



REPORT OF THE
EDMONTON DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

October 27, 2008

INTRODUCTIONS

Wendy Andrews opened the session by welcoming participants and making the link between the citizen engagement process on climate change, initiated by David Kahane of the University of Alberta and the Canada's World process. Wendy introduced the facilitator and host Shauna Sylvester, a Fellow at Simon Fraser University's Centre for Dialogue and the founding director of Canada's World.

Shauna provided an overview of the evening and led the group through a round of introductions. **In introducing themselves, participants responded to two questions: In relation to climate change, how do you think others perceive Canada? How would you like Canada to be perceived?**

How others perceive Canada – participant reflections:

Canada is northern, pristine, wild, isolated, a tourist destination with a great number of rivers.

Some suggested that they were not in a position to know how others perceived us, but were concerned that our reputation of late has been declining, particularly in relation to our position on climate change.

A number of people pointed to Canada's failure to meet our Kyoto commitments as a serious issue suggesting that as one of the worst per-capita emitters, we have not behaved responsibly in addressing global warming and that we have demonstrated that we have a vested interest in maintaining a carbon-based economy and being resistant to change. Others pointed out that in the early years, Canada had good intentions and lead on addressing climate change but that as a resource-based economy living in a cold climate, we recognized the complexity of delivering on our Kyoto commitments.

For many, Canada has had a history as an honest broker, a middle power that was a trusted mediator (for example, Canada led on the Landmines Treaty and the International Criminal Court). While there

was some recognition that some of Canada's positive reputation as an honest broker still remains, it has been tarnished by recent actions in Bali, on human rights and in the Middle East.

Some participants suggested that Canada was perceived as rather dull, boring, cautious, apathetic and a country of people who liked to be like. Some others suggested that Canada has become US' lapdog in international negotiations, and have taken on the role of the US bidding particularly on climate change. As the recipient of the Fossil Award on many days at Bali, Canada's reputation has been seriously tarnished.

One participant suggested that Canada is known for its honesty and great quality products.

How participants would like Canada to be perceived?

A sovereign country. A model for green technology with strong legislation to support a greener economy.

A global leader and innovator in new technologies for cleaner energy, urban planning, land use planning, sustainable agricultural practices and green industrial development.

A leader in addressing climate change, a global innovator in technology to help moderate and eliminate green house gases.

A global leader in addressing First Nations and Aboriginal rights.

A country that is more conscious of its impacts on others. A leader in international relations demonstrated through our generosity, our sustainable live styles, our practices in addressing justice and social inequality.

In the top 1/3 for our hemisphere, so long as the assumption of temperate climates at holds true, and middle of the pack for the rest of the globe is good...Can't have an army of 'leaders' and nary a good foot-soldier to fight trench to trench.

An active player in addressing global warming – although we may not have all of the answers, we have enough to get moving. We need to demonstrate internationally that our attitudes toward climate change have changed and that we are ready to act, both as a country and as individuals. (If Europeans can do it and still maintain their standard of living, so too can Canadians.)

A knowledge based economy. A country that others can work with, that is a leader, that follows through on its commitments, particularly Kyoto.

Strong international mediators who work through institutions like the UN.

Guardians of the world's water fresh water resources.

OVERVIEW OF CANADA'S WORLD

Shauna provided an overview noting that the aim of Canada's World is to engage Canadians in all provinces in creating a new narrative for Canada's role in the world – a story that is based on who we are now as a country, not who we were 50 years ago.

Shauna noted that the idea for Canada's World came from several years of international work and recognizing that Canada's reputation in the global arena was eroding. Shauna argued that this erosion did not begin with the current government, but could be traced back to the early 1990s (with the exception of the years when Canada pursued the human security agenda, which was led by Lloyd Axworthy but was not supported by the government when he stepped down as Foreign Minister). This came to a head for Shauna when she was working in Sri Lanka on a peace process and colleagues returning from the human rights meetings in Geneva and the environment meetings in Africa noted that Canada had a new nickname – “shrub”. They described Canada as the insignificant plant that adorned the conference room corner that rarely intervened. When Canada did speak up, they said we were like a little “bush”. This sparked Shauna to ask the question – what do Canadians think about Canada's role in the world?

In developing Canada's World Shauna interviewed 200 people from different walks of life including corporate leaders, former senior civil servants, diplomats, NGO leaders, artists and academics. This process led to the formation of Canada's World - a collaboration among 15 different university faculties, and 40 foundations and non-government organizations.

Unlike traditional policy reviews and consultations led by government, Shauna noted that Canada's World is funded by individuals, businesses, academic institutions and foundations who wish to enhance Canada's international reputation and who seek to inspire citizens to articulate and advance a new international policy for Canada - a policy that:

- builds on Canadian historical experience, interests, values and assets;
- demonstrates a strong understanding of the complexities of international relations;
- acknowledges the multiplicity of actors involved in international policy;
- addresses some of the key global challenges;
- reflects the diversity of Canadian society; and,
- is future-oriented, compelling and effective.

Shauna noted that Canada's World has identified nine new realities facing Canada in the international arena and has consulted widely with Canadians about their thoughts on these issues. One of the most important global issues for Canadians is climate change.

Shauna noted that this was the second dialogue on climate change in Alberta. The first one was held in Calgary in the spring as part of a deliberative dialogue process that involved 30 randomly selected citizens over a 2.5 day weekend. The results of all of the Canada's World deliberative dialogues and a national poll are available on the Canada's World website at www.canadasworld.ca

CLIMATE CHANGE TIMELINE

Participants were asked to fill in a line that nominally started at 1931 (the Statute of Westminster when Canada received independence from England for our foreign policy) to 2008. Participants were asked to note the key events and initiatives that helped shape their understanding of climate change and Canada's activities in relation to climate change.

Pre-1931

Indigenous knowledge

1792 Steam engine is discovered

1825 Link between greenhouse gas and global warming is made

1860's Unusually warm climate

1896 Swedish scientist first mention Climate Change Theory

1930'S Industrialization

The drought, 'dirty thirties'

1940'S

- Marshall Plan – recovery of re-industrialization of Europe
- WWII resource exploration – cataloguing of resources, commodification of resources; technology for oil exploration founded in submarine technology; nuclear lead to seismic
- Bretton Woods IMF/world bank; beginning of USA hegemony
- 1943 first nuclear pile

1950'S

- Consumer Economy emerges
- No more outdoor skating in Scotland or Holland (this is contested)
- Rise of Car Culture
- Iran 1953 first US covert operation to ensure access to resources; current regime employs similar tactics

- 1955 first numerical analysis of the atmosphere
- 1956 measures of CO₂
- 1957 King Hubbard model for petroleum resource depletion – Peak Oil

1960'S

- environmental research increasing (follows trend – bookmarked by economic downturns)
- Rise of nuclear energy
- Recognition of expansion of Sahara desert
- Beginning of scientific community's understanding of ozone depletion

1970'S

- Environmental research decreasing
- first energy crisis
- 1972 OPEC created
- Parked skidoo for 4 winters
- US gold standard – economic growth
- Vietnam war
- 1976 Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting substances
- Canada a leader in negotiation of Montreal Protocol
- First Department of the Environment
- First Earth DAY
- Established Environmental Protection Agency
- Emergence of Environment NGO's

1980'S

- Continental collaboration among scientists
- Oldman Dam indicates that the government is not listening to public re: climate models – indicator
- 1983 Green Party is formed
- 1985 Early climate modelling; first reliable predictions of what may happen
- 1987 Bruntland Report– sustainable development becomes a global issue
- 1988 First International meeting (Toronto) on Climate Change – Canada plays a lead role
- Depletion of cod stock East Coast
- 1988 first cuts to Ministry of the Environment
- 1988 Olympics need to truck in snow to Kananaskis
- 1989 Cold War comes to an end with the fall of the Berlin Wall

1990'S

- 1992 Rio Summit
- Planet – issue of the year for Time or Newsweek
- Green Movement extends federally ; wave of environmental awareness
- Klein starts policy of opening tar sands (1997)
- Canada starts to become very passive internationally (economic downturn Canada – focus is on unity – looking inward)
- Water drought issues – shift – wettest century
- Edmonton landfill crisis – economic crisis compelled the change to re-cycling
- Climate change impact and adaptation research – national networks catalyzed research
- 1997 – Kyoto Accord – Canada lead role tipped scales
- IPCC (International Panel on Climate Change) – sciences leadership, academics

- Federation of Canadian Municipalities create quality life indicators – series of environmental indicators, LEED standards
- Policy began to follow science
- CFCA grants
- “Motherlode” of warm years
- ERSC talks – academic research money

2000

- Celebrities focus on climate change
- 2006 Inconvenient Truth
- Oil reaches \$110/barrel
- Pine beetle survives warm BC winters causing havoc in the forests
- French heat wave
- New phase of Kyoto
- Glaciers melting
- Bali meeting
- Ewaste begins to emerge as a serious problem

CANADIAN VALUES, INTERESTS AND ASSETS

Participants were asked to define Canadian values, interests and assets in relationship to climate change. Each participant posted their thoughts on notes and grouped them on the wall. Below is a listing of the ideas generated by the group. The notes appear in no particular order.

Values

pride, reliability, being credible, adaptable, recycling, security, fairness, honesty, clean air, clean water, access to parks, access to outdoors for recreation, concern for others, the idea of being a world leader, opportunistic, entrepreneurial, the common good, generationally varied, a deep

concern for the world and for the environment, desire to change (although some argued that this is not yet a Canadian value)

Interests

Protect quality of life, interest in clean abundant well-managed water, national security, economic opportunity, playing our part, tourism, resource based economy, maintaining economic growth, not being out of line with the US, open port in the North – northwest passage, environment, sustainability, predictability, car based and air travel economy, economy is first - environment second, standard of living must be maintained, self interest – willing to do what's necessary if it doesn't cost me too much or doesn't discomfort me, minimal economic/personal discomfort, ecological integrity, resource management, jobs and economy, continuing high employment.

Assets

Water and land resources, renewable and non-renewable energy resources, national parks, clear thinking, youth, intelligent highly educated population, high education standards, high technical capability, scientific ability, good science, knowledge information, knowledge economy, space (low population, low density), wealth, communications, , innovative, world standing as an honest broker, very high standard of living, cultural variety, scientific and government ministry expertise and understanding of climate change and its background, history and international scientific community connections, solid research base

PRINCIPLES

Participants were asked to form groups of three and identify principles upon which they would want future action on climate change to be based. The groups shared their views and discussed the principles in some detail. Below is a listing of the principles that were identified:

- Share our capacity, technology and ideas
- As one of the wealthiest countries, we must be a leader. Lead by example (role model), get our own house in order so that we have credibility
- Recognize the diversity of our Canadian reality (e.g. geographic, ethnocultural etc.)
- Demonstrate our concern for future generations, grandchild report must trump quarterly report
- Peaceful resolution of issues

- Full cost accounting, true cost of goods – natural accounting
- Act from a belief in social justice (those impacted most are the poorest nations eg. Bangladesh and island states)
- Develop, implement and enforce regulation on Climate change
- Move from a scientific basis for policy action on climate change; fund research of science that leads to engagement and change
- Recognition that Climate change has been driven by the economic system, need to shift away from this to a philosophy that we have enough, i.e. an economic system that serves people and our natural world; this will mean that we have to be adaptable and accept a level of inconvenience, forgo economic goods
- Open to change/ making trade offs
- Move beyond technological fix – willing to accept change
- Recognize that there are multiple actors – herald and inform the public of the work and role of government, business and individuals in addressing the issues
- Advance Entrepreneurialism and innovation – encourage supports that enhance the natural talents of the population; encourage and implement improved technology for energy use.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD

Participants were asked to work with a partner. Each dyad was given a target audience and asked to develop specific actions they could take to address climate change.

Provincial/municipal Government:

- Focus on the management of transportation – ramp up public transportation recognizing there will be a trade off from single occupancy vehicles. Provide better resources and carrot sticks to stimulate shifts towards better public transportation e.g. redesign traffic flows, use the tax base to drive change, account for the externalities.
- Focus on sustainable resource management of water – use both carrot and stick approaches by for example, taxing waste water, and including full cost accounting

Federal Government:

- Objective – reduce green house gasses – 25% to 30% to 1990 levels

Method – revenue tax shift and a cap and trade

Outcome – green economy, more jobs, less pollution, export of our expertise, recognition of Canada’s leadership, less dependency on imported energy for Eastern Canada

Business and Investment:

- Business tells their own story; Business needs to demonstrate that they are good community citizens and they accept their role in addressing change - Business and industry is a model power; (less effect of media painting industry as the bad guys)

Scientific Community:

- Education – new scientists, focus on educating the public - converting science results into public information
- Research Funding – don’t mix up science and technology – focus on science – social impacts
- Leadership – need to foster greater leadership from the Scientific community

Non-profit:

- Focus on awareness raising with the public, communicate the values, demonstrate the value of changing behaviours
- Propose solutions to the public and communicate the solutions from the scientific community
- Strengthen the bond between government and the public; build trust in public institutions – focus on the mandate to act

Labour:

- Reduce the work week – give people the time to look after themselves and get more involved publicly
- Transition from primary industry to a greener industry; promote creativity; avoid getting institutional about entrepreneurs
- Value a diversified economy
- Expand and support the social economy – support medicare and efforts to decrease poverty

Citizens:

- Promote greater access to information and awareness
- Lead and stimulate discussion of climate change in community and schools;
- Promote public dialogue – mirroring what we are doing tonight
- Support people to evaluate their own lifestyles; leading them to less consumerism – e.g. light bulbs, size of home and size of car.

EVALUATION

As part of the closing, participants were asked to identify what they liked and didn't liked about the session and to indicate if there was any pressing issue that they wanted to address that had not yet been raised:

What come participants liked:

Recognition that we have common values and ideas

Well done. Good facilitation, good process, good sense of timing, crisp.

Enjoyed getting together in a smaller group. Interesting process that should be repeated in future world cafes.

Fantastic to be a part of something so engaging.

Amazed at the wisdom of the group. As we do this type of dialogue and we work ahead how do we let people know that they can make a difference?

Like the size of the group.

The evening was crisp and well refined, like Al Gore.

The university location was good – it helped focus on the seriousness of the issues and on the ideas.

What participants didn't like:

We did not explore the clashes of ideas that happened in the smaller group within the bigger group.

It was too homogenous a group. There should have been a greater diversity of people. The process could have engaged more rural, aboriginal and working class people – it was a highly educated group which can skew the voice.

This was a hastily put together event and it has utility – but we need greater diversity; we need people in the room who think that climate change is the furthest thing from their mind; profound disappointment with so many from the academic community ; sense that hosting here a session at the university excludes others.

Ideas that participants would like emphasized in the final report:

DRIVE LESS

Sense of URGENCY to act NOW

Need to demonstrate how people have acted differently to make things happen. If there is a consensus on what we should do, does it mean we are ready for action? How can we be part of it?

Suggest 40% tax on bottled water.

The economic crisis that we are in are the same as the ecological crisis we are in.

Sense of urgency

What comes of this session can't just sit as a report on a shelf. Communicate it to all levels of government, really get the message out, increase the awareness in the public.

university is a place for transformation ; important to me, more easy to concentrate on these issues

I am shocked at how many older people say 'its up to you younger folk' to address Global Climate Change whereas I would say if you're breathing then you are in this 100%...regardless of age. What claim have older generations to set such tasks for younger people only to cop out and retreat by car to their out-of-town acreage or large suburban dwelling?

We need to take action for the good of the community, not just as individuals

Dispel the myth that technology will solve this problem.

CLOSING

Shauna Sylvester closed the session and thanked Wendy Andrews for her efforts in inviting and organizing the logistics for the session, David Kahane for his support and Andrew Knight, a member of the Canada's World Advisory Committee, for providing the space at the university to host the dialogue.

Shauna invited participants to join the Canada's World community – through the website at www.canadasworld.ca, through the Facebook community and by hosting their own dialogues.

Shauna noted that the next steps in the Canada's World process include: compiling the report from this session, distributing it to participants and posting it online on the Canada's World website. She also noted that the ideas generated in the dialogue would be included in the overall documents going forward to the Canada's World national dialogue.

Shauna thanked the participants for their contributions and asked them to fill in a post-session questionnaire.