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

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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, October 31, 2017**

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**Chair**

**Mrs. Deborah Schulte**



## Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

Tuesday, October 31, 2017

• (0850)

[English]

**The Chair (Mrs. Deborah Schulte (King—Vaughan, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order.

Welcome, everyone. Welcome, Ms. Gelfand. Thank you very much. Can you hear me?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand (Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development, Office of the Auditor General):** I can hear you.

**The Chair:** I can talk louder. It's a big room, and the sound just bounces, I think.

Welcome today. We really appreciate you and your team coming before us. You have released your fall reports. They're all of interest to the committee, of course, because they're on reducing greenhouse gases, the impacts of climate change, clean energy technologies, and the progress in implementing sustainable development strategies.

Obviously, the last one is of real importance, given our committee's report on FSDA, the Federal Sustainable Development Act. The other ones are of importance to us as we move forward on our fourth study on climate change and clean technologies.

For the first hour, we will have you and your team. For the second hour, we're going to have the departments that we've asked to come before us.

I'll turn the floor over to you, please.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Madam Chair, thank you for the opportunity to discuss my fall 2017 reports that were tabled in Parliament on October 3.

I'm accompanied by Kimberley Leach, Sharon Clark, and Andrew Hayes, who were the principals responsible for the audit.

In this latest round of audits, we examined three areas in which the federal government has been working to address climate change. We looked at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to the impacts of climate change, and fostering the development of clean energy technologies.

Climate change is one of the defining issues of the 21st century. It is far-reaching and complex. These audits show that when it comes to climate change action, Canada has a lot of work to do in order to reach the targets it has set.

Our first audit looked at whether Environment and Climate Change Canada had led efforts to meet Canada's commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Canada has missed all of its reduction targets since 1992 and is also not on track to meet the 2020 target. Our audit found that the federal government had shifted its focus to a new and more difficult target, one that has to be met in 2030. This amounts to moving further into the future the timeline to reach the emission reduction targets.

[Translation]

Last December, the government released its newest climate change plan—the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. We found that the federal government, provinces and territories established a governance structure to oversee and report on the framework's implementation.

Environment and Climate Change Canada worked with other federal departments to determine roles and responsibilities in order to implement the measures set in the framework and developed processes to track progress and report annually to first ministers.

While Environment and Climate Change Canada has made progress in working with the territories and provinces to develop the pan-Canadian framework to meet the 2030 target, it remains the latest in a series of plans that have been produced since 1992.

Environment and Climate Change Canada already estimates that even if all the greenhouse gas reduction measures outlined in the pan-Canadian framework are implemented in a timely manner, emissions will go down, but more action will be needed to meet the 2030 target.

[English]

Our second audit examined the federal government's efforts to adapt to climate change impacts. We just saw some yesterday, probably, here in Ottawa. The impacts of wildfires, floods, and extreme weather events are being felt across the country. Identifying climate change risks and taking measures to address them are another area in which governments can take action to adapt to a changing climate.

We looked at whether 19 federal organizations had identified and addressed climate change risks to their programs and operations. Overall, we found that the federal government is not prepared to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate.

[Translation]

Environment and Climate Change Canada developed a federal adaptation policy framework in 2011, but the department did not move to implement it. The department also failed to provide other federal organizations with adequate guidance and tools to identify their climate change risks.

As a result, we found that only five of 19 departments and agencies we examined had fully assessed their climate change risks and address them. For example, Fisheries and Oceans Canada determined that rising sea levels and increasing storm surges could impact some small craft harbours. For this reason, in Nova Scotia for example, the department raised a wharf after the harbour flooded, to guard against a reoccurrence.

In another example, as a response to the risk of permafrost degradation and sea level rise, Natural Resources Canada examined the vulnerability of mine waste management practices in the north and developed adaptation strategies.

We found that the 14 other departments had taken little or no action to address the climate change risks that could prevent them from delivering programs and services to Canadians.

● (0855)

[English]

Many departments have an incomplete picture of their own risks, and the federal government, as a whole, does not have a full picture of its climate change risks. If Canada is to adapt to a changing climate, stronger leadership is needed from Environment and Climate Change Canada, along with increased initiative from individual departments.

[Translation]

Our third audit examined three funds that support the development of demonstration projects on clean energy technology. These technologies are one way to decrease greenhouse gas emissions from the production and use of energy.

I am happy to report that the three clean energy funds we looked at were working well overall. The money was spent properly, it was easy to track which projects were funded, and projects were approved through a rigorous and objective process.

[English]

Our fourth audit examined whether six federal organizations were providing ministers and cabinet with assessments of the environmental impacts of the proposals they were putting forward.

We found that almost 80 percent of proposals to ministers did not provide assessments of positive or negative environmental impacts. The Public Health Agency of Canada gets the gold star this year, as it was the only one of the six organizations we examined to include preliminary assessments with almost all its proposals to its minister and with all of its submissions to cabinet.

You may recall that last year Parks Canada was the agency that was able to do the same.

[Translation]

Turning now to the environmental petitions process. In the 2016-17 fiscal year, we received 16 petitions from individuals and organizations.

This year, our annual petitions report to Parliament includes a 10-year retrospective of the petitions process.

[English]

Addressing climate change is not only difficult and complicated, but also important and urgent. Addressing climate change requires whole-of-government action across all departments and agencies.

The federal government has come up with a new climate change action plan and worked with important players to develop it. That sets this plan apart from the ones that came before, which did not meet any of Canada's climate change commitments. Now the federal government needs to turn its new plan into action. We remain hopeful that progress can be achieved, and we will continue to audit this very important issue.

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

[Translation]

Thank you very much.

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We're going to start questioning with Mr. Bossio.

**Mr. Mike Bossio (Hastings—Lennox and Addington, Lib.):** Good morning, Ms. Gelfand. Thank you very much for being here again this morning. It's always a pleasure to have your smiling face at our committee. We always look forward to your reports. They're insightful and give us a snapshot in time of where things are.

In your report, you acknowledge that the government has come up with a plan. You suggested that it is a good plan, the pan-Canadian framework. For the first time, the government is working with all levels of government to try to move in the same direction instead of the federal government saying, "We're going to do this, and then all the rest of you follow our lead." That hasn't worked out so well.

Would you agree that trying to reach a consensus with the different levels of government is going to put us in a much better place to actually achieve targets, moving forward?

● (0900)

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** In our audit, we did acknowledge that Environment and Climate Change Canada worked quite collaboratively with the provinces and territories in establishing the Vancouver declaration as well as the pan-Canadian framework. The collaboration and input of all the provinces do make this plan different from previous plans.

Remember that depending on how our auditors define a plan, since 1992 we've had anywhere from five to 11 or 12 plans to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. That's 25 years of plans, and at the same time our emissions are going up.

Yes, they worked more collaboratively with the provinces and territories. It's now time to see that put into action. As I said, we remain hopeful that the collaboration does make this plan different.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** In looking at this plan, though, in a more multi-faceted way.... We're working with the different levels of government, putting a price on pollution, making investments into green innovation and public transit and climate mitigation, and reducing the overall cost of green energy to make it more competitive with fossil-based energy. Would you not agree that in trying to bring forward a multi-faceted plan, there's no silver bullet? No one option, I think, is going to solve the climate change reductions that we're looking to achieve by 2030. Would you agree, though, that it's going to take time for that plan to bear fruit?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Absolutely. We recognize that we were auditing this plan at the beginning. The plan was signed in December of 2016. Not even a year has passed. Absolutely, it will take time to implement the plan. Yes.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** I don't know if this is a fair question, but I'm going to ask it anyway.

What would you say would be a reasonable amount of time to determine whether the plan is going to start to reach its targets? I know that over the years.... I know you're looking backwards, but perhaps we could try to look a little bit forward, based on your previous experience in trying to measure the success or failure of these plans.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** That's a great question that actually impacts our work. We are trying to figure out when to start auditing elements of the plan. How much time should we give the department to start putting this stuff into action? At this point, we don't plan on auditing climate change again until at least past the spring of 2019.

We are going to do another audit on the commitment around fossil fuel subsidies. That's the one that was tabled by the Auditor General earlier this year. We're going to redo that one in the spring of 2019.

Our planning will start in the fall of 2019 and go into 2020. At that point the plan will be anywhere from two to three years old, and that would be a good time, most likely.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Based on your previous experience, is that a good time frame to judge it? I know it's a moving target and it's a difficult question to answer, but based on your previous experience, does that three-year time frame, looking forward, based on this plan, seem reasonable?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** In the case of the Kyoto implementation plan, I believe Ms. Leach audited that almost every year. We were looking at it every year.

In our case, we're thinking not before spring of 2019. Perhaps the fall of 2019 or into the spring of 2020 would be when we might start looking at the implementation of the carbon price or any parts of the plan.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** I have another question, so maybe I'll go to that. These are your words:

We found that Environment and Climate Change Canada improved its reporting on projected greenhouse gas emissions. It more clearly outlined key assumptions, and it changed its projections to better reflect the uncertainty included in its calculations. The Department was working on its methodology to improve reporting on carbon sinks and emissions from Canada's forests. It was also working with provinces and territories to improve how provincial and territorial measures would be reflected in reporting projected emissions.

You mention that the ECC improved its reporting on projected greenhouse gas emissions and better took into account the impact of GDP growth and fluctuating oil and natural gas prices. If the previous data made it difficult to accurately assess progress, would you agree that this is an important early step in taking an evidence-based approach to trying to determine the difference that we're making?

● (0905)

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** What I can say is that absolutely we found that Environment Canada had improved its reporting of projected greenhouse gas emissions in all the ways that you've already mentioned.

The one area where we thought they could improve was to try to separately indicate the impact of federal measures and provincial measures, but we were extremely pleased to see a change in how they were reporting it. This audit was a follow-up to a previous audit. We had made recommendations to improve projections, and they had followed them.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Wonderful. Thank you so much.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Fast is next.

**Hon. Ed Fast (Abbotsford, CPC):** Thank you, Commissioner, for appearing before us again.

One of the biggest frustrations we've had as the official opposition is that we have been unable to secure from the government detailed information as to the impact that carbon taxes will have on Canadians. We've put in requests. What we've received back are almost totally redacted documents. To be able to hold the government accountable, we need to have some information that allows us to determine whether the government has done the necessary homework before it implements policies.

Did you examine at all the economic impacts of the government's climate change policies?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Sorry; I didn't hear the very last bit.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Did you examine at all the economic impacts of the government's climate change policies?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** We were doing a follow-up on whether or not we were going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve the targets that the government had set. We were looking at the 2020 target and then the 2030 target. The government has set a 2020 target and a 2030 target, and our audit objective was to find out whether or not we were going to achieve the 2020 target and/or the 2030 target. That's where our audit stopped.

We did not look at the impact of the carbon price. That would be in our next audit on the implementation of the pan-Canadian framework.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** All right.

Given the fact that we've had significant challenges in trying to get the government to provide us with economic impact analyses on the impact of a carbon price on Canadians, is it your position that this kind of information should be made available to Canadians?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** It will definitely need to be made available to us when we ask for it. I don't know if we have a position on whether or not analyses of government are supposed to be made available to the public or not, so I can't answer that specific question. I can say that we've had difficulty getting information on subsidies to the fossil fuel industry. That is why I wasn't able to table the report on reaching that goal, because the Department of Finance was not providing the office with that information. We've had difficulty with access to information, and that's why the Auditor General tabled that report.

As for a position on whether or not that information is to be made available to the public, I don't think I can comment on that.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** It's my understanding that the government has done some economic impact analyses. In fact, more recently I understand that they've done that full analysis for the forest industry and, again, they have refused to release that information to the public.

I note that each of the ministers' mandate letters indicates that information should be available to the public by default, that there would be greater openness and transparency under this government. It's something that's really frustrating. We've not seen them deliver on that.

You concluded that Environment and Climate Change Canada, in collaboration with other federal partners, did not provide adequate leadership to advance the federal government's adaptation to climate change impacts. Your report also noted that Environment and Climate Change Canada did not identify concrete actions, priorities, and targets to achieve those objectives.

The amount of money that's available for the government to help with adaptation is around \$260 million. Am I correct in making that assumption?

• (0910)

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** There's all kinds of information about the funding that was available for adaptation. Between 2011 and 2017, about a six-year period, there was \$540 million for climate change adaptation. It's been stated that from 2016 to 2018, \$11.7 billion will go toward green infrastructure, building codes, and the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Let me ask you this: have those monies been spent?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I didn't audit whether or not the 2011 to 2017 monies were spent.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Okay, but you did conclude that in fact the government has not been following through on its commitments to address adaptation to climate change, correct?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** That is correct. There was a policy framework established in 2011. Environment Canada held one workshop in 2013. They didn't do much more after that. They in fact didn't even do their own risk assessment for impacts to climate change in that period or since that time.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** What you're saying is that hundreds of millions of dollars were set aside for adaptation, but basically only one event has taken place to help the departments of government.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** No. Five departments did complete risk assessments. They include Natural Resources Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, Health Canada, and one more. I always miss one—

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Fourteen did not, correct?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Fourteen did not. Five did. Many of them went further than just identifying the risks and actually developed tools and processes and did scientific studies. They raised ports. I mean, there was action spent to adapt by those five departments. What's more disconcerting is that 14 did not do that good risk assessment.

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

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Ms. Duncan.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton Strathcona, NDP):** Thank you.

Commissioner, it's great to see you and your terrific team. I always value your audits and reports and I look forward to the next one.

I'm deeply concerned, Commissioner. We've gone through this series of reports. Going back as far as 2008, we have 2008, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, and 2017. Every time, the departments are not delivering their responsibility for a sustainable development strategy.

You say in this report that 80% of proposals submitted to cabinet are not doing the required sustainable development strategy. We have two legal requirements at the federal level. One is the sustainable development act, and then there's an overall strategy. Each department is supposed to do a strategy in tune with that. We have also had this cabinet directive since 1990, and then updates by Treasury Board and by the PCO with guidelines on how to do it, yet you're reporting that neither the Treasury Board nor the PCO seem to be even requiring that these documents be filed.

One thing I found stunning in your report was that they require that a gender lens report be attached to the submission to cabinet but not a report on sustainable development. One of your recommendations was that there needs to be a kind of higher-level central agency oversight over this situation to make sure there is compliance, yet in the bill that is tabled—we'll be hearing from the minister and her officials on Thursday—that responsibility is still resting with some official within Environment Canada.

I'm wondering if you could give us an idea, if you have looked at other jurisdictions and so forth, of a mechanism we can look to in order to be holding the federal government more accountable in delivering on these requirements and in ensuring that their policies, programs, and legislation are consistent with their commitment to sustainable development.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** That's quite a broad question.

Over the past five years, we've been looking at whether or not departments have been implementing the cabinet directive to review environmental impacts of all policies, programs, and projects that are put forward to ministers and to cabinet. The cabinet directive says that each one of these policies and programs is supposed to be vetted for environmental impacts, both positive and negative, and that this information is supposed to be brought forward to the minister and/or to cabinet.

Generally what we've found over the five or six years that we've been looking... Basically we have 26 agencies that are responsible for doing this, and we've chopped it up and looked at four to six agencies per year. Overall, what we found is that the cabinet directive is better followed when the proposal goes to cabinet, and in that case I'm going to generalize and say that about 40% of the time that a proposal goes to cabinet, a strategic environmental assessment has been done. Very little information goes to a minister, when there is a minister, about either positive or negative impacts. There can be positive environmental impacts as well, and the minister should be aware of that. Very rarely do proposals get vetted for their environmental impacts, either positive or negative, when they go to the minister.

This is just one piece of the federal sustainable development strategy. That strategy and the new act have much broader scope than just looking at environmental effects, but our audits have been on that one piece of the old federal sustainable development strategy. It said clearly that all the departments were going to improve their use of the cabinet directive, so we looked at that slice, not at the whole thing.

• (0915)

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** There are 17 parameters, now, that the departments are going to have to look at since Canada has signed on to the UN sustainable development goals. If the departments aren't going to be delivering on one of those 17, what confidence do you have that they're going to be reporting on all 17? I guess that's a bit of a rhetorical question.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I can tell you that we are doing an audit right now on the preparedness of the government to implement the sustainable development goals, basically all 17. We want to know how well prepared Canada is to implement the SDGs. That is part of an international effort of auditors general from around the world going into their governments to see whether or not the governments are prepared to implement the SDGs.

Auditors general from around the world will then go and look at specific goals. As you know, there are 17 goals, 169 targets, and 200-some indicators. The auditors general will then be going in to look at specific targets and seeing whether or not their governments are meeting those targets. It's part of an international effort of auditors general from around the world.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I would look forward to a report on that.

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

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I notice you reported that the federal government seems to keep setting target dates and targets for climate and then missing them and just setting other ones. Do you have any concern with that? Should we stick with the target date and start reporting?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** My job is to tell you whether the government is achieving its objectives. It set those target dates, and to date we have not met any of our targets.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Thanks.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Go ahead, Mr. Gerretsen.

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

Welcome back. I know you've been before the committee on a number of occasions, but it might be beneficial to put on the record for those who are watching. Could you very briefly tell us about your credentials and what you did prior to this role?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Sure. I worked with the federal government for a few years at Parks Canada, maybe five years. Then I worked in the NGO sector, the non-governmental sector, for organizations like the Canadian Wildlife Federation and the Canadian Nature Federation. Then I worked for about five years in the mining sector, both at the industry association and with a mining company called Rio Tinto Iron Ore Company of Canada.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** You have lots of experience in the environmental world, so to speak.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I would say I have lots of experience in the area of environment and sustainability.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Thank you.

Do you see the proposed reforms in Bill C-57 as being a step in the right direction?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I'm hoping that the committee will call me to speak to that act specifically, because right now I'm here to tell you about our fall reports.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Okay. As it relates to the work you're here to talk to us about today, you said that five of nine of the departments had fully evaluated their risks. Was that correct?

• (0920)

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Five out of 19 departments had done anywhere from a reasonable to an excellent job. We had 19 departments to look at, and we were struggling with how to chunk them. There were the ones that did almost nothing, if not nothing. Then there were a few that did some things, and then a few that did an excellent job, and then a few in between. As a result, we cut it off: either you did a good job or you didn't do a good job, and five out of 19 did anywhere from a reasonable to an excellent job of looking at all their climate change risks and assessing them.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Based on your experience as commissioner and what you may have seen prior, would you say that what is being done now is better or worse than five years ago?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** We looked at the 2011 framework on climate change adaptation that the Government of Canada passed. In that framework it says that each department is supposed to assess the climate change risks to its assets and the delivery of its programs. We looked at that commitment and whether or not the departments were meeting that commitment.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** You've been before this committee before with this same update.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** No. I'm talking now about climate change risk adaptation. You might be talking about strategic environmental assessment. Those are two different tools.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** No, I was referring to the climate change update. Maybe it's in information that you've provided to us.

Where do you see the challenges? You said that some of the departments would provide the information if it was going to cabinet, but not if it was going to the minister. I know now we're talking to the strategy, but can you explain why you think that is?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** It's probably a combination of push and pull: ministers need to request it and staff need to provide it. When we're talking about strategic environmental assessment and the use of that cabinet directive, it's probably a little of both, when it goes to ministers. As it pertains to climate change risk and risk analysis, we found that the departments that went ahead and did it took their own initiative, their own leadership, and went ahead and followed this guidance and did it, while other departments did not do that.

That's why our recommendation is that Environment Canada has to step up to the plate, but other departments also have to take an initiative to assess their climate change risks.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** Do we have the right oversight body to enforce that to happen?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** That's up to Parliament to decide.

In other countries the sustainable development strategy reports directly through...say in Germany, to the chancellor. It is not in one department. In the case of the federal sustainable development strategy, that whole government-wide strategy is run out of an office of a director general in Environment Canada, who is not a very senior official.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** If you were to make a recommendation as a way to instill more accountability, would you look to a model like the one you just referenced in Germany?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** When I appear before the committee on this issue, I'll give you the recommendations at that time, if that's all right.

**Mr. Mark Gerretsen:** You know what I really want to talk to you about.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** She's ready.

You have 30 seconds. Is there anything else?

No. Okay, we're moving on to Mr. Sopuck.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC):** Thank you.

In 1987 the Brundtland commission's report, "Our Common Future", defined sustainable development as "the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Do you agree with that definition?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** That's a definition that Parliament suggested?

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** No, that's from the Brundtland commission.

Do you agree with that definition of sustainable development?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** It doesn't matter if I agree with it or not. The definition I use is the one the Government of Canada decided on.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** Okay. Well, that's the accepted definition of sustainable development worldwide. I happen to have been a delegate at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, and it was the Brundtland commission definition that was accepted by all countries, so I think it's the most accepted definition of the concept.

Interestingly, the Federal Sustainable Development Act, according to your report, "requires the federal government to develop a strategy intended to make environmental decision making more transparent and accountable".

Clearly the Federal Sustainable Development Act only deals with one leg of the stool, the environment side, and is clearly not a sustainable development act. Would you agree with that?

•(0925)

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Are you saying the current Federal Sustainable Development Act?

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** Yes, I just quoted what your report says about making environmental decision-making more transparent. At the Earth Summit it was very clear that sustainable development is a development concept, yet the Federal Sustainable Development Act only focuses on the environmental aspect of development. Clearly, the Federal Sustainable Development Act is inadequate.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** The current Federal Sustainable Development Act and the federal sustainable development strategy indeed focus on environmental sustainability and not the three legs of the stool that the Brundtland commission....

The Federal Sustainable Development Act also indicates that sustainable development is an evolving concept, so if you look at the definition by the Quebec commissioner of sustainable development, it is even broader.



**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** How it's implemented is evolving. The definition is not.

In terms of in your report, you talked about the impacts of wildfires, floods, and extreme weather events that are being felt across the country, and on and on. Why didn't you provide any data to back that up?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I could provide all that data. There is nothing in our report that doesn't have backup data, so we could provide all that data to you. It comes mostly from Natural Resources Canada.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** You made a flippant comment about yesterday's rainfall being climate change. Those kinds of flippant comments are not helpful in the least. The only thing that's helpful are quantified long-term trends. For example, in prairie Canada, 1961 was the driest year ever, and in Manitoba this year we had a perfect farming year. I would urge the powers that be never to focus on anecdotes but only to look at data. Otherwise, it's all just speculation and opinion.

You talk about Fisheries and Oceans in terms of looking at rising sea levels and so on. The department raised a wharf after a harbour flooded. That's hard infrastructure. Recently, the Manitoba government launched the made-in-Manitoba climate and green plan, and I would urge you to read it because, in addition to dealing with the subject of emissions, the report deals at great length with what I call ecological infrastructure—wetlands, forests, habitats, and so on.

Why do you think there's so little emphasis in the climate change debate on conserving, managing, and protecting our ecological infrastructure, such as wetlands, woodlands, riparian areas, water quality, and so on?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Unfortunately, I didn't audit that issue, so I can't make a comment on it.

As for my comment regarding Ottawa, the reason I mentioned it was that I heard the mayor of La Pêche talk about climate change, so it was in my head and I was thinking about it.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** Except you talked about infrastructure. You talked about how we adapt to climate change and developing infrastructure to deal with climate change, and I'm saying it's a grave omission not to have included ecological infrastructure.

I strongly recommend you follow the example of the Manitoba government when it comes to dealing with infrastructure and have a section evaluating the federal government's actions in terms of ecological infrastructure, meaning things like wetlands and woodlands.

Following up on Mr. Bossio's comments, much of the ecological infrastructure consists of carbon sinks. Would you agree that Canada has a pretty good track record in protecting and preserving our carbon sinks, such as our taiga woodlands and so on, but we could do more?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I am doing an audit right now on the Aichi biodiversity targets, and one of those targets is the use of and thinking around natural capital. I'll be able to talk more about whether or not the government is meeting that target in terms of protecting natural capital, which is part of what you're talking about.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** It's a part, but a relatively small part. The biggest part.... You focus on things like floods, droughts, and so on, and water is by far Canada's most important environmental issue, in my view. The Aichi targets are only peripherally involved with water, perhaps with the protection of wetlands.

What Manitoba is contemplating with their made-in-Manitoba climate change agreement plan is a massive water conservation program, the likes of which Canada has never seen before. That's the kind of program to emulate.

Thank you.

● (0930)

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

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

Thank you very much for coming. It's always great to see you.

In our committee report, "Federal Sustainability for Future Generations", which I think was a unanimous report, this was one of our recommendations:

The Committee recommends that the Government of Canada develop additional measures for improving enforceability and accountability in support of meeting the sustainable development targets. In developing these measures, the Government should seek the advice of the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development.

That's you.

What measures of enforcement and accountability do you recommend in order to ensure stronger departmental progress?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Tell me exactly what you want me to talk about. Is it the Federal Sustainable Development Act?

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** It's the act, yes.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** The new one that's being discussed?

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** We talk about how we keep our departments accountable for the things we've been discussing today. How would you recommend we move further to ensure accountability of those departments? With five of the 14 not moving forward....

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I hope that the committee will call me to specifically talk about our recommendations around the new proposed act, the deficiencies of the previous act, and the advantages of the new act. Today I'm here to talk about the reports that we just issued.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Can you talk about that at all?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Privy Council and Treasury Board have a responsibility in implementing the strategic environmental assessment tool. When things go to cabinet, PCO and Treasury Board could and should, most likely, be doing a better job of making sure that strategic environmental assessments have been done before the proposal gets to cabinet.

It would likely raise our rates of compliance with this cabinet directive if the central agencies used their tools. Similarly, they could be putting—and we've mentioned this—a climate impact lens on things as well, to make sure that we're ready to adapt. There's a strong role for the central agencies.

In the climate adaptation chapter, you'll note that they did not do a lot of work in the area of adaptation, and we recommended that they look at the tool that they already have, which is the strategic environment assessment tool, and think about adapting it so that the country can be better ready to adapt to climate change.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** You mentioned today, and also in your “Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change” report, that Environment and Climate Change Canada was not working to advance the federal government's adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

What can Environment and Climate Change do to provide leadership to support public and private sector institutions as they prepare Canadians from coast to coast to coast for climate change?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** In the adaptation framework, it's quite clear that there are several goals set out for that framework on adaptation. One of them includes helping Canadians get ready to adapt.

That would be a great question to ask the department. I believe they'll be here in the next session. My job is to audit. When they say they're going to do something, it's up to them to decide how to do it.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** When Mr. Bossio started off questioning, you were commenting about the fact that the government worked well with provincial and territorial governments on the pan-Canadian framework and the Vancouver declaration. You acknowledged that this does take time.

I know this is similar to what Mike asked, but how much progress should have been made in this period of time? What were realistic expectations when you came in at the end of 2015 and started the negotiation process? What would have been realistic? Where would you have hoped or expected that we would be?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** One thing that you need to remember is that when we started the audit on climate change, there was no pan-Canadian framework. In fact, I believe we started it in 2015.

**Ms. Kimberley Leach (Principal, Sustainable Development Strategies, Audits and Studies, Office of the Auditor General):** It was in 2015.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** We came in right when all of this was in play. It's difficult for me to say how much should be in play or not. We have indicated that this plan is different from the other plans. That's because they've engaged the provinces and territories. That's never been done before.

We remain hopeful that we will start to see action and start to see the curve bend on our emissions. We've had plans before, but our emissions continue to go up.

• (0935)

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Are there any recent signs of that increase?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** The latest data would be 2015 data, so it's too soon to tell.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Okay, it's 2015 data, so you can't give me a—

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** The data lags.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** —general feeling of how you feel things are going without the data.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** That's right.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Do I have a minute?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** When Mike was finishing up, he ran out of time.

One of your recommendations was that we separate federal measures and provincial measures, and then the time ran out. Do you want to elaborate a little on that?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Some of the experts we've spoken to talk about the idea of overlapping efforts. Quebec is doing something, and Ontario is doing something, and the feds are doing something, and what happens if all these policies sort of cross each other or mix up or even go counter to each other?

We're recommending that the government work as hard as it possibly can to try to distinguish between what's going to happen based on federal activity and what's going to happen based on provincial activity, recognizing that this is pretty difficult to do. I'm sure the department will tell you that. This is not easy stuff, but just because it's not easy doesn't mean that we don't do it.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** I don't normally ask questions, but I'm very confused on something. This data, you just said, hearkens back to 2015.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** That is the emissions data.

**The Chair:** Okay. It's not the data that gives the performance of the departments.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** No. I'm talking about greenhouse emissions data that hearkens back. It lags.

**The Chair:** I wanted to know what period the data on the departments was from.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** It is 2015 projections.

**The Chair:** Hang on; I'm not talking about the emissions data. You were talking about the five departments out of—

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Okay, that's recent. With regard to the five departments out of 19 and whether they have looked at their climate change risks, that's extremely recent data. The only thing I'm saying dates back to 2015 is the data on how much greenhouse gas emissions we are emitting as a country.

**The Chair:** Thank you for that. I was confused.

Go ahead, Mr. Godin.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Joël Godin (Portneuf—Jacques-Cartier, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Madam Commissioner, for participating this morning, and thank you to the team accompanying you.

Before joining the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development, I was on the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and I still come to the same conclusion. I have already made comments about the Auditor General and you, as commissioner, reporting to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and, of course, overall, all of the recommendations you're suggesting are welcomed by the department, which says that it will comply and take the necessary action.

What happens next? The unfortunate thing right now with our management is that there is no adequate follow-up to force departments to comply with the recommendations. In your opening remarks, you said that five of the 19 departments complied and did the right things to achieve the objective, but that it was on their own initiative. It isn't normal that, in 2017, we are still relying on the intention of individuals. I think the government must have the tools it needs to move the issue forward. I find it unfortunate and, I'm saying it again today and I probably haven't finished saying it—I'll probably be labelled as a parliamentarian who wants that things are done well and that the taxpayers' dollars are well spent—complying with recommendations should not be based on the intentions of individuals.

Then, we see that the objectives that Environment and Climate Change Canada have set are unattainable. You mentioned at the start of your remarks that the department “already estimates that even if all the greenhouse gas reduction measures outlined in the pan-Canadian framework are implemented in a timely manner, emissions will go down [we don't know to what level], but more action will be needed to meet the 2030 target”. Is this all smoke and mirrors? Is it to respond to public opinion and silence it for a little bit or to ease the pressure? Can we be a little more serious in this process?

I'd like you to give us some advice. As parliamentarians, what should we do to remain realistic? Let's stop dreaming; we have to be realistic. Do we have the right targets? Is it responsible to say that we are going to attain such an objective when we don't? It's okay not to attain it, but let's be honest.

Can you tell us what steps we should take to make sure we are a little more serious?

● (0940)

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** I'll try to answer both questions.

It's the job of parliamentarians to follow up. Public accounts require all departments to produce an action plan one year after they have been subject to a report. This committee did the same thing by following up on the work. At the Office of the Auditor General, we also conduct follow-up audits, including one focused on reducing greenhouse gases. We need to do another follow-up on the Canadian Environmental Protection Act.

You're right to say that follow-up isn't done systematically. It's both our job and the job of parliamentarians to do follow-up and ask that the departments be accountable for their implementation of the recommendations.

The 2030 target was established by the government already. In its pan-Canadian plan, Environment Canada said that emissions would go down, but there is still a deficiency. There will have to be more action in this area if all the measures are taken within the prescribed time frame.

Regardless, it's the department that should answer your question.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Thank you very much, Madam Commissioner.

You also said that, in 2011, the government at the time had developed a federal strategic framework but that, unfortunately, the department hadn't necessarily applied it.

Is this framework still relevant? Could it be reactivated?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Yes, the framework is still relevant; it's the last one that was developed. During our audit, it was put on the website so that all the departments were aware that such a framework existed. In short, there is a framework, and it's up to date.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** So it could be reactivated and put back on track. Could it not?

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** You are going to see the recommendations that we made to all the departments; I think you'll hear about it. They all said they would follow our recommendations.

**Mr. Joël Godin:** Thank you.

I am pleased to hear you say that the three funds put in place in the past are working well overall and that the approval process has been rigorous and objective. This means that what has been done in the past isn't necessarily negative.

Madam Commissioner, I have a semantic question.

Paragraph 1.55 of report 1 contains the following recommendation: “Environment and Climate Change Canada should report publicly and in a timely manner on the results of implementing regulations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions”. Then comes the department's response, which obviously starts off with “Agreed [as I just told you]. Environment and Climate Change Canada will build on its current regulatory reporting practices to provide the public with timely information ...”.

Perhaps the department didn't understand the meaning of the word “timely”. It isn't the information that's timely; it's the time.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Godin, I know you are trying—

**A voice:** Let him go.

**The Chair:** I can't let him go, unfortunately. I needed to cut you off. We've gone over time, and I apologize for that.

It has been, as always, a pleasure. We very much respect and admire the work that you do. Your reports were very helpful.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** It was good to have you here today so that we could dig in a bit deeper. We're looking forward to having you back again as we do FSDA.

I'll suspend to bring up the department.

**Ms. Julie Gelfand:** Thank you very much.

• (0940) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

• (0950)

**The Chair:** Order. I want to welcome everyone.

We have quite a suite of witnesses in front of us. I'm going to do a quick introduction.

We have less than an hour, so we want to keep your comments really down tight. We ask you to keep them under five minutes so that we can get to the questioning, because the questioning is where everybody really wants to go. We're looking at some long comments here, and if I could ask you to keep them short so that we can get to the questions, that would be great. I think everybody has copies of the comments.

I'll introduce everyone.

From the Department of the Environment, we have with us Matt Jones, assistant deputy minister, pan-Canadian framework implementation office, and Laniel Bateman, acting executive director, policy development.

Welcome.

From the Department of Fisheries and Oceans we have Keith Lennon, director, oceans science branch. From the Department of Industry we have Colette Downie, assistant deputy minister and chief financial officer, and Christopher Johnstone, director general, science and research sector.

From the Department of Natural Resources, we have Amanda Wilson, director general, office of energy research and development, innovation and energy technology sector—wow, that's a big business card—and Marc Wickham, director, energy science and technology programs, office of energy research and development, innovation and energy technology sector.

Welcome.

From the Department of Public Works and Government Services, we have Simon Dubé, director general of strategic policy and planning, and Veronica Silva, director general, service lead, technical services, real property services.

Welcome.

We also have, from the Department of Transport, Ellen Burack, director general for environmental policy.

Thanks to all of you for joining us today. We appreciate your time. We're looking forward to your statements and then getting a chance to get to questions. I think we have Environment and Climate Change Canada up first.

We'll give the floor to you.

**Mr. Matt Jones (Assistant Deputy Minister, Pan-Canadian Framework Implementation Office, Department of the Environment):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here. I'm very pleased to be here to speak about our progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and our approach to addressing climate change. This is certainly something that's important to talk about, as it is a top priority for the department and for governments across Canada, as was demonstrated by first ministers when they met in Vancouver and developed the Vancouver declaration.

The first ministers, at that time, agreed to meet or exceed Canada's 2030 target and increase the level of ambition over time to drive greater emission reductions, as required by the Paris agreement, and to develop a pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. For the first time there was agreement across all levels of federal, provincial, and territorial governments on an emission reduction target and the need to develop a plan to achieve it.

The declaration also committed governments to the development of working groups to identify options in key areas that we'll be talking about today: clean technology and clean growth, carbon pricing and other mitigation opportunities, and adaptation and resilience, a key topic for today. That menu of options was the first key step leading to the pan-Canadian framework.

Additionally, indigenous peoples were consulted to help shape the development of options and identify opportunities to strengthen collaboration. An extensive engagement process was undertaken to hear directly from Canadians in this process as well.

All of this work culminated, as I think people are aware, in the development of the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change. This was adopted at the first ministers' meeting last December. The anniversary is coming up. It has a suite of policies across those four pillars that I mentioned: clean growth, carbon pricing, mitigation, and adaptation.

The process there was the Vancouver declaration, which launched a process to develop a menu of options, and then an extensive process to analyze, evaluate, and seek approval and agreement on those options in the form of the pan-Canadian framework. We have now turned to implementing that framework. It is also linked to and supported by a number of other federal funding initiatives, specifically around infrastructure.

At Environment and Climate Change Canada, we've been working extremely hard in the development of this credible, actionable climate plan, and in the implementation of that plan. Since the December 1 ministers' meetings, we have worked extremely closely with our partner departments, with provinces and territories, with indigenous peoples, and with stakeholders to implement the PCF and facilitate this transition to the low-carbon economy. The department has been working with provinces and territories to identify projects that could be funded under the low-carbon economy fund, and we are currently developing legislation and regulations to enact both carbon pricing and other mitigation opportunities.

In considering the conclusions from this audit, it's important to consider the time period covered with respect to mitigation. As discussed, the most recent date available is from 2015, and significant actions have been taken in support of the development and implementation of the pan-Canadian framework that are just happening now.

In terms of reporting, we do report on historical emissions and update our emissions projections annually, and I'm sure we'll talk more about that.

The audit did acknowledge the extensive collaboration with provinces and territories to develop this plan, and we look forward to speaking more about this in the future, as was discussed with the commissioner, as we implement the plan and see the results of those efforts.

The recommendations from the report have been covered. There are two related to reporting, one related to emissions projections, and one related to the 2020 target. We've accepted those recommendations and we've already taken action in a number of areas, including working collaboratively on results with provinces and territories.

In terms of reporting, in addition to the three regular reports that we provide to the United Nations, we've also committed to report back to first ministers on our progress in implementing the pan-Canadian framework. We are on track to produce that report this year.

We are also taking action on clean growth and climate change as a core responsibility in our departmental results framework, and our departmental results reports will focus on these results.

● (0955)

It will require significant action and effort over the long term. We have a lot of work left to do in order to drive down emissions and we look forward to speaking with you more on this topic.

With that, I'll turn to my colleague to speak on the adaptation of it.

**Ms. Laniel Bateman (Acting Executive Director, Policy Development, Department of the Environment):** Thank you.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our response to the findings in "Report 2—Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change" in the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development's fall 2017 reports. My colleague has already covered some of the broader context of the government's action on the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change, and I will be speaking on behalf of Environment and Climate Change Canada on the adaptation audit.

The adaptation audit looked at the 2010-2017 time period and focused on the extent to which federal organizations have made progress to adapt to climate change. It examined federal leadership efforts and assessed whether departments and agencies had implemented the federal adaptation policy framework. While the audit deemed that some departments and agencies took action, it identified that more work is needed.

As important context, I would like to take the opportunity to clarify what the audit covered.

The audit did not examine national progress on adaptation or federal adaptation programs, but focused on whether the government departments and agencies had properly assessed climate risks. To respond to the audit findings, the Government of Canada will continue to implement the pan-Canadian framework. This is the government's plan, in partnership with provinces, territories, and indigenous peoples, to grow the economy while reducing emissions and building resilience to a change in climate. Through the pan-Canadian framework, the federal government has identified priority actions to respond to climate change impacts on federal areas of responsibility; outlined roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities; and developed a process to report on the program.

Important investments are being made to advance adaptation efforts in Canada. These include unprecedented federal investments in things such as the \$2-billion disaster mitigation and adaptation fund. Budget 2017 allocated \$260 million over five years to implement the federal pan-Canadian framework commitments on adaptation and climate resilience, including the creation of a Canadian centre for climate services, which will improve access to climate-related science and information; responding to the health risks associated with climate change; integrating indigenous knowledge in guiding adaptation measures, notably in flood-prone indigenous communities; continuing to build resilience in vulnerable coastal regions; and assessing and adapting transportation infrastructure.

The Government of Canada will also take action to improve climate risk assessment processes and adaptation planning. Departments and agencies will assess climate risks in their areas of responsibility, and Environment and Climate Change Canada, with central agencies, will provide guidance and support information sharing to increase federal awareness of climate risks and opportunities.

Environment and Climate Change Canada is continuing to undertake a department-wide climate risk assessment process to determine the vulnerabilities of departmental assets, major regulatory activities, and key services, and to develop a subsequent adaptation plan for the department.

In summary, climate change is a government priority. These actions will ensure that departments are prepared to address climate risks. Government-wide efforts will help Canadians understand how they may be affected by climate change and help them make the best decisions to protect their homes, businesses, health, and communities.

*Merci.*

I will turn now to my colleagues in other departments to speak to the adaptation audit.

● (1000)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Lennon, if you wouldn't mind, go ahead for just a few minutes; otherwise we'll not be able to hear from everyone.

**Mr. Keith Lennon (Director, Oceans Science Branch, Department of Fisheries and Oceans):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I wish to begin by thanking you for providing me with the opportunity to discuss the important work done by scientists at Fisheries and Oceans Canada to better understand, predict, and adapt to the impacts of climate change on aquatic environments.

As you are aware, climate change poses a serious risk to the sustainability of Canada's vulnerable marine ecosystems, fisheries, and coastal communities. The impacts of climate change are growing and are creating a sustained need for scientific expertise.

Climate change is a critical global issue that threatens the sustainable use of the earth's oceans by future generations. It's expected that Canada's oceans will become warmer, fresher, more acidic, and less oxygenated as a result of climate change.

Changing ocean conditions are impacting the distribution, productivity, and overall health of many of our living resources, including key fishery species. Increasing ocean temperatures and declining sea ice are causing sea levels to rise and storms to become more frequent and severe, threatening coastal communities.

To better understand the risks, vulnerabilities, and impacts created by climate change, DFO established the aquatic climate change adaptation services program in 2005. Recent investments have set the stage for continued delivery of this important program in support of the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change and will allow our scientists at Fisheries and Oceans to continue to undertake monitoring activities and research activities to better understand the current state and to predict the future state of Canada's oceans. DFO scientists will be able to conduct vulnerability assessments of fisheries and small craft harbours to identify what resources may be most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. They will also be able to continually refine oceanographic models to predict future conditions, such as water temperatures, ocean chemistry, and currents.

The scientific knowledge and expertise that is assembled through the aquatic climate change adaptation services program provides the evidence base necessary to advance the incorporation of climate change considerations into operational decision-making at Fisheries and Oceans.

DFO is committed to better understanding, predicting, and adapting to the impacts that climate change will have on Canada's three oceans, their living resources, and the coastal communities that rely on them for their livelihoods. On behalf of DFO, we look forward to continuing to provide high-quality, credible climate change science advice that will be of benefit to Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

Again, I'd like to thank you very much for allowing me to join you here today. I look forward to our discussion.

● (1005)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I appreciate everybody's being mindful of the time and speeding things up. Thank you.

Go ahead, Ms. Downie.

**Ms. Colette Downie (Assistant Deputy Minister/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Industry):** Hello. My name is Colette Downie, and I work at Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada.

[*Translation*]

Thank you to the committee for the opportunity to appear today to address findings of the Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change report. I would also like to thank the commissioner, Julie Gelfand, and her team for preparing an in-depth examination of the federal government's progress in adapting to the risks associated with climate change.

[*English*]

ISED recognizes the importance of being adaptable to climate change impacts and ensuring the department can continue to carry out its activities and support Canadians despite adverse affects of climate change.

We agree with the commissioner's findings. We've already taken action to improve our internal processes so that the department is better positioned to make informed, forward-looking decisions to manage risks related to climate change.

After considering the commissioner's advice, ISED views that the best way to swiftly implement her recommendations is to improve the department's existing processes to identify, assess, prioritize, and address climate change risks. In particular, we're making changes to our integrated risk management processes. These include a renewed focus on identifying key risks at the sector level to ensure that the risk profile for the department presents a comprehensive picture of our risks.

Any new processes that we introduce as part of these changes will include references explicitly to climate change impacts to ensure that they're one of the factors considered when risks are identified. We are also committed to collaborating with Treasury Board and Environment and Climate Change Canada on guidance for assessing climate change risk.

As I mentioned, we've already started to make progress on our risk management processes. Starting in January 2017, during risk discussions at senior-level management committees, organizations within the department were explicitly asked whether climate change effects were having negative impacts on their business and whether any specific climate change risks could be identified. I'd like to underline that since January, there have been discussions on this topic at senior governance committees, including with deputy ministers and associate deputy ministers in October.

We also noted that other departments, such as Fisheries and Oceans, Natural Resources Canada, and Transport Canada, in addition to looking at risk, also considered how climate change impacts could affect policy development and program delivery. With this in mind, we're going to do the same thing. We're going to analyze climate change impacts to see how they'll affect our delivery, our policy development, our infrastructure assets, our program beneficiaries, and other stakeholders.

We understand that sound and reliable science will be key as we move forward to implement the commissioner's recommendations, and that the current and planned climate change research being undertaken and supported across the government will be invaluable to our work.

Thank you again for the invitation to appear.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I apologize for rushing everybody. When I put up the red card, it means I really need you to wrap it up. We're never going to get a chance to ask questions if we don't speed through this.

I'd appreciate that. We have your written statements.

Go ahead, Mr. Dubé.

[Translation]

**Mr. Simon Dubé (Director General, Strategic Policy and Planning, Department of Public Works and Government Services):** Madam Chair, I am pleased to be with you and members of the committee to discuss the measures Public Services and Procurement Canada, or PSPC, has in place to manage climate change risks. I am joined by Veronica Silva, director general of Technical Services in our Real Property Services.

[English]

Our department acts as the government's central purchasing agent, linguistic authority, and accountant on behalf of government departments. It also manages its real property portfolio and offers property management services to other departments. As such, climate change adaptation is recognized as a key consideration to ensure our continued ability to deliver programs and services to the Government of Canada and Canadians.

[Translation]

One of our core responsibilities is property and infrastructure as we manage our federal buildings nationally. We recognize that climate change is having impacts on our assets that are felt in areas such as eroding shorelines or loss of permafrost.

•(1010)

[English]

As we undertake construction or restoration projects, Public Services and Procurement Canada is taking into account changing climate, vulnerability, and adaptation measures. The department has taken initial steps to address climate change risks. For example, we are working to improve the resiliency of our assets by incorporating new data and research into our building designs to address anticipated changes to climate conditions, and we're conducting assessments of possible vulnerabilities for our facilities and accounting for risks such as rising sea levels.

[Translation]

Climate change is one of the drivers of the "critical systems emergencies" key risk noted in the departmental plan that was tabled in Parliament in March 2017.

[English]

In response to this audit, we will undertake a department-wide climate change risk assessment that will better inform integrated risk management at the corporate level. It will also inform future program and operation activities within our branches and regions.

[Translation]

We will collaborate with other departments to develop a common climate forecast model. We will also identify and implement adaptation measures for selected assets or operations based on that climate forecast model.

[English]

Our department agreed to the commissioner's recommendation and we will identify, assess, prioritize, and address climate change risks as they relate to the department's area of responsibility. Those will be incorporated more systematically in corporate risk management practices and documents. We are confident that this work will support our progress in that direction.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you so much.

Next up is Ms. Burack.

[Translation]

**Ms. Ellen Burack (Director General, Environmental Policy, Department of Transport):** Madam Chair, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee today as you consider the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development's "Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change" audit findings, as they relate to Transport Canada.

[English]

Impacts associated with a changing climate and extreme weather are already damaging and disrupting transportation systems, services, and operations across all modes and in all regions of Canada. We recognize that a more resilient transportation system is critical to Canada's long-term prosperity as a trading nation, and also to Canadians' safety and quality of life.

The Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development's audit found that Transport Canada is one of five departments that have effectively assessed climate change risks to our activities and taken adaptation action. Transport Canada was pleased to see examples of our adaptation work highlighted within the commissioner's report, including the points that follow.

Our departmental climate risk scan focused on identifying potential climate change impacts to Transport Canada's assets, regulatory activities, and programs. Our departmental adaptation plan includes objectives, expected results, roles and responsibilities, and timelines. Our report, "Climate Risks & Adaptation Practices for the Canadian Transportation Sector", which was co-led with Natural Resources Canada, is a foundational, publicly available source of current knowledge about climate risks to the Canadian transportation sector and about best adaptation practices.

Infrastructure engineering assessments of three northern airports were undertaken by Transport Canada in partnership with territorial governments; these assessments provided information on potential vulnerabilities of the airports' infrastructure to the changing climate, and the observations, conclusions, and recommendations can directly support more informed decision-making about infrastructure operations, maintenance, planning, and development.

Finally, climate risk considerations have been integrated into our departmental risk planning processes, such as our corporate risk profile, since 2011-12.

I'll leave it there. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Go ahead, Ms. Wilson.

**Ms. Amanda Wilson (Director General, Office of Energy Research and Development, Innovation and Energy Technology Sector, Department of Natural Resources):** Thanks very much, Madam Chair, for the opportunity to provide comments to the committee on the fall reports issued by the commissioner.

I'll be speaking specifically to "Report 3—Funding Clean Energy Technologies", which examined compliance and GHG impact reporting for clean energy technology demonstration projects in three funds, two of which were managed by Natural Resources Canada.

For reference, the two NRCan programs reviewed were the ecoENERGY technology initiative, which ran from 2007 to 2012, and the clean energy fund, which existed between 2009 and 2014. Both programs had a strong focus on funding carbon capture, utilization, and storage demonstration projects, and in addition, the clean energy fund also funded smaller renewable and clean energy demonstration projects.

Let me start by noting that NRCan was pleased with the findings related to this audit. The Office of the Auditor General itself issued a tweet on October 3 that read, "Funding for clean energy technology demonstration projects is well run".

• (1015)

[Translation]

Natural Resources Canada has over 45 years of experience administering clean energy technology funding programs, and we're proud of our track record. Our experience, combined with a continuous drive to improve the way we do business, meant that we welcomed the audit report and its resulting recommendations. We've found these to be helpful, shining a light on areas where we can do even better in terms of strengthening the link between investment and outcomes.

[English]

NRCan agreed with the commissioner's three recommendations addressed to the department, the first of which related to clearly documenting project assessment and approval decisions regarding potential GHG emissions reductions. I'm pleased to report that we've developed and implemented a rigorous documentation process for the assessment and approval of projects, including a requirement to provide supplementary information on the potential reduction of GHG emissions.

The commissioner's second recommendation addressed the issue of public reporting on GHG emissions reductions, recommending that NRCan report them for all demo projects intended to achieve reductions and not just for carbon capture, utilization, and storage projects, as had been the practice. The audit did acknowledge, however, that NRCan had internally tracked GHG reduction results for many of these other smaller projects. We just hadn't reported them publicly. As such, NRCan agrees with this recommendation and is working to adopt a process for tracking and reporting on all projects with expected GHG emissions reductions of at least 0.01 megatonnes per project.



The third recommendation put forth by the commissioner suggests that NRCan and ISED work together, in consultation with ECCC, to develop a plan for the measurement and reporting on outcomes for demo projects that aim to reduce GHG emissions. I'm happy to report that we are indeed working with our federal colleagues on such an approach.

Madam Chair, committee members, thank you once again for the opportunity to address the committee. I hope the overview has been helpful. *Merci.*

**The Chair:** Thank you so much for all your understanding about the rushed format.

We're going to open with questions, starting with Mr. Bossio.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Thank you all for being here this morning.

Thank you for cutting your presentation shorter so we have an opportunity to ask these questions.

My questions are primarily for Mr. Jones. According to the data, are emissions increasing?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** The emissions data are available. The reported inventory is available every year. Emissions have fluctuated over the last several years. I believe the auditor's report does have a line graph. In the absence of policy, they are projected to increase going forward, but as you'll see in the auditor's report, in the commissioner's report, with our new policies they are projected to decrease quite significantly.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Is the last data we have on emissions for 2015?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** That's right. There's typically a two-year lag on emissions inventory information.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** According to the data, is climate change happening? Is it a reality?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** I think the fact that climate change is happening is unequivocal. The leading scientists of the world have stated unequivocally that climate change is happening and is unequivocally caused by human actions. I don't think there's any debate on that point.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Would you agree that there's no silver bullet to solving the climate change dilemma?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** Absolutely. We've approached the development of our policies by trying to look at it from all angles. I think we've certainly concluded that there is no silver bullet. Had there been one, we would have one policy rather than a suite of policies. There are so many different sources of emissions that different policy tools are perhaps better suited to get at different sources. We've attempted to take a holistic approach.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Exactly. I'm looking at the approach we're taking through a pan-Canadian framework, and you listed a lot of them: \$20 billion into urban and public transit, \$21 billion into green infrastructure, \$2.2 billion into clean technology, \$2 billion into low-carbon economy funds, \$2 billion into disaster mitigation adaptation, \$260 million over five years to implement the pan-Canadian framework commitments. This is a very multi-faceted, broad plan that is working with the different levels of government to achieve this very large goal of reducing climate change.

Would you agree that this is a serious plan to tackle this issue by 2030?

• (1020)

**Mr. Matt Jones:** Yes. I think this is the most comprehensive plan, and I think a number of commentators, whether it's on the environmental group side or on industry or elsewhere, have referred to this as the most comprehensive plan we've had to date in Canada.

In addition to the funds you've mentioned, it's probably worth noting that of course in addition to carbon pricing, which gets most of the attention, there are a suite of regulatory measures as well on the electricity sector, the oil and gas sector, and elsewhere that have the potential to achieve significant reductions.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** Thank you. I meant to add those as well. There are so many we're working with.

Would you also agree that this is implemented? The pan-Canadian framework came into effect nine months ago. Is that a reasonable period of time to expect that we'd see dramatic reductions in carbon emissions or an impact on the climate plan?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** Well, no, frankly. It takes time to implement these policies. Regulations need to be drafted and gazetted. There is a legislated process with specific timelines and a commitment to rigour in how we design and implement our regulations.

There is a financial management system, of course, in place for federal funds, so it took time for Treasury Board submissions to be made and for those funds to be released. In fact, we were being audited on progress before we had the funds released to implement many of the policies and programs that are embedded in the pan-Canadian framework.

We're quite focused on implementation now, but we're just getting under way.

**Mr. Mike Bossio:** I asked the commissioner that same question. I asked what would be a reasonable time frame in which to see whether this plan is working or not. She gave a number of approximately three years. This is something they're struggling with as well in terms of trying to figure out what it is.

What would you say is a reasonable time frame before we could realistically say that this plan is working and we can start to see the acceleration of carbon reductions in meeting our targets?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** It's a difficult question to answer, just because you will see emission reductions being achieved by different measures at a different pace. There is a specific time frame associated with carbon pricing, but that will take time to step up. Other measures, such as enhanced building codes, for example, are particularly important for driving deep reductions in the longer term, but will take time to develop and implement and then have an effect on the building stock, as the building stock does not turn over quickly.

Our emission projections are laid out in the commissioner's report. I think you'll see an ever-increasing steepness of that line, but we're working extremely hard now to implement policies as fast as humanly possible. That's our exclusive focus.

In fact, my group that was involved in developing the pan-Canadian framework has been morphed into a new organization called the pan-Canadian framework implementation office. This is to focus exclusively on the task of working with colleagues across many departments and agencies to oversee the implementation of all these many policies.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Go ahead, Mr. Fast.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Thank you very much, all of you, for coming today and for sharing some of your information with us.

I have a question regarding carbon taxes. I'll direct it to Ms. Wilson.

It's my understanding that your department has completed an analysis on the potential negative economic impacts of the national carbon tax on the forest products industry and perhaps other sectors. Is that correct?

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** I appreciate the question. I am here, though, to speak to report 3 only, which doesn't relate to that issue, so I'm unable to speak to it. I am sorry. I can get additional information—

**Hon. Ed Fast:** You can't tell me whether analysis has been done within the department?

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** I work in the energy sector, not the forestry sector, so I'm afraid I don't have that information right at hand. If it's your information that it has been done, then it's very likely that it has, but I can certainly get back to the committee.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Could you provide us with that?

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** Absolutely.

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

Do you feel that your department will have any problems releasing that information to our committee?

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** Do you mean whether or not an analysis has been conducted?

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Yes, and the actual analysis itself.

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** I wouldn't be able to speak to that, but I can certainly take it back.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Is Mr. Wickham able to speak to it?

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** Mr. Wickham works in my sector, but I will ask him.

Marc, are you able to speak to that?

**Mr. Marc Wickham (Director, Energy Science & Technology Programs, Office of Energy Research and Development, Innovation and Energy Technology Sector, Department of Natural Resources):** No.

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** I'm sorry.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Are you aware of an analysis that may have been done?

• (1025)

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** I am not personally aware, but then again, I work in the energy sector. There are different sectors within the department, so I am responsible for and was asked to come to speak to the clean energy report.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** Okay. I'll direct the next question to Mr. Jones.

We have tried in vain to get a copy of the economic impact analysis that your department has done on the carbon tax and carbon pricing across Canada. All we received was an almost fully redacted version of it.

The minister's mandate letter clearly says that the government is hoping to raise the bar on “openness and transparency” and that information like this should be available to the public “by default”.

Are you able to tell us that you will be able to release that information to this committee?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** I'm sorry to say that I'm not the senior official responsible for either carbon pricing or economic modelling within Environment Canada, so I have not seen this analysis. I'm not aware of the analysis that you're referring to and I'm not in a position to promise that it will be delivered. The process is in place to review public documents in line with the Access to Information Act, and that process is being handled by colleagues of mine.

**Hon. Ed Fast:** That's very disappointing. I had assumed that with all the officials at this table, we would be able to get the information that Canadians have been asking for—that is, whatever analysis the government has done on the impact that the carbon tax or any kind of carbon pricing will have on Canadians and on Canadian industries. That information is there in government. I believe the evidence shows that those analyses have been conducted, at least in part. I would expect that your departments would allow this committee to see those analyses so that Canadians have an idea what this all will cost them.

The commissioner who appeared before us earlier made it very clear that when it came to establishing policies that would allow all the departments across Canada to adapt to the risk of climate change, there was a lack of leadership on the part of the federal government.

The framework for adaptation was established in 2011. Here we are in 2017, six years later, and the commissioner says that virtually nothing has been done. There were five departments that were able to implement policies that would allow them to adapt to the risk of climate change. Beyond that, no one else really got the job done.

Again, to Mr. Jones, why did it take so long for the government to take this mandate seriously?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** I can say a few quick remarks on adaptation, then I'll turn to my colleagues who work more specifically in that area.

I think it is important to note that the commissioner's report was very narrowly focused on departmental vulnerabilities and risks. What's not covered by that report are the significant new policies, on a national level, that have been developed as part of the pan-Canadian framework.

There are significant programs, significant funds, and significant initiatives that have occurred on the file, separate from the department's risk assessment. While this is an important bit of work that needs to be done, and it is work we are working on now, I think it's incomplete to equate this government or the department's efforts on adapting to the impacts of climate change by looking at its own departmental risk assessment. In fact, my advice last year when we were working on the pan-Canadian framework was to focus on policies that are more national in scope.

With that, I'll perhaps turn—

**Hon. Ed Fast:** To be clear, my question was directed to the departmental responses, not to a national response on adaptation. It appears that there was a lack of leadership. I'm quoting the commissioner herself on this.

My only question is, why did it take so long for the government to actually implement adaptation policies across government in the departments themselves?

**The Chair:** We have less than 10 seconds to try to wrap that up with a very short answer.

**Ms. Laniel Bateman:** Sure.

As my colleague mentioned, when we talk about leadership in federal departments and agencies, it is important to distinguish between internal risk assessment processes and external. Environment and Climate Change Canada undertook work in 2014. It was widely supported but was not approved by senior management in a final way. We are looking at refreshing and updating that work now. We have that process under way now and look forward to completing it shortly.

• (1030)

**The Chair:** Great. Thank you very much.

Ms. Duncan is next.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

The commissioner has credited this government with finally producing a plan to address climate change, but she is critical of the government for lacking in action.

I'm wondering, Mr. Jones, if you can tell the committee why the government continues to delay the spending under the budget, including \$2 billion for the low-carbon economy fund and a plethora of additional items on pages 149-150 of the budget.

Why is the majority of spending on addressing climate change delayed until after the next election?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** I can speak specifically to the low-carbon economy fund, as I'm trying to oversee its implementation.

Currently I can tell you that we've engaged with, and received proposals from, the vast majority of provinces and territories. Quite a bit of work was needed in order to define the criteria, solicit proposals, and engage with the provinces and territories in an attempt to ensure that the proposals we're considering are as strong and as effective as they can possibly be.

We're in the midst of that process now, and I'm optimistic that those funds will flow in the near future.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** What about the remaining funds? There are two pages of lists of items where dollars are committed to be spent to address climate change, yet none of those dollars have been released. Can't you speak to those?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** It depends on the fund. The most significant funds are held by Infrastructure Canada. There are significant funds associated with the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund and some clean technology funding that perhaps other colleagues could speak to. It does take time to seek Treasury Board approval and to develop the terms and conditions and to put everything in place in order to ensure that the money is well spent and reviewed properly.

Our intent is to make those investments as quickly as possible in order to achieve the desired results as quickly as possible.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** That leads, sir, into my next question.

The commissioner has also raised concerns with the lack of mechanisms to measure, monitor, and report on what the provinces and territories are doing. Are you giving consideration to establishing an independent commission, similar to that in the United Kingdom, so that we will have independent, qualified people providing advice on the best way to proceed, and then doing an independent audit that is reported publicly?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** There are a lot of ideas that are being considered at various levels in terms of the governance of this file. With the pan-Canadian framework being so broad—I believe there are 19 federal departments and agencies responsible for some aspect of a program or other in the framework—we've been putting in place interdepartmental mechanisms and oversight mechanisms in order to govern all of this and ensure coordination. I believe the commissioner pointed out that they had been put in place.

In terms of external organizations, that's something that has been proposed. A number of think tanks and NGOs have put those ideas out. They are being considered and kicked around within the department, but I'm not in a position to tell you that this is a plan or an initiative that we're pursuing at the moment.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Then there's still no clarity on that.

My third and final question is this. There have been recent reports out of the universities here in Ottawa that it may be that the methane emissions are twice what was forecast. Given the concerns raised by the United Nations leading into the Bonn meetings that we have an emissions gap rising, and they're calling on all nations to step up, are you giving consideration to stepping forward the compliance date on methane, and are you going to increase the requirement to capture methane, given those results?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** We are looking at the information that's become available recently in the various reports suggesting that methane emissions are greater than previously understood. We're working to develop our methane regulations as we had announced them previously. As the commissioner has encouraged us to move forward quickly, we're attempting to do that. We are taking those reports of potentially greater methane emissions than previously understood very seriously, and we'll be looking at that very carefully.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** I'm open to anybody here responding to this question. Environment may wish to, because they're supposed to be the lead.

The commissioner has expressed great concern that very few of the departments and agencies are providing the appropriate reports to their ministers on the sustainable development goals. I would welcome anybody telling me why they aren't providing those reports, and whether they feel they're getting sufficient direction from the Treasury Board and the PCO.

How about Environment?

• (1035)

**Mr. Matt Jones:** In terms of our cabinet materials, we prepared environmental assessments as standard practice for all of our memoranda to cabinet. My understanding is that's not the focus of this meeting. I understand we were focusing just on the first two audits on adaptation and clean technology. I don't have the right officials here to speak to this in more detail, but it is something that we do take very seriously.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** It comes as a surprise to me, because those are definitely what I anticipated we had the officials here for.

**The Chair:** Okay. We're out of time for that.

Go ahead, Mr. Fisher.

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

I guess this question would be for either Mr. Jones or Ms. Bateman.

The commissioner found that your department worked well with federal departments, provinces, and territories. I think she was specifically speaking of the Vancouver declaration in the pan-Canadian framework. She found that you made advancements in reporting on projected greenhouse gas emissions, although she was concerned with monitoring and reporting and thought it could be improved further.

Could you discuss what steps your department is taking, or will take, to advance its emissions monitoring and reporting? I know you mentioned that you're set to release a report on the pan-Canadian framework this year. We're now in November, so I assume that's any

time, and you talked about how you update your admissions publicly, annually. Has that been done for 2017 yet—

**Mr. Matt Jones:** Yes.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** —or has it been done for 2016?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** The reporting is a bit of a long story, and I'll attempt to be as brief as possible.

There is a large collection of public reports, so we do an inventory every year. We do a new emission projection—what used to be called the emissions trends reports, sometimes called the reference case—around forward projections of emissions. That's updated annually.

Every four years we do a national communication, which is an extremely comprehensive report to the United Nations. I think the view was that every four years was not often enough, so every two years there is something called the biennial report, which is a comprehensive report that we're working on now. I believe those reports are due January 1, so they're nearing completion.

Also, first ministers, as part of the pan-Canadian framework agreement at the last first ministers' meeting, agreed that we should report back annually on results. Because there are so many departments involved, a number of different FPT ministerial tables are reporting on their individual bits, and we're packaging that together. That's due, and our intention is to have that report available in December. It's slightly delayed by the fact that the many implicated ministerial meetings are yet to happen, including the meeting of the ministers of environment later this week.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Thank you for that.

It was really encouraging to hear—and I think it was you, Mr. Jones, who said it—that GHGs are projected to reduce quite significantly. Oftentimes you hear criticisms all the time, so it's great to hear a statement like that. I think that's really encouraging.

My next question is for either Natural Resources or Transport Canada or both. The commissioner noted the progress your department has made in assessing risks of climate change and taking action to address those risks. Did you have to shift priorities or shift budgets? How did you accomplish that when others couldn't? What steps did you take to make that happen, and perhaps what kind of advice could you provide to some of the departments that haven't been as successful?

**Ms. Ellen Burack:** Departments have generally not received additional resources to look internally at their activities to consider adaptation. As a department, we did choose to identify a very low level of resources to create a core group that was able to begin to do some research to understand the risks to transportation and to create a bit of a framework within the department for what we needed to think about, including our regulatory activities, the assets that we manage, etc.

In terms of what advice we would offer, I think it's quite minimal: focus on the basics, identify the lines of business and how the changing climate may be able to affect them, and get expert help wherever possible to be able to do that. It is a new field, generally, but an emerging field, so there are some experts across Canada who are able to offer some assistance.

One thing we did was look closely at the decisions made throughout the department that could benefit from a consideration of adaptation-related issues. We also developed tools to build capacity across the department. We had webinars. We developed newsletters that gathered relevant information to help our people build the changing climate considerations into their own thinking.

• (1040)

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** Congratulations, first of all, on making those steps. Transportation makes up 55% of the GHGs in the country, so it's important that your group took the initiative to do that without further, or very many further, resources. I hope other departments will take your advice.

Ms. Wilson, what would be a government department's number one obstacle to doing the things that your department and Transport Canada have done to move forward in the way that they've been directed to move forward?

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** That's a bit of a broad question.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** It's broad on purpose.

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** Thank you, I think.

There are a number of obstacles, obviously. Any time you're trying to effect change in this manner, as my colleague mentioned, sometimes a lack of new resources to do these things specifically is one obstacle.

However, I think it's incumbent upon us to continuously be looking to adapt our activities to priorities, so we certainly do that. Otherwise, I think it's just about making sure that the critical mass is on board and that the messages are communicated so that officials can get on board and move in a coordinated manner in the direction that's needed.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** You don't mean lack of resources. You mean lack of additional resources.

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** Yes, I mean additional resources, absolutely. We have lots of resources. Thank you.

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

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I think we have our last short questioning opportunity. Go ahead, Mr. Sopuck.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** I like my seven minutes.

My view of environmental management is that you have an issue, you have remediation, and you have an outcome. For example, if you have toxic discharge from a paper mill, you put in a waste water treatment plant, and you end up with benign discharge. Here we're talking about climate change problems in Canada, and then we're talking about reducing emissions.

Which one of you will guarantee that when we reduce emissions, we will ameliorate the climate change issues in Canada?

Okay, there's silence. That speaks volumes.

**Mr. Matt Jones:** I'm just trying to get my head around the question. Are you asking me if I can guarantee that if we reduce emissions, we'll reduce climate change impacts?

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** That's right.

**Mr. Matt Jones:** I think, as people are aware, climate change is a global issue. Emissions come from—

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** I'm talking about Canada now. Yes or no?

**Mr. Matt Jones:** My answer is—if I could answer your question—because emissions come from around the world, Canada cannot, by itself, solve the global issue. Canada has to make a contribution to that effort along with the other countries of the world; hence the Paris agreement and the international efforts to work in unity.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** I'm well aware of that. Basically, Canada's operating alone is not going to have any impact on climate.

I'd like to address my—

**The Chair:** That's not what he said.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** Excuse me?

**The Chair:** We are almost out of time. We've got about one minute.

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** I would like to address my question to the Natural Resources staff.

I'm appalled that the proponents of alternative and renewable energy never consider the environmental impacts of it. I'm going to give you some numbers here. There's a solar farm in the Mojave Desert that kills 28,000 birds a year. Four hundred eagles in California are killed by wind turbines, and in Ontario, for example, approximately 40,000 bats are killed by wind turbines, three species of which are SARA-listed species and on the endangered species list.

Should the proponents of renewable energy be required to take into account the environmental impact of those projects?

• (1045)

**Ms. Amanda Wilson:** I'm going to turn to my colleague, Marc, who is the director responsible for these programs, to speak specifically to how we ensure that these concerns are mitigated.

**Mr. Marc Wickham:** Some of the projects that we support would address the environmental impact of renewable technologies. For example, in hydro, we would look at designs that are fish friendly. That would be an example of how we're continuously looking at the various multiple aspects of the clean energy technologies, including those impacts.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Mr. Sopuck, we have to end—

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** But bird mortalities are happening all the time.

**The Chair:** I have to end the session.

I want to thank our guests very much, especially—

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** I have a point of order.

**The Chair:** Go ahead on a point of order.

**Mr. Darren Fisher:** I would like it if the testimony could reflect Mr. Jones' answer to Mr. Sopuck, and not Mr. Sopuck's summation of Mr. Jones' answer.

**The Chair:** I think we definitely heard the answer from—

**Mr. Robert Sopuck:** I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

I have parliamentary privilege, and my speech is protected here. It's as simple as that.

**The Chair:** I think all of what has been said is going to be in the record. I appreciate that there's non-agreement around the table about the status of things and the answer that's appropriate, but we'll just leave it at that.

I want to thank the guests very much for sharing with us the status of what they've been doing.

I want to remind the committee that we have the minister and staff with us on Thursday.

This meeting is adjourned.

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