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Chair: Angelo Iacono



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• (1100)

[Translation]

The Chair (Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.)): Good morning.

[English]

I call the meeting to order.

[Translation]

Welcome, colleagues.

I would also like to welcome the witnesses from the Department of the Environment who are here today to shed a little more light on the department's various files.

[English]

Today is meeting number three of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. This meeting is taking place in a hybrid format and is being televised.

For those attending in person, please follow the health and safety guidelines for using earpieces, as written on the cards on the table. The QR code on the card links to a short awareness video.

For today's substitutions, we have Mr. Will Greaves for Mr. Wade Grant. For Mr. David Bexte, we have Mr. Jason Groleau. Welcome.

I would also like to take a moment to wish a happy birthday to one of the ladies in front of me. For you, the department has brought in a big, beautiful purple cake. I guess that's your favourite colour. We wish you all the best. I won't ask your age.

Linda Drainville (Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Services and Financial Management Branch, Department of the Environment): No, please don't.

The Chair: Happy birthday to you, and a hundred more.

Today the committee is meeting with officials from Environment and Climate Change Canada for a briefing on the department's mandate and activities and the legislation it administers.

[Translation]

The witnesses today are Linda Drainville, assistant deputy minister and chief financial officer, corporate services and finance branch; Alison McDermott, assistant deputy minister, strategic policy and international affairs branch; Megan Nichols, assistant deputy minister, environmental protection branch; and Tara Shannon, assistant deputy minister, Canadian wildlife service.

[English]

We will proceed to opening remarks and questioning of witnesses. We will follow the committee's routine motion for the time provided for questioning witnesses. We will start with the Conservative Party for six minutes.

We will now proceed with opening remarks from our guests.

• (1105)

Alison McDermott (Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy and International Affairs Branch, Department of the Environment): Mr. Chair and honourable members of the committee, I'd like to begin by acknowledging that we are gathered on the unceded territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation.

[Translation]

Thank you for the invitation to appear before you today.

It is a privilege to provide an overview of the work of Environment and Climate Change Canada, or ECCC—our mandate, responsibilities, and priorities as we work to protect the environment and support Canadians..

In a few words, our mandate is to preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment for present and future generations.

[English]

This work is guided by the Department of the Environment Act, which gives the minister responsibilities ranging from protecting air, water and soil quality and managing migratory birds to coordinating government-wide policies on the environment.

The minister also has key responsibilities under several cornerstone laws. The Canadian Environmental Protection Act helps prevent pollution and manage risks to human health and the environment. The Species at Risk Act protects wildlife in danger of disappearing. The Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act establishes carbon pricing across Canada, creating incentives to cut emissions. The Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act requires the government to set and report on targets that will get Canada to net-zero emissions by 2050.

These laws are not abstract. They provide the framework for how Canada addresses today's most pressing environmental issues. They give us the tools to protect biodiversity, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air and water quality and prepare for a changing climate, but no single government can meet these challenges alone: Protecting the environment is a matter of shared jurisdiction under the Constitution. That means effective action depends on close collaboration among provinces, territories, municipalities, indigenous peoples and international partners.

[*Translation*]

Domestically, we work bilaterally and multilaterally with provinces and territories, including through the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment and the Ministers for Conservation, Wildlife and Biodiversity. We also maintain distinctions-based tables with first nations, Inuit, and Métis partners. And we are advancing commitments under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

Internationally, Canada plays an active role in global environmental and climate negotiations, from the Paris Agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

[*English*]

We also work closely with allies on issues such as plastic pollution, clean trade and transboundary water management.

Our work spans four key areas: We regulate emissions reductions, design and implement carbon pricing and work with provinces, territories, indigenous partners and industry to support Canada's climate objectives.

Our department leads on climate science, modelling and adaptation planning, helping governments, communities and businesses prepare for more frequent floods, wildfires, heat waves and storms.

We also monitor air, water and soil quality; regulate toxic substances; and manage environmental emergencies. We enforce compliance under CEPA and the pollution prevention provisions of the Fisheries Act, and we support safe management of waste, plastics and hazardous materials.

We safeguard species at risk, protect migratory birds and manage national wildlife areas. We are advancing work to conserve 30% of Canada's land and waters by 2030, in line with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

As well, through the Meteorological Service of Canada, we provide 24-7 forecasts and alerts that millions of Canadians rely on daily. These services are essential to public safety, economic activity and Canada's sovereignty in the north.

Across all of these areas, our approach is grounded in science, informed by indigenous knowledge and strengthened through partnerships.

We also recognize the broader context. Environmental protection is not only about avoiding harm but also about positioning Canada for long-term economic and social resilience.

In short, Environment and Climate Change Canada is a science-based department with a broad and complex mandate. We adminis-

ter a suite of legislative tools, deliver critical services and work across jurisdictions to address issues that touch the daily lives of Canadians, whether it is the air we breathe, the water we drink, the weather we prepare for or the climate we leave to our children.

● (1110)

Mr. Chair and members, I hope this overview helps set the stage for your study. We would be pleased to answer your questions.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McDermott.

Who would be next?

Linda Drainville: I think, Mr. Chair, we did not prepare to be next.

The Chair: There will be one person speaking for all. Thank you. Okay. We will start now with the questions.

Mr. Ross, you're up first, and you have six minutes.

Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to our witnesses for appearing today in front of this committee.

I listened to the opening remarks and I just want to know whether your ministry actually engages with international ministries as well in terms of environmental assessments.

Alison McDermott: The quick answer is yes, we do. If you'd like a more detailed answer with respect to environmental assessments—

Ellis Ross: No, that's okay. "Yes" is good enough.

There's an issue that's been brewing in B.C. now for the last 10 years at least, and it's a transboundary issue. Essentially, what it's talking about is that the first nations of Alaska demand to be consulted on mining projects and environmental assessments that affect or may affect Alaskan boundaries.

I notice that Canada is absent. Does Canada plan to be part of this transboundary dispute, or do we have a position? It does boil down to an international dispute.

Alison McDermott: We'll turn to Michael Bonser, ADM for international affairs.

Michael Bonser (Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, International Affairs, Department of the Environment): Thank you for the question. My name is Michael Bonser. I'm the associate assistant deputy minister of strategic policy, international affairs.

I'm sorry; by moving my seating position up here, I've probably eaten into your six minutes.

The short answer is that we have a very robust approach to dealing with transboundary issues, especially with the United States. It involves provinces, states, indigenous peoples. It is based around our work through the ICJ, the International Court of Justice, as you probably know as well.

I will take back the specifics around this question and we can come back to the committee with a stronger and more complete answer as to the question and the sense that Canada is absent from this. That is not something that I had understood, but I will go back to the department and my team, and we'll come back to the committee with more information.

Ellis Ross: A written response would be excellent. Thank you.

There's lots of talk about an oil pipeline being built to the west coast. Has your department, or have your departments, talked to Prince Rupert, Kitimat, and surrounding communities about an oil pipeline being built to the B.C. coast, or will it be predicated on a project being officially registered with the Canadian environmental department?

Megan Nichols (Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Protection Branch, Department of the Environment): Environment and Climate Change Canada has not, at this time, been involved in such discussions. We would not necessarily be the first department involved in a decision on such a pipeline. Natural Resources Canada is usually the lead department for such initiatives, and then there's also the new Major Projects Office, which will be taking a lead in any new nation-building project.

Ellis Ross: Thank you for that.

Is there any type of interaction or relationship that is contemplated or in writing in terms of your departments and the Major Projects Office? How will the two entities work together?

Megan Nichols: At this point, the Major Projects Office has just been announced and has been created very recently, as I'm sure the committee is aware. At this point, it is still being stood up, and we will be ready to participate and engage as soon as that invitation is extended. Leading up to the creation of the office, there has been lots of engagement across departments, and we'll continue to participate in those fora.

Ellis Ross: In the announcement of the Major Projects Office, it was mentioned that it will maintain robust environmental standards, but I don't understand how that's going to be maintained or created without direct interaction with departments such as your own and the relevant ministries.

Am I correct in my understanding that there's been no discussion on the relationship between the Major Projects Office and your departments?

• (1115)

Megan Nichols: Certainly there has been discussion at officials' level. I was simply explaining that because the office has only just been announced, there has not yet been a great deal of formal engagement. However, our expectation is that there will be robust en-

agement. That has been the expectation all along and it is certainly been what has been communicated to us.

In terms of robust environmental decisions, the new Building Canada Act really changes the focus of decisions on projects from whether projects will be built to how they would be built if they are designated as such under this new act. Responsible ministers, such as the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, will have a role in recommending the conditions for a project's approval to the minister responsible for the new act, so we're confident that we will have a robust role in advising on those conditions.

Ellis Ross: It sounds like your departments will only be there in a recommendation and advisement role. There's been no official talk about how you do it from a legal or regulatory standpoint and there's nothing in writing. Has nothing really been formally decided upon or created to ensure that you and your department can do your job and do your duties to uphold environmental standards? Has nothing been put in writing to ensure that happens with the Major Projects Office?

Megan Nichols: There is the Building Canada Act itself—

Ellis Ross: I understand that. I'm talking about a lower level. I'm not talking about the announcements and I'm not talking about the political stuff; I'm talking about the real work that gets done at your level.

Has nothing been formalized to ensure that environmental standards are upheld in what you do to protect the environment, versus the Major Projects Office? Has nothing formally been decided upon yet?

Megan Nichols: There have been many discussions at the working level, but nothing has been officially formalized at this time.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ross. That's it. Time is up. I gave you an extra minute.

Ellis Ross: Did you?

The Chair: Yes, I did.

Ellis Ross: The guy took time to get the—

The Chair: Yes, that's why I gave you extra. I didn't want to cut you before your question. I was giving her time to respond.

Next, it's over to....

Who is going first? Is it Mr. St-Pierre?

Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.): Yes. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: If anyone wants to share their time, please let me know who you'd like to share it with before we start, just so I'm aware.

Eric St-Pierre: All right. I will be sharing my time with my colleagues Bruce Fanjoy and Shannon Miedema.

[*English*]

Thank you for the excellent presentation, Ms. McDermott, and thanks to all of you for the wonderful work you do.

You mentioned that no single government can meet these challenges alone and that protecting the environment is a matter of shared jurisdiction. Can you comment further on the role of provinces in meeting Canada's NDCs, the nationally determined contributions, and also comment on whether Quebec is meeting those challenges?

Alison McDermott: Yes, that's absolutely right: Environment is very much a shared area of jurisdiction, and a lot of the levers rest with provincial and even municipal governments.

Canada's emissions reduction plan includes participation from all the provinces and territories, and we have a number of mechanisms to collaborate with those provinces and territories. Meetings of the ministers of environment happen every year, and we have a lot of regulatory co-operation and co-operation with respect to management of pollution pricing, for example.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr. Fanjoy.

Bruce Fanjoy (Carleton, Lib.): Thank you, Chair.

Thank you all for joining us here today.

I'd also like to hear about co-operation with municipalities. Municipalities are a creation of provinces, I suppose, but they are the source of a great deal of greenhouse gas emissions and they are where millions of Canadians live. I'd like to hear how the department works directly with municipalities to help us meet our objectives.

Alison McDermott: There are many examples.

First of all, we do strive to respect constitutional jurisdictions. We work through provinces in most cases, but we do have some programs, such as the green municipal fund, that are directly made available to municipalities and support a range of actions and investments to reduce greenhouse gases and prepare Canada to be ready for Canada's changing climate.

We have a number of programs in our emissions reduction plan and our national adaptation strategy. If more details are required, we'd be happy to provide more examples.

• (1120)

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Miedema is next.

Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.): Thank you for the presentation.

I'm curious. I'm wondering if you can speak a bit to the new division of responsibilities now that we have a secretary of state for nature and Minister Thompson is now the Minister of Fisheries, not "Fisheries and Oceans".

I'm particularly curious about the Species at Risk Act. For example, is DFO responsible for endangered ocean species, or does that rest wholly with ECCC?

Tara Shannon (Assistant Deputy Minister, Canadian Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment): Currently, the secretary of state for nature is actually cross-appointed to four different ministers who have a role in delivering on the nature agenda.

With respect to the Species at Risk Act, for terrestrial species, the responsibilities for the act rest currently with the Minister of Environment. Aquatic species are the responsibility of the Minister of Fisheries. There is a close collaboration between those two ministers on the implementation of the act, but that is more or less how the act is distributed.

The Chair: Thank you, Shannon.

Go ahead, Monsieur St-Pierre.

Eric St-Pierre: Ms. McDermott, during your presentation you mentioned the regulation of emissions reductions and the design and implementation of carbon pricing. Can you comment a bit on whether that includes some of the work around the industrial carbon price? Are you able to comment on whether the output-based pricing system or industrial carbon price regulation is forthcoming?

Can you comment on the industrial carbon price, please?

Alison McDermott: I'll turn that over to my colleague Megan.

Megan Nichols: Certainly, this does include our work on carbon pricing.

When the government removed the federal fuel charge back in March, it announced that we would be renewing our focus on industrial carbon pricing as one of the key pillars to achieving our climate goals and that we would be engaging with provinces and territories and industry on how to strengthen that system and make sure that it's working as effectively as possible.

Bruce Fanjoy: Okay.

Speaking of carbon pricing, this is not necessarily widely understood, but the purpose of carbon pricing isn't to pay it but to avoid it. I'd like to know what we are doing to work with industry to help innovate and persuade, so that ultimately we are both reducing emissions and improving bottom lines by avoiding unnecessary costs like carbon pricing.

The Chair: Give us a short answer, please.

Megan Nichols: Certainly.

Indeed, the intent of carbon pricing is to keep costs low for regulatees and provide them with maximum flexibility on how to comply as well as to drive investment in decarbonization.

There are three ways a company can comply: They can reduce their emissions so that they are below the required limit, they can purchase credits or they can pay the price directly to government. It's purposely designed to have a lot of flexibility to encourage the kind of innovation that you're mentioning.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Nichols.

[Translation]

Mr. Bonin, you have the floor.

Patrick Bonin (Repentigny, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to point out that my colleague Sébastien Lemire will be replacing me partway through the meeting. I'm sorry I can't be here for the whole meeting.

First of all, since Mr. Carney took office, we've seen some fairly worrisome setbacks in the fight against climate change, specifically the abolition of carbon pricing for individuals and the postponement of implementing zero-emission standards, which was scheduled for 2026.

Can you give us an update on the 2030 emissions reduction plan? I would like to know where we are in meeting the target for 2030, or even 2026, for that matter. Also, what impact will these setbacks have?

• (1125)

Alison McDermott: I'll try to answer that question.

I'll start by saying that the government has made a great deal of progress in decarbonizing the Canadian economy. As we just described, we've implemented a number of foundational programs and policies, such as carbon pricing and other regulations, investment tax credits, and many policies to help businesses and Canadians reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Patrick Bonin: My question has more to do with the impact of the setbacks, Ms. McDermott.

Alison McDermott: I'll answer that question directly.

The Prime Minister has already reaffirmed his commitment to fighting climate change and achieving net zero by 2050. He believes, as does the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, that the fight against climate change is not only a moral imperative, but also an economic imperative. The world is moving towards a low-carbon economy—

Patrick Bonin: I'm sorry, Ms. McDermott, but we have very little time this morning. My question is not about what Mr. Carney said, it's about the impact of setbacks on carbon pricing and delaying the implementation of zero-emission standards on the achievement of greenhouse gas reduction targets for 2026 and 2030.

Alison McDermott: One of the Prime Minister's actions was to remove the carbon price burden on consumers. We feel that it doesn't have an overly significant impact, since their contribution to reducing emissions is only 1% or 2% compared to 2005.

Patrick Bonin: Can you tell us what that represents in megatonnes?

Alison McDermott: I believe it's between eight and 11 megatonnes.

Megan Nichols: In terms of the consumer carbon price, I believe it's three megatonnes for the year 2030.

Alison McDermott: I think those estimates vary somewhat depending on the model.

Patrick Bonin: What about zero-emission standards? The coming into force of the zero-emission vehicle regulations, which were scheduled for 2026, has been postponed for manufacturers.

[English]

Megan Nichols: For the electric vehicle, the impact of the removal of the target in 2026 has not yet been calculated, given that the government has also announced its intent to review that regulation in more detail to make sure that industry will continue to achieve the goals and also that prices for consumers are affordable. We are currently conducting a 60-day review of the full regulation. At the end of that time, once we finalize potential changes, we will be able to assess the full impact of all changes, including the removal of the 2026 target.

[Translation]

Patrick Bonin: Mr. Carney has repeatedly refused to reiterate his commitment to meeting the 2030 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target.

To your knowledge, apart from the United States under Mr. Trump, is there any other signatory to the Paris Agreement that would back down on its reduction targets? Does the Paris Agreement allow a country to reduce its emissions reduction targets or ambitions? Would the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act allow Canada to do that?

Alison McDermott: International rules were not created to make it easier for countries to back away from their ambitions, but rather to encourage them to increase their ambitions. So we don't really expect nations to scale back their ambitions.

• (1130)

Patrick Bonin: Do you know of any other signatory to the Paris Agreement, apart from the United States under Mr. Trump, that has backed down on its targets or intends to do so? Does the text of the Paris Agreement allow a signatory country to set less ambitious targets?

The Chair: Please provide a brief answer.

Alison McDermott: [Inaudible—Editor] very much part of the agreement, and there is no contemplation of nations backing away from their objectives.

The Chair: Thank you.

[English]

We now go to Ms. Anstey for five minutes.

Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC): Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the witnesses for being here today.

I'd like to ask some questions about an industry that is extremely important to the province that I come from, Newfoundland and Labrador, and that's the offshore oil and gas sector.

Given that we have a new government with new objectives, I want to discuss more specifically not only how this sector relates to trade diversification but also, within that context, the impact that the emissions cap has on investor certainty.

First, given the Prime Minister's clear mandate to diversify Canada's trade and the fact that offshore oil in Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the few resources with direct access to tidewater, I'm curious to know whether the witnesses might agree or disagree that this sector could be an important part of the Prime Minister's mandate.

Megan Nichols: I can start, and if my colleague wants to add...

Certainly, the government has recognized the importance of Canada's leveraging its energy resources to be an energy superpower in both conventional and clean energies and is committed to leveraging that advantage that we have.

In terms of the emissions cap, which you mentioned, indeed, draft regulations for that were published back in fall 2024. We received significant feedback from provinces, territories and stakeholders on this proposal, so we are considering the way forward based on all of that. Certainly, the cap is not meant to be a cap on production; it's only meant to be a cap on emissions. The draft regulations were carefully designed to ensure that they would not have a significant impact on the potential growth of the sector.

Carol Anstey: Thank you.

It's interesting that you point out that it's not a cap on production, because industry reports a 60% drop in offshore capital spending since 2016 and zero exploration wells in 2025. It's interesting that you would say there's no cap on production when we're currently seeing that there is a big drop. I'm curious to know how you square that with the regulatory framework. I'm wondering what your position is with respect to this potentially causing a negative impact on that industry.

Megan Nichols: I can really only speak to the Environment Canada role, which is really limited to that regulatory function. I can't speak to what other factors might be affecting investment in the offshore sector.

Again, I would just say that we did receive significant feedback from provinces and from industry and are taking that into consideration in determining the way forward on this particular proposal.

Alison McDermott: Yes, and keep in mind that the cap is not in place at this point in time.

Carol Anstey: Just on this point once again, other offshore jurisdictions like Norway and Brazil are attracting billions in new investment. The government now has introduced this new legislation, Bill C-5, the national projects list, which, in our understanding of it all, is clearly designed to streamline major infrastructure projects and to reduce the regulatory burden.

Can you acknowledge that this legislation was intended to address the regulatory hurdles that currently are driving this investment from places like Newfoundland and Labrador to other areas such as Norway and Brazil? What's your position on that?

• (1135)

The Chair: You have one minute to go.

Megan Nichols: I can't speak to the extent to which any changes in investment patterns may be directly due to a regulatory suite, but certainly Bill C-5 is intended to streamline regulatory processes so that rather than a project having to seek approvals from many de-

partments, they are combined in one document and provided up front, subject to conditions that then would be enforced by individual departments.

Carol Anstey: Given that it's streamlined, then, it would acknowledge that up until this point, the regulatory burden would have caused delays and bottlenecks.

Megan Nichols: I can't pronounce on that cause and effect.

Carol Anstey: Currently, there are media reports—and the industry is watching this very closely—that there might be some walking back on the proposed oil and gas emissions cap and that it might be replaced with some investment-based measures. Do you feel that this policy that you referred to earlier would have been an effective policy? Can you speak to that, given that we're hearing some rumblings that they may be walking back on this?

The Chair: Thank you. We will have a short answer, please.

Megan Nichols: I would just say that certainly it's always important to consider a range of policy measures in terms of emissions reductions. The oil and gas sector is the highest-emitting sector in the Canadian economy, and some subsectors are growing, so it's certainly one that we need to continue to focus on.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Nichols.

Monsieur St-Pierre is next.

[*Translation*]

Eric St-Pierre: I may share my time with my colleagues.

One of the Aichi targets is to conserve 30% of Canada's land and water by 2030. Can you give us an update on your achievements with respect to this objective?

Tara Shannon: Yes. Right now, we're at about 13.8% of the protected area target for 2030, which is 30%.

[*English*]

The aquatic is over 15%. I apologize, as I don't have the exact number in front of me at the moment.

There is still a lot of work to do. I think it's really important to acknowledge that in the context of meeting the target, we have to work very closely with our provincial and territorial colleagues, who are responsible for the administration of 76% of Canada's lands. Only 6% of Canada's territory falls under federal jurisdiction. It's an area of distinct partnership with our provincial and territorial colleagues.

Eric St-Pierre: I have a quick follow-up question and then I'll pass it on to my colleagues.

[Translation]

Have you put in place any conservation projects or initiatives for the coming years? Can you speak to that?

Tara Shannon: There are a number of them.

[English]

I think I would probably highlight the existing nature agreements with our provincial and territorial partners. We have five in place and a sixth one under consideration with the Province of Manitoba.

I think I would highlight in particular the work that is also under way with respect to the nature agreement with the Province of British Columbia, which is actually a trilateral agreement between Canada and British Columbia and the indigenous nations in the province. That is an umbrella initiative with many other subprojects that will be proceeding as defined by a trilateral governance committee.

Shannon Miedema: I'm wondering if you can update us on what I think was maybe the work to create a federal strategy around insured and uninsured losses based on extreme weather events across the country.

I had been speaking in my past life with the City of Halifax about the Insurance Bureau of Canada and their event every fall with Climate Proof Canada. I know that they have been speaking directly with your department as well as others and I'm wondering where that sits now.

Alison McDermott: Thanks for the question. It's an excellent question.

This is a bit of a shared file between Public Safety and Environment Canada, so I think we would be better to come back with a written answer to that question as an update on where we stand.

• (1140)

Bruce Fanjoy: This may also be a bit of a shared file. I want to hear what the government is doing and anticipates doing with respect to adaptation and mitigation. We had serious droughts across the country this year affecting agriculture. Wildfires are becoming a permanent part of summer and even spring in the country, and they're affecting air quality.

What is ECCC planning in order to help Canadians address these issues?

The Chair: You have 40 seconds.

Alison McDermott: The Department of the Environment is actually working across the federal government with a long series of other departments in implementing its national adaptation strategy. To date, the government has invested more than \$6.6 billion to help Canadians prepare for and prevent the impacts of climate change. We're continuing to roll out some of that money while we think about additional and new potential policies and programs.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McDermott.

[Translation]

Mr. Bonin, you have two and a half minutes.

Patrick Bonin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'll come back to my question, which is very simple: Given the government's setbacks, what percentage of the 2030 emissions reduction plan target will be met?

Alison McDermott: We are in the process of revising the projections in light of the most recent information, to answer that question directly. We will have, I hope, the new projections before the update scheduled for December.

Patrick Bonin: Setting aside Mr. Carney's recent setbacks, what percentage of the target has been met, at last count?

Alison McDermott: Should I respond regardless of the decisions that were made?

Patrick Bonin: Yes. What percentage of the target has been met, according to your latest assessment?

Alison McDermott: I can give you the results published in December 2024. The first biennial transparency report showed that all measures implemented and announced are expected to reduce Canada's emissions by 34% below 2005 levels by 2030 and 40% by 2035.

Patrick Bonin: Those results were calculated before the oil and gas sector's greenhouse gas emissions cap regulations were adopted. Is that correct?

Alison McDermott: That is among the measures that were announced.

Patrick Bonin: Today is an Opposition Day in the House. The Conservatives tabled a motion to abolish the emissions cap, which has not yet been implemented. Should the measure be abolished, by what percentage would greenhouse gas emissions rise?

Alison McDermott: That's precisely why we make projections, to find that out.

Patrick Bonin: Are you talking specifically about that measure?

Alison McDermott: Yes. We haven't completed the work, but we feel that it wouldn't be a significant contribution, given all the other measures announced in the plan.

Patrick Bonin: What emissions reductions were expected through those regulations, which have not been passed and are at risk of being shelved?

The Chair: Please give a brief answer.

Megan Nichols: The proposal, which was tabled in 2023, projected 13 megatonnes of greenhouse gases between 2030 and 2032. However, as I said, we received a lot of feedback from stakeholders. We are currently reassessing the path forward.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Nichols.

[English]

Mr. Leslie, the floor is yours for five minutes.

Branden Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC): That's great. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to start by asking about ECCC.

Over the last decade, ECCC has been tasked with rolling out what are deeply unpopular policies, such as the consumer carbon tax that Canadians obviously despised, and which has since been removed; Bill C-69, which has scared away private investment and still continues to scare away private investment and make it impossible to get anything built in this country; an oil and gas emissions cap proposal that is under review and that may be moved; an EV mandate that was in place for next year that is paused and currently under review; and emissions targets that the government is backing away from.

My question to the department is this: After years of implementing these policies and now seeing them repealed by yet the same Liberal government, how is morale inside the department?

• (1145)

Alison McDermott: Maybe I can go ahead, but should I turn to my colleagues...?

I'll just say that the department feels like it has an importance in a world where we have an administration in the U.S. that is not particularly committed to fighting climate change.

We think the work of the department is as important as ever, and although morale is challenged by some of these developments and the fact that the fiscal situation of the government is tight, I think morale still remains good.

Branden Leslie: Okay. Thank you for that.

Now, the Liberal government has been quite firm in imposing an emissions cap on Canada's energy sector, which is actually just a production cap. I know that it's not in place yet, but can you confirm whether or not that is still the government's plan, or is it going to be quietly shelved?

Alison McDermott: I don't think we can comment on the future plans of the government at this point in time.

Branden Leslie: Why not? Are you not involved in those conversations?

Alison McDermott: It's not something that we would share with the committee at this point.

Branden Leslie: Would you say that the policy is an important part of the government's plan to reduce emissions? I understand that you've got rid of a number of these other policies, and if this one is shelved, is that going to have a major impact on the targets that the minister has already walked back from, those 2030 and 2035 targets? Is that going to further diminish the likelihood of meeting the government's own obligations under the Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act?

Megan Nichols: The oil and gas emissions cap is certainly a potential element of a way to reduce emissions from our highest-emitting sector in the economy, but we do have other measures in place and planned as well, such as regulations on oil and gas and methane, carbon pricing and incentives such as investment tax credits.

In terms of the role of the potential oil and gas emissions cap, based on the draft that was presented in 2023, it was projected to contribute an additional 13 megatonnes of reductions between 2030 and 2032. However, as I have said, we have received extensive

feedback, and that is being considered in light of the potential way forward.

Branden Leslie: You mentioned projections if the cap is imposed, and I'm sure the department has done modelling on the economic impact, particularly on jobs and investment. Could you share some highlights with us today and/or provide written feedback as to what that modelling looks like?

Megan Nichols: I can share that in the draft that was presented previously, the impact on the growth of the sector was considered to be very minimal. The sector would still grow by 16%, and there would be an extremely minimal impact in terms of GDP growth. GDP is expected to still grow over the period by 22%, so it would be very minimal.

Branden Leslie: Thank you. Could you please share that? Also, if there have been any revisions since 2023, those would be appreciated.

Are you aware that Minister Dabrusin has publicly walked back the government's 2030 and 2035 emissions target obligations?

Alison McDermott: I'm not aware that she has. I don't believe that she has walked those back.

Branden Leslie: She certainly has not committed to them.

Does the department have any recent information or modelling that suggests Canada is on track to meet the targets of 2030 or 2035, or is it just an open secret now that the government will not be hitting its targets?

Alison McDermott: As I responded to MP Bonin, if you look at our projections as of last December, there was some gap. Of course, where we will end up is to some degree a question of government policy intention. The Prime Minister has announced that the government will be releasing a climate competitiveness strategy in the near term, so there will be more information there on the government's policies.

• (1150)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Leslie.

[Translation]

Mr. St-Pierre now has the floor for five minutes.

[English]

Eric St-Pierre: Thank you. I'll be sharing time with my colleagues.

I think that language matters and that being precise is actually important. Call me a lawyer, but I'm a stickler for precise language. There are some out there who like misinformation and disinformation, but I think facts and science and data matter. Some are calling it a production cap on oil and gas. Is the policy called a production cap or is it called an emissions cap, and what's the difference between the two?

In other words, why is it called an emissions cap and not a production cap?

Megan Nichols: Indeed, just to confirm, it is an emissions cap and not a production cap.

Eric St-Pierre: Can you explain the difference between the two?

Megan Nichols: An emissions cap essentially sets a limit on the emissions that the sector can produce, recognizing that there are many opportunities to reduce emissions intensity. By benefiting from reductions in emissions intensity, there is not necessarily a commensurate impact on production.

The Chair: Mr. Fanjoy is next.

Bruce Fanjoy: Canadians want to know how they can participate in cleaning their sources of energy. We currently do not have, at the federal level, many incentives for them to get involved. Can we anticipate that the government will be engaging Canadians across the country in roles whereby they can help Canada meet its international obligations to reduce greenhouse gases?

Alison McDermott: As we've discussed, the government does have quite a broad suite of policies and programs. Some that have been particularly consumer-focused in recent years have included consumer incentives for electric vehicles, the oil to heat pump program, retrofit programs for housing and a number of programs at the municipal and provincial levels to support Canadians' participation in these kinds of activities. We hope to be able to announce more details of programs in the future, but a number of programs are still rolling out based on previous announcements.

Shannon Miedema: I know that in support of government initiatives around climate action, the Canadian Climate Institute has done a fair amount of work on the cost of inaction. A lot of times people talk about short-term costs but are not thinking about long-term costs. We see billions of dollars of losses in extreme weather events in our country. Our country's been on fire these past summers.

Is that the work that you rely on as a department, or do you have other work that you could share around the business case for a strong climate policy in Canada?

Alison McDermott: Yes. When we talk about economic trade-offs with respect to climate change, they tend to be those in the very short term, because over the long term, the economic costs of climate change are in the billions of dollars, if not the trillions of dollars. I think there's widespread belief that those costs are very high.

We'd be happy to share more. That's very much a part of the thinking with respect to government policy, and we'd be happy to provide more detail. There have been a number of estimates from the Canadian Climate Institute and the Parliamentary Budget Officer, so there are a lot of third party sources of such analysis as well.

[*Translation*]

Eric St-Pierre: Mr. Chair, do I have a little more time?

The Chair: You have about 40 seconds.

Eric St-Pierre: Okay. I'll be brief.

Mr. Bonser, can you comment on Canada's role at COP30 in Brazil?

[*English*]

Michael Bonser: Brazil will be hosting COP 30, as you said. We anticipate that this will be very much an implementation year. Many countries, like Canada, are being asked and expected to put forward new nationally determined contributions—the new targets

that you've been talking about. In February, Canada was among the first countries to put out those targets, and the plan. Other countries are coming to the table to do the same, and we anticipate that this will be very much a conversation among leaders, ministers and senior negotiators around how to move forward from here to address the gaps that many countries face, that the world faces, in order to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. There's much work to do.

There will also be a great deal of conversation, I think, around financing and capacity to deliver and how countries can support the investments in the clean transitions abroad and in countries that are working very hard to move away from fossil fuels and more traditional energy sources to achieve their own climate objectives.

• (1155)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Bonser.

I'll now forward the mic to Mr. Ross for five minutes.

Ellis Ross: Thank you.

I was shocked when LNG Canada phase 2 got recommended for fast-tracking. I had no idea that they had permits or authorizations outstanding within your department. Can you tell me what outstanding permits or authorizations within your department still need approval or disapproval?

Megan Nichols: I don't believe that there are any in our department.

Ellis Ross: Are you saying that there are no permits or authorizations needed for LNG Canada phase 2?

Megan Nichols: There are no outstanding ones. I would have to confirm if there are others that were already granted, but there are none that are outstanding from our department at this time.

Ellis Ross: To your understanding, then, what needs to be fast-tracked? If there are no government permits or authorizations needed, what will be fast-tracked?

Megan Nichols: I would defer to the Major Projects Office on the actual benefits of fast-tracking this project, but sometimes there can be other barriers, such as funding or other other requirements, before—

Ellis Ross: No, I'm not talking about exterior conditions; I'm talking about your department in terms of what you need to do to authorize phase 2 for LNG Canada.

Megan Nichols: Again, there is nothing outstanding for Environment and Climate Change Canada on this project.

Ellis Ross: Okay. That's a surprise, a nice re-announcement there.

You said that there's currently no emissions cap, but there are some outstanding projects within the Impact Assessment Act for Canada. In particular, there are first nations that want to use natural gas to produce electricity in energy-deficient areas. Is there any reason that these approvals or disapprovals are not forthcoming from your department in a timely manner?

Megan Nichols: I'm not aware of specific projects. Sometimes projects require provincial approval, so it could be that there's a provincial approval that is outstanding. I'm not aware of specific ECCC permits required on these ones. However, we can certainly go and validate and return to the committee with that information.

Ellis Ross: Okay, that would be great, because it's listed on your website, the impact assessment site, but it doesn't really clearly describe a provincial jurisdiction area.

Is your department aware of a company called Edison Motors in British Columbia? No? Okay.

I was previously an MLA, and they were kind of being given the cold shoulder in terms of their business development idea. They were actually off and running with a great degree of success, but they did not have government support. Now there are some federal programs that are not providing them with any support. They've been approaching not only my office but also a number of different MPs' offices all across Canada, trying to get government support. What restricts the government from supporting this born-in-B.C. initiative seems to fall under environmental standards or regulations or the legislation.

Can I ask you to actually look into this and get back to the committee with a written reason as to why this company is not getting the support of the federal government?

Megan Nichols: We can certainly look into this and come back to the committee.

Ellis Ross: Thank you.

Another one I'd like to ask about is the Sandspit Inn in Sandspit on Haida Gwaii. I don't expect you to understand, but I looked at your job descriptions and I saw that real property is one of your jurisdictions.

Are you aware of this hotel?

Linda Drainville: No, I'm not aware of it.

Ellis Ross: You're not. Okay.

Well, it's an old hotel in Sandspit. It's a very decrepit, abandoned hotel, but it's federal government property. For years, this developer has been trying to say that he wants to acquire the property from the federal government and turn it into low-income and senior housing, and he hasn't had a response.

With the housing crisis that we have in Canada, as well as affordability issues and seniors' issues, I want to know why the government is ignoring the developer. Is there a reason? It's not only about affordability or senior citizens; as this place rots, it's going to become an environmental issue.

• (1200)

The Chair: Thank you.

Provide a short answer, please.

Linda Drainville: Thank you very much for your question.

This is not a Crown asset that is managed by Environment Canada, so I would encourage you to ask your question of Public Services and Procurement Canada, or PSPC. They should be in a position to tell you exactly who owns that property, and this could help in moving forward with next steps.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Drainville.

[English]

Next we have Mr. Bruce Fanjoy for five minutes.

Bruce Fanjoy: We're all looking forward to the release of the climate competitiveness strategy. Are you able to share with the committee some of the principles upon which that will be based?

Alison McDermott: At a very high level, I can say that this climate competitiveness strategy is about realizing climate goals in a manner that enhances Canada's long-term competitive position. It is very much a part of Canada's commitment to fighting climate change and positioning Canada to lead in a global economy that is increasingly looking for decarbonized goods and services, technology and know-how.

The government is still developing this strategy, so I can't provide a whole lot of additional detail at this time.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mr. St-Pierre, you have the floor.

Eric St-Pierre: It was shown that the regulations respecting reduction in the release of methane and certain volatile organic compounds were very effective in reducing emissions.

Can you tell us if these regulations will continue to apply until emissions are reduced by 75%?

[English]

Megan Nichols: Indeed, the existing regulations for oil and gas methane have already achieved 40% to 45% reductions of methane from the sector, so they have achieved their goal.

About two years ago, we put in place the draft regulations. We proposed increasing them to around 75%. We've been working since then to take stock of input and feedback from stakeholders, provinces and territories to work toward a final regulation. That work is still ongoing and will hopefully be completed soon.

Shannon Miedema: I'm wondering about the status of the federal implementation of Bill C-226 on environmental justice and racism. It's a huge issue in my province of Nova Scotia.

Is the ECCC actively working with provinces and territories on implementing this, now that it's received royal assent?

Alison McDermott: Yes. The department is, after a bit of a pause during the prorogation and the election campaign, back to engaging with communities, provinces, territories and Canadians on how to develop that strategy. I think the timing set out in the legislation requires a strategy in 2026, so I would say the government is on track to be in a position to release that strategy during that time frame.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mr. St-Pierre, you have the floor.

Eric St-Pierre: Ms. McDermott, can you give us an update on the work that's been done on the road maps for taxonomy?

[English]

Going back to the 44th Parliament, there was some work tabled on taxonomy. I think it was paused because of prorogation. Can you comment on what's upcoming for a taxonomy or taxonomy generally speaking?

• (1205)

Alison McDermott: Yes.

Taxonomy is an important part of the sustainable finance piece of the government's climate plan. This is really about mobilizing private sector capital because, to get to net zero by 2050, the government does not have enough financing on its own to do that. The private sector is very much going to be required. The Government of Canada is very much committed to fostering the development of an overall sustainable finance market to try to support that kind of investment and drive economic growth and help fight climate change.

In October 2024, the previous incarnation of the government announced a plan to deliver sustainable investment guidelines, or the taxonomy, to help mobilize private sector capital towards activities essential to building a net-zero economy. As you may recall, this was in response to the Sustainable Finance Action Council's advice, which supported the idea of having an arm's-length and external-to-government body or group develop a voluntary green and transition finance taxonomy—

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McDermott. Your time is up.

[Translation]

Welcome, Mr. Lemire. You have two and a half minutes.

Sébastien Lemire (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ): Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's good to see you again. I hope your family is well.

Witnesses, given that we face a unique environmental situation, I would be curious to hear about the consequences of Prime Minister Mark Carney's arrival, particularly in a context where he is asking you to slash your departmental budget, which will clearly have an impact on the number of environmental assessments conducted.

I'm also interested in the consequences of passing Bill C-5, which was pushed through with a closure motion and supported by the Conservatives. It is quite odd that the official opposition would curtail themselves. This bill's passage has a major impact on environmental issues. Meanwhile, a small group of friends in the Privy Council can get together, essentially, to indicate in schedule 2 of this bill the other laws whose provisions will not apply. I am thinking in particular of the Species at Risk Act and part of the Canadian

Environmental Protection Act, but also legislation on migratory birds and marine mammals, among others.

What impact does the passage of this legislation have on your work? Does your role as environmental watchdog remain just as relevant?

Tara Shannon: Thank you for the question.

[English]

Our obligations under the Species at Risk Act and the Migratory Birds Convention Act do not change. We will be required under both of those acts to continue to do the analysis and assessments that we currently do. What Bill C-5 does, as my colleague Megan Nichols has spoken to previously, is focus on the question of how.

I will turn to Megan to see if there's anything she would like to add to that, but I do want to reiterate that our regulatory obligations under both of those acts have not changed.

[Translation]

Megan Nichols: As mentioned, a document on the conditions to be met for each project impacted by the act will be produced, and our minister will be responsible for developing recommendations on those conditions. I believe the minister intends to look at the regulatory requirements that fall under our department. It will also be up to us to enact all the conditions under our jurisdiction.

The Chair: Mr. Lemire, you have time for a quick question.

Sébastien Lemire: Witnesses, what impact will the announced budget cuts have on your work?

Linda Drainville: We believe that, for the time being, we have the funds we need to carry out our mandate and produce results for Canadians. For the time being, we can say that we are on the right track.

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Drainville.

[English]

Ms. Anstey, the floor is yours for five minutes.

Carol Anstey: Thank you.

I want to lean into this emissions cap and production cap again. It's so important to the financial component of our province.

The Prime Minister is travelling the country. He's meeting with premiers. He's having conversations about our country being an energy superpower. Within that conversation, they're talking about walking back this emissions cap.

If it didn't have an impact on production, why is the government reconsidering this policy?

• (1210)

Megan Nichols: I don't know that I can speak to all the factors at play at the political level. I would just say, again, that we always have a suite of measures at our disposal in terms of how to best reduce emissions from a particular sector, ranging from regulatory measures to incentives to direct funding. There's always an opportunity to recalibrate the right balance in order to protect competitiveness and job growth.

Carol Anstey: Thank you.

You know, I've spent quite a bit of time talking to proponents in this industry, including OilCo, which is the provincial Crown corporation responsible for managing Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore oil and gas. They've actually called the federal emissions cap an "investment killer", because it's creating uncertainty in investment in that industry. There is a high level of upfront capital cost to this industry.

What's your response to that?

Megan Nichols: Again, I can really only go back to the draft regulations that were tabled and the assessment that was done at that time of the costs and impacts as well as the benefits. At that time, the impact on growth of the sector was assessed to be very minimal, and similarly for GDP growth.

Again, we did receive significant feedback, all of which we are taking into account. That also includes additional information and data from industry that will help us make sure our policies are fit for purpose and in line with the government's priorities.

Carol Anstey: But you're talking about it with respect to growth. Wouldn't that really be within the same conversation as production? Don't they go together? Wouldn't there be an acknowledgement that if we don't have growth, we don't have production? How do you square that? How do you speak about it from a growth perspective but then say it's not a production cap?

Megan Nichols: I'm not sure if I'm fully following you. The assessed impact on growth, as I said, was very minimal, with, again, a minimal impact on production. The projected growth without the draft cap as proposed initially was 17%, and with the cap was assessed to be 16%. There was an extremely minimal impact.

Carol Anstey: Specifically within the sector, though, in Newfoundland and Labrador, they're saying that they're not getting growth or investment. Where do they play within that conversation, then? I'm curious.

Megan Nichols: I would have to come back to the committee with more details on the specific impacts on the offshore sector. We can certainly do that in a follow-up.

Carol Anstey: It would be great if you could provide us with some more information. From all the meetings I've had and the discussions that have come through, I'm getting a completely different response from the industry, so I would really appreciate that.

I want to shift gears just a little bit. None of these offshore projects are on the national projects list. We've talked about Canada being an energy superpower, its strategic location to tidewater and our diversification of trade. I'm wondering what concrete measures the government is putting in place. If these projects aren't on this

national projects list, how do we move some of these projects forward?

Alison McDermott: I think our colleagues at NRCan would be better placed to talk about the steps and actions the government is taking to promote these types of projects. I would just offer a reminder that no projects list has been scheduled at this point. A prospective list is being examined and considered to be scheduled.

Carol Anstey: Okay.

I guess one last thing is in terms of the emissions cap. Is there a timeline around when some decisions might be made on this? This is something that's super-important.

Megan Nichols: Understood. Unfortunately, it's not within my purview to know what that timeline would be.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. St-Pierre now has the floor for five minutes.

Eric St-Pierre: I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Grant.

The Chair: Mr. Grant, the floor is yours.

[*English*]

Wade Grant (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): I apologize. I'm a bit under the weather. That's why I've been trying to save my voice.

I'm from an urban first nation. We've done a lot of work with different partners on conservation and the effects of climate change. What can you share about engagement and learning from first nations, Inuit and Métis about conservation and how that could benefit us in the future?

• (1215)

Tara Shannon: Thank you for the question.

We have a number of partnerships with indigenous nations across Canada. We have distinctions-based nature tables with first nations, Inuit and Métis. In addition, our programming includes things like the indigenous guardians initiative. We have entered into a number of innovative agreements focused on conservation, including most recently the "project finance for permanence" initiatives in both the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, along with a recent initiative in the Great Bear Sea in British Columbia. Those leverage private, philanthropic money to match investments made by the Government of Canada and provincial and territorial governments.

There are more I could speak to, but those are the top-line partnerships that I would highlight in the conservation space.

Eric St-Pierre: How many megatonnes is Canada producing annually, and what percentage of Canada's total emissions comes from the oil and gas sector?

Related to that, can you quickly comment on which sectors in Canada are reducing emissions and which sectors are actually increasing them?

Alison McDermott: Our estimate is that the largest source of emissions is the oil and gas sector, at 30%. Other important sectors contributing emissions are the transport sector, at 22%, and buildings, at 13%.

Eric St-Pierre: Are you aware of whether the emissions for the oil and gas sector are increasing or decreasing?

Alison McDermott: Production in the oil and gas sector is increasing, so the absolute emissions are as well, although some success has been had in reducing the emissions intensity of the oil and gas sector.

Eric St-Pierre: Thank you.

Bruce Fanjoy: The question of dealing with our climate challenges and environmental responsibilities has come up in the context of the need to find savings in our budget. I want to make it clear that there's nothing more unaffordable than unmitigated climate change.

Can you expand on the cost of pollution and the cost of climate change to the Canadian economy?

Alison McDermott: I apologize. We will have some more of our own numbers for you, but I can give you a third party figure. For example, the Insurance Bureau of Canada says that extreme weather caused an estimated \$9.2 billion in insured losses last year alone. That actually made 2024 the most destructive year in Canadian history.

As I mentioned, we have some other estimates that we could compile from our own analysis, as well as those of third parties, but that's a good measure of damage—at least, of insured losses last year.

The Chair: You have time for a short question.

Shannon Miedema: I'll follow up on that. That's for extreme weather events. What about the economic cost of pollution? Do you have any numbers on the impacts of air quality on health and things like that?

We know the oil and gas industry in Canada is committed to a path to net zero by 2050, and there are lots of ways we're going to get there, but does some of that information drive our decision-making now?

The Chair: Give a short answer, please.

• (1220)

Alison McDermott: It does, absolutely. The air quality considerations are like an additional factor that brings benefits when we reduce climate change impacts or when we reduce pollution.

The Chair: Thank you.

Now the floor goes to Mr. Leslie for five minutes, please.

Branden Leslie: Thank you.

I would like to pick up on a piece of testimony that came out there, which was that the carbon tax had a limited effect of 1% to 2%.

In 2024, the Canadian Climate Institute released a report saying that the consumer carbon tax was 8% to 9%. I listened to Liberal politicians use that stat as a defence of why they couldn't possibly

get rid of the consumer carbon tax. Now that the political winds have changed, why is it that the department is using such drastically different numbers with regard to the importance of the consumer carbon tax in terms of emissions reductions?

Alison McDermott: I'm sorry. I probably wasn't as strong in my French language when I answered that question. The 1% to 2% was talking about the impact on our reductions vis-à-vis our 2005 levels. I think that the 8% that you heard estimated by the Canadian Climate Institute would be the share of overall emissions reductions accounted for by that consumer fuel charge.

Branden Leslie: Thank you.

I would like to move on to the Major Projects Office. Do any of the five projects that have been referred to the Major Projects Office thus far require a federal permit through ECCC?

Tara Shannon: Yes, the Contrecoeur project would require a Species at Risk Act permit.

Branden Leslie: How are you expecting project proponents to get on this list? Will they be lobbying ECCC or Natural Resources bureaucracies or either of your ministers, or will they just be going straight to the Prime Minister to lobby to get on this designated list?

Are we still waiting to find out who gets lobbied?

Megan Nichols: Indeed, projects can be identified in a number of different ways: through discussions between ministers and provinces and territories or stakeholders, or through discussions with the Major Projects Office. There's no one prescribed pathway in order to make sure that key projects are identified in as robust a way as possible.

Branden Leslie: How do Canadians have any confidence that this won't be used to select pet projects that are of interest to Liberal insiders or to block projects that simply are not liked politically?

Megan Nichols: The legislation, the Building Canada Act, does lay out certain principles that the government can consider in identifying projects. These are things that will be considered, such as the clean growth impacts of potential projects and their capacity to facilitate trade and economic growth. Those are laid out in the legislation itself.

Branden Leslie: Thank you.

I would like to move on to one of those particular projects. The Prime Minister has indicated that the Port of Churchill might be one of the designated projects of national interest. Are you aware that the western premiers have already signed an MOU to develop an economic corridor to Hudson Bay?

Tara Shannon: I think the answer at the table is no.

Branden Leslie: It came out of the western premiers' meeting just a couple of months ago. I would encourage the department to look at that.

Now, at the very same time, Parks Canada is looking to create multiple marine conservation areas within Hudson Bay. Can you explain to me why one arm of the government is trying to encourage new projects while another arm—in this case, Parks Canada—is trying to block entire areas of water in which a project like this...? Could it never actually come to fruition?

Tara Shannon: I can't speak to Parks Canada's plans for the creation of national marine conservation areas in that region. I would suggest, though, that at times.... I don't know what their plans are, but there are scenarios in which activities are still permitted in conservation areas. However, we can't speak to specifics without understanding the specific situation at hand.

The Chair: Mr. Leslie, you have one minute left.

Branden Leslie: Thank you, sir.

Could you confidently say that an imposition of restrictions would not get in the way of moving energy-critical minerals or other goods through the Port of Churchill? Can we say that confidently today?

Tara Shannon: Not being responsible for the initiative at hand, I don't feel that I can comment on it.

Branden Leslie: I'll just quickly touch on the EV mandates.

There obviously has been a pause, with a review ongoing. In terms of those particular mandates, when was the decision made to pause, and what is the status of the review?

• (1225)

The Chair: Give a short answer, please.

Megan Nichols: The announcement to pause was made just a couple of weeks ago. In terms of the 60-day review, it kicked off on that same day and is currently under way in many discussions with industry, provinces, territories and other stakeholders.

[Translation]

The Chair: Mr. St-Pierre, you have the floor for five minutes.

Eric St-Pierre: I'll be sharing my time with my colleagues.

[English]

I'm curious about where carbon border adjustment mechanisms might fall within some of your work with regard to the Carbon Markets Bureau.

I'm not sure exactly who I should be addressing this question to. We know that Europe is moving towards a carbon border adjustment mechanism, a CBAM. I'm curious to know ECCC's position on some of this work. Can you comment on whether CBAM will become part of ECCC's mandate in the coming months or the coming years?

Alison McDermott: I would note that this initiative is under the responsibility of the Department of Finance, but at both the international level and in the Carbon Markets Bureau, the department does follow those developments. We are contributing to the work that's being done in studying those measures in other countries.

[Translation]

Eric St-Pierre: Could you tell us more about Canada's coal emissions reduction policies and Canada's international contribution in this area?

[English]

Megan Nichols: Certainly. In terms of thermal coal, Canada has in place regulations to phase out the use of unabated coal for electricity by December 31, 2029. Those regulations remain in place.

I think it's important to distinguish between thermal and metallurgical coal. Of course, Canada continues to be a producer of metallurgical coal in many provinces. We are also members of the Powering Past Coal Alliance, which is an international alliance dedicated to phasing out the use of unabated coal for electricity internationally.

Wade Grant: If Canada were to abandon its industrial carbon tax—carbon pricing—what would that mean for attracting investment into Canada?

Megan Nichols: Indeed, as we're seeing the global economy pivot more and more to net zero and to being low carbon, we do consider it's an important part of attracting investment. Our most recent modelling shows that the industrial carbon price will bring between 52 megatonnes and 57 megatonnes of reductions in our GHG emissions in 2030. That's quite a sizable amount.

Also, a number of studies from third parties demonstrate the significant billions of dollars of investment related to the carbon price across Canada. I believe one of the numbers from the Canadian Climate Institute is that about 70 major decarbonization projects in place across the country, valued at about \$57 billion, are benefiting from either credits from carbon pricing or deferred compliance costs.

Shannon Miedema: I'm just wondering if ECCC has any role in supporting climate resiliency for indigenous housing. I know that the National Indigenous Collaborative Housing Inc. is here this week. I'll be meeting with them.

Is there a division across departments on something like that?

Alison McDermott: I'm not 100% sure with respect to that specific initiative, but I would note that Environment Canada plays a role more broadly in supporting departments in their policy development. We have a group inside Environment Canada that supports other departments in policy capacity building with respect to both adaptation and mitigation. We also help support the consideration of climate and adaptation considerations in all policies and proposals put forward through a “climate, nature and economy lens”, as it's called. The lens requires that when new policies are put forward or are being developed, departments need to consider these factors.

Again, there's support given to those departments. I wouldn't be surprised at the technical levels if those kinds of supports were being offered. When departments such as Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada have big initiatives, they generally will have some of their own staff develop that kind of expertise. For example, an adaptation that's extremely important is that the investments being made today will be robust and able to withstand the climate we're expecting in the future. That's pretty much the norm now.

• (1230)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McDermott. Your time is up.

[Translation]

Mr. Lemire, you have two and a half minutes.

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I come from a mining region, Abitibi-Témiscamingue, where social licence is particularly important. Years of mining development obviously left significant marks because the environmental laws were not strict enough. There was a lot of laxity, but the Quebec government has largely rectified this.

Bill C-5 forces us to understand that a small coterie at the Privy Council can decide that a project is in the national interest and therefore justify circumventing a series of laws and regulations. Unfortunately, I see that many of these laws or regulations that can now be circumvented fall under your department, despite the best of intentions. In my opinion, the Government of Quebec should act as a bulwark—but the Bureau d'audiences publiques sur l'environnement, or BAPE, also seems to be quite easy to circumvent under Bill C-5.

So what safeguards do we have as citizens to ensure compliance with environmental laws? I agree with the exploration and development of strategic critical minerals. That is part of the solution and we want to contribute to it. On the other hand, the environmental aspect is, to me, fundamental. It's all well and good if everyone agrees on the principle of speeding up the process, but that shouldn't come at the expense of strong legislation. As far as I'm concerned, one would suffice—Quebec's legislation—but I get the impression that both federal and provincial legislation can now be circumvented. Is that correct?

Megan Nichols: I can only offer a few comments based on what I know about the new legislation, but I would note that responsibility for the new legislation lies with the Privy Council. Perhaps the Privy Council can provide a more detailed answer.

What I can say is that, certainly, before a project is designated under the new act, it will be necessary to consult the provinces, certainly including Quebec, and possibly the BAPE. I don't know exactly which process will be followed, but there will also be consultations with indigenous peoples. So I think it is necessary.

Sébastien Lemire: As for indigenous peoples, I must admit that I am particularly proud of the fact that it was in this chamber that the Bloc Québécois, with the support of the Conservatives, was able to remove the Indian Act from the schedule, which will make it harder to circumvent indigenous peoples under the circumstances. So I think that was an important step.

For now, however, I think I will not abuse my time and will resume in the third round.

Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Mr. Ross, you have five minutes.

Ellis Ross: Thank you.

Can you tell me, on average, given the engagement of first nations and provincial entities, how long it takes to acquire a federal environmental certificate for a linear major project?

Megan Nichols: I believe that question would probably be more appropriate for the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada. I would defer to them.

Ellis Ross: Okay.

It was mentioned that with these new regulations and the legislation, the climate for investment is going to be huge, and you have evidence to back that up, but our major competitors—China, the United States and Russia—have no carbon tax and no emissions cap, and they're doing more with their oil and gas production, as opposed to Canada, where it's stalled. No new projects have been approved, so the economy is not going to improve.

Has there been analysis done to study the competitiveness between Canada and our major competitors, namely Russia, the United States and China?

• (1235)

Alison McDermott: I would say that in general, international comparisons and consideration of competitiveness issues inform all the advice that is provided, so yes, implicitly those kinds of factors are taken into account.

I think each of those countries has unique factors and circumstances in how their climate policies are set, but there's been actually quite a bit of action on the part of some of these other countries as well.

Ellis Ross: I understand that, but the talk around China's emissions doesn't relate to oil and gas.

The United States has no oil and gas cap. They have no carbon tax, the same as Russia. They're doing great, and whether or not you're talking about primary markets or secondary markets, their production is actually increasing, including all the coal plants that are being built in China.

I heard the conversation around coal as well, but the specific question was whether there is an analysis within your departments—or in government, for that matter—of the competitiveness of oil and gas, or even the coal industry, in relation to these three major competitors?

Michael Bonser: As Alison mentioned, it's not a specific study per se, but we factor that kind of analysis into all of the work and all of the advice we give government, be it on China, India, Russia or the United States. We do it for all major economies. We look very hard at their trajectory. We also look very hard at the emissions they produce.

From an Environment Canada perspective, when we engage internationally, it's around what elements of their objective are around emissions reduction over time, and energy transition as well. Where are they also making those commitments in energy—

Ellis Ross: You're talking about specific data. Is that for public consumption? Is that on your website?

Michael Bonser: I'd have to check the website to see what specific data is there. I'm talking about the analysis and advice that are provided to ministers.

Ellis Ross: I understand the advice side and the recommendation side, but are they transparent? There's no way to hold the government accountable unless that kind of information is transparent.

Is that information there for public consumption?

Alison McDermott: A lot of the information would be available. There's also a lot of the advice with respect to an analysis of the oil and gas sector—

Ellis Ross: Can we get an example of that?

Alison McDermott: —which would come from our colleagues at Natural Resources Canada.

Bruce Fanjoy: I have a point of order.

The Chair: Ms. McDermott, wait one second, please.

Mr. Ross, ask a question of the witnesses and give them time to respond. You can't just jump into another question, because translation will have difficulty following.

Ellis Ross: Thank you, Chair.

I'm trying to get a specific answer to a specific question. Can I ask the question again?

The Chair: Sure.

Ellis Ross: Can we get an example of that information about the recommendations or advice to the government about a competitive analysis of countries like China, the United States or Russia?

Alison McDermott: I'll just note that China is the highest emitter of GHG emissions in the entire world. Russia is number four.

Ellis Ross: That's not the question.

You talked about a recommendation or advice to government on competitiveness and an analysis of other policies coming from our competitor countries. I'm asking if there is an example of that so that we can be transparent and hold the government accountable in terms of competitiveness and Canada becoming an energy superpower.

Alison McDermott: As I said, a lot of the advice and analysis being done on the oil and gas sector would be performed at Natural Resources Canada.

I will note, as I did earlier, that the government is planning to release a climate competitiveness strategy, which very much gets at many of those same issues, so hopefully that will help to satisfy some of that interest on your part.

Ellis Ross: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: You can have one last question.

Ellis Ross: You mentioned that no authorization or permits are needed for LNG Canada phase 2. There are four other projects listed for the Major Projects Office, such as nuclear.

I don't expect you to provide me with the answer right now, but can you list the authorizations and permits needed from the federal government for the remaining four projects listed within the Major Projects Office? I assume these projects were initiated through your departments.

The Chair: Give a very brief answer.

Tara Shannon: I think we can get the committee a list. Earlier, I mentioned that the Contrecoeur project will require a Species at Risk Act permit.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Shannon.

Thank you, Mr. Ross.

[*Translation*]

Mr. St-Pierre, you have five minutes.

Eric St-Pierre: Thank you.

• (1240)

[*English*]

I'll ask the question in English.

The Canadian Climate Institute, or CCI, which you're familiar with, has identified four key policies that would drive decarbonization. The first is strengthening the industrial carbon price; the second is finalizing the methane regulations for the oil and gas sector; the third is finalizing clean electricity investment tax credits, or ITCs; and the fourth, as I mentioned previously, is the made-in-Canada climate taxonomy.

I'm curious to know whether the CCI's recommendations have been taken into consideration. If you could comment on that, it would be very much appreciated.

Alison McDermott: They are very much of interest to the department, and they will be feeding into the government's forthcoming climate competitiveness strategy and decision-making on all of these pieces.

Shannon Miedema: Can you talk a bit about the risks Canada would face if it weakened its climate ambition competitiveness and leadership while trading partners and other major players across the globe are strengthening theirs?

Alison McDermott: I think, from an economic standpoint, that is, in fact, the major factor driving the Prime Minister's instruction to create a climate competitiveness strategy. It's the recognition that the global trends are very much in the direction of low carbon and that although there's a bit of a setback right now with respect to the U.S. administration's policy, other countries are speeding towards a low-carbon economy. If Canada does not think about that and take that into account in developing its own policies, we could find ourselves, and our companies could find themselves, far behind.

We may expect some shifts over time, even in U.S. policy. Even without that, we see economic trends in terms of the cost of renewables going down and the demand for low-carbon projects, products and services growing significantly over time. The idea of getting Canadian firms, businesses and individuals aligned with where those global trends are going is very much at the heart of the climate competitiveness strategy and the policies of this government.

Bruce Fanjoy: If we look at different forms of energy—conventional energy, solar, wind and nuclear—can you tell us which form of energy has the lowest cost?

Alison McDermott: It's actually challenging to keep up with the developments and cost curves. I think it very much depends on the types of installations. We know that the price of solar is very competitive right now—solar, wind and batteries in general. Depending on the circumstance and the specific location, one may be more suitable than the other and more cost-effective than the other. However, those are becoming very quickly the cheapest and most cost-effective forms of energy.

[Translation]

Eric St-Pierre: In Quebec, where my riding is located, we are very fortunate to have Hydro-Québec, which produces renewable energy with few or no carbon emissions.

[English]

There's very low intensity in terms of emissions from Quebec's grid system.

[Translation]

Can you tell us about efforts to decarbonize electricity systems in other Canadian provinces?

[English]

Megan Nichols: I would say that across the government, there are a few different things that we're doing to encourage net-zero electricity. NRCan has made a lot of investments and continues to provide significant funding.

In terms of Environment Canada, we just recently published the clean electricity regulations, which will achieve a net-zero grid across the country by 2050. That brings at least an additional 181 megatonnes of reduction to our GHGs by 2050, as well as at the same time providing an important foundation to attract clean growth and more investment into our economy.

● (1245)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Nichols.

Ms. Anstey, the floor is yours for five minutes.

Carol Anstey: Thank you.

We have had reports that Prime Minister Carney just gave a speech saying that China is “very sincere” on the climate and has given “a standing offer” to engage. I'm curious to know if your committee has any evidence of that in your communications with them.

Michael Bonser: Perhaps I can take that question.

I have not seen the Prime Minister's speech this morning, but what I can say is that China is very active in the world of the UN-FCCC, the multilateral United Nations system that drives much of the normative framework around climate action. It drives the Paris Agreement in many ways as well.

We also engage bilaterally with China on issues around environment and climate change, in part to push them to increase their level of ambition and to ensure that they are telling the whole story and not just the story that is convenient for the country itself, but

they do continue to engage internationally and they do continue to be seen as a significant player in the international climate world.

Carol Anstey: I just wanted to clarify, because it's interesting within the context of some of the other figures and numbers that were talked about earlier in our meeting.

I want to pivot for a minute.

There was some conversation around extreme weather events. In my province this summer, we certainly saw the devastation of wildfires across the province. My riding in particular is an area very similar to Jasper, in that there is a lot of deadwood in the forest as a result of the spruce budworm. I know that the community has been actively engaging with stakeholders and volunteers in trying to come up with a plan to deal with this situation. I'm curious to know, based on the lessons that were learned in the Jasper wildfire, what actions the government is taking to mitigate a similar situation going forward.

Tara Shannon: I would say that the question is probably best placed for our colleagues at Parks Canada, who are responsible for wildfire management in national parks. At Environment and Climate Change Canada, we don't have a direct responsibility for fire management, as we don't manage the lands.

Carol Anstey: I'm curious. Would we be able to get them to come to speak to this issue? Is there some way that we can engage on this issue? It is a very big concern.

I think that within the context of talking about extreme weather events, we can't really pick and choose the ones that we want to talk about. This is something that is very important. Could we put that out there and have them come at another time to speak to this?

Tara Shannon: I am certain that the committee could make a request. Our colleagues would be pleased to come to present what they have done since the Jasper wildfires.

Alison McDermott: I will just note that the government does make some investments in mitigation activities with respect to fire protection.

I know that we have invested. CIRNAC has invested in indigenous communities. There have been other investments through Public Safety Canada and FireSmart, investments that very much help to make a big difference in the way communities are affected by wildfires.

Carol Anstey: I think the investment component is great. When people are driving through their communities that look like tinderboxes, it's causing a lot of fear and concern. This would be super-important to me.

I just wanted to pivot to something with respect to the EV mandates. Again, this is something that I get asked about a lot. I know there's a pause in place. One of the things I often hear where I live, with long distances between charging stations and extreme weather conditions, is that typically what's happening in terms of consumer demand is that it has really diminished.

I'm just wondering. When you're looking at these policies, do you consider the challenges in rural Canada and the different impacts they have in these communities? Car dealers have all of these electric vehicles on their lots and an inability to move them. The consumer demand just isn't there. I'm wondering if you could speak to the rural-urban divide on electric vehicles, please.

• (1250)

The Chair: I'm sorry. We're out of time.

Monsieur St-Pierre is next.

Eric St-Pierre: Picking up on that, I've been driving an electric car since 2018. Actually, the range for my EV goes further. I recently made a road trip of about 800 kilometres return from Montreal to Sudbury, Ontario, where I'm originally from. There is available charging infrastructure.

My question is around the EV subsidies. Can you comment on the effectiveness of the EV subsidies and whether they could return?

Megan Nichols: The EV subsidies, the federal ones, are a responsibility of Transport Canada, so I would defer to them on what to expect going forward.

In terms of what we've seen through results, last year we did see sales of EVs of up to over 15% across Canada, a significant increase since before those subsidies were in place. This year, without those subsidies in place, and also with some provincial incentives winding down, we have seen sales drop to about 9%.

I do think it's important, though, to note there are other factors that have likely driven that decline, such as upfront price parity, as we've seen, not coming quite as quickly as we expected it to, so that even with the incentives, there is often still a price differential. Then, also, there's the impact of what's happening in the U.S. market for EVs with the policies in the U.S. The impact of tariffs is having a bit of an impact as well. There are many different factors, which is why we are taking a pause to look at the current mandate and make sure that it's fit for purpose.

That said, it's important to note that, as with many things, we do think a suite of initiatives is important. It's not just the mandate and it's not just incentives: It's also looking at charging infrastructure and making sure that there's a range of choices available to Canadians to meet their needs.

Eric St-Pierre: I have a follow-up question. Can you comment on global sales of electric vehicles? Are they flatlining? Are they going down? Are they going up?

If you can refer to other countries, that would be great. Thanks.

Megan Nichols: I think the most recent data we have is that about one in four vehicles sold globally is a zero-emission vehicle. I'm not too sure what the latest trend is, but I think it's continuing to increase. In areas where it's increasing more rapidly—the EU, Norway and in China right now—I believe about one in two light-duty vehicles is an electric vehicle.

Wade Grant: To expand on that, I wanted to know what the early indicators are that global demand for low-carbon products will grow. How is Canada positioning itself for that?

Alison McDermott: Price is one of the big factors. In terms of an indicator or likelihood, the price of the Chinese electric vehicles has come down very dramatically. They're extremely low-cost. In countries where they're being exported, the demand's quite high.

It's similar for other relevant types of clean economy products, like batteries. The cost of batteries and the cost of solar panels continue to come down dramatically. That, of course, makes the demand grow very strongly.

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Witnesses, on November 10, 2023, your department issued a press release indicating that the Government of Canada was committed to investing up to \$8 million to protect green spaces in east Montreal. Obviously, the canopy rate and the proximity of the Port of Montreal are important issues. Other investments have been made jointly with Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada, I believe, including the planting of over 200,000 trees in east Montreal. Again, I recognize the need for reforestation.

That said, I had asked the former Minister of the Environment, Mr. Guilbeault, to see whether Rouyn-Noranda, given all the problems with the Horne smelter, could also receive access to such funding. Unfortunately, it was very difficult to obtain any concrete follow-up. I would therefore like to know what criteria your department used to say yes to east Montreal but no to Rouyn-Noranda.

• (1255)

Tara Shannon: Thank you for the question.

[*English*]

I'm not familiar with both projects. I think we'd have to follow up with a written answer.

[*Translation*]

Sébastien Lemire: Would it be possible for you to check and provide me with an answer in writing to find out what criteria are put forward and what alternatives could be proposed? I think action is also urgently needed in Rouyn-Noranda. The federal government has thus far turned a deaf ear to environmental issues related to the Horne smelter.

Tara Shannon: We'll follow up in writing. Thank you.

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you.

Something else caught my attention under the circumstances. How can we ensure that we also protect the environment in more southern regions?

When it comes to defining protected areas, I get the impression that this rarely happens in the southern regions or regions that are more densely populated. Whether in Ontario or Quebec, protected areas are rarely established in those regions, and large areas are chosen instead. Don't get me wrong—I'm in favour of protecting large areas. However, we have economic development issues.

Could there be better parity in these protected areas between the more urban areas located further south and the northern regions?

Tara Shannon: Thank you for the question.

[English]

The cost of protection is higher in the south than it is in the north. The south of Canada is the area with the highest biodiversity value, so that is often an area where we put a lot of our attention.

There are a number of factors that go into a decision to invest in potential protected areas, so there's not one set of criteria. There's a factor analysis, including, most importantly, the collaboration and co-operation with stakeholders. We as a federal government are not, for the most part, owners of the land, so we cannot advance protected areas without the support and close collaboration of the implicated governments and stakeholders in that particular area.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Shannon.

[Translation]

Sébastien Lemire: Thank you.

Is that—

The Chair: Mr. Lemire, your time is up.

[English]

That puts an end to this meeting.

I'm sorry, Mr. Leslie; if I attribute some time to you, I have to give it to everybody. I've been generous with everybody. I've also been generous with the departments, giving them a little extra time to be able to complete their responses.

Branden Leslie: I have a point of order, Mr. Chair, that is unrelated to that. I appreciate the round requirements here.

There have been lots of questions about Parks Canada. I know that they've been somewhat hived off to a different department, but I'd be surprised if they were completely outside of ECCC. I'm curious to know whether it might be worth adding them to the list for Thursday's meeting to be able to answer many of the questions that were offered here today.

The Chair: Unfortunately not, because Parks Canada has now been moved to Canadian Heritage. This is why those questions are not being addressed.

Branden Leslie: Just to clarify, do they have no involvement with ECCC anymore? Perhaps the department has an answer to that.

The Chair: It's now under the Canadian Heritage.

Would you like to say something, Ms. Shannon?

Tara Shannon: No. I was just going to say “yes”.

The Chair: Are there any other questions?

Go ahead, Mr. Lemire.

[Translation]

Sébastien Lemire: Mr. Chair, I would like to ask for clarification. You're telling us that the committee can no longer examine environmental issues related to Parks Canada because issues related to that agency now fall under the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage. Parks Canada will no longer be accountable to us on environmental issues. Did I understand correctly?

The Chair: The committee can invite whomever it wants, at the discretion of its members. That said, it is true that Parks Canada now falls under the mandate of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage.

Sébastien Lemire: I think the Conservatives have made a fairly clear request to invite Parks Canada to the next meeting. If it's a formal proposal, I'll support it.

• (1300)

The Chair: The committee will already be hearing from two agencies next time. You weren't at the last meeting, when I explained my goal of setting aside Monday and Thursday that week to hear from those departmental and agency officials.

Your colleague exerted considerable pressure for us to do things another way because he wanted to do a different study. In the end, as you can see, the committee will be hearing from two other agencies next time. As a result, I don't think there will be enough time to hear from Parks Canada officials. If the committee wishes to call that agency, then it will be for another time, and I will need a little more information.

[English]

The committee is scheduled to next meet on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 11 a.m. We will receive further briefings from the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and the Canada Water Agency.

I'd like to thank all the officials for being present today.

Is it the will of the committee to adjourn the meeting?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: The meeting is adjourned.

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