



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

43rd PARLIAMENT, 2nd SESSION

---

# Standing Committee on International Trade

EVIDENCE

**NUMBER 018**

Monday, March 8, 2021

---

Chair: The Honourable Judy A. Sgro





## Standing Committee on International Trade

Monday, March 8, 2021

• (1105)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Judy A. Sgro (Humber River—Black Creek, Lib.)):** Happy International Women's Day to everyone participating today, and to anyone watching. We wish you all a wonderful International Women's Day.

Good morning, everyone. I call this meeting to order.

Welcome to meeting number 18 of the House of Commons Standing Committee on International Trade.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108 and the motion adopted by the committee on October 23, 2020, the committee is studying Canada's effort to reform the World Trade Organization.

Today's meeting is webcast and is taking place in a hybrid format, pursuant to the House order of January 25, 2021.

I would now like to welcome our witnesses for the first panel today.

**Mr. Terry Sheehan (Sault Ste. Marie, Lib.):** Madam Chair, I just had my hand raised.

Is it appropriate to raise a point of order? It's a notice of motion that I circulated late Thursday, to be read into record with no debate.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Sheehan.

**Mr. Terry Sheehan:** Thank you very much.

To you and to the rest of the women on this committee, whether politicians or staff, happy International Women's Day.

Madam Chair and committee, I had circulated, in both official languages, the following notice of motion. I just want to read it as part of the public record, to be discussed at a future time by the committee.

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study on Canadian exportation of green, clean and low-carbon technologies; that this study include an examination on how Canadian clean technology such as hydro-electricity, wind energy, solar energy, carbon sequestration, grid management, and plastics recycling can impact an ever evolving international market; that this study analyze the role that government agencies such as the Trade Commissioner Service can help Canadian clean technology businesses scale up and export to new markets; and that the committee report to the House.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Sheehan.

Mrs. Gray, did you have a point you wanted to make?

Go ahead, please.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray (Kelowna—Lake Country, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair. I do have a notice of motion to read in as well, since we're allowing that at this point. I had also submitted this on Thursday.

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study of no less than four meetings to evaluate the effectiveness of the Integrity Declaration on Doing Business with Xinjiang Entities and other government measures on supply chains involving forced labour related to the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region; that the Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade be invited to appear; that the Minister of Foreign Affairs be invited to appear; that the Chief Trade Commissioner be invited to appear; that Canada's Ambassador to China be invited to appear; and that the Committee report its findings and recommendations back to the House.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mrs. Gray and Mr. Sheehan.

We will now go on to our witnesses. Thank you for your patience.

From the B.C. Lumber Trade Council, we have Susan Yurkovich, president and chief executive officer of the B.C. Council of Forest Industries; from the Grain Growers of Canada, we have Andre Harpe, chair, and Erin Gowriluk, executive director; from the Trade Justice Network, we have Jesse Whattam, coordinator.

[Translation]

We also have Mr. Claude Vaillancourt, president of the Réseau québécois sur l'intégration continentale.

[English]

Ms. Yurkovich, the floor is yours. Please go ahead.

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich (President and Chief Executive Officer, BC Council of Forest Industries, BC Lumber Trade Council):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Susan Yurkovich, and I'm the president and CEO of the BC Council of Forest Industries. I have the great pleasure of representing the majority of forest products manufacturers in the province of British Columbia, which is made up of big and small companies. Together, they produce about 50% of the country's lumber and pulp exports.

I also serve as the president of the BC Lumber Trade Council, representing most B.C. lumber producers on trade matters, including the softwood lumber agreement or disagreement between Canada and the United States.

Given the importance of B.C.'s forest sector to the Canadian economy, our workers and our communities, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the key role our trade relations and our international trade organizations play in the long-term success of our industry. I wish to share a couple of perspectives with respect to the World Trade Organization and potential reforms.

First, I'll say a bit about the importance of the forest sector in British Columbia and Canada. B.C.'s forest industry has an economic impact like no other on our provincial economy. It contributes nearly \$13 billion in GDP and generates about \$4 billion annually in taxes and fees. That's money that supports health care, education and the other important social services that British Columbians and Canadians count on.

Importantly, it supports about 100,000 direct and indirect jobs in rural communities and urban centres alike. Today, our sector makes up about one-third of B.C.'s provincial exports. Our products are shipped to about 100 countries around the globe, accounting for 21% of all the traffic at the port of Vancouver, 46% of the container traffic through the port of Prince Rupert and about 11% of rail traffic in western Canada in recent years.

As part of the small, open economy that is both B.C. and Canada, strong trade relations and diversified markets have been critically important to the success of our industry. While the U.S. continues to be the top B.C. destination for our forest products, accounting for about 55% of total exports over the last couple of decades, in partnership with Canada and the B.C. government, over that same period, we have also led a charge in developing new markets for our high-quality wood products. Specifically, we have made great inroads into Asia, where about 30% of our products are now sold. This is critical, because it reduces our dependence on the U.S. market, where we continue to face unwarranted and punishing tariffs on softwood lumber. I will come back to softwood lumber in a minute.

As we look to the future, B.C. is poised to continue to help meet the growing global demand for products that are the renewable, low-carbon material of choice for everything from mass timber buildings to fibre-based packaging. Those are products that are helping to tackle climate change, while also supporting jobs that we are proud of right here at home.

As a trading nation, we are signatories to agreements that govern how we do this business around the world, and as with all relationships, these agreements will from time to time be tested. What's important to B.C.'s forest industry, like many other export-dependent industries across the country, is that we have strong, effective and efficient trade agreements in place, and that we have organizations that can help ensure they are enforced and respected, organizations like the WTO.

With that context in mind, I would like to come back to our decades-long experience with softwood lumber disputes and highlight some observations from our experience that inform our general recommendations with respect to the study you are undertaking. This includes the importance of upholding the WTO dispute settlement mechanism, the need to have a well-functioning appellate body, and the requirement for mechanisms that ensure timely resolution of disputes.

To begin, we can't underscore enough how critically important it is to continue to have a strong WTO dispute settlement mechanism. As a trading nation, Canada has bilateral and multilateral trade agreements with countries around the world, outlining the rules of the game, the terms by which each jurisdiction must abide. However, even with the best agreements in place, from time to time we do find ourselves in disputes with our trading partners. When these disputes arise, we must have a well-functioning neutral body to adjudicate.

Here is a little perspective from our world. The dispute with the U.S. about whether Canada provides unlawful subsidies to the lumber industry has been going on for about 40 years. As we sit here today, we are currently in the midst of the dispute affectionately known as Lumber V.

- (1110)

The prior disputes, Lumber III and Lumber IV, both ended in Canada's favour, with neutral international tribunals forcing the U.S. Department of Commerce to rescind unsupported subsidy findings. A neutral entity, looking at the facts of the case, sided with what is true, and that's the reason we believe that the continuing availability of binding WTO dispute settlement is of critical importance to our industry and many others across our trading nation.

That brings me to our second recommendation: the need to ensure that a well-functioning appellate body is in place.

This past summer, a WTO panel released a 225-page report evaluating the U.S. Department of Commerce's 2017 subsidy determination concerning softwood lumber products. In that report, the WTO identified more than 40 instances where—in its own words—“no unbiased and objective investigating authority” could have reached the findings that the Department of Commerce made based on the evidence before it.

While that was good news for Canada, the good news was very short-lived. In September, the U.S. appealed the panel report, and they did so to an appellate body that doesn't currently exist. The reason it doesn't exist is that the U.S. has been blocking the appointment of new appellate body members for the past several years. By appealing to a non-functioning appellate body, the U.S. has indefinitely stalled the adoption of the final report, meaning that the very favourable result for Canada has, in effect, been neutralized for the foreseeable future.

Given the importance of binding WTO dispute settlement for our industry, we strongly encourage the government to do what it can to resolve the current impasse. The prompt appointment of neutral adjudicators is of key importance to ensure the fair and efficient resolution of international disputes at the WTO. In the case of softwood lumber, this is all the more important in circumstances where the U.S. has likewise prevented the efficient progress of claims under NAFTA or the new CUSMA by delaying the panellist selection process, in the case of CVD, for more than three and a half years.

Finally, while it's essential to ensure the continuing availability of WTO dispute settlement, there is always room to improve the old system. Specifically, reform that ensures timely resolution of disputes would be viewed as both welcome and necessary. For example, while the resolution of disputes before panels and the appellate body is supposed to take a matter of months, it is frequently the case that it drags on for several years. This delay creates both added cost and uncertainty for our industry and, I expect, for all litigants.

The longer a dispute takes to be resolved, the greater the adverse impacts. This is for sure the case with softwood lumber, where the industry has significant duties on deposit, duties that now total nearly \$5 billion, as a result of the unsupported findings of the U.S. Department of Commerce. These large financial burdens can only accumulate as the appeals drag on, tying up this cash indefinitely instead of it being invested in plant and equipment, training new workers and developing new products and new markets. In the case of softwood lumber, it also hurts U.S. consumers, as duties increase the price of products, negatively impacting affordability, which is particularly egregious given that the U.S. lumber producers are not able to meet their country's own domestic demand. More importantly, it hurts the thousands of Canadian workers and families, along with companies and communities, who depend on getting goods to market and continued industry investment for their livelihoods.

In closing, I want to thank you for undertaking this important work on this topic and reiterate the importance of having a robust, functioning WTO dispute settlement system for the softwood lumber industry in Canada and for other export industries across our nation. In considering WTO reform, I urge the committee to carefully consider options that will ensure that Canadian companies can get a fair hearing from a neutral body that is fully functioning and able to hear cases through to appeal and deliver timely resolution to disputes when they arise. This is critically important for the economic health of our country, which will continue to be a trading nation for decades to come, and for the workers and communities sustained by getting our goods to market.

Thank you. I look forward to your questions.

• (1115)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Yurkovich.

We now go to the Grain Growers of Canada, please.

**Mr. Andre Harpe (Chair, Grain Growers of Canada):** Good morning, everybody. Thank you very much for being here.

Madam Chair, honourable members, thank you for the opportunity to appear today.

My name is Andre Harpe, and I am the chair of the Grain Growers of Canada. GGC is the national voice for Canada's 65,000 grain farmers. Depending on the crops we produce, whether it be cereals, pulses or oilseeds, we export between 70% and 90% of what we grow to a diversity of markets worldwide.

I am also a third-generation farmer from the Peace River region of northern Alberta. I grow malt barley, canola, and peas.

Grain Growers is also a member of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance, commonly known as CAFTA, which represents essentially all export-oriented agricultural commodities and food manufacturing, and is a strong champion of free trade and the role of the World Trade Organization in trade liberalization.

Ladies and gentlemen, all across Canada grain farmers like me rely on free and fair trade. This is core to the success and competitiveness of our farm businesses, our families and our communities, as well as the larger grain sector.

I'd like to focus my comments on three areas: one, the importance of trade to grain farmers and Canada's leadership at the WTO; two, a full-functioning dispute settlement mechanism; and three, revitalization of the WTO negotiation function.

Grain farmers need a strong, rules-based trade environment to ensure that we have predictable access to international markets. Canada is a mid-size economy, and we are largely built on exports. This means we rely on a predictable trade landscape, expanded and diversified market access, and a WTO framework that can provide certainty of our export markets.

Your study looking at how to modernize the WTO is an important one. Since its inception, there has never been a greater need for an effective and enforceable rules-based system than right now. Grain farmers are concerned with growing nationalism, a focus on self-sufficiency in food production, and new forms of protectionism spurred by COVID-19. Agriculture is often the most vulnerable and the first target for protectionist measures.

However, this approach is neither sustainable nor beneficial in the long term. Canada must hold a firm line against this growing wave of protectionism. Open borders allowed for the movement of inputs, ingredients, workers, and expertise to cross borders throughout COVID-19, and for supply chains to continue to operate. Without open trade for agri-food, things would have been very different for families in Canada and around the world. We would argue that it is more critical now than ever to remove existing barriers, accelerate agri-food trade liberalization, and urgently fix and modernize the World Trade Organization.

In that sense, we are very supportive of the federal government's ongoing leadership through the Ottawa Group on reform, to safeguard the WTO and the rules-based trading system. We appreciate the focus on ensuring that any support measures stemming from COVID-19 are targeted and transparent, avoid unnecessary barriers to trade, and recognize that any emergency measures put in place should be withdrawn as quickly as possible to avoid any adverse effects on trade.

However, challenges to the functionality of our trading system predate the pandemic. The grain sector has faced a laundry list of non-tariff trade barriers in recent years that have restricted market access and farmers' access to technology. We hope the WTO modernization efforts will strengthen the function of the relevant committees for our sectors—namely, the agriculture, SPS, TBT, and the rules of origin committees—which work to review and improve compliance to the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures and the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, as well as adherence to international standards. These agreements require that the measures introduced by WTO member states be based on science, be applied to the extent necessary, and not constitute an obstacle to trade.

Another major concern for Canadian grain farmers is the dispute settlement mechanism. A system of rules without the ability to effectively and efficiently come to a resolution when disagreements emerge simply does not work. As such, the current paralysis of the WTO appellate body needs to be resolved. Since 2019, the appellate body has been missing the required number of members, leaving it unable to reach quorum and therefore unable to hear appeals. A solution to this impasse is needed so the WTO dispute settlement can address the growing number of complex trade issues.

● (1120)

In addition to the dispute settlement mechanism, a revitalized WTO negotiation function is required to update and strengthen the existing rules of trade and to ensure they align with today's realities.

GGC supports increased momentum leading up to the ministerial conference, now expected in December 2021, to accelerate reforms and to agree on a renewed work program for agricultural negotiations. MC12 must deliver an outcome on agriculture, including on domestic support, along with other measures restricting trade of agriculture. Large agriculture-producing countries employ trade-distorting measures that impact international markets and prices. We believe there must be an equal playing field for farmers internationally and that WTO plays an important role in ensuring that this will happen. Much work remains in multiple areas, from market ac-

cess to export competition, transparency, timelines of notifications and modernizing of trade rules to fit today's business needs.

As I prepared to appear before this committee, I came across a 2017 report from the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food entitled “Non-Tariff Trade Barriers to the Sale of Agricultural Products in Relation to Free Trade Agreements”. I must say that if this document were not dated 2017, I would have guessed it was probably written last month. It supports the importance of WTO modernization and adherence to science-based decision-making. As highlighted in the report—and there has been a substantial amount of economic analysis on the cost implications of non-tariff measures to date—the data show that the sum effect of non-tariff measures for agri-food exporters is equivalent to having tariffs ranging from 25% to 30% in Asia, and 30% to 40% in the European market.

More largely speaking, the federal government must take a proactive strategy to enhance commercially viable access to export markets and to mitigate the trade-distorting impact of non-tariff barriers on our sector's growth and competitiveness.

The absence of WTO modernization will lead to more trade barriers as well as a less predictable, less transparent and less enforceable trading environment. The challenges our sector is facing in terms of protectionist measures will only increase over the next decade. The sooner we can accept this reality, the sooner we, a middle power in global trade, can effectively position ourselves in this increasingly protectionist world.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

● (1125)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Harpe.

We go now to Ms. Whattam, coordinator for the Trade Justice Network.

**Ms. Jesse Whattam (Coordinator, Trade Justice Network):** Thank you, Chair and members of the committee, for having me.

My name is Jesse Whattam, and I'm here representing the Trade Justice Network, which is a coalition of environmental, civil society, student, indigenous, cultural, farming, labour and social justice organizations that came together in 2010 to call for a new global trade regime founded on social justice, human rights and environmental sustainability.

To name some of our members, they include the Canadian Labour Congress, Unifor, Canadian Union of Public Employees, United Steelworkers, and the Climate Action Network, just to name a few.

The World Trade Organization has failed to serve Canada or create a better, fairer world for all, and the Trade Justice Network welcomes the calls for fundamental reform. For three decades, the regime of hyperglobalized trade investment and supply chains via the World Trade Organization has empowered pharmaceutical, agribusiness, financial and other corporate interests in high-income countries to dominate economies to the detriment of national and local economies, workers, farmers, indigenous peoples, our health and the environment.

In the past three decades, despite increased global economic integration, the numbers of the world poor have increased absolutely and relatively. Without a labour protection floor, we've seen repressed wage growth and increased precarious work. The climate and economic crises have been ignored or needed solutions have been constrained by trade rules. There has been a rise in inequality within and between nations as governments have been stripped of essential tools to pursue the well-being of their peoples.

This is why the WTO is facing an existential crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has only further exposed the inequality and instability of the current WTO regime. It's time for change.

I'm going to focus my comments on the inequity of power at the WTO, regulatory practices and the dispute settlement mechanisms.

The reality is that while the WTO is supposed to be governed by its 164 members, it's actually managed by its most powerful members. The EU and the U.S., along with most western OECD countries, have remained dominant and set the global rules of importance to multinational capital that have never been mutually beneficial for developing countries. This especially played out when rich countries sidelined the Doha development round priorities while pursuing an explosion of bilateral agreements and plurilateralism at the WTO, which was then foisted on developing countries. The interests of developing countries and the poorest communities and low-wage workers everywhere have been marginalized in many of these new negotiations.

In the realm of domestic regulation, corporate interests have lobbied successfully for deregulation through the current trade regime. Further, dispute settlement mechanisms and other explicit constraints in the WTO and free trade agreements prohibit high standards of public and environmental protection. While claiming that domestic regulation maintains the ability of member countries to regulate in the public interest and facilitate increased trade, in reality there's an inherent tension between the domestic regulatory space and trade liberalization.

While the language in the General Agreement on Trade in Services recognizes the sovereign right to regulate, it does not preclude a challenge against a state on the grounds that it administered a regulation that did not fulfill its standards and the criteria set under international instruments, such as the WTO law. In effect, such questioning of domestic regulations via the WTO dispute settlement mechanisms and based on international disciplines and standards

challenges the boundaries of the state's regulatory space and the role of its regulatory authorities.

Since the founding of the WTO, regulatory barriers to trade have been at the top of the priority list for multinational corporations. Developed countries, on behalf of their largest industries and exporters, began to complain more loudly that the food and product safety standards, public health measures and environmental protections were creating market inefficiency. Under this pretense of market inefficiency, it has facilitated a deregulation affecting labour rights, consumer products and environmental protections.

Further, international business lobbies have increased their advocacy of so-called regulatory coherence and co-operation, including a right to intervene in the regulatory process as early and as often as possible, hoping to derail or weaken pro-consumer or pro-environment policies and regulations before they're even implemented, avoiding the need to later challenge them.

Right through the pandemic, this has been clear. Negotiations have continued on limiting domestic regulation of the service sector, even as the concentration of service firms is posing a major impediment to timely and cost-effective procurement and distribution of essential goods. Negotiations to limit regulation and vetting of foreign investors continue, despite a clear need for the production of personal protective equipment and medicines to be diversified.

A fundamental transformation should mean that no country should seek or be required to incorporate the so-called good regulatory practice into binding international treaties, as they've been designed to benefit corporate interests and multinational capital while putting democratic decision-making in a stranglehold.

• (1130)

My next point is on the dispute settlement mechanism within the current form of the WTO and trade regime. One of the biggest shifts of the WTO is that countries that try to restrict foreign trade can be more easily sanctioned, most notoriously by giving foreign investors the ability to sue states under the opaque arbitration process. Previous witnesses have spoken about how this current dispute mechanism has hurt Canadian industries.

Just last week, pharmaceutical companies were asking that countries such as Colombia, Chile and others be punished for seeking to ramp up their production of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics without express permission from pharmaceutical companies. Sanctions are being urged by the drug industries, citing alleged threats posed by any effort to challenge basic intellectual property rights. Canada and other high-income nations have refused to sign on to the proposal of the WTO or have delayed approving it. Even in the middle of a global pandemic, the rules of the WTO are prioritizing the profit of multinational corporations over people, especially in the global south.

When it comes to the climate, it is paramount that the WTO and trade rules protect climate policy. WTO trade rules that conflict with climate action should be eliminated to allow communities and governments to advance bold climate protections without the fear of being challenged in trade tribunals. We should not be beholden to agreements, such as the government procurement agreement, that can prohibit, say, renewable power purchasing. A fundamental transformation would align trade policies with climate objectives and enforce commitments to implement international climate accords and to make climate-protecting policy changes.

In conclusion, the WTO has functioned to establish rules for the world economy that mainly benefit large transnational corporations at the expense of national and local economies, workers, farmers, indigenous peoples, our health and the environment. Recently the Trade Justice Network signed on to a global call for WTO reform, which was signed by hundreds of civil society organizations across the world. This call cited the Geneva principles for the global green new deal, where economists, policy-makers, experts and civil society organizations aimed to lay down the foundations of a new multilateralism that builds the rules of the economy towards goals of coordinated stability, shared prosperity, and environmental sustainability while respecting national policy sovereignty.

It's these goals that should shape the WTO reform: people and the planet before profit.

Thank you for having me.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Whattam.

We'll move to Mr. Vaillancourt, please.

[Translation]

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt (Member, Réseau québécois sur l'intégration continentale):** Good morning. I would first like to thank the Standing Committee on International Trade for this invitation.

The Réseau québécois sur l'intégration continentale, or RQIC, is a multi-sectoral organization of Quebec social organizations from

the labour, grassroots and international development communities. The network focuses on free trade issues. RQIC's member organizations represent more than one million people.

I would like to begin with a necessary reminder. The World Trade Organization, the WTO, has a long history. This organization has been for many years, and rightly so, a major target of social movements around the world. The WTO has been the subject of major opposition. Think, for instance, of the WTO Seattle Ministerial Conference, which is associated with the birth of the anti-globalization movement, or those in Cancun and Hong Kong, among others.

The WTO has been criticized on many accounts, such as its lack of transparency, negotiations in favour of very large companies only, negotiations under strong constraints for the countries of the southern hemisphere, a lack of interest in social inequalities and environmental issues, an objective of privatization of services provided for in the General Agreement on Trade in Services, the very negative effects of WTO policies on small-scale farming, and so on.

Reforming the WTO is therefore a project that requires great ambition. Since the failure of the Doha Round, the WTO has operated in slow motion and has not proposed anything of real importance. Yet there has been no collapse or chaos in international trade, contrary to what was predicted.

Many have asked this question: is the WTO really useful if the path of multilateralism does not allow for a better hearing of the concerns of many southern countries and civil society organizations around the world?

One thing is certain; in order to reform, the WTO has a long way to go and a steep hill to climb. In this sense, Canada's proposals in the Ottawa Group seem to us insufficient to effectively reform the WTO. Indeed, strengthening the dispute settlement mechanism, revitalizing the negotiating function, and strengthening the deliberative function of the WTO will not bring about the much more fundamental reforms we expect of the WTO.

The WTO's problems are not about the functioning of its internal mechanisms and will not be solved by what we see as somewhat superficial changes. The Ottawa Group's plan unfortunately looks like a headlong rush and a refusal to listen to the many criticisms levelled at the WTO since its founding. What we are suggesting are changes, not to the form, but to the substance of the WTO's role.

The reformed WTO must completely overhaul intellectual property protection. By delaying the entry of generic medicines into the market, the WTO has reduced access to essential medicines for a large part of the population, especially in the south.

COVID-19 makes it more necessary than ever to remove WTO intellectual property constraints, as called for by, among others, Doctors without Borders, India, South Africa and many experts from around the world. Canada must support this demand, rather than oppose it as it has done. The lifting of these constraints should be allowed in any other emergency situation as well.

The reformed WTO must abandon its desire to systematically address non-tariff barriers. Rather than seeking to attack regulations, specifically environmental regulations, and often viewing them as protectionism, they should be encouraged. It is impossible to address a problem as grave as global warming by advocating unconstrained open markets and unrestricted movement of goods.

COVID-19 also made us realize how important it is to develop an economy focused on short circuits and to manufacture essential products locally.

More stringent regulation must also be developed in certain vital sectors, such as finance, to avoid, for example, a crisis like the one we experienced in 2007-08. This regulation must also apply to the Web giants and e-commerce.

The reformed WTO must exclude certain sectors from trade negotiations from the start. Canada has signed the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, recognizing that the protection of culture is incompatible with the liberalization of international trade.

• (1135)

Other sectors should also enjoy similar protection and be removed from the WTO negotiations, including agriculture, health and education.

The reformed WTO must address tax competition among states. Although the OECD already addresses this issue at the international level, we believe it is necessary that this issue also be addressed by an organization dealing with international trade. International competition clearly distorts trade competition and has the effect of attracting investment to the most tax-friendly countries, thereby increasing social inequalities and penalizing countries with the best social policies. The WTO should, among other things, defend a minimum tax rate for all member countries.

The task of reforming the WTO is thus considerable. It is clear that its original mandate to make international trade as free as possible no longer holds today and is leading to disaster. In the 26 years since its creation, social inequality has exploded and global warming has become one of the greatest threats we face.

COVID-19 revealed how neglecting the environment and weakening public services, direct consequences of WTO-backed liberalizations, have contributed to the spread of the pandemic. It is also clear to us that if the Doha Round had been completed according to the will of the WTO, we would be living in an even worse situation than we are now. We therefore hope that the Government of Canada will have the courage to propose real changes to the WTO and challenge an original mandate that cannot stand today.

In closing, I would like to point out that the time frame we were given to prepare this brief was quite short and our working condi-

tions were quite difficult. We would like to have a longer time frame in the future.

Thank you very much for your attention.

• (1140)

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Vaillancourt.

We move on to the committee for questions.

Mr. Lobb, you have six minutes, please.

**Mr. Ben Lobb (Huron—Bruce, CPC):** Thanks, Madam Chair, and welcome to all the witnesses.

My first question is for the Grain Growers. It's in regard to the latest issue, even though it's not brand new, of durum wheat and Italy. What are your thoughts on that?

**Mr. Andre Harpe:** Go ahead, Erin. You might be more up to date on that situation.

**Ms. Erin Gowriluk (Executive Director, Grain Growers of Canada):** Sure.

I'm Erin Gowriluk, executive director of the Grain Growers of Canada.

This is a really important issue and one that the industry has been calling on the federal government, on the Canadian government, to take to the WTO for a couple of reasons. One of the more obvious reasons would be to resolve the issue with Italy in particular, to see them rescind or pull back on the mandatory country of origin labelling requirements.

I think, more importantly, it's to send a signal to Italy and to countries around the world that when Canada talks about promoting rules-based trade, we walk the talk. In particular, if we enter into an agreement and a country is not in compliance, we will hold them to account. That is an example that we would like the Canadian government to set.

In so doing, you prevent what's happening currently, where you see examples of this in other parts of Europe right now with the farm to fork strategy, where the country of origin labelling requirement is now bleeding into other jurisdictions. I think that is due, in part, to a lack of action on the part of Canada.

**Mr. Ben Lobb:** Thanks very much.

I know one of the reforms that have been ongoing or proposed is in regard to the appellate body and appointing panellists. I know for the previous U.S. administration that was a way for them to never get a resolution on anything. The Biden administration has indicated that it might be open to that.

What is your early take on their ability to appoint panellists for the appellate body?

I'll throw it to the Grain Growers again.

**Mr. Andre Harpe:** With the new administration, we're still trying to get a feel for how they act and where they're going in the future. We're looking forward to hopefully some positive outcomes, especially with the WTO and the appellate group.

I guess we're still waiting to see exactly what they're going to do.

**Mr. Ben Lobb:** If you look at it, the country of origin labelling issue that was around the beef sector—I think Mr. Hoback is on the call here today and he'll remember that—took years and years. You can see that if you delay action on enacting a dispute at the WTO—and the durum wheat is now years old—it's going to take years to have a result. Even though they say it doesn't take years, it takes years. Almost half a decade's worth of time will have passed and we still don't have an outcome or a resolution. We definitely need to move forward on that, and I know our people with the BC Lumber Trade Council would feel the same way.

I want to ask the Trade Justice Network a question, and it's in regard to the idea of environmental goods. Is it tariff-free environmental goods, and what are your thoughts on that?

Maybe they're gone. Madam Clerk, do you know if they're still here, or did they do their presentation and go?

• (1145)

**The Chair:** I believe they're supposed to still be here.

**The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Christine Lafrance):** Was the question addressed to Ms. Whattam?

**The Chair:** Yes, it was.

**The Clerk:** I think she has a connection problem. We're trying to reach her to see what's going on.

**Mr. Ben Lobb:** Okay. Well, when she gets back, maybe I'll ask her about digital or tariff-free broadband.

Next, with the BC Lumber Trade Council, it's the same deal. It's an ongoing issue, in perpetuity, dealing with other countries and tariffs, etc. What is the best outcome? If we're talking about WTO reform, how can we speed up the process so that organizations like yours and the businesses you represent can get before the WTO, get a result and get some financial compensation?

What is it, besides having Joe Biden appoint some appellate body panellists?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** Well, that's part of it. We all have hope for a new administration in the U.S., but we have had this ongoing dispute on lumber with both Democratic and Republican administrations for many, many years. We are hopeful about the future.

For us, I think we just need to have a trade organization that can hear these matters in a timely fashion and you can get through the process. To your point, it just takes a very, very long time. The process should be rigorous and it shouldn't be a cakewalk, but these processes that drag out for years and years have very significant impact on workers, families, companies, communities, because you're tying up a whole lot of resources.

We rely on these independent, neutral bodies. This issue with respect to lumber is with the U.S., but we rely on these neutral bodies that take an evidence-based approach to come to decisions that then

apply pressure on the U.S. Department of Commerce. If those processes are taking forever, we never get resolution.

For lumber, it's very much a *Groundhog Day* situation. As soon as we resolve something, we seem to be into it again.

Timeliness of processes.... They should be rigorous. They should be evidence-based and multi-faceted, but they should be timely so that we can actually move forward and not tie up resources—duties or legal or time and energy—that could be better spent invested in the Canadian economy and Canadian communities.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Lobb.

We will move on to Mr. Sarai, please, for six minutes.

**Mr. Randeep Sarai (Surrey Centre, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

My first question will also be for Ms. Yurkovich, who has been leading this fight on behalf of lumber producers in British Columbia. She has become a very good expert on this. As we all know, we have thousands of jobs in the softwood lumber industry. In my riding in particular, I think we have some of the most softwood lumber jobs per capita in the province, and maybe even in the country. It's of deep concern to me when these tariffs are on year after year and different mechanisms are used to stall them.

What I want to know from you, Ms. Yurkovich, is how it has impacted the industry. Even though prices have been high and producers have been able to withstand it, we've also seen, when that was not the case, what it has done to the industry. It has devastated it in the past. You alluded to a very good point today, which is that there are \$5 billion in duties that are collected and could be invested back into the industry. The sad thing is that this \$5 billion is on the backs of Americans who are building or buying homes. They're paying it. It's used for political interests.

It's also not helping those in British Columbia who are producing this great lumber and who could be using this to, as you said, improve the industry, get the latest technology and also improve trades and technology in the industry.

Can you take a minute to tell us how it's impacting your industry?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** I mean, it's weird. One of the things coming out of COVID has been that a lot of people are residing at home, and the home has been a very big focus, so out of this.... Very few good things have come out of COVID, but there has been a reinvestment in homes. For us, that has actually buoyed our industry, coming off the end of 2018 and through 2019 and early 2020, when we had a huge number of curtailments and closures of mills, and those affect families and workers in communities right across our country.

I've talked about this. There are 100,000 forest-dependent jobs in the province of British Columbia. Everybody always thinks about them as jobs that are largely rural. You were talking about where you reside, Mr. Sarai. It's a huge contributor to the local economy, even in the Lower Mainland, and in Calgary, Montreal and Toronto. We might not see the forest-dependent jobs, but about 40% of the forestry jobs in British Columbia are actually located in Vancouver, in the southwest part of the province. They're in logistics, marketing, banking, financial transactions, shipping and all kinds of things. Each one of those jobs has a family and a story attached to it, so when you have....

We are buoyed by high prices right now, but that just masks the underlying problem. Fundamentally, for us, every dollar that's sitting on deposit with the U.S. could be spent on plants, equipment, investing in communities and developing new products. When we think about the products that people are looking for, they are looking for products made from fibre, and when they come from sustainably managed forests, they're recyclable and renewable. People are looking for products made from fibre because they're a better choice, particularly in a climate-constrained world. If you build something out of wood, it's storing carbon for the life of the product.

During the early part of the pandemic, we had phone calls asking us how much more pulp we could make that could go into PPE and how they could source some of that product locally. Firms would love to be able to make those investments, but \$5 billion.... About \$2.5 billion of that is coming from the province of British Columbia. That's a lot of money sitting on the sidelines that could be invested in workers, communities and new products.

• (1150)

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Ms. Yurkovich, besides prompt appointments and not blocking appointments to the appellate body, what other reforms specifically would help? The softwood lumber industry has become almost an expert with five rounds of this, five incarnations. What other reforms would help this dispute mechanism?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** Like all processes, it's not perfect, and there is certainly room for improvement.

We would like to see.... Some of the other witnesses here talked about non-tariff barriers, which, of course, we are subject to as well, and even having a level playing field, including around how products are produced and environmental and regulatory considerations. We don't want to have a lax system. It's not good for the world to have very strong environmental requirements in one place and lax requirements in another place, because then money just flows there.

We actually do a good job here in Canada, because of our energy system, which is 96% or 97% clean. We have an abundance of low-carbon products that we produce, largely in British Columbia. We have an opportunity and we want to be able to make that available to the globe. We don't want to see there being opportunities for people to invest in places that don't have as stringent environmental considerations.

Therefore, it's about making sure that it's fair and applied evenly across the piece, making sure that the process works in a timely fashion, making sure we have a roster of people we can draw from who are experienced, who can look at the facts and who are able to opine in a way that's not influenced by externalities, who are going to look at the evidence and give countries a fair hearing.

**Mr. Randeep Sarai:** Thank you, Ms. Yurkovich.

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

Thank you, Mr. Sarai.

We'll go on to Monsieur Savard-Tremblay, for six minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, BQ):** Good morning. Greetings to all the participants. I thank them for their presence.

My question will be for Mr. Vaillancourt, from the Réseau québécois sur l'intégration continentale.

Mr. Vaillancourt, I will ask you a rhetorical question.

On paper, the idea of a dispute settlement body does not seem bad, particularly to ensure a kind of legal equality among states to avoid the fact that, in the balance of power, it is always the richest and most powerful countries that win in trade and other disputes. The small ones must be given a chance. On paper, that sounds like a good idea.

What is wrong with that?

• (1155)

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** In my opinion, it is not the idea of having a dispute resolution body that is the problem. I think it's necessary and important. Trying to strengthen it is also a good thing. However, the questions we are asking about the current role of the WTO in the world are much more fundamental.

That the WTO is correcting some of its mistakes is interesting and should be done, but our concern is that it is not making the change in direction that is needed now. The record of the WTO is not very good, and that needs to be emphasized. It is not great for the workers of the world, nor for the environment. But all of this stems from the WTO's initial and fundamental vocation, which is to liberalize trade as much as possible. I think we are no longer there.

Even Klaus Schwab, the great organizer of the World Economic Forum in Davos, says we have to end neoliberalism. We are not there anymore. We need more regulation and a way to distribute wealth.

If the only question the WTO asks itself is how to perpetuate itself and improve its internal mechanisms, and it doesn't ask questions about its vocation, in my opinion, there is a problem. If it doesn't listen to the criticism that is levelled at it and doesn't take into account the problems that are created by the system that it has installed, there is a problem.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Basically, it is more a problem of perspective and not a problem with the structures themselves. You don't dispute the idea, per se, of having a body that adjudicates trade disputes.

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** No, we don't dispute the idea per se at all, but if we're talking about reform, we would like to see the WTO go several steps further. It doesn't go far enough and doesn't seem to be listening to what the social movement has been calling for for many years.

So, yes, the WTO needs to be reformed, but it needs to be a much deeper reform that goes to the heart of the very objectives of this organization, which is problematic. We absolutely have to recognize that, and it's very important to say that.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** It is also very different from what it was supposed to be in the beginning, after the Second World War. We were talking about an international trade organization based on the guidelines of the Havana Charter, which are quite different from the WTO of 1995.

What elements do you suggest should be reformed or eliminated? Would it be the most favoured nation principle? If you had to target two or three elements of the WTO agenda, what would they be?

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** The priority would be the environmental issue. We must allow environmental protection to take precedence over free trade. It's a matter of survival for the planet.

Then, what is absolutely not talked about at the WTO, but which is fundamental, is the issue of taxation. We talk about it in our report. Tax competition distorts international trade and prevents countries from putting in place measures to redistribute wealth. Obviously, this is absolutely not within the scope of the WTO, but why not? That is the question we are asking. It could be part of it.

Among the most pressing issues, we include the issue of intellectual property. We're going way too far, because we're favouring large international companies way too much, when we have very important needs in terms of accessibility to medicines.

In my opinion, these three things are important, but we will also have several things to propose. As we mentioned in our statement, fundamentally, the idea of making international trade as free as possible is anachronistic. Humanity is not there anymore, right now, and we need to do what we need to do to really defend the people around the world.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** At the end of the day, trade should be seen as a means, but never as an end in itself. You're talking about trade being based on human development goals, ultimately.

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** That's exactly right.

We need to adopt measures to redistribute wealth, fight climate change, and ensure equality between north and south. The WTO has greatly favoured the kind of gap that has been created between the countries of the north and the south. Moreover, as early as the WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle in 1999, this was denounced by the countries of the south, and the negotiation process was extremely difficult for them. So this is another problem.

• (1200)

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** If I am not mistaken, the WTO is one of the few international organizations that are not bound by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Should the WTO be subject to international environmental agreements, for example?

I wonder how these policy changes that you put forward and that I support can be implemented in a concrete way.

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** Yes, absolutely.

The goals of the Paris Agreement should be a priority—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** It has to be a very brief answer, Mr. Vaillancourt.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** All right. So I'm going to stop here. I've said what I had to say.

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Thank you.

[*English*]

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

We will go now to Mr. MacGregor.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Before I begin, I thought I'd check to see if the Trade Justice Network is still with us. Is Ms. Whattam still there?

**The Chair:** Madam Clerk, is Ms. Whattam with us?

**The Clerk:** I see her in the room, but her camera is not open.

Ms. Whattam, can you hear me?

**Ms. Jesse Whattam:** I can hear you, but my connection keeps cutting in and out, so I've been having difficulty. I'm keeping my camera off and I hope that boosts my connection.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** That's not a problem. I'll direct my first question to you, given that you can still hear me.

You mentioned in your opening statement the Geneva principles for a global green new deal. The opening paragraph from that executive summary talks about how we “once had a version of multilateralism that permitted nations to regulate international markets and to pursue strategies for equitable prosperity and development.” It reflected, really, the experiences that we had from both World War II and the Great Depression. The leaders in the post-war period, in the 1950s and 1960s, were intimately acquainted with how fragile our international system was, having gone through a depression and a world war. With the current pandemic, we are learning that again. We've seen the stresses on our supply lines and so on.

Given that climate change is very much going to be the defining issue of the 21st century, and putting this in the context of WTO reform, can you give the committee a sense of what's really at stake?

The threats that climate change, if left unabated, poses to our trade networks, especially with countries that have a lot to lose if their climates change, with increasing desertification, scarce water supplies, migration of people and so on.... Why is it so important for us to put that into the context of WTO reform?

**Ms. Jesse Whattam:** Yes, absolutely, I'll definitely take that question. If I cut out, it's because my connection dropped.

You mentioned the pandemic, and I think of the ways in which the global community has come together. Especially when you're talking about civil society organizations and grassroots organizations that are on the front lines of both the pandemic and climate change, we can see how those crises are similar in a way because the stakes of both are so high.

The ways in which the World Trade Organization and the current trade regime rules have constrained.... Even if governments want to take actions to prioritize the livelihoods and lives of communities, they're actually unable to do so because of the way that trade is structured right now. We can see this in the ways free trade agreements can be used to constrain governments from prioritizing “buy local” or other environmentally friendly projects.

When I think [*Technical difficulty—Editor*].

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** I think you've put yourself on mute.

• (1205)

**The Chair:** Ms. Whattam, are you with us, or have we lost the connection?

**The Clerk:** It seems like she is still there.

**The Chair:** We're not getting any response from her, and this is taking up Mr. MacGregor's time here.

Mr. MacGregor, maybe you should go on to one of the other witnesses.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Yes, okay. I'll move on to Mr. Vaillancourt.

In a similar line of questioning, we don't want to lose sight of the lessons that have been learned from this pandemic, the strains that have been put on global supply lines and so on. Maybe along the same lines, where I was asking about the threat of climate change and so on, are there any lessons you would like to see us really firmly commit to when we are looking at WTO reform, based on

the experiences of the last year but also the challenges we will face over the next decade?

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** I think one of the big problems with the WTO is this willingness to systematically attack tariff barriers by claiming that they are in place to hide some level of protectionism. In my view, that's the wrong way to approach things.

It is clear that we need to make a major energy transition. That is very important. We need to think about the economy in a different way. We need to shorten the circuits and produce more locally. There must also be a series of regulations to organize society around the necessary energy transition.

An organization like the WTO aims at very broad, liberalized trade. One only has to look at the history of the WTO to see that what the General Agreement on Trade in Services, or GATS, proposed in terms of liberalization was extreme. So we have to think of the world differently. The WTO must fundamentally and structurally reform its way of looking at the economy. People are ready to do this, at all levels. I mentioned Klaus Schwab earlier, and I'll repeat his name. This proves that even in fairly elitist economic places, people are ready to make this change.

The WTO must also manage to question itself and rethink the economy in a different way, according to the challenges that await us, that is to say the energy transition and the fact that social inequalities are increasing every year. Let's not forget that they are getting worse. This creates a fundamental problem. If the WTO chooses to reform itself, it must address these fundamental concerns, not put obstacles in the way, and allow states to take the necessary measures to address these major issues.

[*English*]

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Maybe as a final question—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, Mr. MacGregor. Your time is up.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** No worries.

**The Chair:** It's on to Mrs. Gray for five minutes, please.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to all the witnesses for being here today.

My first questions are for Ms. Yurkovich from the BC Council of Forest Industries. Our last softwood lumber agreement was from 2006 to about 2015. Now, with no agreement and with softwood not being negotiated into CUSMA, based on some of the testimony we've had here today it sounds like you're likely at the mercy of a functioning WTO to resolve disputes. How have your organization and those you represent been affected since we last had a softwood lumber agreement with the United States?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** The last agreement was 2006 to 2015, with a one-year standstill period. We have, of course, been back in to paying duties, which were put on us in 2017.

It adds costs, but mostly it creates volatility and uncertainty. I think that's not good. After this year, we know what it's like to live with uncertainty. For our sector, this ongoing battle on the trade front takes up a lot of time, energy and resources. Most frustratingly, it doesn't allow us to deploy those resources in a different way.

It has real impacts when we have.... We're in good markets now, but when we were in bad markets, a lot of people were out of work very quickly. Look at 2019. It was a devastating year. Each person who loses a job in a mill.... These are good, family-supporting jobs. They are jobs that build communities. When we have that kind of volatility and loss, it can have a huge impact on workers and communities.

We would like to get resolution on this, particularly given that we've always had a North American market for lumber. They need our lumber. It's a great building material for people who are looking to make good choices for the planet. We would just really like to have this resolved once and for all.

• (1210)

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Thank you very much. I appreciate those comments. I've certainly seen it first-hand in my community of Kelowna—Lake Country because we had a mill here, Tolko, which closed recently and hundreds of jobs were lost.

We know that the Ottawa Group has been working to find solutions relating to the WTO. Have you seen any noticeable changes or reforms that have benefited the forestry industry since this group has formed?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** I couldn't say specifically.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Okay, that's fair enough. That's good information.

You mentioned the importance of binding dispute resolution settlements and that decisions that should take months were taking years. How has the forestry sector been affected by this? Have you seen decisions yourself that you felt could have been easily rectified, but which were extended over a long period of time?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** If you look at the current situation we're facing, the decision out of the WTO in the summer was a stunning victory for the country. It proved, yet again, that our industry was not subsidized. We have that decision. It's been made, yet it's been appealed and it's basically in limbo.

It's important to have those decisions finalized, because that's what, in the end—in both Lumber III and Lumber IV—actually puts pressure on the U.S. to come to the table and do the right thing. It's very frustrating for us to see that put in limbo. It's frustrating that they can appeal it to a body that the party you're litigating against has the ability to thwart.

It just doesn't seem fair. It doesn't seem right. It's not due process. It's super frustrating.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Thank you for that.

Have you seen non-tariff barriers affect your industry? How do you see the WTO modernizing in order to be able to positively address these issues?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** There are the phytosanitary issues. Issues around non-tariff barriers for our sector are real. We see them all the time. We've seen them levelled not just at our sector...but we've seen other instances even over the last year or so. It's challenging.

We've put a lot of time and effort—as I am sure the Grain Growers and other producers in the country have—into making sure that our products meet very high standards through our quality assurance programs and our auditing processes. To see those non-tariff barriers kind of creep in is a super tricky way to basically harm competitors in a way that looks like they're trying to do the right thing. We guard against that. We spend a lot of time and effort on that. Like I said, Canada has very good systems for making sure that we make sure that our products are of the highest standard.

It's not going happen—

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Yurkovich. Excuse me for interrupting, but we have to move on.

We move to Mr. Dhaliwal.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal (Surrey—Newton, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, on this International Women's Day, I want to congratulate you and all women around the globe. Have a very happy Women's Day. I want to thank them for all the contributions they have made to our society and around the globe.

My question is going to Susan Yurkovich, who has done great work and has shown great leadership in British Columbia when it comes to the lumber industry. I'll just call you Susan. You were here during the last Parliament as well.

I have seen an enormous impact over the past many years. I'm sure Randeep will agree. Over 100 years ago, when the Sikh community came in, where they ended up was in small towns in the lumber industry. That's where the jobs were. Today, with a declining number of jobs, those small towns are becoming ghost towns. That had an effect over the years.

To come back to the WTO, we have 100,000 jobs, \$13 billion in GDP, and \$4 billion in taxes and fees. You mentioned there were two decisions that were made in favour of Canada—Lumber III and Lumber IV. How do those decisions address the economic impact that happened over the past many years?

• (1215)

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** How did those decisions impact...?

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Yes, in the past.

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** On those, when we do get resolution, of course we have greater certainty of what the operating conditions are. It allows companies to choose to make investments and to know what the rules of the game are going to be.

I would say those two decisions were out of the former NAFTA process, but we can't get there until we have these international bodies eventually finding in Canada's favour and putting pressure onto the U.S. system, which is where we ultimately have to get resolution.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** You say that we have to have a well-functioning WTO and an effective appellate body as well. Now the decision has been appealed by the U.S. Under the circumstances, how long do you think this appeal process will take? Exactly what do you mean by the appellate body, if we have to pin down that time frame?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** The situation with the WTO is that we have the decision from the summer, which finds...it's a very strong victory for Canada. Every party always has the right to appeal a decision. The U.S. has the right to appeal, so it has chosen to appeal.

Unfortunately, it has appealed to a body that is not properly constituted. The appellate body doesn't have enough members to hear the appeal because the U.S. won't appoint its members. Basically, that decision is in limbo. I can't really tell you how long it will take, because I can't tell you when the U.S. might choose to appoint its folks to the appellate body.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** Even if we have a body—if the U.S. appoints those—how long do you think that appeal process would be, if we had all the members in the appellate body?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** If we had the appeals process, it would still take us a couple of years, likely, to work through it. You have to remember that with the lumber file we have appeals, and then we have administrative reviews under CUSMA, or the new NAFTA side of things, in addition to the WTO. We use both mechanisms.

Basically, it's ongoing until you can reach resolution, which is what has happened in the past. In the case of 2006, we got to a point where there was enough pressure and we negotiated the deal.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** You also said that, when it comes to the lumber industry, 30% is new markets. What else can be done, from a government perspective, so we have much bigger shares in other countries and we are not dependent on the U.S.?

**The Chair:** Give a brief answer, if possible, Ms. Yurkovich.

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** We're continuing to diversify markets. We're continuing to work through the Canada Wood Group program that the federal government is a partner in, and has been for many years. We'll look to continue to diversify both products and markets, but that takes time.

The U.S. needs our lumber, and we would still like to be able to sell it to them.

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

We'll move to Mr. Savard-Tremblay, for two and a half minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** I will return to Mr. Vaillancourt and pick up the conversation where we left off in the previous round of questioning.

Mr. Vaillancourt, you mentioned intellectual property. Could you expand on that idea further?

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** Currently, the WTO rules are really in favour of extending the protection of brand-name drugs as much as possible, which poses a problem of accessibility to generic drugs.

For the countries of the south, we can say that the situation has been really catastrophic. Basic medications are becoming extremely difficult to access, which causes illnesses and leads to real tragedies.

This is currently seen with the COVID-19 situation, where two WTO member countries, India and South Africa, have in fact asked that this protection be suspended, so that they can manufacture vaccines themselves and make them accessible to the greatest number of individuals quickly. They do not want to depend on private companies, which are also making considerable profits in this regard.

This is really about disease and the survival of populations. So it's absolutely important that Canada step in and support these two countries so that this can be done as quickly as possible and so that accessibility to vaccines is as widespread as possible.

So we can see how regulation, that is, everything related to intellectual property, is extremely constraining and at the heart of the WTO, but also in other agreements signed by Canada.

• (1220)

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** So this is not a good idea at all...

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Make it a very short question, please.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** In the pandemic context, it is not a good idea at all to provide extended brand-name drug protection.

**Mr. Claude Vaillancourt:** Absolutely not, and the WTO can really intervene on this. Indeed, it can require that the duration of these protections be reduced in exceptional circumstances.

[*English*]

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

We'll move to Mr. MacGregor, for two and a half minutes.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would be remiss if I didn't ask a question of the Grain Growers of Canada, who are frequent witnesses at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food.

The new director general of the WTO was elected on a promise to update the WTO rule book to take into account 21st century issues like the green and circular economy. She has put the world on notice that the environment and climate change are quite important to her.

You, along with other groups, have joined together to form the agriculture carbon alliance in Canada. In the context of WTO reform, what does your participation in an organization like that do for Canada's efforts in leading this conversation about WTO reform?

**Mr. Andre Harpe:** I've been listening during the morning, and the interesting thing is the connection between trade and the environment. As a producer myself.... Basically, the agricultural industry in Canada—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

There is no interpretation because of the sound quality.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Let's hold for a minute. We have an interpretation problem.

Please hold on, Mr. Harpe. We need to make sure we have interpretation.

**The Clerk:** You just have to raise your mike, Mr. Harpe.

**Mr. Andre Harpe:** Is this better?

**The Clerk:** Yes. Please continue.

**Mr. Andre Harpe:** Okay, thank you.

As producers, we are so connected to the environment. I believe trade will have to be connected to the environment, as with our connection to the newly formed carbon alliance.

The reason we formed the alliance was to show everybody else, including the world, how effective we are in capturing carbon and how effective Canadian agriculture is in dealing with carbon already. We look forward to being able to do better. We believe we are doing quite well right now, but, as they say, there is always room for improvement.

I look forward to seeing what the new director general will come up with for the World Trade Organization guidelines.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. I'm sorry for the technology and translation issues.

We go on to Mr. Hoback as our last questioner, for five minutes, please.

● (1225)

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Mrs. Gray, go ahead.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Mr. Hoback is just rebooting. He'll be online shortly.

We can move to our next speaker, Mr. Aboultaif, instead.

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

Mr. Aboultaif, go ahead.

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif (Edmonton Manning, CPC):** Thanks, Chair.

The question is for Ms. Yurkovich. It's on softwood lumber.

How much progress have we made in the last five years towards changing the position of the U.S. when it comes to our industry?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** I would like to say "a lot", but we are still here. We are still in this.

The tricky thing about the U.S. is that if the Government of Canada could actually create an agreement with the U.S. and bind the Canadian industry to that agreement, this is not the case in the United States. The U.S. industry can use its trade laws—and they do, regularly—against our industry, and the U.S. government can't actually enter into an arrangement without the industry at the table. So it's very difficult. It has become a kind of business strategy for them to use their trade laws against Canada.

It's unfortunate. We have a lot of work to do to grow demand for wood and low-carbon wood products. It's super frustrating to us that we haven't been able to resolve this. We think there are way more opportunities to be had by working collectively and collaboratively to increase fibre from sustainably managed forests in all kinds of products, but instead, we continue to spend a lot of time and energy on litigation.

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** If I understand correctly, then, this is a private sector solution. Is that correct?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** Well, no, it's ultimately.... This disagreement has been resolved in the past. If history is a teacher of how this will be resolved in the future.... It has been resolved at some point when the leadership of both countries have dug in and brought their weight to bear, on the U.S. industry in particular.

My expectation is that we will get there at some point. We have many issues on the plate of both governments. Hopefully we're coming out of a global pandemic. We have lots of work to do to lift people up. We hope that when we get through this, the softwood lumber issue will be back on the table and we can get a durable solution.

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Thank you.

Madam Chair, can we go back to Mr. Hoback and give him a chance to ask his question?

**The Chair:** Mr. Hoback, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Randy Hoback (Prince Albert, CPC):** Thank you, Chair. Hopefully you can hear me okay. It's amazing how your computer decides to update itself as you start questions.

This is to the forestry association.

This has been an ongoing dispute. One thing I will say about the appellate body is that modifications need to be made. One of the frustrations I find is that when we do get a judgment in our favour, such as the one you received this summer, there's no way to enforce that judgment. Of course now, in this case, they've appealed it. But in the past, we still had the same problem.

Is there any advice that you'd give the Canadian government as they go through the modifications in the appellate body that we should be looking at?

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** I think that's a good question. These decisions are what has brought weight to bear on the Department of Commerce, because these WTO decisions are prospective. They actually don't give us a lot of recourse, even when we get a positive decision.

One thing you have to look at when you get these decisions is what the enforcement mechanism is for making sure that the decisions are respected and that any outcomes that are in those—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Point of order, Madam Chair.

There is still no interpretation.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** We have a translation problem again.

**The Clerk:** Ms. Yurkovich, can you put your mike a little bit further from your mouth? It's popping too much. That's what I was told.

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** Is this a better sound?

**The Clerk:** It's much better. Thank you very much.

**Ms. Susan Yurkovich:** Okay. I'm sorry about that.

I think what we should also look at is what the enforcement mechanisms are and how we put these decisions into force. As the changes are being looked at, I think that's something we need to look at as well.

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** We found the same with COOL, the country of origin labelling, on beef products. We won the case, and then we had to figure out a strategy to actually enforce the win.

I'm going to pivot to the Grain Growers of Canada here, because I have a little bit of time. Can you explain to me why, in the Italian durum case, there hasn't been a challenge? Why haven't we taken this to the WTO? Also, do you think that this has brought on other tariff actions in other countries, because we haven't stood up in the Italian case?

• (1230)

**Mr. Andre Harpe:** Go ahead, Erin.

**Ms. Erin Gowriluk:** Thank you.

I don't know why we haven't brought it to the WTO. I know the industry has been calling on the Canadian government to do just that—to your point specifically, Mr. Hoback—because we want to see a resolution of this issue, and that has a direct and immediate impact on the Canadian grain farmers.

But I think more broadly, what we're seeing now is that there is this contagion, if you will. As I mentioned earlier with regard to the European Union's farm to fork strategy, there are provisions within that strategy to allow that similar requirement to exist outside of Italy and across the European Union. When those issues go unaddressed, for example, that's our fear. Our fear is that the signal is sent that this is okay, and that there are no ramifications or consequences when you don't abide by the rules embedded in the agreement. In this case, it's the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union.

We continue to ask for the Canadian government's assistance. We'd like to see this brought before the WTO—to resolve the issue, but also to ensure that we send a strong signal that Canada believes in rules-based, science-based trade and we're prepared to stand up for it.

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** How much time do I have left, Chair?

**The Chair:** You don't have any left, according to my schedule.

**Mr. Randy Hoback:** Okay, thanks.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

To all members who, for whatever reason, were not able to get their questions in to Ms. Whattam or the other witnesses who seemed to have some technical challenges, you can send them to the clerk, and she will forward them to the appropriate witnesses, if that is helpful to the committee members.

I want to thank you, witnesses, for the very valuable information and the work you continue to do to advance the trade issues around Canada.

Our witnesses can disconnect, and I will suspend for half a minute so we can go on to the committee business portion of the meeting.

Thank you.

• (1230)

(Pause)

• (1230)

**The Chair:** Thank you all for your attention.

I'll just outline what we have before us.

For upcoming business, we have the estimates, which were referred to the committee by the House on February 25. The ones we have received are on the Invest in Canada hub. I've already asked that an invitation be extended to Minister Ng and her officials to appear so that the committee will be in a position to report on the estimates prior to May 31.

Next, on WTO reform, we've had two meetings up until today, and we are scheduled to have another 60 minutes on Friday. Last October, though, we did talk about having three meetings on the WTO issue, so I would appreciate some direction from the committee members. If we want to have a third meeting, we'll need to make that decision so we can organize the calendar.

We have two draft reports that we're going to have to go over.

The first one is on trade between Canada and the United Kingdom. The potential transitional trade agreement study was distributed last Friday and is ready to be reviewed by the members. Following the vote this afternoon, I will be tabling the Bill C-18 report as well.

The second draft report that's being worked on is "Canada's International Trade after COVID-19: Changes, Federal Supports for Exporters and Trade Agreement Priorities". It is scheduled to be distributed to members by March 26.

Next, we expect to have Louis Plamondon's private member's bill, Bill C-216. It may come to a vote in the House this week and, if carried, is going to be referred to our committee.

One other thing, as a reminder, is that last October 23, when we had a committee business section, we did adopt a motion to hold a minimum of two meetings on "Investor-State Dispute Settlement Mechanisms: Selected Impacts".

In addition to that, we have several motions from Mr. Sheehan and Mrs. Gray, which have also been referenced today, and other motions that are already tabled.

The question for us is how we would like to proceed today.

Mr. MacGregor, go ahead.

• (1235)

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I've been in contact with Mr. Blaikie. I believe he gave notice of a motion for something that now has been slightly amended. He has been in discussion with some members of this committee already. I'll read it out slowly just for my colleagues' benefit.

It reads as follows:

That, pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee undertake a study of Canada's trade policy and trade agreements in respect of how they may help or hinder the production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in Canada and across the world, including, but not limited to,

(i) Canada's position with respect to a proposal at the World Trade Organization to provide "a waiver from certain provisions of the TRIPS Agreement for the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19",

(ii) how Canada's trade agreements, like CETA, may be used to ensure Canada's vaccine advance-purchase contracts are respected,

and (iii) whether Canada's current trade position should motivate accelerated capacity in domestic vaccine manufacturing capability;

That the committee dedicate a minimum of four meetings to this study, and,

That the committee report its findings to the House.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan (Outremont, Lib.):** I have a point of order, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. MacGregor.

You have a point of order, Ms. Bendayan.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** It's just a point of clarification from my colleague.

I don't seem to have that motion myself. Was that text circulated in both languages, or is this something that will be circulated shortly?

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** My understanding is that Mr. Blaikie put the original motion on notice a while ago, maybe last year. It was dealing, at its centre, with the TRIPS waiver.

This one has been slightly reworded.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** It was tabled quite some time ago, but now that it has these proposed changes, I'm not sure if that requires a time limit or.... It doesn't appear to be exactly the same as the one that Mr. Blaikie tabled previously. We'll have to get some clarification to.... Certainly, we know what the intent was.

Mrs. Gray.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I just want to say that we would be supportive of those amendments as have been read out. We can certainly make amendments to motions as we are here without having to go through another process.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Madam Clerk.

**The Clerk:** Do people want a recorded vote on the motion from Mr. MacGregor?

**The Chair:** Does the committee—

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Madam Chair, I'm sorry if you don't see it, but I do have my hand raised.

**The Chair:** Now I see it, yes. Thank you.

Go on, Ms. Bendayan.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Perhaps I could seek the views of other colleagues, but I would like to review the text of the motion that we would be voting on before doing so. Unless there is some urgency to vote right this moment, I would appreciate receiving the text in both English and French for the benefit of all colleagues.

• (1240)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

That certainly makes sense.

Mr. Arya.

**Mr. Chandra Arya (Nepean, Lib.):** It's the same thing, Madam Chair. I would like to review the text in advance.

**The Chair:** A suggestion might be.... I'm not sure that we're going to get that text that quickly. A decision on that could be held off until Friday's meeting if that is the desire of the committee.

Is everybody okay if we hold down Mr. Blaikie's suggested motion so that everybody will have a chance to get it and review it? We could deal with it on Friday. Are there any objections to that?

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** I just forwarded it to the clerk. I just want to let you know that it's just been sent right now.

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

This coming Friday's meeting is again 60 minutes on the WTO, and 60 minutes on the final draft report on Canada and the U.K. That's going to take us to that meeting.

We then have to look at the meeting of the 18th. We may have Bill C-216 at the same time. If there's any particular direction, ideas or suggestions from the committee as to the direction they would like to go in....

Ms. Bendayan.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm happy to hear from my colleagues, the co-chairs of the committee, Mrs. Gray and, of course, the representative of the NDP for Mr. Blaikie, and Simon-Pierre. For my part, I think what we heard today from witnesses was helpful and we should perhaps continue hearing from witnesses on Friday on the WTO.

Of course, I understand from you that we might have a private member's bill, Bill C-216, coming to this committee. I would welcome views from the clerk as to whether that would take precedence over the other studies we have before us, but I do note that there was interest from all parties to study investor-state dispute mechanisms and it's something we had voted on quite some time ago. Therefore, I look forward to getting to that study, as I am sure other members do.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mrs. Gray.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I have two things.

First, I want to ask whether we would have officials coming back. I believe officials last spoke on WTO a year ago. Certainly there have been a lot of updates since then, so does the plan also include having officials come before the committee?

Second, I had read in my notice of motion, and I would like to table it. I'm not sure whether you want me to read it again. I've already done so in this meeting. This motion is to look at the effectiveness of the integrity declaration of doing business with Xinjiang entities.

I am moving that, and if you'd like, I can read it. I did read it earlier.

**The Chair:** You read it into the record, and you are moving it now.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Yes, I'm moving it.

**The Chair:** Mr. Sheehan, you are next, and then Ms. Bendayan.

**Mr. Terry Sheehan:** Thank you very much.

I have a similar question about order of precedence. You've outlined a number of things coming down the pipe, and Tracy, Alistair and I talked about some motions that we could use as well. Could we hear from the clerk, just for clarity, about how order of precedence would happen?

The notice of motion that I introduced Thursday afternoon on studying green technology and exports was distributed in both official languages. Just for clarity, one thing I did not say is that I see it as a three- or four-meeting study. In other committees, in the ebb and flow of how business is done, sometimes we get at things very quickly and then find we have an hour left here or there, whereby we could perhaps entertain various other studies that could be plugged in throughout our time, instead of devoting time to do it all at once.

Those are some of my thoughts about committee business. If I could hear from the clerk about order of precedence, it would help me think about our future committee business.

• (1245)

**The Chair:** Madam Clerk.

**The Clerk:** There is no order of precedence. A motion can be adopted by a committee to undertake a study and the study might never be done, because of a lack of time or because there are other emergencies. As for the private member's bill, if it's referred to the committee, the committee will have 60 sitting days to report it back to the House.

The committee can decide to do the private member's bill first and the self-initiated studies afterwards, or otherwise. The calendar is up to the committee. As I said, by standing order, the committee has 60 sitting days to report a private member's bill back to the House.

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

Ms. Bendayan.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

[*Translation*]

I also thank the clerk of the committee for clarifying this.

[*English*]

Madam Chair, do you know when the private member's bill might be referred to our committee? I believe you mentioned the date earlier.

**The Chair:** It could happen this week, but there is no guarantee. Again, we will have 60 days to respond once we have it.

Could I make a suggestion?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Sorry, Madam Chair, I was not finished.

I would also like to advise all members of the committee that the minister is available to appear before this committee on the estimates, as is the custom. I believe we have until May for that to happen. The minister is certainly interested in coming back to see colleagues on this committee.

**The Chair:** Mr. Savard-Tremblay.

[Translation]

**Mr. Simon-Pierre Savard-Tremblay:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Following Ms. Bendayan's last comment, I wonder if the minister would also be willing to testify as part of the dispute resolution study. This would allow us to clarify Canada's position on this issue.

Do you think she might be interested?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** I think this might indeed be of interest to her. However, I would add another meeting for the study at hand. Given what is before us, it will take a minimum of two meetings.

Today, we could agree that three meetings will be necessary if we are to invite the minister.

[English]

**The Chair:** To go back to the things we've already agreed to, we voted on the ISDS in the fall—last October, I believe—to have two meetings. It has now been suggested that we might want to have three meetings on the ISDS. We had already agreed we would do that.

For the WTO, we said possibly three meetings. If we have one more meeting and include the officials Mrs. Gray suggested this morning, if everybody is in favour of that, we would have a third meeting on the WTO with the officials for the last hour. We would start the ISDS. That starts us going in a direction.

We have two motions that were introduced this morning—both Mr. Sheehan's motion and Mrs. Gray's—if the committee wants to discuss those motions at this time.

Mrs. Gray.

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I was going to mention that my motion is on the floor to discuss and vote on.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Are there any comments on Mrs. Gray's motion?

Do you want to speak to it in general terms, Mrs. Gray?

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Absolutely.

This is definitely a timely motion. We know the government has what's called the integrity declaration on doing business with Xinjiang entities. This is to look at how that is functioning. We know there was a vote in the House of Commons to declare this a genocide. That was voted on by members of Parliament. It's timely to look at this. We're talking about human rights. We're talking about looking at exports from that region of China. This is why this would be a timely study.

Thank you.

• (1250)

**The Chair:** Thank you Mrs. Gray.

Ms. Bendayan.

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Allow me to thank my colleague Mrs. Gray for putting forward this important study for consideration. I do, however, believe that we have an entire committee that was created at the request of the Conservative Party to study our relationship with China, in particular the commercial relationship we have. Given the number of studies we have on the table at this committee, and given that there is a special committee that exists for this sole purpose, I would suggest to my colleagues that we have an outlet for this question, that it should be studied, and it will be studied at that other committee.

I understand there's a subcommittee meeting of the Canada-China special committee today. I would encourage all members of this committee to see if that issue being proposed by Mrs. Gray could be studied there, which would be far more appropriate.

Madam Chair, I believe you're on mute.

**The Chair:** Thank you. It's hard to keep going back and forth, I have to tell you guys. Thank you for your patience.

Mrs. Gray, did you have additional comments?

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Madam Chair, that particular committee is not focused on trade. They are focused on a lot of diplomatic and foreign relations, so this is absolutely appropriate with this committee. This is entirely focused on trade. Also, this was an initiative that was put forth by the government. It's a matter of looking at reviewing this to see how it's functioning within trade as of right now. That's the purpose of this. This is actually looking at something that exists and it absolutely falls within the trade committee.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Aboultaif.

**Mr. Ziad Aboultaif:** Thank you.

This is long overdue, I believe, and could not come at a better time to study the trade relations, the rationale and all the dynamics of doing trade with China in view of everything that's happening right now. I think this is very critical and a priority. To have this on the schedule would be nice to see. Thanks.

**The Chair:** Thanks.

Madam Clerk, just for clarification, are the motions that were introduced today and introduced last week in order for this committee?

**The Clerk:** To my knowledge, the motions that were distributed are in order.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Okay, I see hands up. Between hands up and hands down and muting, it's an interesting process here.

Is there any further discussion on...? Mrs. Gray has moved her motion, which notice was duly given for. We should call a vote on Mrs. Gray's motion. Is everyone in agreement that we call a vote on Mrs. Gray's motion? I don't see anybody saying anything, so I'm going to go ahead with the vote.

Would you like a recorded vote on this motion, Mrs. Gray?

**Mrs. Tracy Gray:** Yes, Madam Chair. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Okay.

(Motion negatived: nays 6; yeas 5)

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

Mr. Sheehan is first, and then Mr. MacGregor.

● (1255)

**Mr. Terry Sheehan:** Thank you very much.

You had mentioned entertaining the various notices of motions that have been placed on the table. I think, with only three minutes left, I would probably look to move my motion on Friday, just to have the opportunity for people to discuss said motion, if warranted. Obviously, if people wanted to support it right now, I would entertain that, but I just was prepared for a notice of motion.

Chair, you did mention something about entertaining voting on it now, but again, from way back in my city council days, I always like to do a notice of motion just to give people the time to read it. It's been circulated in both official languages, too. Again, it's an important motion around green tech. It's coast to coast. Every province has green tech opportunities for scale-up. That's why I introduced it.

I will leave that with the committee, but I just wanted to note that it's such an important discussion I wanted to make sure we had the appropriate time set aside to answer questions. I would not want it to be defeated simply because it was rushed. That's all.

**Mr. Sukh Dhaliwal:** No. We fully support it, Terry.

**Mr. Terry Sheehan:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Is the committee of the desire to vote on Mr. Sheehan's motion today or to hold it off for another day? I have two yeases. Are there any objections to Mr. Sheehan's motion?

We have Mr. MacGregor and then Mr. Lobb.

Mr. MacGregor.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** I'm sorry. Where are we at, Madam Chair? Are we still on Mr. Sheehan's motion?

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Okay. I will defer until after this business is concluded.

**The Chair:** Mr. Lobb, are you speaking to Mr. Sheehan's motion?

**Mr. Ben Lobb:** Yes.

On Mr. Sheehan's motion, I look at it and I understand where Mr. Sheehan is coming from, but I do know that it's specific in some ways around talking about wind, solar and other things like that.

Take, for example, nuclear, which I would consider green. It's not listed there. Some of the stuff in and around the oil and gas sector that would be considered green technology is not listed there.

If we look at this at another meeting in terms of business, is this something that we can make more general instead of making it more specific? For my own two cents, I would want to throw in a friendly amendment in and around nuclear CANDU technology and all the other supporting services that go along with it.

I don't want to ruin Mr. Sheehan's motion if he wanted to keep it that way, but it's just something to have him think about, maybe, over the next couple of days.

**The Chair:** Mr. Sheehan, are you all right with holding your motion down?

**Mr. Terry Sheehan:** Yes, I would be, because Mr. Lobb brought up very salient points. Those two other industries unto themselves are extremely important, important to me and important to Canadians.

In just the spirit of this motion, I would think that those two industries almost unto themselves warrant their own particular studies. I mean, we have Tenaris Tubes here in the Soo. I'm not going to go down the proverbial rabbit hole, but yes, those are industries that definitely are important to Canadians. I would think they almost deserve a study unto themselves.

I take that under advisement. I think we probably should come back to my resolution with these thoughts in our heads.

● (1300)

**The Chair:** Okay. I'm just keeping my eye on the clock here. At the moment, we have WTO and ISDS. That's what's ahead of us in the immediate future.

I have Mr. MacGregor and then Mr. Hoback.

Mr. MacGregor, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Has Mr. Sheehan ceded the floor on his motion?

**The Chair:** Yes. We will not be voting on that today.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** I wanted to know, Madam Chair, from the clerk.... If I wanted to have a vote on the motion I talked about earlier, could I push for that right now if I so wished? There have been talks with the Bloc and with the Conservatives. The motion has been circulated. I could read it into the record one more time.

**The Chair:** It would have to be the original motion. I believe it has to be the original motion that Mr. Blaikie moved in the fall, without—

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Yes, but if I wanted to push for the motion as amended for a vote right now, could I do so?

**Ms. Rachel Bendayan:** Madam Chair, just in case this assists your reflections, I do have another engagement at one o'clock. This is the end of our committee time. Of course, if you decide to go on without me, I will find a substitute.

**The Chair:** Well, it is one o'clock, and I don't believe there's an urgency. When things get changed, Mr. MacGregor, for the timelines to continue on.... Certainly, Mr. Blaikie can speak to this on Friday, since the meeting time has run out at this particular point.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** All right. Recognizing the time, I'll respect everyone's commitments and ask Mr. Blaikie to move it next time.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. MacGregor.

Thank you very much to the committee for your continued dedication and help. It was great seeing you. We will see you later on in the week.

The meeting is adjourned.

---







Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

---

### SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

---

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the Copyright Act.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

---

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: <https://www.ourcommons.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

---

### PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

---

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la Loi sur le droit d'auteur. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre des communes.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la Loi sur le droit d'auteur.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

---

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante :  
<https://www.noscommunes.ca>