



# Environment UPDATE

December 1982 Volume 3 Number 3

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## Speaking up for the Environment

The broad responsibilities imposed on me as federal Minister of the Environment include promoting practices and conduct leading to the better preservation and enhancement of environmental quality. One of the ways of doing this is by taking on an advocacy or watchdog role. I intend to assume that role, of advocate for the environment, more frequently in the years ahead - within the federal cabinet, with other government departments, with provincial governments, with industry.

In this role I know I will have the support of the Canadian public. Indeed, that support was clearly manifested at Environment Canada's public consultation meetings in Ottawa and across Canada last September.

I am therefore heartened to keep pressing for a political solution of the acid rain problem, both in Canada and in the United States.

I am encouraged to continue exposing the myths that threaten the Canadian forest -- for example:

- . that Canada's timber supply is inexhaustible

- . that our forests have been managed on a sustainable yield basis
- . that a renewable resource is renewable promptly and automatically.

On the issue of toxic substances, I am further encouraged to promote the strategy of sharing the responsibility between governments and polluters - both actual and potential.

However, to succeed in the role of environmental advocate, I need the support of everyone who cares about our natural heritage. We must all become advocates, prepared to speak out for a better Canada.

John Roberts  
Minister

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### Introducing ...

Inside this issue, centreleaf, is the first edition of a new publication, EPS Environmental Quality Initiatives and Regulatory Agenda Update, produced by the Environmental Protection Service. By keeping you better informed, we hope it will help you make a more effective input into the workings of government

Robert W. Slater  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Environmental Protection Service

### In This Issue

Consultation '82

This issue reports on Environment Canada's first annual public consultation meetings in Ottawa and other major centres. Thanks goes to everyone who took part.

## The Dialogue Goes On ...

One of the conclusions drawn from the consultation meetings held throughout the country is that the dialogue formally established between Environment Canada and the Canadian public will continue.

The participants were unanimous in that regard, and wished to be kept informed of the use which the department wants to make of their opinions and advice. The department, through its most senior officers, Messrs. Seaborn and G erin, promised to do so.

In response to that wish, an interim report was drafted and distributed to the participants at the close of the Ottawa meeting, and a more detailed report has

just been mailed to all participants.

At a recent meeting of Environment Canada's Senior Management Committee, the assistant deputy ministers and the regional directors general agreed to prepare a reply to recommendations relating to their respective fields. This reply will be mailed to participants by mid January.

Environment Update will keep its readers informed of the coming months consultation activities. The dialogue goes on ...

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### Suggestions, Please

We need your help in making Environment Update a better, more useful publication. Please send your comments, criticisms and suggestions to the Managing Editor, Environment Update, Information Directorate, Environment Canada, Ottawa K1A 0H3.

### Information

Requests for further information should be sent to the authors of the articles at:

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unless otherwise indicated.

Comments and suggestions should be sent to Managing Editor, Environment Update, at the above address; (819) 994-1410.

## Spotlight on Strategic Plan

The groups I belong to and the NGO people I have met are extremely grateful to Environment Canada for preparing this strategic document, and for the papers giving us a written summary of department policy on the eight key items before us. They give us something to work with, something to begin with, to know exactly ... instead of coming here to the meeting blind and cold, and trying to figure out from conversations what the heck is going on. We are very grateful. That doesn't mean it is perfect.

- Kenneth Amberley,  
Crossroads Resources Group,  
Winnipeg

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"On y va." Three words spoken into the microphone by Senior Assistant Deputy Minister Jacques Gérin began the discussion and set the tone.

It had never been done before. Participants were asked for their opinions on Environment Canada's strategic plan -- the department's basic statement about what must be done over the long term, and what principles should guide us. The plan had become part of the dialogue being established through the public consultation process.

Deputy Minister Blair Seaborn put it this way: "I don't feel that it's the prime job of Environment Canada to develop the economic strategy of the country. I haven't got the people, I haven't the skills to do that. What I do have are the skills to advise and to warn and to try to influence - to say what economic developments, in my best judgement, are acceptable ones in a long-term environmental sense, and which ones are not.

"I want it to work. And I hope it's clear from what I have said that I need your help. We want you to speak to others who make the decisions, so they will realize that there is a large body of people out

there who really do feel strongly and have some rather intelligent ideas. And it's not a bunch of bothers and bureaucrats from something called the Department of the Environment that are making these points."

Here are some of the points made during the discussion:

- . Environment Canada's resources should be increased, and any necessary cutbacks should be made in other government departments
- . the department should have increased responsibilities in the following areas: energy projects and economic planning strategy related thereto; transportation of dangerous goods; and environmental affairs in the north
- . the relationship between Environment Canada and other departments and agencies, as well as its relationship with the industrial sector, must be clarified in the strategic plan
- . agreement with reiteration of the principle "the polluter pays"
- . labour, the co-operative movement and voluntary organizations wish to be known as the non-governmental sector rather than the private sector
- . an environmental ombudsman should be appointed to provide liaison between the representatives of the department and public interest groups
- . the department should assist the public in locating appropriate agencies - whether federal, provincial or municipal - dealing with any particular matter.

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## Canadian Environment Week June 5 — 11, 1983

Canadian Environment Week begins on World Environment Day, June 5, marking the 11th anniversary of the United Nations' Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm.

Scientists have since confirmed that the earth's resources are seriously threatened by pollution, overexploration and mismanagement. That's our earth - the only one we have -- and every one of us must take this danger seriously.

Canada Environment Week offers you fresh opportunities to help protect our national heritage. You can do this by taking part in some of the week's special activities, designed to heighten public awareness of environmental problems and the efforts to solve them.

Find out how you can share in the action. Contact your regional Environment Canada information offices (see page 2).

## Diverse Interest Groups Rub Elbows in Ottawa

Industrialists, academics, environmentalists, private citizens and representatives of several public interest groups came to Ottawa in large numbers last September to discuss Environment Canada's policies and programs.

The range of interests represented at the department's first headquarters' public consultation meeting pleasantly surprised veteran intervener David Brooks of Energy Probe.

"For some reason, I did not expect to meet industry at the meeting," he said. "The department had a good idea, inviting representatives of the private sector."

Henri Mauviel, director of public affairs in the department's Information Directorate, said the mix was just what was sought in the public consultation policy.

"The department wants to benefit from the opinions, perspectives and expertise in all segments of Canada society," he said. "So the meeting was designed to provide access to the department by public and private interest groups, professional associations and the general public."

Several organizations sent representatives to the meeting to discuss only one issue. For example, the Canadian Forestry Association, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Forest Engineering Research Institute of Canada and Canadian Pulp and Paper Association were solely concerned about the department's role in forest management and research. The Canadian Power Squadrons talked about weather forecasting; the National and Provincial Parks Association offered its views on planning national parks.

Other organizations sent several representatives to attend more than one of the 10 workshops at the meeting. The National Council of Women and the Canadian Wildlife Federation sent three representatives each to consider acid rain, toxic chemicals, water issues, wildlife and forest management. Energy Probe sent four -- three from their Toronto Office and one from Ottawa -- who attended the workshops on acid rain, forest management, hazardous wastes and nuclear power.

As expected, more than half of the over 100 groups who attended the meeting represented environmental and wildlife conservation interests at the national, regional and local levels. Friends of the Earth, the Canadian Environmental Law Association, National Survival Institute, Sierra Club, Pollution Probe, Yukon Conservation Society, Alberta Wilderness Society, STOP, Société pour vaincre la pollution, and la Société de conservation de l'Outaouais were among the largest block represented.

Many other interests were also represented. Participation from universities -- Ottawa, Toronto, Carleton, York, McGill and Alberta -- was well received. Participants from DOMTAR, Abitibi Price, CIL, Honda Motor Corporation and SUNCOR typified the diversity of the industrial sector. There were spokesmen from professional groups such as the Mining Association of Canada and the Tourism Industry Association, and several consultants from organizations like the Consumers' Association of Canada, Canadian Public Health Association, Canadian Labour Congress, Canadian Medical Association and Heritage Canada. Several private consultants also attended.

Native peoples' organizations were also represented. The Yukon Indian Women's Association, Grand Council Treaty Number 3 and the Alberta Society for Preservation of Indian Identity brought their concerns about national parks, water issues, forest and wildlife management.

The variety of interests was a stimulus to the discussion, according to Cathy Fox of Vancouver-based SPEC (Canadian Scientific Pollution and Environmental Control Society), a B.C. regional environmental organization. Hearing various opinions about complex environmental issues was "enlightening", she said. But John Collins of Ethyl Canada thought the meeting was dominated by the environmentalists.

"I was in favour of the meeting objective -- to get a dialogue on important issues started," he said. "However, in some workshops, environmentalists seized the opportunity to promote their particular interests at the expense of a meaningful discussion."

Environment Canada will continue to encourage the expression of opinions from various interests. Henri Mauviel said environmentalists form its largest constituency, but the department will also reach out to industry and other special and private interests.

"Only through discussion by and among all concerned parties will we reach the consensus necessary to advance the cause of environmental protection in Canada," he said.

Further information:

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## Workshop Brings Out Expertise

There were workshops on a wide variety of subjects, including acid rain, water, toxic chemicals and the NIMBY (not-in-my-backyard) syndrome, and weather, climate and man; on national parks, forestry, the World Conservation Strategy, economic development, and the nuclear fuel cycle.

The department was delighted with the expertise and commitment of the participants, with the quality of the comments and recommendations. Some of the recommendations are highlighted here.

Acid Rain. Participants agreed the department should play a lead role in developing more stringent auto emission standards for new vehicles. They said concerned citizens should have more access to scientific, technical and socio-economic information, to help them apply pressure on the provinces for abatement of emissions; that scientific data should be related to socio-economic considerations; and that public discussions should begin on the role of government in this important matter.

National Parks Planning. Participants expressed satisfaction with the management of national parks, given the available resources, but suggested it should receive more attention in Environment Canada's strategic plan. Other recommendations called for more representation from Parks Canada in the senior management of the department; the development of a draft policy on employment and training of local people to work for Parks Canada; broadly based consultation on the establishment of new national parks, rather than just local consultations; development of a system to identify ecologically sensitive areas in the north; and a stronger advocacy role for Parks Canada for its policy on preservation.

Not-in-My-Backyard Syndrome. Participants preferred to talk about waste management in general, rather than site-related discussions prompted by the acronym NIMBY (not-in-my-backyard). Several recommendations emerged, including establishment of a fund for remedial action and compensation for abandoned dump sites; involvement of the public in policy decisions on waste management; and government involvement in the technologies available to deal with problems of waste management. It was recommended, too, that waste management disposal in all its aspects - including research and development, regulation and management of the disposal process - be performed on a cost-recovery basis.

Weather, Climate and Man. Participants urged more importance for the Canadian climate program in the department's strategic plan. They also recommended that the Climate Advisory Committee develop strategies for increased emphasis on climate data application; that there be

increased collaboration between atmospheric research and development specialists in universities, the private sector and government; and that the department play a larger role in ensuring that the need for atmospheric services, such as meteorology, is appreciated by the public -- particularly by young people.

Forest Management and Renewal. Three associations presented briefs: the Canadian Forestry Association, the Canadian Institute of Forestry and the Recycling Council of Ontario. Participants recommended a higher priority and greater authority from the Canadian Forestry Service within the department. To highlight the importance of forestry for members of Parliament, they also recommended reorganization of the present Committee on Fisheries and Forestry, or at least the creation of a subcommittee on forestry.

World Conservation Strategy and Wildlife Strategy for Canada. Participants unanimously endorsed the Canadian Wildlife Service draft document, "A Wildlife Strategy for Canada". They also urged the federal government to encourage public interest groups to seek adoption of the World Conservation Strategy. Among the other recommendations were some specific suggestions concerning the Federal Environmental Assessment and Review Process.

Nuclear Energy. This workshop resulted in several recommendations about the responsibilities of government and public interest groups. One called for a central coordinator to deal with nuclear matters, and the provision of unbiased technical information on the environmental effects of the nuclear fuel cycle. The government was also urged to establish a single separate agency to manage the disposal of high-level radio-active wastes. Public interest groups, it was agreed, should address the need to inform people of the risks they may run from the nuclear fuel cycle, and intensify and refine their efforts to wield political influence.

Canadian Water Issues. Participants called for improved public information and participation, and urged Environment Canada to exert pressure on other federal departments and provincial governments where there are significant environmental concerns, even if these concerns are not a specific responsibility of the department. Similarly, they saw a need for more participation by the Department of the Environment in environmental assessment, regardless of jurisdiction, particularly concerning offshore developments.

Many participants expressed a need for a national water policy, including a national approach and national guidelines for

water quality management and waste-water treatment.

Participants recommended that waste-water guidelines be based upon new research and an improved data base supported by continuous monitoring. They felt that more federal support is required for area-wide urban water resource plans, including an overall strategy for water supply and waste water disposal, flood control and drainage in metropolitan areas. Necessary research in these areas should be encouraged by some sort of financial incentive, they suggested.

Economic Development. Many participants attending this workshop said the economic policies of the federal government could be the root cause of many environmental problems now facing us. Until some of these economic policy questions were suitably addressed, the real issues underlying environmental problems could be missed. This was proposed as one of the main topics for discussion at the next

headquarters public consultation meeting.

Toxic Chemicals. Environment Canada was asked to play a more aggressive role in the administration of the Pest Control Products Act. Participants said the labelling of domestic pesticide formulations is inadequate, omitting essential information on health hazards and detailed methods of safe application. They called for a parliamentary review of the pesticide registration process.

There was a consensus that the Canadian Forestry Service should not promote forest spray programs. On the positive side, the department was urged to establish a grant system like that of the National Science and Engineering Research Council for research projects of more than one year in length.

Detailed reports are available on the results of the workshops. For copies contact: Gail Turner (819) 994-1410.

## The Department of Environment Listens to the ...

### ... Atlantic Region

The four Atlantic provincial meetings attracted 187 participants, who presented 111 recommendations. All four meetings had a diverse audience of unaffiliated citizens, representatives of industry, the news media, members of public interest and environmental groups, provincial and federal government employees from other departments. The meetings focused on two topics each morning and afternoon, with open discussion on any other topic in the evening. Highlights were as follows:

#### Halifax Meeting

Major concerns about herbicides were (1) the effects of forest spraying on birds, animals, fish and human health; (2) the current process for approving forest spraying; (3) adequate monitoring after spraying; and (4) the development of alternative non-chemical forest management methods.

On the topic of hazardous wastes, participants objected (1) that the term "not-in-my-backyard syndrome" blames the victims, and (2) that people are justified in not wanting disposal facilities near them. They said decisions about the type and location of disposal facilities should only be made with full public participation.

Discussions on energy and the environment focused on (1) uranium mining and exploration in Nova Scotia; (2) the development of soft energy alternatives to mega-projects; and (3) the New Brunswick Point Lepreau nuclear generator.

#### Fredericton Meeting

Major concerns included (1) safe disposal of nuclear wastes; (2) the hazards of stored chemicals to firemen in the event of a fire; (3) the registration procedure for pesticides; (4) the re-registration of chemicals tested by IBT, an American firm found to be producing fraudulent studies; (5) development of ecologically sounder forest management methods; (6) more monitoring of forest spraying; (7) the safety of the Point Lepreau nuclear generator; and (8) the effects of river pollution on salmon.

#### St. John's Meeting

Major concerns were (1) dealing with oil spills and ship fuel waste; (2) environmental safeguards in the Labrador Sea; (3) coastal zone management; (4) hazardous waste; (5) the hazards of chemicals; and (6) controlling the spruce budworm without chemicals.

#### Charlottetown Meeting

Major concerns were (1) management of the Pest Control Products Act; (2) the re-registration of chemicals tested by IBT; (3) the importance of energy conservation; (4) the safety of the first Point Lepreau nuclear reactor; (5) more thorough study of the proposed second Point Lepreau reactor before it is approved; (6) hazardous waste sites in Prince Edward Island; (7) monitoring and enforcement regarding shellfish contamination; (8)

waste pollution from a potato processing plant; and (9) Prince Edward Island National Park development issues.

Further information:  
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### ... Quebec Region

The Quebec Region's first public consultation meetings were held in Quebec City and Montreal on September 11 and 18 respectively. Some 100 persons attended, representing environmental groups, professional associations, the academic community and industry.

Presentations centred on Environment Canada's activities in Quebec, concerning such matters as acid rain, toxic substances, water quality, forestry, wildlife and national parks. Participants urged greater involvement by the department in the province.

They called for education and information programs on the environment, and the funding of programs for environmental groups; better regulation of atmospheric

pollution and toxic chemicals, and the development of alternatives to such chemicals.

They asked the department to devise a national policy for the management of domestic and industrial wastes, and to work out accords with the Province of Quebec or citizens' groups on recreation, conservation and the protection of wildlife habitat. The regional office of Environment Canada was urged to prepare a report on the quality of the environment in Quebec, and to develop a regional strategic plan.

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### ... Ontario Region

Five public consultation sessions were held in Ontario - one each in Kingston, London and Sudbury, and two in Toronto. Twenty-six briefs were presented by environmental groups and other participants, who attended 13 workshops.

Public interest groups called for a larger role for Environment Canada in nuclear issues. In northern Ontario, concern ran high over proposed deep-rock disposal sites for reactor wastes, and low-level radioactive wastes from uranium mining and refining.

In southern Ontario, conservationists were concerned about government grants encouraging the indiscriminate draining of wet-

lands for agriculture. There was also a strong demand for a federal environmental assessment act - one with teeth in it to crack down on agencies exempt from provincial regulation.

Many groups voiced the fear that the new access-to-information legislation would actually make some government material more difficult to obtain. They urged Environment Canada to take a more visible stand on issues, and to act as a vocal advocate for the environment.

Further information:  
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### ... Western-Northern Region

September saw four public consultation meetings in the Western & Northern Region, resulting in some excellent comments, suggestions, and recommendations regarding Environment Canada's programs and policies.

About 50 people attended the first meeting in Winnipeg on September 12, plus a good number of Environment Canada staff. Among the issues discussed were Environment Canada's role in relation to rural and agricultural environmental quality (including the use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers) and Environment Canada's role in heritage preservation (as opposed to the conservation of natural resources).

The Regina meeting on September 19, attended by some 60 people, dealt with Environment Canada's role in uranium mining, disposal of radioactive wastes, and the whole nuclear energy question.

The problem of rural and agricultural environmental quality was raised as a further concern.

Some 30 people attended the third meeting, held in Yellowknife on September 22. The primary concerns there were Environment Canada's overall role in the north, and the proposed hydro-electric development on the Slave River.

The final meeting in the series, held in Edmonton on September 26, drew 35-40 people. The main issues included water quality, especially related to the North Saskatchewan River and the areas of oil sands development; and, as at Yellowknife, the proposed Slave River project.

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## Focus Shifting to Prevention

Environment Canada is shifting its emphasis from cure to prevention--from fragmented problem-solving to broad-based environmental planning. This is the thrust of a study by the policy directorate of the department's Corporate Planning Group, entitled "Environment Canada: Its Evolving Mission".

In its first decade, the study says, the department had to concentrate on checking further pollution of water, air and soil. At the same time, it had to make a start on repairing ecological damage already caused by economic, industrial and technological activity.

Increasingly, though, the department has turned its attention to longer-range, more basic considerations. It has explored such concepts as the conserver society, appropriate technology and "ecodevelopment", to encourage sound environmental practice.

The study observes: "Tackling problems after the fact on a one-by-one basis is gradually being supplemented, and where possible replaced, by an approach that seeks to relate environmental considerations to social, economic and cultural development from the start."

This, it says, is the ideal approach, which tries to achieve harmony between society and the environment by averting costly conflicts.

In the 1980s the department will put still more emphasis on conservation. The study notes three main objectives:

- . maintenance of ecological processes and biophysical systems necessary for human survival and sustainable development
- . preservation of the genetic diversity on which depend the survival of life on earth and the ecological processes that support it, along with plant and animal breeding programs and the long-term security of natural resource industries
- . sustainable use of wildlife, forests, air, water, soil and other natural resources.

Energy development will receive special attention. Environment Canada will be closely concerned with the reduction in fossil fuel consumption and the shift to energy conservation, as Canada moves toward energy self-sufficiency.

The department will remain alert for opportunities to use those energy sources within its special competence: water, sun, wind and biomass--organic material such as forest waste. It will continue to assess the environmental impact of energy programs and projects, and contribute to the

sustainable development of Canada's energy options.

"Northern development also calls for collaboration among a number of federal departments, including Environment Canada," the study says, "to ensure that resource extraction in the north will not lead to irreparable damage to northern ecosystems, and is supportive of the development aspirations of northern residents."

It says the "global politics" of resource management and development will strongly influence Canadian development strategies in the 1980s. Canada's stable political climate and abundant resources inevitably will bring mounting international pressure for further resource development and increased food and fibre production--with the attendant risk of greater environmental stress.

In the coming decade Environment Canada will have to address this problem, along with such hazards as toxic chemicals, acid rain and other airborne pollutants.

Meanwhile Canada's national park system will be expanded to include further examples of the northern environment. Research will continue into climatic change and the upper atmosphere, and improved management of water, forests and wildlife. The department will also explore energy-efficient low-waste technologies, new recycling opportunities and pollution control methods.

Environment Canada's role is expected to shift in response to many changes, such as the strengthening capabilities of provincial agencies. It will devote still greater effort, though, to three broad activities:

- . bringing the best possible knowledge to bear on the principles of sound resource management and collaborating with others to translate them into action
- . dealing with such pervasive problems as toxic substances and hazardous wastes
- . alerting Canadians to future environmental developments that may affect their quality of life.

On the international as well as the national scene, Environment Canada intends to play a leadership role in these and other issues of public concern.

Mailing address of the distribution centre is Ottawa K1A 1C7. Telephone number is (819) 997-1100.



## Energy Brief Available

Copies of "The Energy Brief", a reference document on energy sources and conversion technologies, now are available from Environment Canada's distribution centre. The brief was originally presented to the Special Parliamentary Committee on Alternative Energy and Oil Substitution.

The committee's report reflected many of the views put forward in the brief, which was produced with extensive assistance from all parts of the department. Their

combined efforts have resulted in a useful compendium of information which normally would be difficult to assemble.

Mailing address of the distribution centre is Ottawa K1A 1C7. Telephone number is (819) 997-1100.

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## Tracking Dangerous Wastes

Environment Canada is sponsoring regulations under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act for tracking dangerous wastes from generation to disposal. Unit I of the proposed regulations was published in the Canada Gazette Part I, June 1982; on November 20, 1982 a notice requesting comments was published in Canada Gazette, Part I. Public input will be received until February 18, 1983.

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