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# Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

EVIDENCE

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Chair: Angelo Iacono





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Monday, December 1, 2025

• (1100)

[English]

**The Chair (Angelo Iacono (Alfred-Pellan, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order.

[Translation]

Good morning, colleagues.

[English]

Today is meeting number 18 of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

This meeting is taking place in a hybrid format and is in public.

For those in person, please follow the health and safety guidelines on the cards found on the table to prevent audio or feedback incidents.

[Translation]

Today, the committee is studying the supplementary estimates (B), 2025–2026 and the mandate of the Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

[English]

The committee is meeting with the Honourable Julie Dabrusin, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, who is here to discuss both studies.

The minister is accompanied by the following witnesses.

We have Mollie Johnson, deputy minister.

[Translation]

Next, we will have Linda Drainville, assistant deputy minister and chief financial officer of the corporate services and financial management branch.

[English]

We also have Megan Nichols, assistant deputy minister, environmental protection branch, and Alison McDermott, assistant deputy minister, strategic policy and international affairs branch.

From the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, we have Terence Hubbard, president; Éric Landry, vice-president of operations; and Patricia Brady, vice-president, strategic policy and programs.

Minister, I have yellow sign that indicates that you have one more minute to speak. Then, I turn it over and ask you to please end your sentence. That's it.

You have up to five minutes for an opening statement. The floor is yours.

[Translation]

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin (Minister of Environment and Climate Change):** Good morning, everyone.

[English]

Thank you, Mr. Chair, members of the committee for having me here today.

I'd like to begin by recognizing that we are meeting on the traditional territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin nation.

I'm happy to be here to discuss my mandate and the 2025-26 supplementary estimates (B) under my portfolio, which includes Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and the Canada Water Agency.

With me today, as you noted, Mr. Chair, are Mollie Johnson, deputy minister of environment and climate change, and Terence Hubbard, president of the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada.

This is a defining moment for Canada. The decisions we make today will shape our country for generations to come. Around the world, economies are undergoing a historic transition toward low-carbon energy and technology. This is reshaping trade, investment and jobs at a pace not seen since the Industrial Revolution. It's changing the way we drive, the way we heat and cool our homes, the way we work, and the way we build and power our country.

This transition represents a real opportunity for Canada to be a leader in the economy of the future. That's why in budget 2025, we released the climate competitiveness strategy. The strategy is rooted in a simple truth: Addressing climate change is both a moral obligation and an economic imperative. This strategy provides clarity on fiscal, regulatory and industrial policies to create certainty for businesses to invest, innovate and compete internationally, all while reducing emissions. It also supports major projects to be built more effectively and efficiently.

For example, the Iqaluit Nukkiksautiit hydroelectric project will become Nunavut's first 100% Inuit-owned hydroelectric facility, a milestone in clean energy innovation. This will replace Iqaluit's dependence on 15 million litres of imported diesel each year. This project will advance economic competitiveness while modernizing our infrastructure and lowering emissions.

• (1105)

[Translation]

Climate change is a global challenge that knows no borders. This fall, I co-chaired the G7 and the ministerial meeting on climate action in Toronto, before leading the Canadian delegation at COP30 in Brazil to reaffirm our commitment and strengthen our climate leadership on the international stage. However, this international leadership must be backed by concrete action here at home. Canadians are already feeling the effects of climate change: heat waves, forest fires, droughts, floods and more. These events damage infrastructure and weaken local economies, while affecting our health and natural environments.

Nature conservation is one of the most effective ways to reduce these risks. Healthy ecosystems absorb carbon, protect communities and preserve biodiversity. That's why we are continuing our conservation efforts in partnership with the provinces, territories, indigenous nations and local communities. This summer in the Northwest Territories, I announced our land for the future, an important, indigenous-led conservation project.

We are also making generational investments to strengthen our sovereignty. Budget 2025 provides \$2.75 billion over nine years to Environment and Climate Change Canada and Shared Services Canada to acquire a new high-performance computing solution, essential to providing the advanced climate and weather data that Canadians depend on.

[English]

Turning to the 2025-26 supplementary estimates (B) for my department, these estimates represent a net proposed increase of \$2 million. Some of these changes include a request for \$4.9 million over five years, beginning 2025-26, for the extension of the Inuit impact and benefit agreement.

There are also transfers to and from the department—for example, to the Canadian Space Agency and Indigenous Services Canada.

Mr. Chair, I'm going to stop here. I'm happy to take questions from members.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Brandon Leslie, the floor is yours for six minutes.

**Brandon Leslie (Portage—Lisgar, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

At the UN's International Maritime Organization meeting, your government voted in favour of a new net-zero carbon tax on shipping. Witnesses told this committee that this tax could cost up to \$500 per tonne, which will obviously get passed on to Canadians through higher prices for everything that we buy that's shipped here.

Do you have any idea whatsoever what this is going to cost Canadians through higher prices?

• (1110)

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** This has long been an issue that I hear in questions coming from the Conservatives, the idea that any action

on climate change is a net negative not only for our country but for the world.

We know that the impacts of climate change—

**Brandon Leslie:** I'm just looking for the cost of the tax.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Pardon me?

**Brandon Leslie:** Has the department done any estimates on what the tax would cost for the average item in Canada, and therefore the cost to Canadians when it's passed on to them?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** For the policies that we have in place, we are ready....

I have said this before: Actions such as the industrial carbon price do not increase the cost of food for Canadians.

When we're talking about the policies that we actually have in place in Canada, whenever we pass a regulation, we provide a regulatory assessment, and it is available and transparent—

**Brandon Leslie:** Thank you, Minister. I look forward to seeing that, once that tax is implemented.

However, you talked about the policies that are still in place. For years, you defended every major climate policy that this government introduced—the carbon tax on consumers, the program to plant two billion trees, the emissions cap on oil and gas, the greenwashing regulations and the EV mandate. Then, almost overnight, they were delayed, watered down or abandoned entirely. Now, every time one of these policies seems to collide with reality, it falls apart.

What should Canadians conclude from this pattern of your supporting policies and then having to step back from them?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I think what Canadians should take from the work our government is doing is that we are working forward for policies that are collaborative, meet the needs of Canadians and fight climate change.

We have very much set forward, as it says in the climate competitiveness strategy that was in the budget, that we are working to strengthen the industrial carbon price and strengthen methane regulations. We're working on a taxonomy for investment guidelines. We are taking real actions, and we're doing that in collaboration with provinces and territories and making sure that Canadians are at the centre of our policies.

**Brandon Leslie:** Thank you, Minister.

Somebody not at the centre who used to be at the centre, former environment and energy minister Jonathan Wilkinson, publicly said that your new climate competitiveness strategy isn't a climate strategy at all.

Do you agree with him? Is he wrong?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** We have a climate strategy, which is our emissions reduction plan, and we provide progress reports based on that emissions reduction plan.

The climate competitiveness strategy is really the economic piece, putting in place things that were envisioned by the emissions reduction plan, but also going further in some places. It is not the emissions reduction plan. That is a separate document. It is a tool to move forward on climate competitiveness.

**Branden Leslie:** Thank you for raising that.

The environment commissioner, the PBO, the independent experts and pretty much everyone, except for you, have agreed that you will not hit the Paris targets as originally intended.

Can you finally admit that your emissions reduction plan is not working and will not achieve the targets that you've laid out?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I am the environment minister, first of all, but second of all, the PBO report specifically did not take into account the climate competitiveness strategy, and if we take into account—

**Branden Leslie:** I thought there was a climate strategy, though. You just said it wasn't a climate strategy. Why would we need to take that into account?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No, I didn't say that. I said there was an emissions reduction plan and that the climate competitiveness strategy does not replace the emissions reduction plan.

**Branden Leslie:** Is everybody else wrong in saying that we're not going to hit these targets? Are you right and everyone else is wrong?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What I have said—if you'd let me complete that one—is that we always knew that the targets would be ambitious. We could have set low targets and we could have stood by lower targets, and they would be easy to meet. These targets require us to stretch. We're determined to keep doing the work to meet them, but it's going to take continued work.

**Branden Leslie:** Could you tell me the gap in raw numbers between the 2030 target and where we are going to end up in 2030? What is that gap right now?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** An emissions reduction plan that will be provided by the end of this year will provide more detail as to exactly where those different numbers stand, but, by the way, the commitment to continue doing the work remains.

I think that's a very important piece, and I would hope that the Conservatives would be willing to support us, because all I hear from Conservatives is that they want to remove every single thing we do—

**Branden Leslie:** Thank you, Minister. You're going to keep on keeping on, and that's great.

Could you tell this committee if there's any specific environmental or climate policy that is simply non-negotiable—a red line that, if crossed, would have you resign, just like Minister Guilbeault did?

• (1115)

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Is there a single environment policy or climate change policy that the Conservatives will support and help us actually move forward on?

**Branden Leslie:** Minister, I'm here to ask you the questions. This is not about you asking a member of the opposition questions; this is about you answering a question.

Is there a line in the sand of a specific environmental or climate policy such that if this government, despite your objections, decided to remove it, you would have to resign over it, just like Minister Guilbeault did?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** My goal in everything I do is to keep working to move our country to a low-carbon economy, to net zero, and to keep doing the work that we need to do. It's important for our future generations and it's important to make sure that we're globally competitive.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Thank you, Mr. Leslie.

Ms. Miedema, the floor is yours for six minutes.

**Shannon Miedema (Halifax, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Good morning, Minister. It's great to have you here.

Having done climate work for so long at the local government level, I know that it's important to have really ambitious targets and plans, but also that you need everyone on board to do them. That's all levels of government, and that's utilities, the business community, our non-profits and the public.

I'm really excited that the next study this committee is going to look at is one that I proposed. It's on the insured and uninsured losses that happen with extreme weather events and the kind of framework we need in order to protect people going forward.

Could you explain the economic consequences of delaying climate action and why consistent policies are important for both our communities and our businesses?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** That's a really good question, because one of the things that I think gets missed in a lot of the noise we hear, in the House of Commons especially, is that climate change and not taking action on climate change have a real cost right now. You can see it in the cost of food. One of the largest impacts on the increased cost of food is climate change. It happens when there are droughts and when there are floods. All of these types of things impact the cost of food as we move forward.

Beyond that, there is also a competitiveness moment for this country, and Canada has a real edge. Nine of the top 100 clean-tech companies are based in Canada. We are second only to the United States in the number of companies on that list. There's a real moment, and if we don't meet it, we lose economic opportunities for our country. That is something that we need to consider.

When we put forward the climate competitiveness strategy, a big part of that was making sure that we were creating certainty and predictability for industry so that industry can go to where the global economy is going, and the global economy is going to net zero. When I was at the G7 and when I was at COP30, that kept on being reinforced. If Canada wants to be able to have a space and to lead in that economy or even to be able to access diversified trade markets, making sure that we have sound climate policies here is important in being able to reach those opportunities.

**Shannon Miedema:** Thank you for that.

Can you please touch on how impact assessments on projects that are assigned to the Major Projects Office will continue to protect our environment, species and habitat, and indigenous rights?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** As we break down what happens when we say that we're referring a project to the Major Projects Office, there are two pieces: the Major Projects Office and the Building Canada Act.

We've referred many projects over to the Major Projects Office. That is really a chance to have some streamlining and extra support in putting the pieces together. Through that environmental assessment process, the Impact Assessment Agency very much remains a part of the process of assessing those projects going forward.

Then there's also the Building Canada Act, which has clean growth and climate objectives for our country in its criteria. In our budget, we are proposing to reinforce the Building Canada Act by including wording on the application of a climate lens to projects.

Right now, those are the two pieces we have, but the projects that have been referred right now are with the Major Projects Office.

**Shannon Miedema:** That's excellent.

Minister, you touched on the climate competitiveness strategy. Can you tell us a little more about how this strategy could create jobs for Canadians, how it could drive emissions down—you spoke to investment already—and the major pushes it's going to provide as a strategy?

• (1120)

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** One of the things that really strikes me in the conversations I have with many different kinds of industry is that they want to have very clear, predictable rules as to the environment they're working within. Having a very clear industrial carbon price so that they know what the credit prices are and what they'll be facing helps them to make sure that they're investing towards that.

The main piece that I think is so very important about the climate competitiveness strategy is that it creates that predictability and that certainty for industry moving forward. We have said that we are committed to continuing with it.

The other piece is that when we look at global markets like the European Union, we see that they have carbon border adjustments. We're seeing that in the U.K. as well. We're seeing that with different markets that we're trying to access as we diversify our trade. Making sure that we have these climate policies in place helps us access those markets and can give Canada an edge, and that's what we really need to do in this moment.

**Shannon Miedema:** We heard all through witness testimony on EVs as well that market certainty is absolutely the most critical piece.

Thank you so much.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bonin, you have the floor for six minutes.

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

Good afternoon, Madam Minister. Thank you for being here. We're pleased to welcome you to the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development for the first time, especially given current events.

Last week, Alberta and the federal government announced an agreement for a new pipeline that will transport one million barrels of oil from the oil sands per day.

Are you in favour of such a pipeline?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I'm glad you asked me about this MOU with Alberta, because it includes a number of things—

**Patrick Bonin:** Minister, the question is this: Do you support a new pipeline to transport one million barrels of oil from the oil sands per day?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The process set out in the agreement is important, because it means that British Columbia's agreement is needed—

**Patrick Bonin:** So you're in favour of this pipeline.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No. What I mean, if you'll let me finish my sentence, is that this is an agreement that needs—

**Patrick Bonin:** I'll ask my question in a different way: Are you in favour of a new pipeline to transport one million barrels of oil from the oil sands per day, yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** It's not for me to decide. It's important that the Province of British Columbia and indigenous people come to an agreement. It's not up to me—

**Patrick Bonin:** Madam Minister, you didn't answer my question, which is simple.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Yes, I did. What I said—

**Patrick Bonin:** So you refuse to answer—

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** That's the difference between us and the Conservatives. In the House, the Conservatives say that the decisions are theirs and that they will enforce them. We say that we're going to work—

**Patrick Bonin:** Minister, I'll let you speak to the Conservatives when they ask you questions.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I'm telling you that we have to work with the provinces and that we're ready to do so.

**Patrick Bonin:** So, as Minister of Environment and Climate Change, you have no opinion on a new pipeline that would transport one million barrels of oil from the oil sands per day.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No, what I'm saying is that the proposal for the project—

**Patrick Bonin:** Are you in favour of this pipeline, yes or no?

[*English*]

**Wade Grant (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

With the cross-dialogue, it's hard for me to keep up on the translation.

**The Chair:** Okay.

[*Translation*]

**Patrick Bonin:** We'll slow down a little bit for you, Mr. Grant.

**Wade Grant:** Thank you.

**Patrick Bonin:** Do you think a new oil sands pipeline will help fight climate change, yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Not all questions can be answered with a yes or no. The agreement includes measures on carbon capture, as well as sections on carbon pricing for industry. It has several sections. So it's not all black and white.

As Minister of the Environment, I have to make sure that we continue to reduce our emissions here in Canada, and that's what I'm doing every day.

**Patrick Bonin:** Okay.

As Minister of the Environment, do you believe that increasing oil sands production makes it possible to increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

• (1125)

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I'll answer you in two parts, because there are several parts to that question.

The first thing—

**Patrick Bonin:** My question is simple, Madam Minister.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** First, the agreement contains measures on carbon capture, which is part of this discussion, which is different—

**Patrick Bonin:** Let's assume that your agreement comes into force and that oil sands production increases in the country. Are you telling me that it will reduce emissions?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No, what I'm saying is that—

**Patrick Bonin:** Then it increases emissions, right?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** —there are a number of things that need to be done to reduce our emissions.

**Patrick Bonin:** I understand that you're good at communicating, but my questions are specific.

Do you think building a pipeline and increasing oil sands production makes it possible to increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the country?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I'll repeat my answer—

**Patrick Bonin:** Does it increase them or decrease them?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The information I'm trying to give you is that—

**Patrick Bonin:** I'm going to switch gears. Obviously, you don't want to answer this one.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I'm talking about the carbon capture measures that are part of this agreement.

**Patrick Bonin:** How many billions of dollars of public money would have to be spent to offset those emissions with carbon capture?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** It has to be paid for by the private sector.

**Patrick Bonin:** So there is no money from the government for carbon capture and sequestration projects.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** As I said before, there are tax credits, but—

**Patrick Bonin:** How many billions of dollars of public money would have to be spent to capture the carbon emitted by a new oil sands pipeline? Is that even possible?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** You're asking me if it's possible to do what?

**Patrick Bonin:** There are two questions.

First, how many billions of dollars of public money would it take to capture the additional emissions associated with production to fuel a one-million-barrel-a-day oil sands pipeline?

Second, is it possible, through your tax credits and carbon capture sequestration, to capture all the additional emissions associated with the additional production for this pipeline?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Okay.

I was saying that, on that side, it's a project—

**Patrick Bonin:** How many billions of dollars? Is it possible—

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I don't have the project in front of me to check all the figures.

What I'm saying is that this is part of what was in the agreement—

**Patrick Bonin:** You don't know how much it would cost.

**Eric St-Pierre (Honoré-Mercier, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

I'm having trouble following the discussion, because my colleague is asking a question, but he's not waiting for the minister's answer before continuing, so I can't hear his answer. Perhaps we should give the minister a little time to answer questions.

**Patrick Bonin:** Mr. St-Pierre and honourable colleague, your comments would be relevant if you weren't speaking French. Since we're speaking French right now, you don't need the interpretation. I will even speak more slowly for you, so that you can hear my questions.

Madam Minister, are you still committed to meeting Canada's current greenhouse gas reduction target by 2030?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Yes.

**Patrick Bonin:** You're always committed to that.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Yes.

**Patrick Bonin:** Do you currently agree with Mr. Guilbeault, who says very clearly that we have to be able to look at ourselves in the mirror, that we have to be honest with Canadians and that we can no longer meet our 2030 targets? Do you agree with that statement?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I'll just take a moment to say again that these are ambitious targets. We need to continue to do our work. We are committed to continuing to do the work necessary to meet those targets. So—

**Patrick Bonin:** Mr. Guilbeault says that we have to be honest with Canadians and tell them that we can no longer meet the target. So you don't agree with that statement.

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

[*English*]

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

**Carol Anstey (Long Range Mountains, CPC):** Thank you, Minister, for finally taking some time to meet with us today.

Minister, rural Canadians have been very clear that EV mandates make little sense in their small communities. The vast distances, harsh weather, high vehicle costs and limited charging infrastructure make adoption far more difficult.

Will you acknowledge to this committee that a rigid one-size-fits-all approach does not work for rural Canada, yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** As you know, we had consultations on the EV regulations that closed last month. We're reviewing them right now—

**Carol Anstey:** Yes or no, Minister? Do you agree that these mandates don't make sense for rural Canadians, yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I just want to be clear. Do I believe that EVs can make sense in rural areas? We've seen it in other parts of the world, absolutely, but I just want to be clear that we're in a period when we're in review, after having completed consultations. Right now, we're still looking at how to make sure that we have the strongest policy going forward on zero-emissions vehicles.

• (1130)

**Carol Anstey:** Thank you, Minister.

Brian Kingston from the Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers' Association told this committee that the government's pause of the 2026

EV mandate was “a recognition that this regulation isn't working and the targets are unfeasible”, noting that it would require a 200%-plus increase in sales in order to meet your 2026 requirement.

Based on that evidence, will you commit to permanently removing the EV mandates, yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** We are in a period of review, and I will be putting out new pieces—

**Carol Anstey:** Do you, as the environment minister, personally support removing the mandates?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I support making sure that we have a policy that is based on the consultations and review, and it will be the strongest policy.

Do I believe in zero-emissions vehicles as part of the future right around this world? I do, absolutely.

**Carol Anstey:** But will you support removing the mandates, yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Well, I, as Minister of Environment, will take into account everything that's come through the consultations and come up with a strong policy to make sure that Canadians do have access to zero-emissions vehicles.

**Carol Anstey:** As the minister, you don't support or not support. You're not prepared to say that in a committee setting.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** As a minister, I'm not going to pre-reveal what the policy will be when I am completing it.

Do I support zero-emissions vehicles as part of the future—

**Carol Anstey:** I never asked about that—

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** —not only in Canada, but around the world? Yes.

**Carol Anstey:** I asked specifically about the mandates, though. It was about the mandates specifically. Do you support them, yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I am in a period of review. I will be releasing the full policy shortly.

**Carol Anstey:** Okay, thank you, Minister.

Minister, you talked about other countries. Mr. Kingston testified that comparing Canada to Norway is a total outlier and not a fair comparison, citing Norway's small and urbanized population, short driving distances, massive subsidies and the oil fund finance incentives that Canada would never do.

Given this evidence, why does your department continue to cite Norway as a model when the auto sector says that it's fundamentally not comparable to Canadian realities?

Please answer quickly, Minister. Thank you.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** There are a few pieces to that.

The first part is that I think it is worthwhile to look at the fact that Norway, as of today—

**Carol Anstey:** It's not comparing apples to apples.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Norway is a northern country that does have rural parts.

**Carol Anstey:** It doesn't have the same vast distances that we do.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What I'm just saying is that there are lessons to be learned from a northern country—

**Carol Anstey:** In my riding, some people have to drive 1,000 kilometres to get to a specialty hospital. That's 1,000 kilometres, Minister, so how are the realities the same? I don't understand.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Maybe I can help you on that.

What I am saying is that the regulations have been set out by percentages. You would assume that you would see the pickup first—and I think that's borne out when you look at numbers—in more urban areas with more people and in areas where there's more charging infrastructure—

**Carol Anstey:** Yes, but the mandates are being applied right across the country, though, and they're being applied to rural communities as well, even the percentages. At no point does it make sense for them.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The standards didn't require 20% in every region of the country, for example. It was as a country in total.

Then you would expect that the uptake would begin in areas where—

**Carol Anstey:** However, eventually it's 100%—yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** First of all, under the review that we're doing...

My time is up, but I will just say that ultimately, other countries are moving towards zero-emissions vehicles. We are seeing uptake right around the world, so Canada should be ready not only to produce those vehicles but also to make sure that Canadians have access to those vehicles.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

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

**Wade Grant:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Minister, for being here today.

I have two children who are going to be growing up in the next little while, and one of them is actually going to be joining the workforce in the next three or four years. As we shift to a low-carbon economy, workers and those who are about to enter the workforce want to know what will happen to benefit them.

How is our government ensuring that clean economy investments translate to good middle-class jobs right across Canada from coast to coast to coast?

• (1135)

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** When different organizations looked at the statistics for the jobs that will be available in a clean economy,

they found that there are substantial jobs right across, and in different types of work. I believe there was one estimate that there would be about 400,000 jobs created. I think that was an RBC study.

One of the bigger issues we face is actually how we can fill all these new opportunities that are going to come into being with these new types of projects. This goes to a whole stretch of things.

For example, I was talking about clean-tech companies in Canada. Those represent a bunch of exciting jobs for Canadians who want to jump into that area.

There are also a lot in the skilled trades. When we look at how to build this electrical grid for the future, it's important that we have the people who are ready to do that and have people who can retrofit homes so that Canadians can save on their energy costs and at the same time reduce emissions.

One thing I was really excited about in this budget is the youth climate corps, because that's a real chance for young people to get the skills, be paid until they get the skills, be able to have an active role in reducing emissions and move towards knowing how we can protect our communities from the impacts of climate change.

On the youth climate corps, I had a chance when I was in Montreal to meet with many young people from diverse organizations and groups who were doing different things on campus or in different kinds of work environments. They were really excited to talk about these opportunities and how we can make sure we're setting up Canadians and young Canadians to meet those new opportunities, and also how they can have a say in framing what that will be.

The youth climate corps has been pushed for quite a while. Having the project in place in this budget is a big step forward, and I would say that it's something we can build on for other job opportunities to set up youth in the best way.

**Wade Grant:** Yes, absolutely, it is. My riding has the University of British Columbia, and I had heard that as well from a number of youth there.

To follow up on that, Minister, how do climate policies help attract clean investment, create skilled jobs and strengthen our green economy in Quebec and right across Canada?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** One of the pieces that I keep seeing is that if we have clear policies, first of all, that helps. In this budget, we expanded—some of them were already there—a number of investment tax credits that can actually really help with building out these opportunities. For example, if we're talking about clean technology and the ability to get tax credits toward clean technology, that can help industry to build up toward that. The clean electricity investment tax credit is promised in this budget.

One piece that I think is really important is it includes the public utilities when it comes to interprovincial transmission pieces, which can really work to help support what we need for the future. What I hear over and over again is that clean electricity—Canada has one of the cleanest grids in the world—attracts investment to Canada. It's something that Canadian companies can use as a selling point when they're trying to trade with other countries because countries are looking for products that are low carbon. Having a clean electricity grid helps support it.

I was really excited that we have a clean electricity investment tax credit and the fact that it actually expands to cover public utilities when we're talking about how we build across the country.

**Wade Grant:** Quickly, within 15 seconds, Minister, could you explain what steps have been taken to ensure the consultations on projects reach the communities concerned and the results are published effectively?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The consultations are a really important piece. When we engage in consultations we continue to put them out publicly and make sure that we get that consultation in.

I'm going to have to answer that in my next question, apparently.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bonin, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

**Patrick Bonin:** Madam Minister, your colleague, who was minister of Canadian Heritage and minister of Environment and Climate Change, said that if we're honest with Canadians, we can no longer meet our 2030 climate targets.

Do you consider that Mr. Guilbeault is being dishonest in saying that?

• (1140)

**The Chair:** Just a moment, please, Mr. Bonin. I'm told that the interpretation isn't working. We're going to check.

Perfect. The interpretation is working.

Mr. Bonin, you can start from the top. I'll reset the clock.

**Patrick Bonin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, Mr. Guilbeault, who was Minister of Canadian Heritage, said that if we're honest with Canadians, we can no longer meet our 2030 climate targets. Do you consider that he's being dishonest when he says that?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I was Mr. Guilbeault's parliamentary secretary for six years, when he was minister of Canadian heritage and minister of environment and climate change.

I just wanted to say that I will never say that he is dishonest. I have a lot of respect for him, but I don't agree with him, because I think we can continue to do this work.

**Patrick Bonin:** So you're saying that you're going to meet your 2030 targets, but Mr. Guilbeault said that, since Mr. Carney came to power, so since you've been Minister of Environment and Climate Change, there have been setbacks in terms of meeting Canada's greenhouse gas reduction target.

Do you agree with him that Canada is falling behind on its 2030 greenhouse gas reduction target, yes or no?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I would say two things.

First of all, he was the minister of environment and climate change before me, under the government of Prime Minister Carney—

**Patrick Bonin:** Minister, give a yes or no answer. I don't have much time. I have a minute and a half.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The other thing I would say is that—

**Patrick Bonin:** Is Canada falling behind on its 2030 greenhouse gas reduction target?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No.

**Patrick Bonin:** You're not backing down, so you don't agree with Mr. Guilbeault on that, do you?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No, I don't agree with him. I think we do things differently. We're trying to work with the provinces—

**Patrick Bonin:** You said no. Thank you. I got an answer.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer says that Canada is falling behind the target. Are you still saying that Canada isn't falling behind the target?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What he also said was that he didn't include the climate competitiveness strategy in his report. Do we have a lot of work to do to continue on this path? Absolutely.

I'm not saying it's easy. What I'm saying is that we—

**Patrick Bonin:** You're talking about your strategy. So you don't agree with the Parliamentary Budget Officer either.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No, that's not what I said.

**Patrick Bonin:** The commissioner of the environment and sustainable development said just recently that Canada is falling behind. Do you disagree with him, as well?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** First of all, what I said is that the—

[*English*]

I'm sorry.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer

[*Translation*]

did not include the new measures proposed in the climate competitiveness strategy. He said so himself.

**Patrick Bonin:** Excuse me, Mr. Chair. The interpretation isn't working. I can't hear anything anymore.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What's going on?

**Patrick Bonin:** You were speaking English, and there was no interpretation. We're going to continue, but there was a moment when I couldn't hear anything.

When did you see the first version of the Canada-Alberta Agreement on French-Language Services?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** So I have—

**Patrick Bonin:** Give me a date, Minister. When was that?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I worked with the Prime Minister, and we continued to do the work—

**Patrick Bonin:** Give me a date.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** We had discussions during—

**Patrick Bonin:** When did you get the first version of the Canada-Alberta Agreement on French-Language Services? That's my question to you, Minister.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What I said was that I was part of the discussions—

**Patrick Bonin:** Can you give me a date, please?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I don't have a date, but I can say that I was part of the discussions, so I—

**Patrick Bonin:** Five days ago, 10 days ago? So you don't have a date. You don't know when you saw the first version of the agreement.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** We've had conversations, and we've been negotiating for months, so I think what you're saying—

**Patrick Bonin:** When did you see the first version of the agreement? Do you have a date?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What I'm saying is that—

**Patrick Bonin:** Did you see it when it was announced that very day?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No, I did not—

**Patrick Bonin:** No, but in cabinet the day before?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What I said was that I was part of the conversations and the negotiations, so we had long conversations.

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

[*English*]

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

**David Bexte (Bow River, CPC):** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, witnesses, for being here today.

Thank you, Minister, for finally appearing. I see that you found time to be at the finance committee on October 20, but you took your time to get here.

Minister, the recent MOU signed with Alberta suggested the immediate suspension of the Clean Electricity Regulations. It wasn't in the Gazette this weekend. When will it come into effect?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The Clean Electricity Regulations are in effect now, but only begin applying in 2035. They were intentionally given a long tail so that all provinces and territories would be able to work towards them.

• (1145)

**David Bexte:** You said 2035.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Yes. In the way the regulation is drafted, 2035 is when they begin to apply.

**David Bexte:** When will it be published?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What I'm saying is that in the memorandum of understanding, the wording is that we and the Province of Alberta have until April 1 to negotiate an agreement to show that they have a pathway to meet the objectives of the regulations.

**David Bexte:** Okay. Then is all of this still under heavy negotiation?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I can read you the exact wording of the agreement—

**David Bexte:** Okay, thank you.

Then we should presume that no elements of this MOU will survive or could survive. Everything is up for negotiation.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No. What I would tell you is that I have the ability to negotiate a pathway to meet the objectives of a regulation with all provinces. I think it's really amazing that Alberta is going to sit down and do that negotiation.

**David Bexte:** You suggested earlier, in your opening remarks, that there was a climate cost of food, yet the industrial carbon tax is still applied to fertilizer production, grain drying, farm equipment, etc. You've made great speeches in the House to the effect that this is not a tax and has no impact on food prices.

Isn't that an oxymoron? I mean, that's ridiculous. You say there's a cost of food for all these other things, yet you're taxing the means of production of food and saying it doesn't impact the price at the grocery store. Can you explain that, please?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I can even provide the studies to this committee, if you want.

**David Bexte:** Would you?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I will, absolutely.

There are studies time and time again, in fact, that say the industrial carbon price does not increase the cost of food.

**David Bexte:** Then what does it impact? Does it just impact the viability of farms, so farms get smaller—

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Emissions are—

No, it actually does not—

**David Bexte:** —and farms consolidate to bigger farms?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** Small farms aren't impacted by the industrial carbon price.

**David Bexte:** They're not impacted by it at all. Then are the carbon taxes that I'm paying as a producer imaginary?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The industrial carbon price applies to large industry. It applies in different ways in different parts of our country—

**David Bexte:** I pay carbon tax on the electricity, equipment and fertilizer that I use to run my farm. Are you saying that's imaginary?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I would love to see how you're breaking that down, but what I am telling you—

**David Bexte:** It's with dollars—real dollars.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** You wouldn't have a line, sir, that says anywhere “industrial carbon price”.

**David Bexte:** Because it's hidden, yes, but the price has gone up on everything.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** It's not hidden. It's not that. I'm just saying that I don't see where you're seeing it.

**David Bexte:** Minister, to the next question, are you constitutionally impaired from saying the word “oil pipeline”?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** That's actually a very funny question.

Does it matter to you what words I use—

**David Bexte:** I appreciate the hilarity of it.

You said that there was a lot of discussion about the pipeline, but a pipeline is a binary thing; either we build a pipeline, or we don't. There's no middle ground.

Do you support a pipeline?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I support our provinces working together. If they want to work together—

No, but that is what the memorandum of understanding with Alberta is about.

**David Bexte:** Ultimately, it leads to a pipeline or no pipeline, one or the other.

Do you support a pipeline?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I support that if the provinces and the indigenous peoples are in agreement then there is a pathway to actually make that happen, but I am not going—

**David Bexte:** To make what happen?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** For a pipeline.

**David Bexte:** Thank you very much, Minister.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** But I think it's really important that I would not override indigenous peoples' agreement, and I would not override the province of British Columbia, which is what the Conservatives say they would do.

**David Bexte:** Does the province of British Columbia have a veto?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The Prime Minister's been clear that the—

**David Bexte:** The Prime Minister has sole responsibility under the Constitution and Bill C-5.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** You are repeating again the Conservative line that you would override the provinces and indigenous people.

**David Bexte:** This is not a Conservative line. This is legislation. It's law.

**Shannon Miedema:** On a point of order, Mr. Chair, there's a lot of interrupting. I think it would be nice to give ample time to respond to questions.

Thank you.

**David Bexte:** I appreciate the point.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** As I said, the Prime Minister's been clear. He said in the House of Commons that there needs to be agreement from the Province of British Columbia and from indigenous peoples. We're not going to override the jurisdiction of our provinces, and we're not going to override the rights of indigenous rights holders.

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

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

**Bruce Fanjoy (Carleton, Lib.):** Thank you, Minister.

The Conservative opposition members here on this committee have made it abundantly clear that they're opposed to all solutions for this ecological challenge that we're facing. They're opposed to market-based solutions, non market-based solutions....

Not only do they not have any of their own; they don't want any other solutions to come forward.

Can you elaborate on how climate action supports good jobs and economic growth and talk about some of the clean energy projects under way that are driving innovation and economic opportunity in Canada?

• (1150)

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** It actually consistently stumps me when I hear the Conservatives saying that they oppose all climate policies, because it's not just about reducing emissions—and we must—and it's not just about the moral obligation to our future generations, which is there.

I worry. We talked about the economic piece, and it is really important that we do, but it's also really important that we don't lose sight of the fact that we have to do this because it's our obligation to all future generations, and it's essential for our country. We are facing wildfires in extreme amounts. We had the second worst wildfire season on record last year, and the worst one was only two years before that.

I don't want people to get the impression that I'm only talking about it from an economic perspective. I think we need to fight climate change, and we must all do it. However, from an economic perspective, it is also important. There are so many opportunities, and why anybody would walk away from those opportunities is truly stunning to me.

Right now, if we look at some of the major projects, for example, that we're seeing come forward, there are projects like Iqaluit hydro. That is Nunavut's first 100% Inuit-owned renewable energy developer. It is going to get Iqaluit off diesel. That's good for the health of the community. It's good for the environment and provides opportunities as that gets built out.

One project that I'm really excited about is high-speed rail. Right now, taking the train between Toronto and Montreal—I can tell you because I have family in Montreal and live in Toronto now—takes a really long time. High-speed rail would cut speeds between Toronto and Quebec. I think three hours is the estimate of what it would take to get between those places.

What that means is that there are jobs in building it, in designing it—all of those parts. There are jobs in the steel that's going to have to get manufactured for that project and for the aluminum that's going to be needed for the construction. It also unlocks such an important economic corridor for us where people can get back and forth quickly and in a low-carbon way between cities so that they can actually commute and work in these cities. It's an easier way to keep people connected.

The job opportunities are sometimes in the construction and in the design, but they're also in what they're unlocking for the future. That's another space.

I'll also talk about a number of the mines that we are seeing go into development. When we're talking about net-zero mines that will mine the products that we need for batteries and for the items that are needed to get to a net-zero economy, again, there are a lot of economic opportunities right through, in mining but also in the next stages where we're building out battery development and manufacturing here in Canada.

All of those are really exciting opportunities. I think we need to keep looking towards ensuring that these opportunities are being made available to Canadians. If we step away from taking climate action, if we step away from climate policy, we are actually taking away these opportunities for Canadians.

**Bruce Fanjoy:** Thank you very much.

How is the government helping farmers take advantage of emerging low-carbon markets and adopting sustainable, fuel-efficient practices?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** We have clean fuel regulations and their job is to make sure that we reduce emissions from the fuels that we use in our country. These regulations also create a huge opportunity for canola, which is an amazing side benefit, and we hear great input from canola farmers that they're excited about those opportunities.

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

The floor is yours, Mr. Ross, for five minutes.

• (1155)

**Ellis Ross (Skeena—Bulkley Valley, CPC):** Thank you, Minister, for coming to our committee meeting.

You mentioned first nations' involvement in this new pipeline—the MOU that Alberta signed with Canada—but you also mentioned that you will not override aboriginal rights and title or rights and title interests, as the Liberal colleagues have also said.

If one first nation out of the many first nations that will be affected by the pipeline and the tanker ban doesn't give their consent, is this project going to end?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** There are a few different pieces to this. One is that the pipeline proposal in this MOU does not actually have a route designed yet. There are a lot of conversations that have to happen.

**Ellis Ross:** Let me put it a different way then. When the Trans Mountain pipeline was approved, many first nations did not give their consent, but the Liberals still approved the project and even bought the project. Is that similar circumstance going to happen with this latest MOU proposal?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** The MOU proposal sets out that we need to see consultation with indigenous peoples. The Prime Minister said that we need agreement from indigenous peoples. That exact process is not part of my day-to-day work on this piece. I am telling you that I think it's very important—

**Ellis Ross:** Actually, Minister, I have to disagree with you there. The Environmental Assessment Act specifically says that it has to deal with rights and title interests. To deflect and say it's somebody else's problem, unless you're insinuating that the Major Projects Office is going to take full control of this process....

I'm asking this. If one first nation along the pipeline route or if one first nation along the tanker ban exemption area does not give their consent, will that be characterized as running roughshod over aboriginal interests?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I'll repeat that any project, specifically as set out in the MOU, would need the agreement of indigenous peoples. I can't engage in hypotheticals because, like I said, we have many steps forward.

**Ellis Ross:** It's not hypothetical, though. The Liberals, with the Trans Mountain pipeline, approved the project even though they didn't have consent from certain first nations, so it's not hypothetical; there's already a precedent.

You've talked a lot about competitiveness, but a lot of the competitiveness and the obstacles you're placing in terms of us being an energy superpower only apply to Canadian suppliers, producers and manufacturers. Is there any legislation or policy coming down from the Liberal government that will actually put the same measures on oil coming from Saudi Arabia or the United States?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** There are two pieces to that. First of all, when it comes to products like LNG and, for example, Asian markets like South Korea, Japan—

**Ellis Ross:** No, I asked about oil from Saudi Arabia.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** If I can say this because you were talking about restrictions or the like, whatever you were saying there—

**Ellis Ross:** I want to know if oil from Saudi Arabia or from the United States will be subject to the same measures you're putting on Canadian suppliers.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I was trying to say—because the first part you were saying was that they're Canadian pieces—when it comes to LNG, for example, there are actual rules—

**Ellis Ross:** No. I'm not talking about LNG. I'm talking about oil. Oil from Saudi Arabia comes to Canada, but it's not subject to the penalties that your Liberal government is placing on Canadian oil. Are there going to be measures put on Saudi Arabian oil or oil from the United States that is currently coming into Canada?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** First of all, as Minister of the Environment, I'm not the person who's managing imports, but what I will say is that in the export markets—with all of our products and all of our energy products—there are actual bona fide rules being put in place by the jurisdictions to which we're seeking to export. They are asking for low methane. They're asking for it to be lower carbon. If we are looking to any market for any of our products, that's what we're seeing.

• (1200)

**Ellis Ross:** Okay, Minister, I can agree that you're not the minister responsible for importing, but you are the minister responsible for climate change action, as the Liberal government has put forward. It doesn't seem to apply to anybody except Canadian producers and suppliers, though. It will not apply to Saudi Arabia, and it will not apply to the United States.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I would say that the world is moving towards the low-carbon economy, and Canada has to be ready to meet that moment.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

[*Translation*]

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

**Eric St-Pierre:** Good morning. Thank you for being here.

I'm going to avoid getting all worked up, and I'm going to ask my questions nicely.

We've talked a bit about industrial carbon pricing.

Minister, can you comment on how Canadian businesses can innovate and adopt cleaner technologies through industrial pricing?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What we see with industrial carbon pricing is that it gives industries reasons to look at what they can do, not just to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, but to find other ways to innovate. I'll use the example of our methane regulations. In Canada, we have several companies that are truly global leaders in reducing methane emissions and detecting methane leaks.

In Montreal, there's the example of GHGSat, a company that's very active in detecting methane leaks, which helps people and

companies respond more quickly. At one point, GHGSat was one of the 100 largest clean-tech companies. It was a global leader, and it's based in Montreal.

When we have regulations that stem from a need, it also creates a market for these technologies. That means that we can see, here in Canada, that companies are advancing in innovation for these markets. We see it. I think we need to continue doing that work.

**Eric St-Pierre:** Thank you.

GHGSat is a very innovative company in Montreal. As Montrealers, we are therefore very proud to have innovative companies like that one.

Earlier, you commented on industrial carbon pricing, citing studies that show that it doesn't increase the cost of food, for example.

Can you submit one of those reports to the committee? Can you comment on one in more detail?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** There are several things I can say.

At a committee meeting—I think it was at the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food—even the president of Costco said that climate change had the greatest impact on the cost of food, not industrial carbon pricing.

I want to start by saying that, when the cost of food goes up, a lot of people in the industry say it's because of climate change. However, when it comes to industrial pricing, a report from the Canadian Climate Institute gives really good examples of how little impact it has on the cost of food.

I'm very happy to provide the committee with a copy of that report, because I think it's important. There's a lot of misinformation about why food prices are going up. It's not industrial carbon pricing. However, if we do nothing, climate change will have the greatest impact.

**Eric St-Pierre:** Thank you. You're right that there's a lot of misinformation. We often hear it in the House as well.

Last week, I went from Montreal to Toronto for a conference. I took the train, and it took me six hours. I'm glad to hear that high-speed rail will reduce that to three hours.

In 30 seconds, can you comment on the economic benefits we could derive from the Alto project?

• (1205)

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I think one of the best and most exciting examples of major projects stemming from the Building Canada Act is really high-speed rail.

First, it shows how we can create more connectivity between two provinces, Ontario and Quebec. It also shows how we can help people come together quickly and comfortably. As I say every time, right now, the train ride from Toronto to Montreal takes more than six hours.

It will also reduce emissions. It's going to create a lot of construction jobs and use Canadian aluminum and steel.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

Mr. Bonin, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

**Patrick Bonin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, although Mr. Guilbeault says it's dishonest to tell Canadians that Canada can meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets for 2030, you say it's possible.

Concretely, how are you going to manage that? When can we expect you to show us something that will make us believe you?

I would like to believe you, but all we can see are setbacks. I'm not the only one saying this. That's also what Mr. Guilbeault, the Parliamentary Budget Officer, and the commissioner of the environment and sustainable development are saying.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** First of all, I never said that Mr. Guilbeault was dishonest. I want to make that clear. I have a lot of respect for Mr. Guilbeault. I didn't use those words. I want to make it very clear that I never said that.

**Patrick Bonin:** He's the one who says you're being dishonest when you say you're going to meet the targets.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** What I've said repeatedly is that we have big ambitions for these targets. We knew when we set them that it would be difficult. We also need every province to do its part to meet these targets.

However, we can do that. We have to try to do that. I hope that everyone here around the table agrees that we should continue to do this work.

**Patrick Bonin:** How can we believe you, Minister? When are you going to show us something that proves you right, when everyone says that Canada is falling behind?

The world sees you backing down.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** In the climate competitiveness strategy, we've already indicated that we're going to strengthen pricing—

**Patrick Bonin:** Can you show us how much the climate competitiveness strategy will reduce greenhouse gas emissions? Can you submit a document?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** We will be tabling a document before the end of the year on progress in connection with our greenhouse gas reduction plan. This is something that—

**Patrick Bonin:** So, by the end of the year, you're going to present us with a document that shows that Canada can meet its target.

Is that correct?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I'm sorry. Who is showing what?

**Patrick Bonin:** By the end of the year, you're going to table a document that will show that Canada is able to meet its 2030 reduction target.

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** It will show where we stand, and it's my job to continue to do the work.

The other choice is not to try. That's not a choice for our country.

**Patrick Bonin:** You know very well where I stand on this matter. We're asking you to do the work, but it's not happening right now.

Have you assessed the impact of removing the clean electricity regulations on greenhouse gas emissions reductions? How much will removing regulations increase emissions?

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** I don't agree with the word “remove”. That's why I always say that, according to our regulations, even when it comes to industrial pricing, I can make agreements with provinces on how to achieve the objectives.

**Patrick Bonin:** However, with Alberta, you're going to remove it. It's in your—

**Hon. Julie Dabrusin:** No.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Patrick Bonin:** Is my time up already, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** Yes.

[*English*]

I would like to thank the minister for this appearance. The officials will remain for the remainder of the meeting.

The meeting will briefly suspend.

• (1205)

(Pause)

• (1215)

**The Chair:** The meeting is resumed.

[*Translation*]

The committee is resuming its study of the supplementary estimates (B) 2025-26.

Instead of continuing, I decided to start over so that I could give all committee members six minutes.

We'll start again with the Conservative Party.

[*English*]

Mr. Ross, the floor is yours for six minutes.

**Ellis Ross:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In terms of the implementation of the budget and whatnot, I'm still kind of hazy on how we deal with aboriginal issues within the context of the government dealing with, say, major projects in Canada. Can one of the witnesses describe to me how that's dealt with, and what kinds of costs and what kinds of resources are put toward that?

**Terence Hubbard (President, Impact Assessment Agency of Canada):** Thank you for the question.

We have a well-defined process and approach for fulfilling our obligations, both our legal duty to consult and also the government's commitments under the UN declaration.

As you noted earlier in your remarks to the minister, through the Impact Assessment Act, there are many specific provisions and commitments throughout the assessment of major projects that are articulated to support fulfillment of these obligations.

Through the creation of Bill C-5 and the creation of the Major Projects Office, the government has been very clear that both its commitment to our legal obligations—legal duty to consult—and our commitments to the UNDA continue to hold.

Through our assessment process on major projects, we are committed to striving to achieve consent, and there's a well-defined approach and process through the assessment process to achieve these objectives.

• (1220)

**Ellis Ross:** Thank you for bringing up Bill C-5 and the Major Projects Office, because that was in my next question. It's my understanding that the Major Projects Office will not have any substance underneath it to fulfill the obligations that it's been tasked with.

I'm assuming that the Major Projects Office will rely heavily on the existing processes to deal with those legislative requirements, and also the regulatory requirements, for that matter. Am I correct? Or is the Major Projects Office going to develop its own procedures and regulations and whatnot?

**Terence Hubbard:** I think it's a combination. Through the new legislative framework, there are specific procedures and steps the government must take in designating a process.

**Ellis Ross:** Would the Major Projects Office develop its own regulations in response to fast-tracking or rely heavily on existing legislation regulations?

**Terence Hubbard:** Both, because there are new steps that are taken into consideration, and a government decision to designate a project under Bill C-5—

**Ellis Ross:** Oh. I see—

**Terence Hubbard:** —but if something is designated under Bill C-5—

**Ellis Ross:** That's more enabling legislation, though, and I don't think they're going to rework the existing legislation or regulations.

**Terence Hubbard:** Right. Once a project is designated under Bill C-5, if that were to happen, processes and approaches, including the Impact Assessment Act if it were to apply in the absence of Bill C-5, would continue to apply moving forward. Those same approaches and processes that we have in place would continue to apply.

**Ellis Ross:** Okay. Thank you.

The projected window is two years in terms of fast-tracking, and it's still to be determined if the pipeline from Alberta to B.C. will be fast-tracked. That's not a definite. There are a lot of ifs and ands in

that MOU, but in terms of fast-tracking, has your department been told about fast-tracking first nations interests in relation to this pipeline in the two-year window?

**Terence Hubbard:** We have adopted a service standard of two years, not just for projects that undergo Bill C-5, but for all major projects, all projects that are subject to the Impact Assessment Act.

We are working towards being able to deliver assessments within a two-year timeline, including our legal duty to consult and our commitments to indigenous groups as part of these assessment processes.

**Ellis Ross:** The two-year timeline you're talking about, that's just a guideline, though. That's not a set time limit, right?

**Terence Hubbard:** The legislation, our legislation, has maximum timelines established in the legislative framework. We're setting certain standards within those—

**Ellis Ross:** A maximum timeline for aboriginal rights and title consultation and accommodation to be concluded...? There's a two-year time limit...?

**Terence Hubbard:** Not in the legislative framework, no.

**Ellis Ross:** In the regulatory framework...

**Terence Hubbard:** No, but there is a maximum timeline within the legislation. Within that legislative timeline, we are establishing service standards of two years that will apply for all major projects.

**Ellis Ross:** Okay, but I'm talking about—

**Terence Hubbard:** We are designing an engineering process.

**Ellis Ross:** Okay, but I'm talking about aboriginal rights and title consultation accommodation. However, you just said that there's a maximum timeline for aboriginal rights and title issues within that. Is there a time limit, a two-year time limit, for aboriginal issues under the fast-tracking proposal in the nation-building Bill C-5? Is there a time limit for aboriginal rights and title issues to be resolved?

**Terence Hubbard:** The government is committed to a two-year service standard for reviewing all major projects, including consultation obligations.

**Ellis Ross:** I understand that, but the specific question is this: Is there a time limit for aboriginal rights and title consultation obligations?

**Terence Hubbard:** There is a target, a service standard, yes, of two years.

**Ellis Ross:** However, it's not a hard target. It can't be a hard target.

**Terence Hubbard:** It's a service standard, right? So, that's not a legislative timeline.

**Ellis Ross:** I understand that, but it's not a hard target because you can't put an arbitrary time limit on rights and title interests. You can't do that. The case law is pretty clear on that.

**Terence Hubbard:** We have a goal. It's a goal. Let's understand that.

**Ellis Ross:** I understand that. I get that. It's probably aspirational. I get all the political terms. However, there is no hard line on addressing and resolving aboriginal rights and title issues. Is there?

**Terence Hubbard:** As I mentioned, we aim to carry out these consultations and deliver our process within two years. We will be aiming to fulfill our obligations within that two-year service standard, but there may be situations in which we would consider deviations.

• (1225)

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

Thank you, Mr. Hubbard.

The floor is yours, Mrs. Miedema, for six minutes.

**Shannon Miedema:** Thank you very much.

Thanks to all of you for coming today.

I would like to first talk about an issue that's had a huge impact on my community in Halifax and, of course, across Canada, and that's the rising rate of wildfires in our country that pose a real threat to the health and well-being of all Canadians.

One of the major threats to public health, particularly the health of our firefighters, is exposure to toxic flame retardants found in household products.

I think this might be a question for Ms. Johnson.

Can you describe what federal actions are being taken by the department in partnership with Health Canada to address this issue?

**Mollie Johnson (Deputy Minister, Department of the Environment):** Thanks very much for the question. I actually will pass it over to my colleague, Megan Nichols, to speak a bit about our chemical management plan and some of the work that we're doing there.

**Megan Nichols (Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Protection Branch, Department of the Environment):** Certainly.

Our chemical management plan has been in place for many years now, and it helps to ensure that we have a solid risk management framework in place for any substance that could have deleterious effects on human health or the environment. In conjunction with Health Canada, we have put in place tools for hundreds of substances over the years to make sure that we are protecting our human health and environment from these types of chemicals. It applies to a very wide range of things that are listed under our Canadian Environmental Protection Act, which then enables us to put in place measures—sometimes it's regulations, but sometimes it's voluntary agreements with industry—and a wide range of tools.

**Shannon Miedema:** Those flame retardants are part of that work. Okay.

**Megan Nichols:** That's right. We actually just recently put in place a new state of the science report on what we call the PFAS, the forever chemicals. That will enable us to put in place a phased approach to dealing with PFAS over time. We already have some measures in place to deal with the most egregious firefighting foams, but we will be able, under the new regulations that we're bringing forward, to make sure that all firefighting foams are cov-

ered over time, and then we will continue to extend the approach to other substances where PFAS are found.

**Shannon Miedema:** Okay, that's excellent. Thank you.

In 2023, Parliament passed Bill C-226, the National Strategy Respecting Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice Act. Work to address environmental racism in our country actually started with, or largely started with, detailed research and community engagement that was done by Dr. Ingrid Waldron in my province of Nova Scotia.

Bill C-226 aims to correct historical injustices by addressing the disproportionate impacts of pollution on marginalized communities, which has happened in Nova Scotia and across the country. Despite the bill's passing into law, many Canadians don't understand exactly what environmental racism means. In fact, there's a report for Nova Scotia that hasn't yet been made public, that is with officials there now.

Can one of you please explain the value of this law in protecting the health of Canadians and explain what environmental racism means?

**Alison McDermott (Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy and International Affairs Branch, Department of the Environment):** At a really high level, the act is designed to help ensure that Canada avoids instances of environmental racism, works to prevent those from occurring and addresses instances or occurrences that are there.

You did ask for a bit of a definition of what environmental racism is. It's essentially the connection between instances of... It's the intersection between sociological and other factors and instances of adverse environmental conditions.

**Shannon Miedema:** An example would be perpetually siting landfills adjacent to certain communities over other communities, which has happened in Nova Scotia.

Can you provide this committee with an update on the status of the federal implementation of the law?

**Alison McDermott:** Certainly. The government started some early engagement last fall, but some of that was suspended during the writ period. That has resumed, so engagement has been occurring since this fall. Studies are under way, because one of the components of the requirements under the law is to conduct a study. That work's under way, and some early engagement with interested parties has begun to discuss the methodology for that work.

The plan is to have some draft material to share so that we can have more formal consultation begin on the planned approach to addressing environmental racism. That will happen in the early months of the winter. The requirement is to table a strategy by the spring or summer. We're on track to do that.

• (1230)

**Shannon Miedema:** Excellent. Thank you.

Mr. Hubbard, Wind West provides Atlantic Canada with a great opportunity to grow our economy and renewable energy capacity. How will the recent changes made to the IAAC and the creation of the MPO help better facilitate these kinds of projects?

**Terence Hubbard:** One of the big changes we're moving forward on to be able to support the development of these projects is pursuing co-operation and collaboration agreements with provincial governments across the country, as well as the two-year service standard I mentioned earlier, to be able to provide certainty, clarity and predictability on how these processes are going to operate.

It will enable us to focus federally on core areas within federal jurisdiction, ensure that we have a rigorous and robust assessment of those key issues, including related consultations, and provide predictability and certainty for those investors.

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

[Translation]

Mr. Bonin, you have the floor for six minutes.

**Patrick Bonin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for being here.

The agreement between Canada and Alberta refers to an increase in the transportation capacity of the Trans Mountain pipeline from 300,000 to 400,000 barrels a day.

If there's no carbon capture and sequestration, how much greenhouse gas would an increase of 300,000 to 400,000 barrels a day of oil from the oil sands correspond to, on average?

[English]

**Mollie Johnson:** I don't have those numbers with me, but we'd be able to provide something to the committee.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin:** You'll be able to provide us with that data. Could you also provide us with the assessment for the pipeline project of one million barrels a day, so that we have all the figures?

[English]

**Mollie Johnson:** Yes, I'd be happy to do that.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin:** Okay.

Regarding the Pathways Plus carbon capture and sequestration project, which is also part of the agreement and is a flagship project of the government—there are tax credits—are you able to say what greenhouse gas emission reductions are expected?

[English]

**Mollie Johnson:** I don't have those numbers with me, but the idea is to bring down the emissions intensity associated with the oil in the oil sands.

Again, there is no project at this point related to the pipeline and we don't have the details related to the Pathways project. We can provide estimates back to the committee.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin:** Are you saying you don't have them, or are you saying you can't provide them to us?

[English]

**Mollie Johnson:** I don't have them with me, but I'm happy to share information with the committee as it is available.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin:** Okay. Thank you.

The agreement between Canada and Alberta includes the idea of removing regulations on clean electricity in Alberta.

Can you tell us which emissions are linked to electricity generation in Alberta today and what the impact would be if these regulations were removed, as planned?

[English]

**Mollie Johnson:** As the minister said when she was here, what we have right now is an agreement between Alberta and Canada to try to find a pathway to secure an agreement. At this stage, we have a lot of work to do.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin:** I'm sorry, but I'm going to rephrase my question.

What are Alberta's greenhouse gas emissions related to electricity generation today?

[English]

**Mollie Johnson:** I don't have those numbers here with me. What I am saying is that we are in a process where we have a significant amount of work to do with the Province of Alberta to get to an agreement to get—

• (1235)

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin:** So you don't know at all.

Has anyone in the department assessed—

[English]

**Alison McDermott:** As the minister said, the clean electricity regulations are not binding on the province until 2035. The effective impact of that on the province now would be zero.

[Translation]

**Patrick Bonin:** You're telling me that abandoning regulations, if necessary, would have no impact on greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 or even by 2035. Is that correct?

[English]

**Alison McDermott:** That's for the moment.

[Translation]

You asked me what the impact of regulatory emissions was this year, and I said that there was no impact this year.

**Patrick Bonin:** I'm not talking about this year. I'm talking about the greenhouse gas reduction targets for 2030. I'm talking about an action plan where there are emissions regulations. If Alberta no longer has this obligation to reduce its emissions, what will the impact be on achieving your 2030 targets?

**Alison McDermott:** As the minister said, we will be talking to the Government of Alberta to see what measures will be taken—

**Patrick Bonin:** I'm sorry, but the question isn't whether you'll have discussions.

**Alison McDermott:** So it's impossible to know now what the effects will be—

**Patrick Bonin:** I want to make it clear that no one in the department—

**Alison McDermott:** —before we have that agreement.

**Patrick Bonin:** Okay.

So there's an agreement with Alberta. Mr. Guilbeault, the former environment minister and former heritage minister, says that, for him, it's too much. He says that this is the last straw, particularly because the clean electricity regulations are too important.

However, you're telling me that this is part of an agreement between Canada and Alberta and that no one in the department or in the government has assessed its impact. Mr. Guilbeault, the honourable member for Laurier—Sainte-Marie, is getting all worked up.

Can you give us that assessment? What happens if Alberta....

Half of the greenhouse gas emissions in electricity in Canada come from Alberta.

[*English*]

**Mollie Johnson:** To be clear, the impacts associated with the CER are clearly laid out in the RIAS, which is the regulatory impact analysis statement. Those are transparently available for all folks. That will set out what the emissions impacts are in Alberta when the CER comes into effect on January 1, 2035. Then that would—

[*Translation*]

**Patrick Bonin:** So you don't know.

[*English*]

**Mollie Johnson:** No, no, it's there. We're happy to share that information and the RIAS with it. I don't have it right here in front of me, but I'm happy to share that information with you.

Megan, I don't know if you have any additional information.

**Megan Nichols:** Again, I don't have the document in front of me.

[*Translation*]

However, I believe it's about 100 megatonnes by 2050.

**Patrick Bonin:** I'm sorry. By when?

**The Chair:** Give a brief answer, please.

**Megan Nichols:** I don't have the document, but if I remember correctly, it's about 100 megatonnes by 2050.

**Patrick Bonin:** It's 182 million tonnes—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

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

**David Bexte:** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, officials, for being here today, still.

I'll go on a little bit of a different angle for ECCC officials.

Out of 371 grants and contributions that Environment Canada gave in 2025, are any of the recipient organizations connected to Brookfield?

**Linda Drainville (Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Services and Financial Management Branch, Department of the Environment):** No. None of them.

**David Bexte:** Zero?

**Linda Drainville:** Zero.

**David Bexte:** Not one subsidiary or any—

**Linda Drainville:** No. Not one.

**David Bexte:** Nothing.

**Linda Drainville:** Yes.

**David Bexte:** Okay.

What was the total dollar value of projects funded by grants and contributions from Environment Canada?

**Linda Drainville:** Do you mean from the beginning of the fiscal year?

**David Bexte:** I mean for 2024-25.

**Linda Drainville:** If you will give me a second, I have that information.

**David Bexte:** Maybe simplify it with a little bit of a subset. Of those contributions, what were from projects abroad?

**Linda Drainville:** I have this, if you can give me 30 seconds. I think we are talking about—

**David Bexte:** I don't have 30 seconds. I have very limited time.

**Linda Drainville:** I can take two seconds.

About \$38 million went out last year.

**David Bexte:** It was \$38 million?

**Linda Drainville:** Let me double-check just to make sure I'm giving you the right information. It's about \$40 million.

**David Bexte:** Could you table that with the committee, please?

**Linda Drainville:** Yes, we can table that.

**David Bexte:** That includes recipients and mission mandates.

**Linda Drainville:** Yes.

**David Bexte:** Last year at committee, my Conservative colleague from Peace River—Westlock pointed to the fact that many of the grants and contributions from Environment Canada were being sent to American universities, adding up to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Has the department rectified this at all? Has it clarified the purpose or redirected funds domestically to Canadian universities?

• (1240)

**Linda Drainville:** I cannot answer that question. We'd need to look at that one by one.

**David Bexte:** Can you follow up with a written response, please?

**Linda Drainville:** Yes, definitely.

**David Bexte:** Is the department currently working on ways to increase the accuracy and transparency in its modelling? This changed angle a bit. In the modelling work that's being done, there's a lot of uncertainty in how good those models are and whether they're fit for purpose.

What is Environment Canada doing to fix that?

**Alison McDermott:** We're continuing to work with partners in the government, in provincial governments and in academia. There are modelling workshops taking place. Yes, we are continuing to work on the quality of our model estimates.

We've invested in—

**David Bexte:** When do you expect that to be completed, or to be able to offer an improved or useful model?

**Alison McDermott:** Some of those improvements have already been incorporated into our models. We are releasing the latest set of projections at the end of December.

**David Bexte:** The commissioner's most recent audit found that Environment and Climate Change has still not identified which specific measures are essential to meeting the government's emissions reduction targets. He raised the very same concern the year before, in 2023. This means that it is a repeated deficiency and there's been no demonstrated improvement.

Given that, your department can't say which policies are driving results, whatever the metrics are.

**Alison McDermott:** There are challenges in isolating the GHG reduction impacts of individual measures just because of the nature of the....

No country releases individual estimates of GHG reductions associated with individual measures in their climate plans, because it's a very difficult modelling exercise. This is due to the interactive impacts between the measures and because of the complementarities. It makes it hard to distill the impact of individual measures, but what we can do is—

**David Bexte:** Can I interrupt, please?

That illustrates exactly the point of hanging all of these projections and legislation on the models that are broken and don't work.

**Alison McDermott:** The models are not broken. What we're saying is that it's much harder to have accurate estimates of individual measures.

**David Bexte:** Yes, but you're impacting individual industries and individual Canadians.

**Alison McDermott:** Collective contributions of entire packages of measures are models. When we release our projections at the end of the year, you'll be able to look at how they compare with other private sector models and the estimates of the PBO, the Climate Institute and so on.

**David Bexte:** Thank you.

I'm going to move to the Impact Assessment Agency. Is it customary to have many of your department grants and contributions given to individuals, rather than organizations? How many individuals receive grants for the policy dialogue program and similar programs?

**Terence Hubbard:** We'll have to follow up to give an exact breakdown.

**David Bexte:** Table that, please, with the committee.

Thank you, Chair.

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

The floor is yours, Mr. Grant, for five minutes.

**Wade Grant:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, all, for being here.

It's good to see you, Mr. Hubbard. I want to follow up on my colleague Mr. Ross's conversation with you about indigenous title and rights.

You said we don't have a prescriptive way of addressing those as targets and whatnot. Why do we have a target, rather than a prescriptive drop-dead date? What's the importance of that when it comes to relationship building between first nations, Inuit, Métis and the government?

**Terence Hubbard:** We have more than 600 nations across the country, each with their own approaches and processes. We found that in developing our relationships, we really need to sit down and work constructively to develop a meaningful consultation approach and dialogue.

What works in one part of the country or with one nation doesn't necessarily work with another. As part of a well-established and defined approach, following numerous court decisions and jurisprudence and following policy commitments that have been made, developing a community-by-community approach allows us to adjust our approach to meet the needs and desires of communities in how they want to be engaged and how they want to be consulted within our processes. That is core to developing a meaningful consultation approach.

We do that nation by nation as part of our processes, while we have clear service standards and a two-year commitment. Within those service standards, there are core parts of the process that we define timelines around. This provides certainty not only for businesses, but for the nations we're working with on expectations and how they can best organize themselves to participate within our processes.

• (1245)

**Wade Grant:** That's great. Thank you. It's about mutual respect and recognition of the relationship.

I'll move on with my questions for the panel.

I noticed a part of the supplementary estimates that is particularly interesting to me on this file. It's a \$673-million commitment to funding Canada's international climate finance program. Could somebody tell us a bit more about this program and how it helps countries transition towards low-carbon economies while strengthening Canada's international reputation?

**Mollie Johnson:** Part of what we do when we are in international engagement with other jurisdictions, through our work at the UNFCCC and other places, is to work with partner countries to find opportunities to lower emissions through international organizations and direct work with countries. It's part of a program that we have with Global Affairs Canada as well.

This has been very successful in supporting the reduction of megatonnes around the world. I think this really speaks to the fact that the challenge of climate change is one of the global commons.

Canada has a role to play, but we alone are not going to solve an issue that is directly impacting us and our changing climate and imposing direct costs on us as a nation. Our work on international climate finance and climate change is really important in being able to support others in taking action.

**Wade Grant:** Thank you very much.

We've heard the minister speak about the \$2.75 billion allocated to ECCC and SSC to acquire a new high-power computing solutions. Can you tell us more about what that is and how it's helping ECCC and the Meteorological Service of Canada prepare Canadians for a rapidly changing environment?

**Mollie Johnson:** I would say the first thing my father said to me when I came to the job, which was, "Cool, you've got the weather."

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mollie Johnson:** When people think about environment in Canada and climate change, they think about the Meteorological Service of Canada. There is just a huge amount of data that ECCC and the MSC absorb every single day and, in doing that in an AI-rich environment with computing power, we need to have that computing power in order to do that in a reliable way.

It's not just what's going to everybody's cellphones. It's what's going to support our military and our Coast Guard, and it's also connecting with the Canadian Space Agency to support earth observation data as well.

This investment is what's positioning Canada to have the best kind of data to support us, to support our sovereign interests and to position us to reliably take care of our country and be a good partner in the world.

**Wade Grant:** Thank you very much.

Another part I'd like to ask about is the \$13-million increase in contributions to the energy innovation program. Would you be able to expand on what that program does and how it helps Canada

maintain a reliable and affordable energy system while moving towards a low-carbon economy, please?

**Mollie Johnson:** We might need to get back to you on that one, if that's possible. It's under our low-carbon economy fund, but on the exact details of the program, we'd be happy to get back to you. This is a program whereby we're able to provide funds back to provinces and territories and work in partnership with them to support their transition to a low-carbon economy.

Thank you.

**Wade Grant:** Okay. That's great.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**Wade Grant:** I don't have any more questions.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Bonin, you have the floor for two and a half minutes.

**Patrick Bonin:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would be happy to take my colleague's 30 seconds, if possible, of course.

I'd like to return to the budget. The latest budget mentions tax credits for carbon capture and sequestration, as well as an extension. Are you aware of the financial impact of what is planned for the period from 2030 to 2035? How much money does this increase represent? Officials told us it was \$3 billion. Do you have the same figure?

**Alison McDermott:** I'm not aware of the impact of the tax credits on an individual basis, but I believe the Department of Finance has estimated an increase in the investment required for these tax credits at about \$70,000.

• (1250)

**Patrick Bonin:** Did you say "\$70,000"?

**Alison McDermott:** I'm sorry. I meant to say "\$70 billion".

**Patrick Bonin:** Okay.

With regard to the cost of the tax credits, can you tell us what the figures are for the changes to carbon capture and sequestration in the latest budget?

I understand that you may not have those figures with you, but you can submit a document.

**Alison McDermott:** I think that's a question better answered by the Department of Finance.

**Patrick Bonin:** Okay, but can you check? It's your main measure, after all. Thank you.

The two billion trees program has been cut. The government now says it will plant one billion trees. There was \$3.2 billion in that program. Can you tell us how much of that has been spent to date?

Also, how much do you estimate it will cost to plant one billion trees, half of two billion originally planned? What will happen to the rest of the money? I imagine there is or will be some left over.

**Alison McDermott:** Unfortunately, this falls under the responsibility of Natural Resources Canada, but we can try to get the answer.

**Patrick Bonin:** Yes, thank you very much.

We also see that there are 15% cuts at the Department of the Environment. If I'm not mistaken, you're saying that there will be a reduction or elimination of program activities that aren't part of Environment Canada's core mandate.

What activities aren't part of the core mandate? Also, is there a mandate letter?

[*English*]

**Mollie Johnson:** The results of the comprehensive expenditure review will be in the main estimates. We look forward to coming back and speaking about the details when they are tabled in the main estimates in March.

The year-over-year reductions are available to you in the budget. I won't repeat them, but I'm happy to, if that is helpful. We do have a reduction of about 15%. The key items in there, as you noted, are reducing and winding down—

[*Translation*]

**Patrick Bonin:** Mr. Chair, the interpretation isn't working anymore.

**The Chair:** Your time is up, Mr. Bonin.

**Patrick Bonin:** There was no interpretation for the entire answer.

**The Chair:** That's your time, anyway.

**Patrick Bonin:** Okay, but I didn't get an answer.

**The Chair:** Can we check the interpretation?

**Patrick Bonin:** I think someone would need to speak in English.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Testing—one, two.

[*Translation*]

**Patrick Bonin:** It's working again. However, the whole answer—

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Ms. Johnson, can you repeat your response, please?

Thank you.

**Mollie Johnson:** We will return with the details of the comprehensive expenditure review when they are tabled in the main estimates. I'll be able to do a breakdown at that point. I believe you have the numbers that were tabled, the fiscal profile that was in the budget of how those will impact the department. I'll be happy to talk about them then.

I would say that on the 15% reduction that has us focused on core mandate, we'll be looking at operational efficiencies and how we're able to do our work in a more effective way, but that 15% is not a target at Environment and Climate Change. It is consistent if you look at the other departments that are similar in size, medium-sized economic departments. We are really looking at about the same size as equal departments.

Thank you.

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

**Branden Leslie:** Mr. Chair, before we start the clock, perhaps I could get some clarity. Is this the last round of this meeting, or is there another round due to the late start?

**The Chair:** It's Conservatives, Liberals—

**Branden Leslie:** Like, 15 minutes; the meeting started two minutes late because the minister didn't show up on time.

**Eric St-Pierre:** It was 30 seconds.

**Branden Leslie:** Well, it was 11:02 when we started.

**The Chair:** This would be the last round.

**Branden Leslie:** This is the last round? Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to start with a question that the minister did not answer effectively during her time here. At the International Maritime Organization, this federal Liberal government voted in favour of what will be up to a \$500-per-tonne carbon tax. Has the department done any sort of modelling regarding this tax in terms of what the average cost would be for Canadians?

**Mollie Johnson:** This file is led by our colleagues at the Department of Transport. I think inquiring of them would be the right way to go.

**Branden Leslie:** Okay.

In terms of emissions reductions planning, if that were to go into place, would Canada take any credit for any emissions that were reduced from the tax?

• (1255)

**Mollie Johnson:** I don't have the answer to that. We will work collaboratively with our colleagues in the other department to support them. At this stage, I don't have an answer to provide you with.

**Branden Leslie:** Okay.

Picking up on my colleague's questions regarding some of the policies that are being removed, I know that it's 2035 for the introduction of the clean electricity regulations. Has there been modelling done as part of the 2035 to 2050 emissions reduction plan, because I know we're doing this in segments, if specifically Alberta were not to have that come into place in 2035 and/or if there were carve-outs for other provinces and/or the entire country post-2035? What impact would that have on our 2040 and/or 2050 emissions reduction targets?

**Mollie Johnson:** For precision, are you asking about carve-outs related to the clean electricity regulations?

**Branden Leslie:** Yes, as per the MOU with Alberta from last week.

**Mollie Johnson:** To be clear, all of the data related to megatonnes based on what exists right now is in the RIAS that is public and transparently available. That is thing one.

With respect to any changes related to that, we have a lot of work to do with Alberta to determine what the path forward looks like to be able to determine if there would be adjustments to our megatonne allocation associated with that measure. The MOU does say that it is TIER and other related rules that we are going to have to assess as we are doing that work with them up to April 1.

I am not in any way trying to be difficult, but we do really understand that we have some work to do.

**Branden Leslie:** Okay.

Let's get more right in front of us the things that are in place. My colleague was talking about the two billion trees. We have the EV mandate that's on pause. We have the removal of the consumer carbon tax. We have now, as per the document with Alberta—the MOU—the oil and gas cap that will be lifted.

Collectively, have we done any modelling as to what the goal is and what the track is and what all these changes do to where we're actually planning to be?

**Mollie Johnson:** There's a lot of work we need to do to make sure we are securing the megatonnes that are part of the emissions reduction plan.

I would take industrial carbon pricing as an example there. There's work to do to make sure that measure, which we've learned from the lessons of implementing it, works the way we want it to work. That is something Alberta has agreed to. That's something the budget committed to: a national approach to doing that and transparency around how the backstop is going to be implemented, so that's going to get to securing the megatonnes there.

The second part is that the government is required to, and will, table the emissions reduction plan progress report this month. We'll be doing that here. That will talk about both where the government is in terms of its targets and what it will take to achieve 2030. That will provide the information that I think a number of members around this table are looking for, which we'll be very happy to share and then come back and talk about.

**Branden Leslie:** Okay.

You mentioned the gap and you talked about strengthening the industrial carbon tax as a way to make that up. What other big ideas is the department working on? Unless everybody else is wrong and the minister tried to say she is right, we are not going to hit these targets, and we have had a weakening of a number of policies that were aimed at achieving them.

What big idea is the department working on to try to actually achieve those targets by 2030 or 2040?

**Mollie Johnson:** In looking at the climate competitiveness strategy, the big thing is working with the private sector and with the

investments in clean technology and ensuring it is going to take a big lift to get there and to decarbonize, but the thing we need to focus on is how we reduce emissions on these things, and that's coming from the 300 methane companies that are supporting sectors in reducing—

**Branden Leslie:** Are there any specific policies you'd like to mention that are—

**Mollie Johnson:** Investment in clean technology, RD and D—those are all things that are actually going to get emissions down while supporting our resource sectors.

**Branden Leslie:** Switching tracks entirely, have there been any ECCC employees seconded to the MPO?

**Mollie Johnson:** We have been talking about that. I'm not sure what the status of the agreement is, but we are supporting them and doing the assessments and work that they need to do.

**Branden Leslie:** Okay.

In terms of the EV mandate, Ms. Nichols, you had spoken last time you were here about the ability to have much more choice with the EV mandate in place. We've had other testimony that has made it clear there are 110 EV models already available without the mandate currently in place.

Could you explain to me how a future ban on gas-powered vehicles will actually increase choice for consumers?

**Megan Nichols:** Oh, time's up.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Megan Nichols:** I'll start by saying that the policy is currently under review, so we are making sure it remains fit for purpose, but I would also add that while there are more and more models available, they are not yet available in all segments that are of interest to consumers, so we still have a way to go in increasing the variety of models.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Fanjoy, the floor is yours.

**Bruce Fanjoy:** Thank you, witnesses.

My riding straddles urban Ottawa and rural Ottawa, so I get to see and spend a lot of time driving distances in the country. We have a lot of farmers in the riding, and I think it's important we note that solutions that work in built-up areas of the country may need to work differently in rural parts of the country.

I'd like you to elaborate on how some of the new estimates can be applied in rural parts of the country to help our citizens there.

• (1300)

**Mollie Johnson:** I think what's important is that how the rules are applied and how things.... We heard, in terms of market availability, some of the expectations in terms of electric vehicles. One would expect that those first are going to be applied in urban centres and that there will be time and build-out. There are a number of programs, including the program for electric vehicle charging stations and some of those pieces; more retail measures available from Natural Resources Canada that would support a gradual build-out over time; and the greener homes initiative, which had significant uptake with regard to heat pumps. A number of those mechanisms, as well, also supported the rollout in urban and rural areas as people wanted to make choices.

It is about choice. People need to be able to see the opportunities that are related to the transition and to build that out over time. I think that is sort of one of the big learnings of our time in being engaged in climate and energy policy. It's that you need to incent change and need to see a practical pathway to change. There, absolutely, is a real cost that we are facing—\$3 billion per year and \$9 billion to the insurance agency—from weather disasters and extreme risk. We need to find that pathway to be able to ensure that people see an opportunity to be incented to make change and to also do it in a way that works for their pocketbook—for affordability—and a path forward. Spending a lot of time in a rural community myself.... You need to take that time to build up a sustainable path forward.

**Bruce Fanjoy:** Yes.

One thing I've found in the rural parts of my riding is that people are very practical. They have learned to be practical. They have to be practical. If we show them a practical solution that saves money, reduces heating costs, reduces transportation costs and improves yields on the farm, then they will become converts very quickly.

One of the things that also disproportionately affect rural Canada is the impacts of climate change. In eastern Ontario—including in my riding—and also in other parts of the country, we had drought conditions. That affected crops. We've had extreme weather. Wildfires tend to affect rural parts of the country more severely.

Can you update us on some of the steps that are being taken to help build resilience in the face of some of these risks?

**Mollie Johnson:** I was really interested to learn, when I took this job on recently, that probably the place we get the most traffic is at the Canadian Centre for Climate Services. It's a site that has a ton of data and that folks visit—I think it was something like over half a million users—to really find out about how to adapt to climate change. That's not to say that we don't want to continue to find ways to take action to reduce emissions, but it's really focused on what you can do and how you can manage yourself, your farm and your business to ensure that you have healthy land, air and water as you are moving forward. That is one really big piece of business that we at ECCC are doing to support people and communities as they are looking to respond to the changing climate that we are in.

The other piece we have is the disaster mitigation and adaptation fund that we launched in the city of Richmond, B.C. Then we also have a number of local leadership for climate adaptation initiatives. I think it speaks to the fact that we are a federal government but the

solutions for these things are really quite local and for people. It's about really trying to thread that needle of having information available to support people in making the decisions that they need to make and empowering them. It goes even to the high-performance computing power that we were talking about earlier. We need to ensure that people have the information that they need to make the decisions to support themselves. There are costs on both sides of the equation. How do we get ahead of those and help people do what they want to do?

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

I would like to thank the witnesses from the different departments for being here. Thank you very much. You are free to go.

We will proceed to the votes on the supplementary estimates. There are only three. Pursuant to Standing Order 81(5), these votes were referred to the committee on Friday, November 7, 2025.

Shall vote 1b under the Department of the Environment be carried? All those in favour....

**Branden Leslie:** Can we pass them on division?

**The Chair:** Do you want to pass all three of them on division?

• (1305)

[*Translation*]

Is it the same for you, Mr. Bonin?

**Patrick Bonin:** Give me one second, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Pardon me?

**Patrick Bonin:** Please give me a moment.

**The Chair:** I didn't understand, Mr. Bonin. I asked you a question. Answer my question. We're voting on the supplementary estimates.

**Patrick Bonin:** I asked you to give me a moment, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** I didn't understand. That's why I'm asking you to repeat it louder.

**Patrick Bonin:** Okay. I'm sorry.

I agree that it should be adopted on division.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Is it acceptable to the committee?

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Vote 1b—Operating expenditures.....\$100,000

(Vote 1b agreed to on division)

Vote 10b—Grants and contributions.....\$847,603

(Vote 10b agreed to on division)

PARKS CANADA AGENCY

Vote 1b—Operating expenditures, grants and contributions.....\$97,150,000

(Vote 1b agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** Shall the chair report these votes to the House? Usually it's "yes", "no" or "on division".

**Some hon. members:** On division.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.

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