



## **Climate Change: Fulfilling Council of the Federation Commitments**

**Québec City, July 18, 2008** – Climate change was a main focus of Premiers' discussions at the Summer 2007 Council of the Federation Meeting in Moncton. Premiers focused their discussions in Québec City on two important elements of addressing climate change: energy efficiency and green technologies.

### **Energy Efficiency**

Improving energy efficiency is an effective and economical means to lowering consumer energy bills and achieving reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. It also reduces overall energy demand, generates economic development and employment opportunities, and increases the security of Canada's energy supply.

The Council of the Federation recognizes that energy costs can have a significant effect on Canadians, particularly those with low or fixed incomes.

Premiers discussed how energy prices affect the already high cost of living in the North. Northerners living in remote communities have limited options to find alternative means of power generation, transportation or heat for their homes. They also recognize that to reduce dependency on traditional energy sources such as diesel, Northerners will strengthen energy efficiency and conservation practices and alternate energy sources and technologies will need to be developed.

In the context of rising energy prices, the Council will emphasize energy efficiency and conservation by working together and sharing best practices. Premiers today committed to achieving a 20% increase in energy efficiency by 2020 in their respective jurisdictions. They agreed on a five point plan for achieving this:

- Enhance the Model National Energy Code for Buildings by 25% by 2011;
- Add energy efficiency as the fifth core objective into the National Building Code of Canada;
- Increase the numbers of energy-using products covered by the minimum energy performance standards;
- Adopt green building policies for new construction of government-funded facilities, including sustainable procurement guidelines for energy and water use; and,
- Implement a public or private mechanism in each jurisdiction so that individual home-owners have access to energy efficiency home audits and assistance with energy efficiency retrofits.

Furthermore, Nova Scotia Premier Rodney MacDonald will convene an energy efficiency conference by the end of September. Premiers discussed green energy technologies

and have agreed to hold a series of forums to promote awareness and understanding of green technologies and to share knowledge in this area.

## **Green Technologies**

The Council of the Federation recognizes that advancing green energy technologies is a priority to achieving substantial greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the long term.

Premiers are taking the initiative to highlight the importance of green energy technologies, and the innovative research already underway in provinces and territories, by holding a series of forums featuring experts in various green technologies.

Alberta and Saskatchewan have agreed to jointly host a forum on carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology. CCS technologies have the potential to allow Canada to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere while retaining its ability to produce and provide energy to the world.

British Columbia will host a forum on bioenergy, which will create new opportunities, investment and innovation, particularly in rural communities, while providing clean energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The demand for energy in Canada is increasing along with a growing awareness of the environmental impacts of conventional energy sources. Newfoundland and Labrador will host a forum on large-scale hydro as a means to meet future demand and contribute to environmental goals and priorities. Ontario will host a forum on developing the next generation clean car. Transforming the auto sector in Canada has the potential to allow for substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions while maintaining Canada's status as a leader in auto production.

## **Adaptation**

Adapting to the impacts of climate change is a key element of all jurisdictions' climate change action plans. Premiers recognized the good work emanating from the Forums on climate change adaptation held over the past six months in Vancouver in January 2008, Ontario on water issues and in New Brunswick on sea level rise.

To move forward on key aspects of climate change adaptation, Premiers directed ministers to complete:

- A draft Forest Carbon Management Quantification Framework;
- A Tree Species Study with subsequent components: a Forest Landscape/Ecosystem Study and a Forest Sector Study;
- A draft Collaborative Study on Water Conservation and Scarcity; and,
- A Flood Mitigation Strategy for consideration by Ministers.

Saskatchewan, working through the federal-provincial-territorial forum of agriculture ministers, will prepare a report that outlines research underway in crop science to adapt to climate change, assesses gaps in research and opportunities to apply research findings, and considers mechanisms to coordinate and fund this research.

Premiers agreed that regional research institutions, including the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions, Ouranos, the Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative, the Ontario Centre for Climate Impacts and Adaptation Research, and the Atlantic Climate

Adaptation Strategy Group, will collaborate to expand the inventory of climate change related research.

Premiers also agreed that a community of practice would be established to formalize knowledge transfer necessary to assist jurisdictions on climate change adaptation. This will be initially managed through the COF website ([www.councilofthefederation.ca](http://www.councilofthefederation.ca)).

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**Media enquiries may be directed to:**

Hugo D'Amours  
Press Secretary  
Office of the Premier of Québec  
418 643-5321  
[hugo.damours@mce.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:hugo.damours@mce.gouv.qc.ca)