes, check. Has it gone to the moon yet? Yes-no.

Once you have decided what you want the government to do, our job is to check whether or not the government is doing what you have asked it to do.

Another example would be if the cabinet had asked departments and all ministers to consider the environment when they made any decision. When any proposal goes to a minister, the minister is supposed to consider the environment in that decision-making.

We look at all the decisions a minister has made and find out whether or not they have taken into consideration environmental issues when they made that decision. Whatever cabinet or the government decides it wants to do, we let you know whether or not it's being done.

[Translation]

We also manage the environmental petitions process that enables Canadians to obtain responses directly from federal ministers on specific environmental and sustainable development issues under federal jurisdiction.

Under the Federal Sustainable Development Act, our office reviews and comments on the federal government's Sustainable Development Strategy. We also monitor and report on the extent to which federal departments contribute to meeting the targets and goals set out in the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

In addition to these responsibilities, we also help the Office of the Auditor General incorporate environmental issues, as appropriate, in all of its work for Parliament.

•(1110)

[English]

On behalf of the Auditor General, the commissioner reports to Parliament at least once a year. This year we will be reporting three times. Because of the election, we reported our fall results in January. We will report again in May and then again in October.

Before I close, I'd like to take a minute to talk about sustainable development and climate change. I believe these two issues are

intertwined, and they are among the most pressing of our times. As such, my future work will be focusing on these issues.

[Translation]

In September 2015, Canada and 192 other countries committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to achieving the related 17 sustainable development goals.

In addition, prior to the UN Climate Change Conference which took place in Paris in December 2015, Canada indicated that it would reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 30% compared to 2005 levels, and that it would do so by 2030. Since then, the government has indicated that it considers this target to be a minimum, and it has committed to work with all the provinces to develop a Canadian plan to tackle climate change.

[English]

This country's next federal sustainable development strategy is due in 2016. The full integration into this next strategy of the 2030 United Nations sustainable development goals—often called the global goals—and the Paris climate change commitments will be a clear indicator of Canada's commitment to sustainable development and response to climate change. I look forward to reporting to Parliament on the government's progress in achieving these all-important goals.

Madam Chair, I am always interested in hearing from parliamentarians about their interests and concerns, and as always, we are available to appear before your committee at any time. Your attention to our reports supports accountability. It allows you, as parliamentarians, to ask senior officials to appear before you to answer questions about our findings and explain how they intend to carry out your direction and our recommendations. For example, you could request that departments provide you with action plans to implement our recommendations.

In the years ahead, I look forward to continuing my work to provide you with the independent information that I hope you will find useful in exercising your oversight role.

Madam Chair, that concludes my opening remarks. We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

*Merci.*

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Madam Gelfand.

We're just going to hold off on the questions until the end. I'm sure there will be many. I see people writing diligently, and I have a few myself, but we'll hold on that

Now we'll get to the department of the Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Go ahead, please, Mr. McDougall.

**Mr. Dan McDougall (Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Branch, Department of the Environment):** Thank you, Madam Chair. It's a pleasure to be here this morning on behalf of the department to provide a bit of an overview of who we are and what we do.

I'm going to focus most of my remarks on the climate change area, following from the comments from the commissioner as one of the more important areas that we're dealing with these days, but before I do that, could I just draw your attention to the handout we passed around? It gives a one-page overview that I think is useful for the committee in terms of the overall direction and mandate of the department and what we do for a living.

• (1115)

You'll see on that one page that we're a fairly large department. We're organized around three main directions: clean, safe, and sustainable. You'll note we have over 6,000 full-time equivalents in the department spread out across the country. Over 60% of our workforce is located outside Ottawa in the regions, and we have regional offices throughout the country. Also, more than 50% of our workforce is in the science and technology areas, so we are very much a science-based department, both in research and scientific support for decision-making.

The next block down delves a little more deeply into some of our core business lines in research, monitoring, our conservation and protection function, our regulatory function—we are a massive regulatory department, as some of my colleagues will describe—and obviously, given all that, we have a very strong enforcement function as well. The Meteorological Service of Canada is another important area, providing weather and forecasts and warnings and health quality information that's related to the environment.

Also, just at the bottom, you'll see some of the types of things we are involved with. We administer over 12 acts of Parliament and over 70 regulations. We have water quality monitoring stations across the country. We have many different national protected areas and sites. We look after endangered species, ice forecasts, and more monitoring activities.

This overview gives an idea of the wide variety and range of activities the department is involved in. As we pass down the line, I'll get into details on a number of those aspects, but this is the overview.

I might turn now quickly to pick up on some of the comments and situate for the committee where we are in climate change, because I suspect it's an area of interest coming out of the Paris conference as we work toward our attainment of our commitments under that agreement. Again, there's a short deck on it, just a few pages, that gives an overview of climate change.

Before I go through that, we have very recently, just a couple of weeks ago, published with the United Nations our “Second Biennial Report on Climate Change” for Canada.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** It really is high level. This document that we've just published with the United Nations is an up-to-date document we worked on with the provinces and territories to show where things stand and the measures and programs we have in place right across the country. It's available on the UNFCCC—United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change—website, but we can get it to the committee clerk to distribute to members. It is the most current information available on climate change, not only federally but right across the country. It even includes all the measures that were announced by various governments in Paris. It also includes our emissions projections for the country by economic

sector and by province right through to 2030, so it's the most current information on that.

The deck here just gives a few bits of information on where we are. The first thing I would note is that we are in the midst of working with the provinces and territories to develop a pan-Canadian framework on climate change. This obviously will be consistent with international obligations and what came out of Paris. The federal, provincial, and territorial environment ministers have been meeting on this already to support first ministers and the Prime Minister as they look toward a meeting in early March to work further on this issue. As I mentioned, the provinces and territories are very much involved with their own policies and programs, some of which are captured here in this report to the UN that I mentioned, and a number of others as well.

The next slide gives a sense of the sources of emissions in Canada from a climate perspective by economic sector. It's broken down in that pie chart. Oil and gas and transportation are the two largest sources of emissions, representing roughly a quarter each. Electricity generation, buildings, emission-intensive trade-exposed industries, agriculture, and waste are the other major categories of emissions, each comprising somewhere between 7% and 12% of all emissions across the country. That just gives a sense of where the emissions are coming from.

Similarly, on the next page, emissions are broken down by province. You'll see by province and territory the sources of emissions for both 2005 and 2013.

Finally, on the last page, there's an extract from our biennial report, which I mentioned, where we show the projections for emissions to 2030, based on measures that were in place as of 2030. One of the functions that we have within my branch is an economic modelling unit that does these types of projections for the government overall, and for the country. We look at what would happen if no further actions were taken and what emissions would be, so it gives us a sense of the order of magnitude that we need to achieve in order to meet our targets and a sense of the nature of the task in front of us.

You'll see different ranges and scenarios are possible within that. Obviously, the price of oil is one of the major determinants. What happens under a high-price scenario? What happens under a low-price scenario? We've got a reference case in the middle. This is also based on population projections and what's happening to the country in population growth and economic development. We generally use the information that the Department of Finance uses in economic growth projections, that StatsCan uses in population projections, and that the National Energy Board uses in oil price projections and production, and then we work in a variety of other factors with provinces and territories.

This doesn't include any of the measures that were announced by the provinces over the course of the fall or in Paris. A number of significant things were done there, and we're still working with the provinces and territories to incorporate them. As the details of what they have announced become known, we will incorporate them into our projections.

• (1120)

Irrespective of what happens on the climate change mitigation side of things, there's a lot happening in terms of the actual effects on the environment. Karen will probably touch more on this in her presentation. This slide gives a sense of the reality of what's happening in Canada now on a couple of fronts. You see in terms of temperature that Canada is actually warming at twice the global average. When people talk about 2° or 1.5°, we're already as a country past that mark. We are over 2.2° as a country. It's not evenly distributed; in some areas it's even higher. You can see here that the west, for example, and the north are feeling very significant impacts in terms of temperature increases.

Similarly, the second graphic looks at precipitation patterns and what's happening with snow and rainfall. Again some very significant changes are happening. They are very regional in orientation. In some of them we're seeing much greater increases in precipitation and in others we're getting into drought situations. It depends on where you live in the country. All of this is to say that adaptation to change in climate is going to have to be a fairly strong feature of whatever we do in tackling the issues associated with climate change. Mitigation is important, but dealing with the built-in temperature rise that's already in the atmosphere is going to be a feature of it as well.

• (1125)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. McDougall. I just want to let you know that we're up to 11 minutes. I know we have quite a few other presentations, so I want to make sure that we are mindful of that as we progress.

Who's up next?

**Dr. Karen Dodds (Assistant Deputy Minister, Science and Technology Branch, Department of the Environment):** I'll speak next. I will speak to, but not follow exactly, one of the decks you have, "Science and Technology Branch", which is my area of responsibility.

One of the things I'll note right off the bat is that Environment and Climate Change Canada is one of the larger science-based departments and agencies within the federal government. As you can see from slide 2, a lot of the legislation that the department administers actually puts on the minister a responsibility for undertaking science. For example, under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, it says that the minister shall monitor environmental quality and conduct research on pollution, toxic substances, and ecosystem disturbances. My colleague, Mike Beale, will talk about how we regulate under them, but science provides the underpinning information to which our colleagues will then build a regulatory or programmatic response.

We've put our science into four priority areas.

One is conservation and protection. That's looking at things under the Species at Risk Act, under the migratory birds act, or habitat kinds of issues.

Another priority is contaminants and stressors. Most of us recognize that mercury and lead in the environment are not things we want to have. These are the kinds of things we refer to as "contaminants and stressors".

As Dan has already mentioned, climate change is another priority. We have some very senior folks who run very large-scale climate models with our colleagues from the meteorological services. We use the high-performance computers in Dorval to run very large models that give us scenarios going out into the future. That was the basis of the very last map that Dan showed you of regional differences, etc.

We also support the weather services, or the meteorological services, in terms of research.

As slide 3 shows, we monitor, assess, and report on threats to water quality, to air quality, and to aquatic ecosystems. As an example of this, we recently sent a report to the United Nations Environment Programme on our release of air pollutants.

In general, for Canada the story on air pollutants is a good one. I think specifically of emissions of nitrous oxide and sulphur dioxide, which are the two primary causes of acid rain. They've shown very significant reductions since the 1990s. A problem that science identified initially was what's happening to some of the forest ecosystems from acid rain, and even the parliamentary buildings have been damaged by acid rain. We've taken great steps through regulations to decrease emissions, and the science shows that such has been the case. Our emissions of problematic contaminants, such as mercury and lead, have also significantly decreased. In general, that's a good-news story.

We have also shown that the air quality over the greater Toronto area has improved since 2005, and that is, we would estimate, in step with vehicle emissions. As the vehicle emission standards came into place, we saw a quite significant improvement in air quality over Toronto.

We can do the same kind of analysis of water quality and fish and organisms' health in the environment. We look at species at risk and migratory birds.

[*Translation*]

We do risk assessment of chemicals under the Chemicals Management Plan.

[*English*]

Again, from my branch side, we do the very heavy science-based assessment of the risks. What are the hazards these chemicals pose to different parts in the environment, and what exposure is the environment likely to have from these? Then that information is transmitted to our colleagues in the regulatory branch, in Mike Beale's branch, to explore what we can do to regulate and improve the situation.

As Dan said, we do research on climate change to understand the processes. Again, he showed us some differences in temperature increase in Canada. When we briefed first ministers, that was the first time we publicly stated that the temperature in Canada is estimated to increase at twice the global average. If globally we say that we're heading for a 1.5° or a 2° increase, within Canada we predict that means a 3° to 4° centigrade increase in the temperature across Canada.

• (1130)

I'll just note, as Dan did, that we have a very large contingent of scientists in my branch and as well in the meteorological services branch. You'll see in the deck that we are one of the top-performing science organizations and that we do most of that work in partnership.

I look forward to responding to any questions you have.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. That was great.

I just want to be mindful of the time, as we're at 17 minutes now. I don't want to speed you up, because I think the information you're sharing is incredibly helpful to us, but I'm just mindful of the time.

Thank you. Go ahead.

[Translation]

**Ms. Louise Métivier (Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Negotiator for Climate Change, Department of the Environment):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I will try to be brief. My presentation is entitled "International Climate Change". I will be speaking mostly in English, but I will be pleased to answer your questions in French.

As you will have seen in the document Mr. McDougall mentioned earlier, Environment Canada is a party to more than 85 international environmental agreements. We thus have an enormous international presence regarding environmental matters.

Of course, the major event which to some degree colours everything we do in the context of these international agreements is the Paris Conference, which took place in December, as well as the agreement we negotiated that month. My comments will mostly be focused on that event, but I will be pleased to answer any other questions.

[English]

The Conference of the Parties under the UNFCCC, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, changed our world on international climate change. It was one of the biggest conferences of the parties ever to take place under the convention. Over 40,000 participants attended this conference, and it shows the importance that the world is putting on this issue. The negotiations were the culmination of four years of negotiations on an international agreement with legal force applicable to all countries. That is the key difference compared to most efforts that have been undertaken in the past on climate change. This agreement is universal and is applicable to 195 countries. That is unprecedented. It is a significant step and it is a big success on its own. It also comes with its challenges, of course. We have a lot of work ahead of us, but that was an incredible success.

Slide 3 is a bit of an overview of our key approach going into Paris for this negotiation. We wanted to go there with an approach that was very inclusive with regard to provinces, territories, and stakeholders. You probably saw that the Canadian delegation was very diverse and brought in key stakeholders. Our commissioner was there along with businesses, ENGOs, youth, and aboriginal leaders. They were there to advise us and provide us with input, and we met with them regularly. The approach that we took to the negotiations was very inclusive.

We went there with a mandate to make sure that this agreement was based on robust science, and I think that actually permeated or influenced a lot of the negotiations. Actually, the agreement calls for continued improvements to the science as we go through future cycles of targets and commitments. It calls for a lot of work on science as well, which Karen will be involved in.

A key outcome of the agreement that was part of our approach was the necessity to transition to a low-carbon resilient economy. That is basically at the core of the agreement. You will see that this is the ultimate goal of the agreement: to transition to a low-carbon economy. The long-term goal and commitment is to reach carbon neutrality by the second half of this century. One long-term goal is to maintain our temperature rise at 2°, as you know, with an effort to further reduce that to 1.5°. It's a very ambitious agreement and also a progressive and dynamic agreement, under which countries will undertake new commitments every five years, which will be ever more stringent to help us go towards these goals.

• (1135)

There's a more prominent role for adaptation in this agreement. In terms of ensuring that we support adaptation, developing countries require a lot of support there, so climate finance and supporting developing countries in their efforts to adapt and mitigate was also a key part of the agreement.

Canada played a very active role in the negotiation of this agreement. We facilitated some key aspects of the agreement. We also joined many of the complementary international initiatives or declarations. I've listed some of them on slide 4.

The key point I wanted to make was that implementing the Paris agreement will not do it on its own. This requires mobilizing pretty much the global community through many other fora, including mobilizing the private sector. We're going to be working in parallel in many other forums to advance and to try to mobilize complementary efforts for the agreement. Working on implementing all the details on the agreement is not the end in itself.

On slide 5 I wanted to flag some the climate finance we've announced in Paris. The government announced \$2.65 billion to support developing countries on climate finance. We've announced some key initiatives there. This was very well received and helped also in our negotiations.

On slides 6 and 7 I wanted to flag some of the key complementary initiatives we're going to be working under, as I've mentioned.

The key one is Canada has just undertaken the co-chair role of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to reduce short-lived climate pollutants. This is dealing with methane and HFCs and other short-lived climate forces; those are key gases to target to reach our target, so we're going to be working with our North American partners under this body.

The Arctic Council is now under U.S. chairmanship, but Canada just finished the chairmanship there. There was a lot of work there to advance some of these issues.

The last one that's key to mention is our efforts to phase out HFCs, hydrofluorocarbons. That's under the Montreal protocol. We've been working very closely with Mexico and the U.S. under the Montreal protocol. Mike can talk more about this, but that's also a key initiative to be able to reach our objective and to support the Paris agreement.

I have just a few words in closing about our next step on this agreement. There will be a signing ceremony for the agreement hosted by the UN Secretary-General on April 22. Then the agreement will be open for ratification, starting pretty much on that date. There is a lot of outreach from the Secretary-General and from other countries, especially the U.S., to try to get an early entry into force of the Paris agreement, so we might see a number of countries actually ratifying on the spot, maybe on April 22, but we're not sure about that at this point. The agreement comes into force when 55 countries representing 55% of global emissions have ratified.

Then we're going to continue. There is a lot of work. There's a huge work program as part of the Paris agreement between now and 2020. We're going to start that in May. The next COP, in Marrakesh, will also be key on some of the decisions around the details of the Paris agreement.

• (1140)

[Translation]

I will stop here.

Thank you.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. I really appreciate the amount of information you're giving us.

I'm going to have to ask for the agreement of the committee. We have one more speaker on this particular agenda from the department, and we're going to be very close on questioning if we don't....

Do I have the agreement from the committee to have, Mike, maybe a very short, truncated...?

I have time for two rounds of questioning with still 10 minutes for each of the other two departments, but it will have to be quite quick.

Do we have agreement from the committee to hear Mike?

Go ahead, Mr. Cullen.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, NDP):** Thank you, Chair.

I thought the agreement was that we were giving the department 20 minutes.

**The Chair:** We did, and we have gone over.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** We're at 30.

**The Chair:** Well, no, we're at 26 minutes.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Oh, excuse me.

**The Chair:** Do I have agreement from the committee for four minutes for Mr. Beale? Is that fair?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** Okay, thank you.

I'm sorry to rush you, but please be quick.

**Mr. Mike Beale (Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Stewardship Branch, Department of the Environment):** It's not a problem. I probably will not need four minutes.

I'm going to talk to the deck entitled "Environmental Stewardship Branch". The environmental stewardship branch is essentially the regulatory and key program branch in the department. All the regulations and most of the programs are in my area.

I'll walk you very quickly through the deck.

Wildlife is obviously a key part of what we do. The Canadian Wildlife Service is in my branch. The Canadian Wildlife Service has various aspects to it. We administer migratory bird sanctuaries and protected areas. We administer the Migratory Birds Convention Act. We administer the Species at Risk Act, as well as WAPPRIITA, the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act, which is the act that essentially administers CITES, the international convention on trade in endangered species. A lot of our work is driven by the international context—the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES.

I'm just going to look at page 5. The Species at Risk Act is a large part of what we do. There are various stages set out in SARA for assessment and eventually protection of species at risk. There's an independent committee that provides assessments, a listing that is done by the Governor in Council, and we oversee recovery documents and protection measures. We're well under way to eliminating a backlog that we inherited on recovery documents. We expect that in a year from now, that backlog will be eliminated.

On page 6 I talk about CEPA, which is one of the two other major pieces of legislation that we administer. CEPA is the basis for a lot of our regulatory measures. We are one of the, if not the, most active regulatory departments in town. We give Treasury Board a lot of its business.

Karen talked about the chemicals management plan. Again, we're the risk managers. We work closely with the scientists and use what they tell us to decide what we need to propose to the minister and Governor in Council in terms of what regulations to put into place. Among the regulations that we currently administer, there are a lot on vehicles for both air pollution and greenhouse gases.



I'm going to talk finally about the Fisheries Act, on page 9. The Fisheries Act is where we administer the pollution prevention provisions, and we have a number of regulations under that act that we administer.

Finally, we provide support to the agency and to the National Energy Board on environmental assessment.

I will stop there. Thank you.

• (1145)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. I'm really sorry to rush, but I appreciate that you got through that quite quickly.

I'd like to move to Parks Canada. If Ms. Pearse could start, that would be great. Thank you.

**Ms. Jane Pearse (Chief Administrative Officer, Parks Canada):** Thank you very much.

There is a document here that is essentially the same document we use to brief the minister on the Parks Canada portfolio, and I'm going to move very quickly in referencing some of the pages in that document.

On page 4, we talk about the mandate of Parks Canada "to protect and present nationally significant examples of...natural and cultural heritage". At the very highest level, that's what we do.

In doing that, we have 46 national parks and a systems plan that will protect representative regions across the country. We're about 77% complete on that systems plan for the parks. We have one national urban park, the Rouge, which, as you all probably are aware, is in transition to becoming fully operational.

We have four national marine conservation areas that represent five of the 29 marine regions across the country.

We have 168 national historic sites that are representative of our heritage, culture, and persons of national significance. Among them are 11 world heritage sites; those sites and parklands have been recognized as important from the world perspective.

Parks Canada is responsible for 31 million artifacts, which we present in our places, and we also have collections facilities across the country.

Probably the lesser-known fact is that we have about 12,000 built assets across the country. Those were valued in 2012 at \$16 billion in current replacement value. Those built assets include things that you would expect, such as the Halifax Citadel—another historic site—and the walls of Quebec City, but they also include about 1,000 kilometres of highway, including the Trans-Canada Highway going through the mountain parks.

We have about 200 dams. We have a lot of bridges on the Trent-Severn Waterway, and then, obviously, there are the operations facilities that Parks Canada uses. There's a great diversity.

Oh, I'm sorry. I meant to mention the townsites. We have five townsites across Canada. You would be aware of Banff, Jasper, Waterton, and Waskesiu. Parks Canada is responsible for water quality, waste water treatment, and garbage pickup, almost like a municipality.

Page 5 provides a map that gives you a sense of the diversity of the locations of Parks Canada's operations. You'll see that there are a lot of very remote and isolated areas that we are active in.

Page 10 will give you a very short review of our financial situation. Normally, Parks Canada's budget is around \$600 million. You may recall that in 2014 there was an announcement of federal infrastructure investment. Parks Canada received about \$2.6 billion in that investment program. You'll see that we have about \$600 million in capital investment money this year and going forward to 2020. Our budget is about \$1.1 billion, but about half of that is this one-off capital funding.

In terms of HR, on page 12 we indicate that we have about 4,200 full-time equivalents, but in Parks Canada about 50% of our positions are term or seasonal. We have quite a number of seasonal indeterminates, which is somewhat unusual in the federal government. It means that a person has a permanent job with Parks Canada, but it is only for a period of time, a five-month or six-month period of time in the year, and that's so we can match up with our operational seasons and the periods when our sites and parks are open.

We also hire a lot of students, about 1,200 students every summer, and we're pleased that we have a representation of about 8% indigenous people, which is above the workforce average for labour force availability. We make a lot of efforts to do outreach to the communities and the indigenous communities that are close to our parks and sites.

• (1150)

Page 19 gives you a very brief overview of what we do. Obviously ecological integrity is a big part of what we do, including the state of the parks, ecological restoration, species at risk, and remediation projects. We are worried about contaminated sites that are under our responsibility.

Under heritage conservation, as I said, we have 31 million artifacts. That's an important part of what we do.

With regard to visitation, we promote the parks and encourage people to come. We look after people when they're there. We have visitor safety. We have rescue services when people get into bad situations in the back country.

We spend a lot of effort on infrastructure programs and on realty. We are one of the few parts of the federal government that actually leases federally owned buildings out to other participants, as opposed to the other way around. We have quite a lot of activities in that area.

Page 32 gives a list of eight issues we have highlighted that we feel are issues facing the agency. This includes the capital investment program. We did get a one-time investment that dealt with deferred work that was identified in 2012, but we have an ongoing fiscal gap in our funding to deal with our capital investments. We need to have discussions and consideration of how to move forward on that.

Other concerns include reconciliation and the Franklin expedition. We were pleased to be able to find the Franklin ship in the north. The question now is how to move forward with that and bring that find to Canadians. There's commemorating Canada 150, and the role Parks Canada can play in that. Development pressure in the parks is always an issue that we need to be very sensitive to. Another is the approach to visitor service, which is linked to development pressures. The last two issues are science capacity and the Never Forgotten national memorial.

I would be happy to take questions on the structure of Parks Canada as an agency, or indeed on any of the issues.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Pearce, for being so quick. We've now gained a little bit of time for the next presentation.

We'll ask Ms. Smith from the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency to please start.

Thank you very much.

• (1155)

**Ms. Heather Smith (Vice-President, Operations, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency):** Thank you very much.

[Translation]

It is a real pleasure to be here with you today. I will be making my statement in English, but if you have questions in French, I will be pleased to answer them.

[English]

I'm going to be using a deck presentation, and I'll work you through it quickly.

Turning to page 3 of the presentation, I want to talk a little about what environmental assessment is.

Environmental assessment is a planning tool. It's designed to bring environmental considerations into project planning and into economic development. Also, because humans are part of the environment, a lot of social questions come up in environmental assessments too.

A way of thinking about environmental assessments is that it's where sustainable development gets worked out in a practical way. Those interests—social, economic, environmental—intersect and sometimes collide in the environmental assessment process. Environmental assessment processes can be contentious if there's controversy about an economic development project, and there is also a lot of legitimate disagreement about what the process should be when we look at environmental and social considerations in project planning.

It will be an important aspect of the work that this committee will do during this government's mandate. That's clear from the environment minister's mandate letter, so I'd like to tell you a bit about how the process works right now.

It's designed to be used early in a planning process for a project, before any decisions are made. It's designed to ensure that costly mistakes are avoided. We identify what the potential effects of the project could be. We tend to focus on what the adverse effects are,

but we also look at what the positive effects can be, and we identify measures to mitigate adverse effects.

A key part of the process is to provide opportunities for the public to participate, to learn about the project, and to think about how it might affect them and what could be done about it to make it an acceptable project for them. It's a key forum for us to consider impacts on indigenous peoples and to address those impacts. It's a key tool for achieving accommodation and reconciliation of aboriginal rights with other public interests.

In the environmental assessment process, you can expect that the proponent's design will change over the course of the process. That is what the process is designed to do. It's designed to drive beneficial changes to the project design. It's not designed to stop a project from proceeding, but sometimes, at the end of the process, political decision-makers will decide that no matter what we do to change the project to reduce the adverse effects, those adverse effects are not justified in the circumstances.

It's always a political call as to whether the project proceeds or doesn't proceed. The environmental assessment process is simply designed to provide information to decision-makers. How they weigh that decision and what decision they make is ultimately the call of politicians.

Next is slide 4. I'll tell you a little bit about the Environmental Assessment Agency. The Environmental Assessment Agency is the policy centre for the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, so it drives environmental assessment policy. It's one of three responsible authorities under the current act, which is known as the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012. We also conduct environmental assessments that are still going on under the former environmental assessment act. Those are known as comprehensive studies. In other words, we're administering two different pieces of legislation at the same time.

The agency is headquartered in Ottawa. We have five regional offices located in Halifax, Quebec, Toronto, Edmonton, and Vancouver. We function as something known as the "crown consultation coordinator" for the government in the context of environmental assessments.

• (1200)

Environmental assessment happens very early in the decision-making process for a project, before the regulatory process. It's really the first chance that people have to look at what's being proposed and decide whether it's acceptable or not acceptable. It's the first opportunity the government has to engage with indigenous people about the potential impacts on them.

We coordinate the government's interrelationship with indigenous groups on behalf of all the departments that participate in the environmental assessment process.

We're a very small organization. We have a budget currently of about \$32 million and we have about 250 employees spread across the country. If you'd like more information about our budget, there's a breakdown on slide 15 of the deck. You will notice that some of that money is temporary funding, which I hope will come to your attention.

I'll give you a bit of an overview of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012, CEAA 2012. This piece of legislation focuses on projects that have greater potential for significant adverse environmental effects, particularly in areas of federal jurisdiction. The projects are identified through regulations with the cumbersome title of "regulations designating physical activities", the designated projects list. Under the former act, we had a list called the projects list. It does create some confusion for people who have worked in environmental assessment for a while.

There are three parts to the projects list: a list that applies to projects assessed by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, a list of projects assessed by the National Energy Board, and a list of projects that are the responsibility of the Environmental Assessment Agency. It's designed to have each of the three authorities and to be clear as to who would be handling what type of project.

When the agency is responsible for a project, we do a screening process at the outset, during which we consider whether an environmental assessment is required in the circumstances, so we're not doing an environmental assessment at that stage but asking whether we should be doing an environmental assessment. At that stage, very early in the process, we're looking at the potential effects that could occur through this project. A key consideration for us is whether there's some other process during which these effects could be examined and addressed, such as a regulatory process or a provincial environmental assessment process. All of those factors are taken into consideration when we determine whether an environmental assessment is required.

The CNSC and the NEB do not go through that process. If the project's on their list, they automatically do an environmental assessment.

There are two types of environmental assessments under CEAA 2012. One is conducted by the responsible authorities, so in our case the agency conducts the environmental assessment. The other type involves an independent panel that examines and conducts the environmental assessment and holds public hearings. That's a more formal process, but we try to make the process as informal as possible so that people feel comfortable coming forward and participating in it. We've had good success through that process.

There's also a list here of what we look at through the environmental assessment process.

The other thing I want to point out to you is that a number of other federal departments participate in our process by providing their science, advice, and expertise. Key among them is Environment Canada, but we get advice from DFO, from Transport Canada, from NRCan, etc.

Earlier I mentioned the importance of public participation and how there are several opportunities in the process for the public to learn about it. I've also talked about indigenous consultation, which is described in a little bit more detail on slide 8.

• (1205)

Slide 9 talks about the details of decision-making. Ultimately, it's either the Minister of the Environment or cabinet that makes those decisions.

**The Chair:** I hate to do this, but we have to have the 50 minutes for questioning, and I just need you to wrap it up, please. Thanks.

**Ms. Heather Smith:** Okay.

There is some information at the back of the deck about current environmental assessments that are under way and some high-profile projects that are currently in the process.

I welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you have.

**The Chair:** Thank you so much, Mrs. Smith. I really appreciate that.

We will start with questioning from Mr. Fast. Thanks.

**Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC):** Thank you very much to all of you. I noticed—

**The Chair:** You have six minutes.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** I noticed that a number of you raised the fact that our decisions have to be based on science. I want to strongly affirm that all of our responses and actions in addressing not only climate change but any environmental challenge have to be based on science.

I'd like to go straight to climate finance.

I believe, Ms. Métivier, you were lead negotiator in Paris. The Prime Minister made the announcement leading up to the Paris climate change conference that there would be \$2.65 billion spent abroad on climate change support for developing and least-developed countries. That was a five-year commitment going forward, and it's being scaled up over those five years. As I understand it, the contribution in the fifth year will be \$800 million.

Having reviewed the agreement on a number of occasions, it's pretty clear to me that the expectation in the agreement is that developed countries will make this funding permanent, or at the very least that funding will go on indefinitely well into the future, and that the funding will be scaled up over time. Am I correct in that understanding?

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** If I answer right away, I didn't know if you —

**The Chair:** Go ahead, please.

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** You're right about how you describe what was announced. I mentioned on one of the slides that some of it has been allocated, but there's still an amount that's not yet allocated that we're going to allocate based on where we see the greatest need.

You will remember that developed countries had a commitment under Copenhagen of \$100 billion global from all sources, not just from government sources but from all sources, up to 2020. What was agreed to in this agreement is that this would represent the floor after 2020.

Therefore, yes, it will continue, but from all sources, as we indicated, and by 2025 we would indicate a new target for developed countries. Under this agreement, we would set a new target. Those are the commitments under the agreement.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Is it fair to assume, then, that after 2020 Canada will be expected to continue to make commitments to the Green Climate Fund and other types of funding mechanisms, and that the expectation is that those amounts will continue to increase over time?

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** The commitment is a global commitment. I think that in Paris Canada was clear that it would do its part in continuing to support developing countries. There are various mechanisms to do that. We're doing a lot of work to mobilize the Canadian private sector in that, but the commitment is what's in the agreement.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Yes, but you do accept that the Paris agreement actually talks about scaled-up financial resources from developed countries?

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** It said it was a floor from all sources.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Thank you.

On the same subject, I've had quite a number of Canadians raise concerns with me as to where the money will be spent, how it will be spent, and most importantly on what kinds of monitoring mechanisms will be in place from the Canadian side to ensure that those investments are made in a way that represents true value for Canadians.

One of the big concerns is there's this \$2.65-billion announcement to spend Canadian taxpayers' dollars on foreign climate change initiatives, but very few commitments made for investments in Canada today, so I believe Canadians do have a right to be concerned, and specifically to be concerned about how we will actually monitor how that money is spent.

It's my understanding that the Green Climate Fund is administered internationally, that Canada only has one member out of 24 on that board, and that numerous different funding mechanisms will be used to disburse our commitments. Could you explain to us as a committee exactly how Canada will keep its finger on how the billions of dollars that we expect to commit to this will be spent over time?

•(1210)

**The Chair:** Remember, we have one minute left in questioning.

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** Yes, of course. First of all, I cannot answer exactly where all of that money is going to go, because the government has not yet decided how all of it will be invested, but we have history on managing climate finance. We will have to be accountable for that money under various Treasury Board rules and internal checks and balances. About a year ago, I think, the commission did an audit on that and provided recommendations.

Internationally, there is a lot of work being done by all countries on tracking the flows of climate finance globally and having robust methodology to be able to track and report on it. That's separate, but it's a key piece of work that we're part of. We do report on our climate finance through various reports, including the biannual report that Dan just mentioned, so we will be subject to normal—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry to end that. Thank you very much.

Mr. Aldag.

**Mr. John Aldag (Cloverdale—Langley City, Lib.):** Thank you.

I'm going to head right over to Parks Canada and start with some questions.

Just in the spirit of transparency, I did work for Parks Canada for 32 years, across five provinces and two territories. I've been off for about two years. We had a mutual severance of relationship just over 100 days ago, so I'd like to do a little bit of catch-up on what has happened to my much-beloved Parks Canada in the last two years or so.

I'm going to start with the systems plan. You touched on that and indicated that it's currently 77% complete. I'd like to relate back to something from the commissioner. I was with Parks when the Brundtland commission was happening in the eighties and I remember the report calling for completion of the system at that point.

To get to it simply, how active is the systems plan and the negotiations for the remaining 23%? If you could touch on that very briefly, I'd then like to talk a bit more on the systems plan. Where are we at now in the negotiations for the remaining natural regions?

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** Parks Canada has an ongoing series of discussions with provinces, territories, and indigenous groups across the country to advance thinking and planning for national parks. They can be at all stages of the process, and indeed some of the discussions around establishing a new park can take years. One that has been in the press recently is the discussion on the southern Okanagan. There have also been discussions around Lancaster Sound being an NMCA.

We had very good success last year in announcing three new national parks with legislation completed. There is a very activist, ongoing process to try to reach agreement with provinces and territories and indigenous peoples about moving forward on those new park establishments.

**Mr. John Aldag:** Is there a timeline goal for completion, or are you simply plugging away at it?

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** It's difficult when you're one of three potential partners—provinces, territories, and the local indigenous groups—that need to agree on the boundaries and on establishing new parks. Internally we have our focus on advancing some of those discussions, but in some ways we're very opportunistic. If British Columbia were to say that they're open to discussing the southern Okanagan, we would welcome that and move forward with those discussions. The same applies if another province or territory is willing to enter into those discussions.

Another one we're working on now is Thaydene Nene, with the Northwest Territories and the indigenous group up there.

•(1215)

**Mr. John Aldag:** I think that's good. I just wanted to give the committee a sense of where the discussions are at and where we're going.

In your presentation you talked about collections and assets. I'm wondering, since I didn't see it in here, if there's anything on condition assessments and the state of the assets within that fairly extensive collection. Do you have any information in the presentation that we could refer to, or would you be able to get information to us on the archeological collection and the built heritage collection?

I don't know if condition assessments are still being used, but are there condition ratings? Are we overall in a good state of repair, a poor state of repair? Do you have any comments on that?

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** Just to clarify, are you specifically speaking about built heritage assets or the...?

**Mr. John Aldag:** Yes, built heritage.

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** On built heritage, there is nothing specific in the document, and I don't have anything specific with me—

**Mr. John Aldag:** Is that something you would be able to get to us, just for future reference?

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** So you're looking at the state of...?

**Mr. John Aldag:** I can explain it after this, as I don't want to take up time. Maybe through the clerk, I'll give a point of clarification. I'll —

**The Chair:** I was listening to your questioning, and I'm thinking that maybe we could save a minute at the very end today and ask for certain reports to be provided to the committee.

**Mr. John Aldag:** Okay.

**The Chair:** We would need to have the committee's agreement to do that. We'll see how everybody feels.

**Mr. John Aldag:** I'm probably going to run out of time soon, but you also talked about the budget. I'm wondering—again, I didn't see it—if you could touch on the breakdown of revenue that Parks Canada generates through user fees and realty fees versus appropriations that come from the tax base.

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** Yes.

**Mr. John Aldag:** Is that in here or is that something you have on your...?

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** Yes, it is. Revenues are on page 11. In a year, Parks Canada makes roughly \$120 million in re-spendable revenues. About half of that is from entry fees. The other half is land rents and other lease arrangements from buildings that we rent out or lease out, or from event fees that we charge for the use of a site or a building.

**The Chair:** We're down to the very end of your questioning. I wonder if maybe you could quickly put forward what reports you're looking for, and then we can agree to that.

**Mr. John Aldag:** It's simply if there's a condition assessment report for built heritage to indicate the current condition of the holdings within Parks Canada and whether they are fair or poor. I think the conditions were “fair”, “good”, and “poor”. They're simply ratings. I think there was a figure here about how many assets there are, and I'm just trying to get a sense of where they currently stand.

**The Chair:** Okay. If the committee is in agreement, I think I heard two things. One was for an assessment on built heritage and the other one was an assessment of status on where the new parks process is for the ones that are in the hopper. I wonder if we could have those

come forward to the committee. There were two issues that you raised.

You understand what the first one was, right?

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** On the first one, there is a public report that reviews the built asset portfolio of Parks Canada and includes both the heritage side and highways, dams, and waterways. It deals with all 12,000 assets. That is already public, and I can provide it easily.

**The Chair:** That's great.

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** I guess I'm just trying to figure out if it's more specific than that.

**Mr. John Aldag:** That would meet the purpose, absolutely.

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** The first one? Okay. No problem.

On the second one, are you asking for a status update on which areas are being considered for new parks establishment?

**Mr. John Aldag:** Yes. In the systems plan, which ones essentially are complete, which ones are under way, and which ones have no negotiations or discussions currently happening for the representative regions? If I could be so bold, I would extend it to not only terrestrial but also marine parks.

**The Chair:** Is that okay?

**Mr. John Aldag:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Is the committee okay with that? Do we agree to get that information?

Sounds good. Thank you very much.

We'll move on to Mr. Cullen.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you to all our witnesses.

I'll start off with a question for Ms. Smith.

Are the new interim measures announced by the government a few weeks ago in regard to applying climate to the test for new projects also applying to the Pacific NorthWest LNG project in B.C.?

● (1220)

**Ms. Heather Smith:** Yes. In the assessment, we had already included the assessment of the direct GHG emissions of the project, and then we asked Environment Canada to produce an analysis of the upstream GHGs that are associated.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** There's one question we have. It's been said that GHGs are now being taken into consideration, but we don't know how. Is it total volume of GHGs being put out? Is it energy intensity? I just don't understand what tests are being applied.

**Ms. Heather Smith:** We use the volume of GHG emissions as a proxy for determining the magnitude of an adverse effect.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Right, but the question that proponents want to know about is whether there's some sort of limit. Is it the idea that if you put so many megatonnes in, then it's a green light, and if you go above that, then the CEAA will look at that negatively and not issue a permit?

**Ms. Heather Smith:** We haven't established a threshold for when we would determine whether something is significant or not significant.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Right. The question then is, if we don't know what the threshold is and we don't know what the test is, what is its meaning?

**Ms. Heather Smith:** Well, you can still talk about the volume of GHG emissions in terms of percentage of total provincial emissions and total Canadian emissions.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Okay.

**Ms. Heather Smith:** As I mentioned earlier, in the assessment process the decision is ultimately a political call—

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** It sure is.

**Ms. Heather Smith:** —on whether that volume of emissions is acceptable or not acceptable.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** We noted your budget as well. You assess projects in the multiple tens of billions of dollars, and have just \$14 million in base funding?

**Ms. Heather Smith:** Yes.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** That's insufficient.

Mr. McDougall, I'm looking at the graph you provided. I'm noticing that in four years' time, there's a more than 120-megatonne gap, depending on those scenarios.

Are those increased scenarios? Are they including the prospect of future oil sands development and future pipeline construction?

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** Those scenarios are based on the National Energy Board's expectations for oil and gas development that were just released in November. It's the most current information from the industry.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** No, I understand, but we're wondering what's included in that, because these are a couple of crossroads moments. I can imagine a scenario in which you include Energy East and one in which you don't, and one in which you include Kinder Morgan and one in which you don't. Is that the way the department looks at this?

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** There are a couple of things. On the specific projects, I'll have to get back to you on whether any individual project is included in that. I'm not sure if the—

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Ms. Smith is saying that CEAA is looking at the analysis of, say, one liquid natural gas facility adding so many tonnes. That's a scenario on the minister's desk and says, "If you approve this, this is what it does to your curve."

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** Right, and potential LNG is included in those scenarios.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Right.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** As to which line it's in, I'd have to get back to you—

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** It would be very helpful for the committee to even just understand what that means. The concern I have, in looking through these estimates, is that in four years' time we'd be missing the target by the equivalent of what the entire oil and gas industry contributes to greenhouse gases. In 14 years' time, we're

missing the target by as much as what all of Ontario and Quebec contribute to greenhouse gases. Even more than that, if we miss it by your worst-case scenario, we're missing it by what the entire oil and gas industry and the entire transport sector put into greenhouse gases for Canada's contribution, so in order to bend that curve....

We've seen this movie before, by the way. I've seen this movie before. I sat at the environment committee 10 years ago, and there was the gap. If the curve doesn't bend, we end up with those scenarios. Then the options for the government become very limited. You can buy credits or just miss your target. We've done both, yet I wouldn't see either of them being deemed a raging success.

I'm wondering how you're going to bend that curve down, given what we're missing our targets by right now.

By the way, that's the 2020 target, correct?

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** Correct.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** That was submitted by the previous government.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** Correct.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** The current government has set that as the floor, not the ceiling. We imagine a more ambitious target being presented.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** For the 2030 target, that's what they said—that it is the floor, not the ceiling.

• (1225)

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** So that gap of 350 megatonnes is a bare minimum, in the present-case scenario, as to what target the government will put in.

Ms. Gelfand, in your 2014 report you mentioned that the government hasn't got a coherent plan to reach its climate change targets. That's floor target from the previous government.

Have you seen a new version yet, a coherent plan, towards meeting those targets that would have Canada achieve its goals?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** We haven't seen it yet.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Okay.

You also mentioned in your 2016 report on pesticides that risky pesticides were ending up on shelves. Store owners didn't know about them. Consumers certainly didn't know about the potentially dangerous pesticides that were showing up. The government's gone away from one action that was announced, but is there an ability to inform consumers or to simply pull these pesticides off the shelves?

**The Chair:** You have 10 seconds, Mr. Cullen.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Thank you.

Has that been changed? Does government now have the ability to let Canadians know when they're at risk? That was one of your recommendations.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Yes. I don't know if they've acted on that quite yet. I will be coming back next week, and I can try to get you that answer.

**Mr. Nathan Cullen:** Wonderful. Thank you.

Thank you, Chair.

**The Chair:** Mr. Amos is next.

**Mr. William Amos (Pontiac, Lib.):** Thank you to all of the witnesses. It's wonderful to be starting working with you. I look forward to continuing this conversation. Obviously this is just an introduction. I have relationships going back the late 1990s with so many of you, so this is really kind of fun. I almost don't know where to start.

Before I forget, I would like to pass a message through you to your colleagues at both Parks Canada and Environment Canada. Many colleagues who work with you live in my riding of Pontiac.

[Translation]

There are quite a few of them. Many of the people in our community work with you and we would very much like you to let them know that we will be listening.

[English]

I would also like to pass along the message that if there are ever colleagues of yours who would like to approach us directly to simply ask what we are thinking on the committee, as individuals, please encourage them to come to us. I appreciate that civil servants also have to respond directly to the minister, but we're open to discussion.

I'd like to direct my first question around budget and science capacity to Dr. Dodds and Mr. McDougall. Could you please characterize for us the nature of budgetary cuts in the past decade to Environment Canada's science capacity and how that has impacted its capacity around strategic policy?

**Dr. Karen Dodds:** I can talk about the science capacity at the department.

I've been in my position since January 2011, and the whole department has experienced budgetary pressure. One of the things we've looked at was whether any reductions impacted the science community as compared to any others, and there hasn't been a difference in the level of impact for the science branch and for the science community as compared to others.

Carol Najm, our chief financial officer, would have the specific numbers. I was more concerned about whether, in the overall reductions, we were unfairly or disproportionately either relieved from pressures or had pressures applied, and whether they were the same across the whole department as they were in my branch.

As we went through the reductions, our focus was on maintaining the core capacity that Environment and Climate Change Canada needed to undertake all its responsibilities, and we made every effort to make sure that our core science capacity was maintained. Most of what we did was consolidation.

We have to report on an annual basis to Statistics Canada on our science expenditures, so you can look at the Statistics Canada science expenditures and see that they've remained pretty constant in the department.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** From a policy perspective, over the last five years that I've been with the department, we've been having an increasing integration between science and policy, and that's reflective of what's happening in the international sphere as well. For example, the United Nations Environment Programme globally

has put in place programs that try to integrate those two things more closely so that when the scientists are assessing the current state of the environment or the nature of policy problems that are coming up, the two sides of the equation—the problem and how you take action—are becoming much more closely aligned.

A good example of that is the work that's been done on what Louise referred to as “short-lived climate pollutants”, the non-carbon dioxide actors that are having a fairly significant effect on climate change, such as methane and HFCs. The work that's been going on between science and policy on that front is very closely linked. A discrete number of potential avenues where you get the most bang for the buck are identified by science, and the policy and regulatory folks have been working with the scientists on—

● (1230)

**The Chair:** You have one minute.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:**—what you put in place to deal with the problem. The collaboration is getting stronger.

**Mr. William Amos:** Thanks.

I've heard Dr. Dodds mention that there have been pressures and cutbacks, but that the cutbacks were not disproportionate in science as related to other aspects. Is it fair to say that there has been a significant reduction in science conducted at Environment Canada?

**Dr. Karen Dodds:** You'll see in our—

**Mr. William Amos:** I don't mean just for 2011, but in the last 10 years, since the previous government. I'm trying to get a sense of where science is.

**Dr. Karen Dodds:** One of the metrics we use is the number of peer-reviewed scientific publications. You'll see in the presentation deck that we shared with everybody that it's remained at approximately 700 per year, and that's been a constant number over about the last decade. In terms of productivity, just using that metric, it's stayed very constant.

Again, my budget on an annual basis is roughly \$145 million. I have over 1,300 folks who are almost all, except for a very small percentage, in the science and tech community, and my branch is not the only part of science and technology in the department. Meteorological services is almost all science and tech as well, and their budget has done about the same as mine.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry that I have to cut this off. We've run out of time.

I have to move to Mr. Fisher.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. Darren Fisher (Dartmouth—Cole Harbour, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you, folks, for the overview. You've provided us all a massive amount of information.

I'll ask a Cape Breton boy, Mr. McDougall, if I could.

You've read the mandate letter. How significant a change or transition do you feel your department will have to make with this new government, now that you know what the minister's mandate letter stipulates she must accomplish?

I guess I should say I'll be sharing my time with Mr. Bossio.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** We've certainly read the mandate letter. There are a significant number of things noted in it that will be accomplished over the term of the government.

One thing that's not in the mandate letter is a sense of the timing associated with those goals. Certainly we've been very active with the minister on the climate change file, most notably. It was probably day two after she was appointed when she went with the chief negotiator to the pre-COP negotiations for a series of negotiations, followed very closely by the climate conference.

We are now in the process of working with the minister to advance work on the pan-Canadian framework with the provinces and territories. She has already had a number of meetings and discussions with provincial and territorial counterparts on that front.

Clearly climate change is front and centre in terms of mandate priority at the moment. That is partly driven by international circumstances, partly driven by the urgency of the need, and partly driven by the magnitude of the task. It's been the clear priority.

There are obviously a number of other things identified in the mandate letter that fall right across the breadth of the department and the portfolio. The department is organizing itself to make sure we can assist the minister in delivering on her priorities and working closely with her in that regard.

•(1235)

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I do have lots more I could ask, but I will pass my remaining time on to Mr. Bossio.

**Mr. Mike Bossio (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, Lib.):** Thank you all, once again, for your presentations. They were very informative.

My question is, on the international side, for Ms. Métivier. In the international climate talks, the focus has understandably been on carbon, but I wonder also if the overall sustainability of consumption within society has been considered at the international level in any way at all.

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** The agreement is aimed at limiting temperature rise and controlling GHG emissions, but if you read a lot of the principles and the preamble of the agreement, there are a lot of principles or commitments to do this through a sustainable development lens. There is also a really strong link with the sustainable development agenda that was approved last year under the UN, which has around 17 targets.

I can't say that sustainable consumption is targeted by a specific article in the agreement, but it's kind of at the core of sustainable development or resilience of the economy.

Also, a big part of this agenda is about mobilizing action before 2020. There's also a lot of work being done on some of these aspects, such as that by non-state actors, in parallel to the agreement.

I can't say that you could point to a specific article in the agreement, but certainly a very big part of the equation is trying to change the patterns of society.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Okay. Thank you.

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** If you read about some of the nationally determined contributions that some countries have put forward, you will see that some focus very strongly on some areas of consumption in order to change behaviour to reach their greenhouse gas targets. It's certainly part of the tool box for many countries.

**The Chair:** You have one minute.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** On the targets we have set of 524 megatonnes for 2030, is that going to help us to achieve the goal of a 1.5-degree or 2-degree rise in temperature, or is that just a starting point to get there in the long term? I'm sure they've all set their different targets out there.

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** One of the things that was done during these negotiations was a synthesis report from the secretariat of the convention that looked at all the countries' first commitments last year. It did an assessment and said that this would put us at around a 2.7° temperature rise. That was a key aspect in the agreement to put in an ambition in a cycle so that this ambition will increase over time to bring us down to 2 degrees. Right now we're at about 2.7 degrees.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Eglinski.

**Mr. Jim Eglinski (Yellowhead, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair, for inviting all our guests, and thank you to the guests who have come to give us the information.

I want to focus my time on Ms. Pearse from Parks Canada Agency. Unlike John, I haven't worked for them, but I've enjoyed them and loved them for 60-some years. My riding of Yellowhead encompasses all of Jasper National Park and half of Banff National Park, so I have a lot of contacts there, and a lot of concerns.

Of major concern to me is that under the minister's environment letter, we want us to develop Parks Canada and encourage visitors to come to the parks. In 2017 we want to make it free for everybody, and then we want to keep it free for children under 18. I would just like to make a suggestion that you throw seniors into that.

Then we also say we need to protect our national parks and limit development, etc. I'm not going much further than that, but there is a clash within national parks of a group of people, probably more on the management side, who are pressured by the development of the national parks to assist the people we are asking to come into the parks. As a prime example, there are two major cities less than three hours away from both Banff and Jasper that have over one million people. The demands when people come into the park are different from what they were in the 1950s or 1960s. The population is three or four times what it was. We need more services in the parks, but the services that are demanded by the public and that are needed in our parks are impacting on the footprint of the natural heritage of the parks.



I wonder how your department is going to try to balance the two. There is a demand by the public for these extra services. There is a demand, probably, from the scientific side and from people who have lived in our parks. A lot of people have to realize that in some of our national parks, we are into second- and third-generation people who have loved that environment, who have grown up in that environment, and who don't want to see it changed. They want to remember it as it was when they were kids.

I'd like to get a little feedback from you, Madam.

Thank you. It's a pretty complex question.

● (1240)

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** Thank you very much for that.

This is a very core issue for Parks Canada. We've provided just a very short overview on page 40 of the document that we shared with you, which was also used to brief the minister. We call it "development pressure". As you said, there are pressures from visitors using the parks, the sites, and the historic sites in a way that could potentially impede their ecological integrity or their cultural and historic integrity.

The good news is that Parks Canada has actually had this balancing act in its mandate right from the beginning. You may know that when Banff National Park, the first national park, was created, it was originally created to protect the cave and the basin, the hot spring that was at the core of Banff National Park. Part of the reason for this was that the railways wanted to encourage people to visit Banff to experience those hot springs, but they needed a way to protect those hot springs for the enjoyment of all visitors.

That balancing act between presenting and protecting is very much the core of Parks Canada's mandate. One of the ways that we manage to express that balance and to get Canadian feedback on how best to manage it is through the management planning process. Many of the parks and national historic sites have a legislated obligation to have a management plan established for those parks. Those plans are reviewed every 10 years, and public consultation is a major feature of how those plans are produced and developed. As we look at a particular historic site or a national park, those plans are available for discussion with all the communities.

There is an interesting evolution on how parks are created. Some of the original parks, especially the ones with townsites, were created at a time—

**The Chair:** You have one minute.

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** Thank you.

They were created at a time when people wanted golf courses and other development opportunities in the park. The new parks now are created often in collaboration with first nations, and the visitors' services and the businesses are located outside the park. There has been an evolution in how those services you referred to are being provided to visitors.

**Mr. Jim Eglinski:** I probably have only 10 seconds, so I'll pass them on to the next one.

**The Chair:** You're okay? You do have one more go there, so you might want to ask your colleagues to follow up.

Mr. Gerretsen is next.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you, everybody, for coming here today.

I'll start by following up on something that I think that Mr. McDougall and Ms. Dodds commented on. That was with respect to the our country warming at approximately twice the global average. I'm curious if you can comment first of all on whether it's a linear relationship throughout the world. Is it normal for our particular region of the world to be warming at twice the speed of other parts? I'm curious about the relationship there. Is it normal, or is it something specific that is being done differently in Canada that's contributing to this?

● (1245)

**Dr. Karen Dodds:** Thank you for the question.

I would say that there isn't anything specific to Canada that's causing the difference, except for the fact of where our country is located and the kind of geography that we have. Also, this is a fairly new finding. Again, the further north in Canada you go, the higher the rate of increase is above the global norm, so it's already higher in the Far North than it is just north of the border.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** You're saying it's dependent on our particular location in the world. Can you very briefly provide some comments as to what that means? What are the implications of this?

**Dr. Karen Dodds:** This gets back to the need to adapt to climate change, which I think my colleague made some comments about. As you go further north, you see a lot of permafrost, but we're already seeing some of that permafrost melt. A lot of our infrastructure, especially in the north, is sensitive to those kinds of changing conditions. The zones where you can grow agricultural crops may change. The kinds of species that you once saw in the south may start moving further north. Again, we know that climate change has a very significant impact.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Okay, that's great. Thank you.

I think Mr. Cullen was asking some questions about this particular graph, and I just want to follow up a little bit on that.

Is there a plan to start to make these lines start moving in the direction that we're trying to get at, and if so, when would we have an opportunity to see that plan?

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** Thanks for the question.

One point I should highlight before answering that directly is that this graph, as I mentioned originally, is of measures in place as of September of last year.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Okay.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** Even right now, a number of significant developments have taken place that are not reflected in those lines. For example, the Alberta climate change plan that came out is something new.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Mr. Cullen was basically asking if you are accounting for such potential developments as Energy East. You would equally have to account for, on the other side, the downward trends.

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** Absolutely.

Ontario is another example. Ontario wrote their cap and trade program, which they're just finalizing the details on. We expect that it will have a significant effect on decreasing emissions.

This is not a crystal ball. It is actually just an economic modelling projection of what happens with existing measures in place as of a point in time.

What we're working on now with the minister, and she with the Prime Minister, and he with his first minister colleagues, is the pan-Canadian framework, the objective of which will indeed be to change the slope of those curves and put them on a downward trajectory toward our targets.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Okay, that's great. Thank you.

I'll turn to Parks Canada for a second. This question was asked of the Department of the Environment by Mr. Amos. I want to pose the same question about cutbacks that have occurred and what the implications of those may have been in terms of employment and in terms of your ability to continue with programs. It's not about trying to accuse a previous government or anything; I'm just trying to get a sense as to where we are right now. I'm curious to see if you could comment on that.

Have any cuts been of particular pressure on Parks Canada? What areas have been affected?

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** Well, I am relatively new at Parks. I've been with Parks for a couple of years, so it's not from personal experience that I'm speaking.

Parks Canada did go through a series of cutbacks, as all departments did following 2012. One of the areas where we tried to absorb the pressure, as my colleagues were saying, was in the services offered. What we did in the agency was target opening seasons to visitation, and that meant to some degree that the shoulder seasons and the winter season were cut back. It did have an impact on some of our staff in terms of their seasonal employment being reduced and being targeted to the period that had the highest visitation. For example, on the canal, some of the canal seasons were reduced. That was actually reversed for the last year or two.

Therefore yes, there were some implications for staff from cutbacks.

• (1250)

**The Chair:** I'm going to have to cut that off. Thank you very much.

Mr. Shields is next.

**Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to those who are appearing here today. We really appreciate your information and the materials you've given us.

Mr. McDougall, you referred to a graph in your presentation that has the types of energy segments, and the one that I'd ask about is buildings.

In the private sector and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, there is a lot of work out there with municipalities and energy audits. The municipalities are probably taking the leadership

on this, and the private sector is working with them. They're both asking for national standards, because they're doing it independently, and that creates real challenges for the private sector from municipality to municipality. They are asking if there is a place where we can get national standards to help the private sector as they build and to help the municipalities to harmonize their requirements

Is this something that you have addressed or are interested in?

**Mr. Dan McDougall:** To start with the building sector, yes, in general it's a sector that's of great interest, and it's an area where potentially there are additional emissions reductions that will help to bend that curve.

In terms of standards, a lot of the standards on the building side are done with colleagues at Natural Resources Canada. They have developed model building codes that they then work with the provinces to implement.

As with many things in Canada, the jurisdiction on this is somewhat mixed. Sometimes it's at the provincial level and sometimes it devolves right down to the municipal level. The federal departments and agencies—Canada Mortgage and Housing, for example, and some of the research institutes—work with departments to develop model standards that they then work with our colleagues in other governments to get implemented. It is an area of ongoing and continuing work, and potentially one of the areas that we'll be looking at with other levels of government as we deepen our work on this pan-Canadian framework.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I was just going to add that in one of my upcoming reports—and I believe it'll be tabled in May, although I'm doing so many I can't track if it's May or October—we're looking at the issue of adverse weather and whether Canada is ready for it, and the issue of the national building codes will be addressed at least partially in that chapter.

**Mr. Martin Shields:** Okay. Yes, I think of the energy audit, because municipalities are carrying that load and it's causing a problem, in a sense, for the private sector. Hopefully we can see more of that, and understand the different levels of government and how challenging that is.

I have one last piece: national parks. In 2012 there were round tables on involving youth in the parks, but there's nothing on your list of issues that says how we are addressing the challenge of youth participation in national parks. If it's not an issue on the list, yet it was in 2012, did you resolve it? I don't think so, because young families still aren't going, and I don't see anything that indicates the age of people who are going to the national parks has dropped. It's just us old white people. Do you want to address that one?

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** Yes. Thanks very much.

I appreciate that, because a lot of exciting things are happening at Parks Canada. We did some research and some analysis within parks and highlighted youth and new Canadians as a population group that we needed to be more active with and with which we needed to be doing more outreach. I'm pleased to say that we have put in a number of different initiatives to reach out. We have urban outreach in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. It varies a bit, but it has been in place over the last 10 years, and it is reaching up to and over one million urban participants in the course of each year.

Since 2009 we have had the My Parks Pass, which came out of the minister's round table. It's targeted at grade 8 students. It gives them a pass and encourages them and their families to visit the parks. We have an earth rangers program, which is directed at school-age children. We also have Canada's Coolest School Trip, a contest for kids in schools to put forward a video with their class. The video gets juried, and one school group gets the chance to go on a trip to a park. The park this year is Jasper. We also input into a number of different magazines that target children.

In terms of new Canadians, we have a program called the cultural access pass, in collaboration with the Institute for Canadian Citizenship—

• (1255)

**The Chair:** You have 30 seconds.

**Ms. Jane Pearse:** It gives complimentary admission.

Thank you very much for your question.

**The Chair:** Sorry, I'm only doing that because I don't think people have a sense of how much time is left. When I say it, it doesn't mean stop talking. It means you have a bit of time, but it's really short, so get the thought out.

Okay, we did have Mr. Cullen in the schedule, but he seems to have gone. With the committee's permission, I wanted to ask a question.

Dr. Dodds, you talked about the reduction in Ontario and you attributed it to the improvements in cars and the emissions reductions in cars, but you didn't talk about Ontario's very significant direction to close the coal-fired power plants. I was surprised, because I was thinking that was probably the biggest issue in Toronto. You were talking specifically about Toronto, but you didn't mention it. Did you have some information that says that wasn't the case? What was the reason you didn't mention it?

**Dr. Karen Dodds:** That's simply a timing issue. We have the information on the timing of shutting down the coal-fired plants, and

certainly all of the science that we have since the closing shows that there has been had a very significant improvement in air quality.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. I definitely want to understand that.

We have had a lot of really good questions and discussion around the table. I really appreciate all of you taking the time to come and share your knowledge with us. Many of us are brand new, and I think we're starting to get a better sense of where your departments are, where the issues are, and where we may want to focus as a committee. Some of the questions have raised some of those potentials as well.

Thank you very much.

Go ahead, Mr. Bossio.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** I would like to ask one thing.

Ms. Métivier, would it be possible to get a report on some of the sustainability issues on the consumption side? I'm looking for things around stewardship and producer responsibility.

**Ms. Louise Métivier:** We'll see what we can get.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Great.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Hearing that, I think the committee made three requests, two for Ms. Pearse and one for Ms. Métivier. I think the clerk has agreed she's going to follow up.

I want to let everybody know that on Tuesday we have the commissioner coming back to us, along with the relevant departments. They are going to speak to the fall 2015 report, so we'll all be ready for that.

Thank you very much for a wonderful meeting.

The meeting is adjourned.

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