

'Manitoba and Climate Change - Investing in Our Future' **Report of the Manitoba Climate Change Task Force,** **September 2001**

<http://manitobawildlands.org/pdfs/MBCC-investingINfuture.pdf>



Manitoba Wildlands is providing this listing of task force recommendations, excerpted from the 2001 report.

Executive Summary Recommendations

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The task force makes several recommendations, including:

- Crafting a provincial energy policy that demands the development of renewable and alternative energy options, maximizing the energy sector's potential as an economic development tool, especially in the areas of hydro, biofuels and hydrogen;
- Conducting a review of the Manitoba Hydro Act to determine how the utility should participate in the province's energy future, recognizing that it is the key energy provider in the province;
- Introducing an expanded grants and interest rate incentive program by Manitoba Hydro to encourage energy efficiency, building on its successful PowerSmart program;
- Defining the climate change components that must be addressed as fundamental Issues in the establishment of a continental energy policy with the United States and Mexico;
- Undertaking research and analysis in Manitoba with a focus on local and prairie regional effects of climate change;
- Establishing a northern strategic initiative that addresses crucial issues, including the shipping season for the port of Churchill, winter roads and employment opportunities affected by climate change;
- New measures that would provide incentives for alternative fuels and funding for transit, including support for special initiatives such as the South West Transit Corridor; and,
- Initiating comprehensive education, outreach and training programs to raise the public's climate change awareness, integrating consideration of the issue into the curricula of the educational system and establishing a Manitoba climate change information hub.

Recommendations from main body of Task Force Report:

Section 5: Strategic Direction and Recommendations

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The task force recommends that the government of Manitoba:

Set real greenhouse gas reduction targets for government operations, as well as require the immediate baseline measurement of greenhouse gas emissions produced by government departments and agencies.

Set requirements for the analysis and measurement of climate change impacts in all major

infrastructure projects receiving public funds, such as the Centennial Library extension and the new True North Entertainment Complex in Winnipeg.

Take measures within government of Manitoba operations to both reduce greenhouse gas emissions and demonstrate Manitoba's mitigation capabilities in this area including:

- Requiring the purchase of ethanol blended gasoline where available for all government fleet gasoline vehicles;
- Utilizing the large government light and heavy-duty vehicle fleet to demonstrate Manitoba-based or value-added greenhouse gas reducing fuels and technologies;
- Retrofitting government buildings to reduce costs through energy efficiency and to demonstrate Manitoba-based building expertise, technologies and products;
- Enhancing the current Green Procurement Initiative by including more specific greenhouse gas reduction criteria in purchasing decisions; and
- Accelerating implementation of electronic delivery of government services and information, with consequences such as reducing the need for Manitobans to travel to provincial offices.

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The task force recommends that the government of Manitoba:

Require climate change impact statements for all Treasury Board and Cabinet submissions, legislative and regulatory proposals and intergovernmental activities.

Require all departments to consider greenhouse gas impacts, in addition to current environmental assessment criteria, in their evaluation processes as well as specifically addressing climate change as a strategic objective in departmental business plans and budgets.

Use and strengthen existing legislation to implement provincial objectives related to greenhouse gas reductions, including two key provincial acts:

- The Manitoba Sustainable Development Act to set greenhouse gas targets and indicators, require annual reports on progress, ensure that an evaluation framework is implemented and require engagement of the public; and,
- The Manitoba Energy Act to implement greenhouse gas reducing energy initiatives, such as setting more stringent energy efficiency codes for appliances and buildings, requiring sustainable development plans from Manitoba energy utilities, supporting the use of alternative transportation fuels and setting energy export transmission fees.

Enhance and strengthen the role of the Emergency Management Organization to both plan for and deal with severe climate change impacts in Manitoba including immediately undertaking a comprehensive risk assessment of the increasing impacts expected of floods, forest fires, tornadoes and other extreme weather events.

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The task force recommends that the government of Manitoba:

Assume a leadership role in supporting Canada's climate change response by:

- Strongly endorsing the need for quick ratification of the Kyoto Protocol following an effective but swift national consultation process;
- Acting as an advocate to make federal climate change funding programs more readily available to Manitoba stakeholders, including urban and rural municipalities, northern and remote communities, labour, youth and business interests;
- Initiating a regionally based approach to climate change action that includes emissions trading and carbon sinks for the Prairies, and collaboration on mid-continent corridor initiatives to reduce greenhouse gases;
- Examining agricultural income support programs to ensure they contribute to climate

change action while enhancing farm livelihoods;

- Promoting a co-operative regional approach in micro-level scientific analysis and studies for the Prairies and the North, given that we share an ecological footprint; and
- Aiding businesses as they develop sectoral plans for their industries to anticipate and adapt to climate change effects.

Assert a more definitive role for the provinces as the key jurisdictions positioned to ensure the implementation of Canada's Action Plan on climate change.

Establish with the federal government a new national climate change infrastructure partnership to promote transportation, water management, energy supply and other projects that contribute to greenhouse gas reductions and adaptations to climate change.

With the government of Canada, explore ways to work with the United States and Mexico to develop continental plans for a greenhouse gases emissions trading regime that will operate in parallel with a North American energy program.

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The task force recommends that the government of Manitoba:

Immediately develop an energy policy, given that energy will be a key determinant of Manitoba's ability to address provincial and national climate change objectives.

Other than one ethanol plant, Manitoba does not have any significant capacity in alternative energy sources, such as biofuels, hydrogen, cogeneration, wind and solar. Manitoba's energy policy development process must address:

- Manitoba's ability to ensure the province's future energy needs are met through development of renewable and alternative energy options;
- How Manitoba Hydro and its subsidiary, Centra Gas, should participate in Manitoba's energy future, by immediately conducting a review of the Manitoba Hydro Act to ensure that our key energy provider is responsive to the overall interests and future of Manitobans;
- Manitoba's role in influencing and shaping Canada's energy policy, including how Manitoba can best position and lever its clean energy export potential in the development of a continental energy program;
- The maximization of Manitoba's clean energy sector as an economic development tool, especially in the areas of biofuels and hydrogen; and
- The research and development needs for Manitoba to achieve its sustainable energy objectives.

Adopt economic development policies that recognize that a comprehensive climate change action plan requires both the participation of Manitoba's key economic sectors and the integration of our industry development strategies by:

- Ensuring all current government economic development policies and initiatives, such as the recent Energy Intensive Initiative, comply with and support the objectives of sustainable development and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions;
- Reducing the future energy intensity of Manitoba industry while maximizing employment opportunities;
- Assisting the private sector to act on the priorities and opportunities that are available to Manitoba business for both climate change mitigation and adaptation activities;
- Developing a strategic economic cluster around "clean and renewable" energy feedstocks and technologies;
- Directing departments and agencies responsible for agriculture to immediately address: climate change issues of carbon sinks; strategies to deal with increasing animal emissions; and, accelerated implementation of best management practices in agricultural production;

- Directing departments and agencies responsible for transportation to immediately address the policies and programs that can lead to real greenhouse gas reductions and to the protection of Manitoba's infrastructure, such as winter roads, most vulnerable to climate change impacts; and
- Directing departments and agencies responsible for forestry to immediately address key climate change issues of carbon sinks and boreal forest impacts.

Assess the use of fiscal and financial instruments and options to accelerate the introduction of greenhouse gas reducing activities and behaviours by:

- Using the principle of tax shifting to reward greenhouse gas reducing outcomes and discourage greenhouse gas producing activities where effective alternatives exist. The precedent exists in Manitoba in the ethanol portion of gasohol being currently exempt from the provincial excise tax on gasoline;
- Using financial incentives to implement greenhouse gas reducing technologies, processes and services;
- Working with Manitoba labour and venture funds, such as Crocus and Ensis, to determine their role and participation in innovative financial approaches to funding greenhouse gas reducing industrial development opportunities, including alternative energy ventures; and,
- Supporting revenue generation alternatives, such as a dedicated urban transportation fuel tax to fund urban transit improvements, required to deal with greenhouse gas reductions in our urban centres.

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The task force recommends that Manitoba Hydro:

Recognize that it is an integrated energy corporation that could lead Manitoba into the carbon-constrained energy future by:

- Preparing a strategic plan that addresses climate change and the roles that electricity, natural gas and alternative energy will play;
- Significantly expanding its energy efficiency program incentives and benchmarking these programs against other leading utilities in Canada;
- Leveraging its expenditures on future climate change related programs with federal climate change action funds to the maximum extent possible;
- Immediately working with the federal government to provide clean, alternative and sustainable power to remote off-grid northern communities;
- Changing its approach with respect to purchasing from Manitoba energy producers, in order to stimulate alternative energy activities and export potential for clean power. The current practice of purchasing at the equivalent cost of production is a barrier to this option;
- Addressing the perception that Manitoba Hydro is not as visible or active as other provincial energy providers in addressing climate change;
- Actively working with the government of Manitoba to promote, develop and deliver an early regionally based emission-trading initiative, including the potential for creating a regime of clean export credits with its U.S. customers; and
- Ensuring a coordinated approach to energy efficiency programs between Manitoba Hydro and Winnipeg Hydro, a process that could be enabled by a merger of the two utilities.

Recognize that to develop significant additional hydroelectric generating capacity in Manitoba, Manitoba Hydro should:

- Ensure Aboriginal peoples' partnership in energy projects in an equitable, inclusive and timely manner;
- Immediately sponsor research to address climate change impacts on reservoirs and water levels; and,
- Actively participate in developing Canada's international emissions trading regime.

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The task force recommends that to capitalize on opportunities in emission trading and sinks, the government of Manitoba:

Work with the federal government to immediately establish and fund a voluntary national emissions trading regime.

Urge the government of Canada to establish international and North American emissions trading regimes that are both environmentally credible and economically efficient;

Assist Manitoba's private businesses and Crown corporations to become involved with voluntary and demonstration emissions trading initiatives in Manitoba, Canada and North America;

Establish a carbon trading and/or auctioning centre in Manitoba, or utilize a current commodity trading institution able to support emissions trading activities; and

Address the knowledge gaps related to determining Manitoba's potential for our forestry and agricultural sectors to participate in sinks and emissions trading opportunities.

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The task force recommends that the government of Manitoba:

Initiate a comprehensive outreach process to raise the awareness of the public on climate change including:

- Monitoring the current state of the science and its implications;
- Listing activities currently undertaken and planned at the provincial, national and international levels;
- Engaging participants, such as environmental and farm organizations, business and labour associations and the Manitoba Round Table, to define Manitoba's action plan to deal with climate change;
- Enhancing and leveraging resources already in place such as the provincial agricultural extension offices to deliver information throughout Manitoba; and
- Supporting successful current climate change initiatives, such as Resource Conservation Manitoba's Commuter Challenge and Manitoba Public Insurance's transit pass program with Winnipeg Transit.

Integrate climate change into the curricula of our educational system including the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels to:

- Educate youth so that future generations are ready and equipped to deal with this issue; and
- Address the training requirements in our colleges and vocational schools to ensure that graduates have the technical skills to participate in emerging climate change business opportunities, such as in the building trades for energy efficiency in building construction.

Establish a Manitoba Climate Change Hub, which will:

- Be a central information service available to all Manitobans which would act as a single window for all climate change information, research activities and funding programs; and
- Provide a link for schools, training centres, environmental organizations, health organizations, museums and research groups to allow for cooperation and greater information exchange on climate change matters.

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The task force recommends that the government of Manitoba:

Acknowledge the unique challenges to northern and Aboriginal peoples, as well as the likely early impacts on this vulnerable region and its communities by:

- Consulting and documenting traditional knowledge to capture the historical record and evidence related to climate change; and
- Partnering with organizations, such as the Aboriginal People's Television Network and the Centre for Indigenous and Environmental Resources, to explain the experience and perspectives of northern peoples and climate change impacts in film and other media.

Implement renewable energy based systems to the four remote northern communities where hydroelectric service is not currently available through Manitoba Hydro's grid.

Develop a northern strategic initiative to deal with the unique northern climate change opportunities and challenges related to:

- An extended shipping season for the port of Churchill, and stabilization of the Hudson Bay Railway line that is affected by changing permafrost conditions;
- Winter road impacts;
- The anticipated shifts in employment in fishing, hunting, trapping and tourism opportunities available to northern residents;
- The need for a sub-arctic centre for northern climate change research that could be served by building on the existing strengths of the Churchill Northern Studies Centre;
- New opportunities for energy, trade, research and information exchange in Nunavut; and
- Industrial energy co-generation by northern mining companies.

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The task force recommends that the government of Manitoba:

Partner with Winnipeg and other urban municipalities to develop greenhouse gas initiatives that promote sustainable cities through:

- Focusing development to maximize urban density, especially along transit corridors;
- Providing realistic options to stimulate alternatives to single occupant auto use including enhanced transit, and infrastructure for high occupancy vehicles, specifically the South West Transit Corridor that should be supported by all three levels of government;
- Requiring all new buildings to achieve energy targets 25 per cent above the model National Energy Code for Buildings; and
- Linking provincial funding to greenhouse gas emission reduction plans and measurements.

Assist municipalities to secure federal climate change funds, such as the Partners for Climate Protection and the Urban Showcase programs.

Support urban transportation fuel taxes and transit pass incentive programs to encourage behaviour change and provide revenue for greenhouse gas reducing programs.

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The task force recommends that the government of Manitoba:

Initiate a comprehensive approach to establish Manitoba's greenhouse gas agenda by:

- Creating a Manitoba-based research collaborative founded on existing expertise, knowledge and capabilities of academia, research institutions, private interests and all levels of governments;
- Identifying short, medium and long-term research priorities; and

- Investing immediately in the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative to begin addressing Manitoba's research priorities.

Use existing trade and transportation corridor partnerships to encourage reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by:

- Implementing the Green Corridors Initiative;
- Continuing to lead and implement the North America Super Highway Coalition alternative fuels initiative; and
- By working with the Red River Valley Clean Cities Coalition to advance the use of alternative transportation fuels across our region.

Partner with key organizations to ensure all are engaged early and effectively based on their needs and abilities by:

- Supporting current Manitoba-based institutions, such as the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the Mennonite Central Committee, that can not only assist with Manitoba activities, but have the capability to develop and market their services and expertise to other regions and countries;
- Working together with labour and industry associations to support their efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and developing new related market opportunities; and
- Carrying out an annual public review and consultation to measure progress towards achieving tangible climate change objectives, possibly through a public forum similar to the one held earlier this year by the Clean Environment Commission.

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To respond to climate change and maintain the momentum generated by this task force, the government of Manitoba should immediately:

Establish a Climate Change Initiative office that will report directly to the Executive Council. This unit will work across government to bolster and coordinate efforts currently being undertaken by various departments and agencies. The office will help ensure mobilization of the support, cooperation and dedication of resources required developing and implementing plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climatic change.

Provide the Climate Change Initiative office with a mandate and resources to:

- Prepare a government-wide climate change policy based on the principles of sustainable development;
 - Direct the preparation of the government of Manitoba's Climate Change Action Plan and engage stakeholders, particularly non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in its formulation;
 - Coordinate the development of the energy and economic policies needed to ensure effective implementation of the government's action plan;
 - Review and make recommendations regarding required enhancements to the Emergency Management Organization, Sustainable Development Act, Manitoba Energy Act and other Acts;
 - Work with Manitoba Hydro on the development a climate change action plan for the utility;
 - Establish partnerships with all stakeholders to implement research, regional coordination, municipal cooperation and outreach initiatives;
- Leverage private sector investment in climate change initiatives; and
- Act in a timely manner to take advantage of opportunities arising from the Federal government's climate change action plan and related funding.

Immediately direct the Manitoba Climate Change Initiative office to negotiate an innovative partnership with the federal government and municipalities to:

- Establish a multi-level partnership similar to the Winnipeg Development Agreement to

deliver a Manitoba-based Comprehensive Climate Change Partnership.

- Assemble funding of approximately \$25 million over five years from Manitoba Hydro and other sources in order to fund the province's initial contribution to this joint federal/provincial/municipal climate change initiative of approximately \$75 million over five years;
- Establish the new partnership's objectives, management structure, program delivery and funding requirements;
- Work collaboratively with Western Diversification to tailor an approach to addressing climate change that meets Manitoba's needs; and
- Take advantage of and implement current opportunities, particularly the Urban Showcase Initiative, the Canadian Transportation Fuel Cell Alliance and the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative.