

Challenges to a Copenhagen Climate Deal

By Curt Hull, Project Manager, Climate Change Connection



Some of the 400 participants at Winnipeg's Oct. 24 350.org rally provide a clear message to the UN Copenhagen climate change conference—just like protesters at many of the other 5,000 rallies in more than 180 countries.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CURT HULL

Copenhagen conference: capitalism and co-operation

A CLIMATE DEAL IN COPENHAGEN presents the human race with a huge opportunity to start working constructively together in a positive, meaningful, global partnership. Without a climate deal, we will waste a lot of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions getting all those delegates to Denmark and we will be putting our children's future at risk.

The game

From Dec. 7 to Dec. 18 more than 12,000 representatives of governments, non-governmental organizations, and media from 192 countries will descend upon Copenhagen, Denmark for an historic climate conference. The 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) will attempt to hammer out a comprehensive, fair, and ambitious treaty to replace the GHG emissions reduction mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

Much of the negotiations will be about the rich

nations trying to hang on to their place of privilege and the poor nations looking to correct some longstanding injustices.

The world faces a bleak future due to climate change caused by human-produced GHG emissions. Most emissions have been and are still being produced by the world's rich countries. The poorer countries have done little to cause climate change, but will be hardest hit by it, facing: crop failures, drought, reduced freshwater supply, conflicts resulting from migrations of climate refugees, and species extinction.

Many world leaders have been downplaying everyone's expectations for success even before the first delegate checks in.

The players

There will be three camps in the negotiations:

- The developed countries (i.e. the rich countries, like us)—who want to hang on to what they have and are afraid of giving the rapidly developing countries any kind of an advantage.

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- The rapidly developing countries (like China and India)—who want to continue to grow to be just like the developed countries as soon as possible.
- The unlikely-to-develop-anytime-soon countries (like those in central Africa)—who want to be protected from a peril they didn't cause, will suffer the most from, and are now being asked to fight and adapt to while struggling with debt and drought.

The prizes

There really are two prizes. They seem to be separate, but actually they must be linked if we are to make the game fair and if we are going to win it.

PRIZE #1: The most obvious prize is the reduction of the world's GHG emissions and we get to prevent the worst climate change scenarios. This includes preventing the huge long-term economic and human costs of climate change from severe weather disasters, food shortages, conflicts, and energy crises.

PRIZE #2: The other prize is more profound. It seems idealistic, almost utopian, and yet it is linked with the first prize. The second prize is an equitable and sustainable global economic system, a system that reduces poverty in the Third World and protects those countries' economic growth. This prize comes if the delegates can create a fair, manageable system that provides funds and technology to enable poor countries to deal with climate change.

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Executive Director's Letter: Singing the Watershed

IN OCTOBER, I was fortunate to participate in a very special event focusing on the Lake Winnipeg watershed. But it was not the usual conference with presentations and speakers and discussion. Instead, the Earth Charter Singers, a group of women who come together regularly to sing the music of Carolyn McDade, held a Women's Singing Circle—and used music, art, prose and the act of gathering and singing to connect everyone present to a powerful and energizing awareness of the watershed we live in.

It was a great reminder for me that even when we aren't actually out on the land or water physically, we can still engage all our senses—not just the left-brain thinking ones—in an understanding of our world and our place in it.

For this event the women brought Carolyn McDade to Winnipeg to lead the singing. Her music is grounded in nature and the relationships we humans have to nature. It consists of simple but haunting melodies which lend themselves to wonderful harmonies—making it ideal for community participation—along with moving poetry. Some of the pieces are meditations and chants, and some of them are created by the participants themselves.

A flowing fabric sculpture was installed in the middle of the room, symbolizing Lake Winnipeg and the waterways that flow into it. A slideshow of photographs of water in all its forms, from all around the watershed, played as a backdrop. There was a display table of educational material, as well as an intriguing map and photograph exhibit of all the creeks flowing into the Red and Assiniboine rivers in Winnipeg. Readings from Rachel Carson's beautiful book, *The Sea Around Us*, interspersed the music. Participants hailing from north, south, east and west were invited to bring water from the places that are significant to them. By candlelight, each participant named the source of the water aloud and mingled it together in a symbolic creation of the lake. The next day, we created and sang a song incorporating all those place names.

A verse from one of the participant-created songs was particularly compelling to me (and it happens that the writer was Eco-Network member Barbara Barnett). It reads:

We are the glaciers
frozen and flowing through time
Holding the story
of life on earth.

Glacier ice, like so many other phenomena of nature, provides us with tangible evidence and information about how the world once was. One of the tragedies of climate change is the permanent melting of the glaciers. And quite aside from the unspeakable loss of water resources that this represents, it also means that we quite literally lose the glaciers' stories of Earth. This gave me pause.

We need *all* our stories to remind us of the unique and wonderful place we are a part of, of the mistakes we have made, the victories we have achieved and of our need to protect and honour what we are so fortunate to have.

Singing the watershed was storytelling. I was grateful to be a part of it, and grateful for all the artists, scientists, elders, and the earth herself who provides us with such an abundance of stories.

For another kind of storytelling, I hope you will join us in the spring for Manitoba Eco-Network's first ever eco-film festival—the Manitoba Eco-Network's Reel Green Film Festival, which will bring together the documentary and artistic work of both local and distant filmmakers to enlighten and entertain. In the meantime, all of us here at the Eco-Network wish you a peaceful and happy (and environmentally friendly, of course) holiday season!

Anne Lindsey
Executive Director, Manitoba Eco-Network

eco events in Manitoba

For more environmental event listings see our website calendar at www.mbeconetwork.org.

DECEMBER

7-9 Manitoba Conservation District Association Convention

"Our Environment: The Co\$t of Doing Nothing!" The primary purpose of the convention is to provide knowledge and technical transfer information on environmental, landscape and sustainability issues that may impact the well-being of living things in Manitoba's conservation districts. The topics include: energy and regional development; creating a watershed culture; climate change and sustainability. For more info and to register: www.mcda.ca.

7-18 Climate Change negotiations in Copenhagen

To follow the progress at these critical negotiations, visit the United Nations site: <http://unfccc.int/2860.php> or the Canadian Youth Delegation site: <http://cydcopenhagen.org>.

8 The Age of Stupid film

Join us for an encore presentation of this 90-minute startling drama-mentary. Location: Millennium Library, 12:10 p.m., FREE admission. For more info: Climate Change Connection at 943-4836.

19 Christmas Bird Count

Explore the Oak Hammock Marsh and surrounding area during the Annual Christmas Bird Count. Help us count our winter residents and learn more about the birds that brave a Manitoba winter. Members:\$5, non-members: \$5+admission (incl. lunch). For more info: 467-3243.



OF SPECIAL NOTE

The Eco-Network appreciates and thanks the many individuals and groups that contribute to our efforts, and would like to recognize some very special donations...

Vita Health

chose Manitoba Eco-Network as one of the charities to receive funds from their **Go Green Program**

www.vitahealthstores.ca/about-community.php



And after six months of the **Go Green Program** in which the **Manitoba Eco-Network** and **Big Brothers, Big Sisters** were the local charity choices, they successfully diverted over 19,000 bags from landfills while raising almost \$1,000 for charity!

JANUARY

1-31 Drive it to Warm it Month

Did you know that the best way to warm up you vehicle's engine and all its other working components is by driving it? Idling your engine, even on the coldest of winter days, only wastes fuel and emits harmful pollutants. By gently driving your vehicle for the first few kilometres, you and your vehicle will be warmer in half the time! Check out www.ecodrivermanitoba.ca during the month of January to sign up for a chance to win a prize!

4 & 18 For the Birds

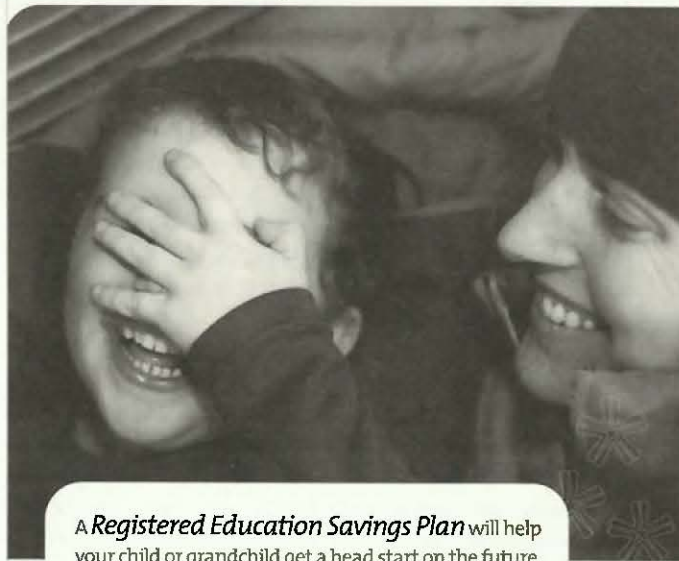
Nature Manitoba Discovery Evenings, with "The Least Bittern in Manitoba" (4th) and "The Easter Screech Owl" (18th). Location: CCFM (340 Provencher Blvd), 7:30 pm, \$2 members/\$4 general. For more info: 943-9029.

19-21 The Changing Face of Flooding

27th Annual Red River Basin Land and Water International Summit Conference to be held in Grand Forks, ND. For more info: www.redriverbasincommission.org/index.html or 982-7254.

Please email your event notices to info@mbeconetwork.org.

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The fact that this second prize is on the table and is so linked to the first prize is a key reason the whole deal is in peril. Giving money to the poor, forgiving debt, and helping others is not what capitalism does best. In fact, some commentators like Rush Limbaugh are calling these negotiations a move toward communism and "world government."

The challenges

It will not be easy to reach an agreement. World leaders and delegates will need to decide what to do on four large, thorny, and interconnected issues:

- Meaningful emission reduction targets for the developed countries
- Appropriate emission reduction targets for developing countries
- Technological and financial support
- Allowing developing countries to manage the support while avoiding corruption

Meaningful emission reduction targets for the developed countries

The developed countries need to commit to GHG emission reduction targets they'll meet after 2012. The targets need to be even more ambitious than Kyoto and they need to be met. (Many of the Kyoto signatories haven't met their current targets yet.) However, the developed countries are afraid that if they are bound to reduce emissions and the rapidly developing countries are not, the rapidly developing countries will have an unfair competitive advantage.

- Scientists estimate that greenhouse gas emissions need to peak in the next 10 to 15 years, and then reduce to 50-80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. This has to happen at the same time as populations grow and global energy demand increases by 55 percent between 2005 and 2030 (according to the International Energy Agency).

Appropriate emission reduction targets for developing countries

The delegates need to decide what emission reduction actions developing countries (especially the rapidly-developing countries) should undertake.

- Up until now the rapidly developing countries have been lumped in with the unlikely-to-develop-anytime-soon countries and have been excluded from emission targets. Meanwhile, China has become the world's largest emitter (even though it's still way behind the U.S. and Canada on a per capita basis). The rapidly developing nations have an obligation to grow in a climate-responsible manner. Europe and the U.S. are China and India's biggest customers. It is common practice in business for customers to put constraints on suppliers' practices.

Technological and financial support

The developed countries need to provide financing and technology to help the developing countries supply their energy needs and to grow their economies in a sustainable fashion that reduces their greenhouse gas emissions. These countries also need to increase their *adaptive capacity* (i.e. the ability of their institutions to protect their citizens from climate changes, threats, and disasters.) How much will this cost? Current United Nations estimates total about \$250 billion per year in 2020.

- Rich nations have not been meeting their current foreign aid commitments. Beginning in 1970, members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) promised to provide 0.7 percent of their national incomes in aid each year. Instead, the amount of aid has been around 0.2 to 0.4 percent. This is a \$100 billion annual shortfall. Moreover, development assistance is often of dubious quality. In many cases, aid is primarily designed to serve the interests of the donor countries or powerful domestic interest groups. In some cases, the aid is in the form of loans, which results in more debt.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CURT HULL

Protesters march from the Legislature to the Forks as part of 350.org's International Day of Climate Action.

Allow developing countries to manage the money while avoiding corruption
We need to ensure that the Copenhagen deal delivers the funding and technological assistance in a way that avoids corruption and treats the developing countries as equal partners in decision-making.

- Much of the currently available funding has not reached developing countries in a way that is regarded as efficient or beneficial. This has been a reason (excuse?) for putting those self-serving conditions on any aid that is currently delivered.

The Penalty Box

If we don't get a deal in Copenhagen we don't lose the game immediately. We just have to keep talking until the next chance to continue the game. But as we delay, more greenhouse gases are added to the atmosphere and we creep closer to the brink of tipping points where a warming planet initiates positive feedback mechanisms (e.g. methane from melting tundra) that cause climate change to run away on its own.

A winning strategy

We need to embrace the idea that we really do live in Marshall McLuhan's Global Village. Co-operation as a strategy can be very profitable in a free-market economy. Management guru Peter Drucker saw that "alliances are where the real growth is" in business. This has appeared in progressive partnerships that have resulted in long lasting supplier-customer co-operation throughout product concept, design, manufacture and improvement.

This kind of interdependence may be the only realistic way to achieve reductions in GHGs — a win for everyone.

According to James Hansen of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, 350 parts per million is the concentration of CO₂ that should be in the atmosphere, "if humanity wishes to preserve a planet similar to that on which civilization developed and to which life on Earth is adapted."

Currently, the concentration is 387 ppm and rising by about two ppm per year.

See www.350.org.

The Shift to Sustainable Farming

Agro-ecology is our safest bet in the face of climate change

By Josh Brandon, Manitoba Eco-Network's Water Caucus, and Living Green, Living Well Coordinator, Resource Conservation Manitoba

THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT launched a plan this fall to develop a roadmap for adapting Canadian agriculture to global climate change, hosting a nationwide series of 10 regional climate change adaptation workshops. What institutions, policies and infrastructure will be needed to ensure that farming in this country makes as successful a transition as possible to the warmer and more unpredictable climate of the 21st century and beyond? Environmental groups across the country are mobilizing to participate in this process. We cannot afford the risk that, in the course of adapting to climate change, we reproduce the type of globalized, industrial, and fossil fuel-dependent agribusiness that has been one of the main drivers of global warming over the past 40 years. The key to adapting to climate change is to promote farming methods that work as much as possible within nature.

Mitigating and adapting to climate change

Canadian agriculture will be among the industries most affected by climate change. Canada, as a northern country, can expect more intense warming in the coming decades than most other regions. The Canadian Prairies will likely experience extreme variation in precipitation. Droughts may become more common, but so will flooding, and much of the precipitation will occur at times when we do not need it: during the winter months. Intuitively, we might expect there to be benefits for farming in a cold climate like ours as the growing season is extended. Hank Venema, director with the International Institute for Sustainable Development framed the problem thus: "Opportunities exist if we can stretch an increasingly irregular water supply across more heat units, *and* if we can manage extreme weather events." We should not assume that warmer Canadian weather would allow us to do more of the same, only bigger. We will need a new paradigm to make the shift.

Farming as part of nature, not against it

Our best chance for a sustainable food system, able to withstand the uncertainties of global climate change, lies in a set of strategies that are loosely described as agro-ecology. Agro-ecology refers to methods of farming that promote biodiversity, while reducing the impact of humans on the ecosystem and the landscape. Agro-ecology includes methods ranging from low-input and organic agri-

culture to indigenous farming technologies. Agro-ecological production significantly reduces our impact on the environment and can be more resilient to the expected shocks of climate change.

Industrial agriculture banishes biodiversity from the field with pesticides and genetic engineering, leaving a single species to cover hundreds or thousands of hectares. Industrial inputs replace services provided by other species in a natural ecosystem, including pollination, pest control and fertilization, while water and nutrients are mined from the soil. The value of a single cash crop is increased, but the

cultural land around urban centres, helping farmers gain access to local markets, and enhancing the genetic diversity of crops grown in Canada, including supporting heritage seeds and preserving tracts of land free from genetically engineered crops.

We need to do more to recognize the invaluable ecological services provided by farmland. If we maintain farmland ecologically, it can help store carbon, reduce water runoff and lower phosphorus and nitrogen levels, all while preserving biodiversity. We must seek out win-win scenarios that benefit municipalities, farmers and the environment.

"The key to adapting to climate change is to promote farming methods that work as much as possible within nature."

total value of goods and services produced per hectare is reduced, and sustainability is impaired.

Sustainable farming technologies, by contrast, mimic and integrate with natural ecosystems, growing several crops together to maximize the symbiotic benefits each gains from its neighbours. The "three sisters" crop system of North American Aboriginal Peoples provides an example. Growing squash, beans and corn together increased the land's productivity. Each plant contributed to the overall system: the corn, structure; the beans, nitrogen; and the squash, mulch and weed protection. The better we integrate trees, shrubs, ground crops and herbs within an area, the greater the biodiversity, the more we maximize light, water and nutrients, and the greater the capacity of the ecological system to withstand climatic shocks.

Principles for adapting Canadian agriculture

We need to ensure a sustainable and secure food system for all. The food price shocks of 2007-08 strained many Canadian households, especially those with lower incomes. Further shocks are likely as the global agri-food system reacts to climate change. Canada must reduce its reliance on food imports and develop local markets from which Canadian farmers can benefit. Local food security needs will vary by province and region, but some key strategies include: protecting green zones and agri-

Finally, farmers need access to training and information in order to make a transition to sustainable agriculture. A shift in culture is needed, to help farmers adapt to climate change. Canada must invest in the knowledge base necessary for making the transition to agro-ecology.

Mobilizing the environmental agricultural community

In order to be sure that the federal government hears this message of agro-ecology in adapting to climate change, we are seeking to organize as many groups as possible to provide an ecological perspective at meetings that will be happening across the country through next spring. As part of the Canadian Environmental Network, the Manitoba Eco-Network links its member groups with hundreds of environmental organizations across the country. Among the greatest strengths of the network are its caucuses: affinity groups organized by common interest. In Manitoba, our Water Caucus brings together expertise and energy from across the province. By sharing research and organizing capacity, we are able to extend our voice across the country.

If you would like to become involved in the Manitoba Eco-Network Water Caucus, or find out what you can do help build a sustainable and resilient agriculture system in Canada, contact: josh@mbeconetnetwork.org.

Louisiana-Pacific Pleads Poverty, Shuts Off Pollution Controls

Environmental scientists recommend that Swan Valley mill petition be denied, and an up-to-date biofilter installed

By Margaret Romak, *Concerned Citizens of the Valley*

THE POLLUTION CONTROLS at the Louisiana-Pacific Canada Ltd. (LP) mill in the Swan River Valley have been turned off since the beginning of 2009. During this time the mill has operated on a part-time basis. Recently, the loggers who supply the mill with wood have been told to clean up their log yards in the bush, but not to start any new areas. The mill is running at partial capacity, and is shut off at times, while LP awaits Manitoba Conservation's decision whether the pollution controls are to be reconnected or permanently shut down.

LP was mandated to install these pollution controls, regenerative thermal oxidizers (RTOs), by a Clean Environment Commission (CEC) ruling in 1994, after pressure from a group of local residents called Concerned Citizens of the Valley. RTOs filter volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) that are significant contributors to air pollution, but according to LP the use of RTOs increases emissions of carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides.

Manitoba Conservation promised at the CEC hearings that they would conduct random monitoring of the emissions from the LP stacks at the oriented strand board (OSB) mill. However, a Manitoba Conservation employee admitted in a 2009 email that the department had never once done any random, unannounced testing.

In its proposal to Manitoba Conservation in November 2008, LP requested the plant be allowed to increase the emission limits of pollutants and asked for interim approval to shut off the RTOs. The proposal letter states, "the proposed changes in emission limits will not result in significant impact to the surrounding environment and community health."

LP made the following statement near the end of its request: "With the current market conditions forecasted into 2010, it is highly conceivable that the Swan Valley OSB mill would shut down indefinitely, directly impacting 175 staff and hourly personnel and various associated contractor log handlers, should the requirement to operate RTOs remain."

On Jan. 8, 2009, when Manitoba Conservation approved the interim shutdown, the RTOs were quietly shut off, and no public notice was given.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAN SOPOROVICH

The pollution-controlling regenerative thermal oxidizers at the LP facility in the Swan Valley have been turned off since January 2009.

On Jan. 29, a small notice was placed in the local paper and in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, asking for permanent decommissioning of the RTOs. When the Concerned Citizens found out about this, the group notified the local municipal councils; most of them already knew and had quietly agreed with LP, but had not let their own citizens know.

In February, a member of the Concerned Citizens visited four randomly selected neighbours of LP, one on each side of the mill. Not one had heard that the RTOs were already shut off, or that they were planning to shut them off permanently — despite a statement on Lpsustainability.com: "[We] keep our neighbors up to date on what's happening at LP and gather concerns and input from members of the community."

After receiving public comment on the decommissioning of the RTOs, then-conservation minister Stan Struthers instructed the CEC to conduct an investigation and provide recommendations regarding LP's request. The Terms of Reference

indicated this was to be a public meeting—not the customary public hearing, which would have allowed the public to cross-examine LP and its experts. Although the Concerned Citizens lobbied for it, no public hearing was granted.

In June 2009, the Concerned Citizens of the Swan Valley and the Boreal Forest Network retained the Public Interest Law Centre (PILC) in order to provide an independent and evidence-based assessment of the LP Swan Valley proposal. Three researchers addressed the group's concerns in their reports to the PILC, which in turn quoted these researchers in an addendum to their brief to the CEC. The remarks below are drawn from those reports.

Issues to be addressed: Gordon Brown

Brown has a PhD in environmental science. He has prepared human health risk and/or air emission assessments for a number of Weyerhaeuser operations.



Wood stacks at the mill. The facility has produced oriented strand board since 1996, but is currently running at partial capacity.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAN SOPROVICH

Concerned Citizens of the Valley members, L to R: Maria Kent, Archie Kichuk, Maggie Romak, Dan Soprovich and Iris Jonsson. Absent: Joe Eichler and Ken Sigurdson.

Based upon his peer review of the health risk data presented by LP, Brown concludes that the human risk calculations provided by LP Canada do not represent current accepted practice for human health risk assessment in Canada and the United States.

Brown recommends that a number of issues be addressed before a final decision on the RTOs is made:

- Ambient air quality monitoring locations were improperly placed.
- Background air concentrations were not added to modelled OSB mill predictions.
- Incremental health risk increases could not be quantified due to lack of an appropriate and current "base case" with RTOs operating.
- Risk estimates were not generated for nearby human receptor locations.
- The potential for odour generation, which can generate health concerns, was not assessed.
- A scientific rationale was not provided for the exposure limits that were assumed, some of which may be inappropriate.

Failures of LP's documentation:

David Chadder

Chadder is vice-president (western operations) at Rowan Williams Davies and Irwin, where he oversees air quality, hazard and risk assessments, stack emissions testing and ambient air quality monitoring studies.

Based upon his peer review of the LP air quality documentation, Chadder concludes that, "the air quality impacts have not been properly documented or accounted for by LP Canada."

He suggests that LP has:

- Failed to meet minimum industry submission requirements.
- Failed to account for all hazardous contaminants of interest in their normal plant emissions.
- Failed to include all types of emissions in

their dispersion modelling.

- Failed to complete a cumulative impact assessment that properly accounts for and includes background ambient measurements.
- Failed to consider potential nuisance odour impacts from the emitted contaminants.

In terms of LP's ambient air quality monitoring, Chadder observes that "Neither monitoring location reflects prevailing winds or maximum peak concentrations . . . As such, these data are more suitable for establishing regional background levels than LP Canada plant impact levels. They do not properly evaluate the impact of plant emissions at the point of plume impingement or maximum concentrations at grade."

Better technology exists:

Charles Simon

Simon holds a PhD in physical chemistry from the University of Florida. He has measured VOCs and other emissions for the National Council of the Paper Industry, and consulted for the U.S. EPA and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

Simon notes that LP is seeking a permanently allowable 33-fold increase in actual VOC emissions from the dryers and press at the Swan Valley mill and an even larger increase in emissions of hazardous air pollutants.

Simon found that recent technological developments have enabled modern bioreactors to be much more effective, meeting or exceeding all vendor guarantees of efficacy and operation costs.

Simon concludes that this technology has the potential to reduce VOCs, HAPs, nitrous oxide and greenhouse gas emissions, while lowering operation costs at the Swan Valley mill.

Conclusions based upon a review of the evidence

The Public Interest Law Centre's independent peer

reviews of Louisiana-Pacific's health risk assessment, dispersion modelling and air quality monitoring demonstrate that there are significant deficiencies in LP's research and technology. Based on the record to date, it is not possible to reliably conclude that the proposed emission limits do not pose a risk to community health and environment.

Based upon the independent evaluation of the evidence, the PILC recommends that:

- The proposed emission levels not be approved.
- LP be directed to provide health risk assessments, dispersion modelling and air quality monitoring that accord with industry best practices.
- LP Swan River be requested to obtain bids from one or more modern bioreactor vendors for the purpose of installing one or more units to control dryer and press emissions.
- The results be tested by independent analysis and by cross-examination in a public hearing process that provides both the regulator and the community with an affordable, meaningful and transparent forum to review these evaluations.

Summary

All the oral and written submissions from the Concerned Citizens are being studied by the Clean Environment Commission, and their report will be presented to the minister of conservation, now Bill Blaikie, early in the new year.

Margaret Romak is a Swan River resident and member of Concerned Citizens of the Valley.

The group is responsible for costs related to the expert assessments and reports of the PILC, and welcomes any support to help address our obligation. Please contact Dan Soprovich at dsop@mts.net or 204-734-3054 for further information.

Power Shift Shifted My Views and Aspirations

By Evan Marantz

HOW DOES SOMEONE who was only passively interested in environmental action become fully empowered and engaged? Well, how about 50-plus hours on a bus and three full days of conferencing; that was my experience at Power Shift 2009 in Ottawa.

I found out only weeks before about the Manitoba Eco-Network's bus to Ottawa for the Power Shift conference, Oct. 23-26. Not knowing what to expect, I boarded the bus at the Forks with 40 others, to leave the city for five days—wondering if it was worth it to miss three days of school. When I returned on the following Tuesday, there was no doubt in my mind; it was worth it. Power Shift for me was an exceptional experience—and tremendously fun on top of it all.

Seeing so many youth and younger people extremely dedicated to the cause of climate change and the environment really inspired me to take a lead and start my own projects at my school. If I was merely interested in environmental issues when I arrived at the conference, by the time I left I was passionately motivated. The daily workshops at the conference educated me on different topics regarding the science and economics behind climate change, and introduced me on how to put ideas into action through lobbying, environmental journalism, documentary filmmaking, and high school community organizing.

At the conference I learned how to get my voice heard about issues on climate change and other social action issues. I left the conference not only with the desire to take action, but with the tools to do so. The conference empowered, motivated, and educated me.

On Oct. 24, we participated in 350.org's Fill the Hill demonstration at Parliament Hill with hundreds of other young people. I was also involved in the protest as we walked from the University of Ottawa to Parliament Hill shouting for climate justice. It was very interesting and inspiring to see the magnitude of this protest and participate in one for the first time.

Aside from the protest, we also met with MPs in the House of Commons to lobby them about adopting climate change policies. It was very empowering to meet with the MP of my constituency and experience one important way to share your voice and concerns to influence policy.

Power Shift presented many different sides to the environmental movement in Canada; it broadened my point of view and exposed me to many peo-



Power Shift Canada: Team 'Toba in front of Parliament Hill's Centre Block.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANITOBA ECO-NETWORK

ple from across the country who are very passionate and care deeply about the environment. Being part of the mass of people who gathered in Ottawa made me optimistic that we can effect change in our country and in the world. I now understand all of the hard work and dedication required to influence government and make broad changes.

It may be difficult for concerned individuals to feel that the majority of people are really committed to addressing climate change, but I can attest that after seeing over a thousand people gather in Ottawa for this purpose, many Canadians really do care.

If we can continue to build momentum off of conferences like Power Shift and move forward as a culture and as a generation, the goals of the environmental movement in Canada will be reached.

Evan Marantz is a Grade 12 student at Grant Park High School and a leader on the student environment committee.



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Canadian Youth in Copenhagen

Pursuing sustainability for 2059 and beyond

By Dean Medeiros, Project Manager, Manitoba Eco-Network Climate Change Connection

WHAT WILL THE WORLD LOOK LIKE 50 years from now? As human technological development progresses at an ever-increasing pace, the only certainty is that we can expect much change. For instance, 50 years ago, on Aug. 14, 1959, NASA scientists obtained the first crude image of Earth from the Explorer VI Earth satellite. This unimpressive, virtually incomprehensible image is a far cry from current technological capacity, even from only the splendours of Google Earth.

Innovation has made it possible for us to improve quality of life for billions of people around the world. Since 1959 earth's population has also more than doubled, from fewer than three billion to nearly seven billion people today, but our ever-increasing needs have compromised the sustainability of our planet and led to climate change. But just as satellite technology has made impressive strides since 1959, I dream that we can mitigate climate change with miraculous strides in technological and social innovation.

In pursuit of this dream, I recently applied to be part of the Canadian Youth Delegation (CYD). Organized by the Canadian Youth Climate Coalition, the CYD is comprised of 30 youth from across Canada with official accreditation to participate as observers in the United Nations climate negotiations in Copenhagen this December.

The CYD will represent Canadian youth at these historic talks and share their experiences and dreams with other youth present at the conference—and those back in Canada. The CYD is currently coordinating a Home Team, organizing hundreds of youth across Canada to promote strong federal climate action, co-ordinate video conferencing opportunities, provide local media outreach during the conference and assist with new media campaigns (i.e. post blogs on Itsgettinghotinhere.org).

A key issue the CYD is promoting is for Canada to support a stabilization target of atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at 450 ppm of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂-eq), of which the CO₂ concentration should be 350 ppm. This is the established minimum necessary to fulfil the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's objective of "prevent[ing] dangerous interference with the climate system"—that is, a rise of 2°C above pre-industrial levels.

To better meet the 450 ppm CO₂-eq target, the CYD argues that Canada should adopt emissions reductions in line with the Intergovernmental



PHOTO COURTESY OF MANITOBA ECO-NETWORK

Left: Dean Medeiros at the Climate Change Connection display.

Right: First satellite image of earth obtained from the Explorer 6 Earth Satellite on Aug. 14, 1959.



PHOTO: NASA

Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s recommended range for developed countries of 25-40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, with emissions peaking by 2015. Canada's current emissions reduction target of three percent below 1990 levels by 2020 (or 20 percent below 2006 levels) is inadequate to meet the 450 ppm stabilization goal.

CYD will also be following the minute details of the policy framework. A key focus of mine will be on forest conservation policy as elaborated in *Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries* (REDD-plus). The *Fourth Assessment Report* of the IPCC calculated that about 20 percent of anthropogenic CO₂ emissions during the 1990s resulted from land use change, primarily deforestation. The goal of REDD-plus is to mitigate emissions from deforestation by providing financial compensation for tropical forest conservation. The development of better satellite technology to better assess forest carbon stocks and organizational arrangements to transfer benefits equitably amongst all resource users, especially the poor, are key to the success of REDD-plus.

The youth of today must push for technological and societal innovations like REDD-plus, since we

will bear the brunt of climate change impacts. But we must also consider those on the front lines of climate change, such as my grandfather—who despite his advanced age is already experiencing the impacts of climate change, along with many farmers around the world. My grandfather lives on the island of Santa Maria, Azores, which during the 2008-09 rainy season did not receive a single drop of rain for the first time in recorded history. My grandfather is illiterate and consequently has no idea about the latest climate change science, yet he is very concerned about the effects of climate change and the legacy of his family and the land he has been nurturing for decades.

Instead of waiting for China and other nations to act, Canada should exhibit leadership and follow a Chinese proverb: "A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step." It is time for Canada to take that step and show global leadership for urgent and comprehensive international climate action. The time for action is now—we must strive to make the dream of a sustainable future into reality.

Any youth interested in joining the CYD Home Team should send an e-mail to hometeam@ourclimate.ca with their contact information and location.

Community-Led Emissions Reduction Here in Manitoba

By Shoni Litinsky

CLIMATE CHANGE CONNECTION is working with communities and neighbourhoods throughout Manitoba as part of the Province of Manitoba's Community-Led Emissions Reduction (CLER) Program. The CLER program is a new four-year pilot program launched by the Intergovernmental Affairs department. The program builds on the Federation of Canadian Municipalities Partners for Climate Protection program and is aimed at helping Manitoban communities reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to the fight against climate change. Fourteen rural and urban centres, including six neighbourhood organizations, have been selected for funding under this new initiative.

“The CLER program is a new four-year pilot program launched by the Intergovernmental Affairs department.”

Through Climate Change Connection I am working with the climate change coordinators hired as part of the CLER program to help them engage their communities. I am also helping them facilitate events that will both identify and lead to the implementation of projects to lower their greenhouse gas emissions. The emissions reduc-

tions resulting from these projects will assist Manitoba to meet its 2012 targets as set by the Kyoto Protocol.

For more information please contact Shoni at Climate Change Connection or visit: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/press/top/2009/04/2009-04-22-130200-5703.html>.



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Check out our website:

www.ecodrivermanitoba.ca



Santa made an early appearance at Ciclovía, a street festival celebrating the bicycle in Winnipeg, this past September. A toonie got you a picture on Santa's knee and helped support the youth travelling to Ottawa for Power Shift to ask the Canadian government to take action on climate change.

New in the Library

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New Materials:

Primer on Automobile Fuel Efficiency and Emissions

By Pollution Probe, 2009

This helpful guide uses plenty of diagrams, charts and colourful images to explain how cars work and what technologies and practices can affect fuel efficiency and emissions. It provides an inventory of government initiatives in Canada, the U.S. and globally and outlines what more can be done to reduce fuel consumption and emissions.



Making the Most of the Water We Have: The Soft Path Approach to Water Management

Edited by David B. Brooks, Oliver M. Brandes & Stephen Garman
Earthscan, 2009

The concept of "soft path," first developed for energy, can also be applied to water. Going beyond demand management, this approach fosters water efficiency and conservation. Drawing on plenty of Canadian examples, this book looks at the philosophical roots as well as the practical applications for water soft paths.

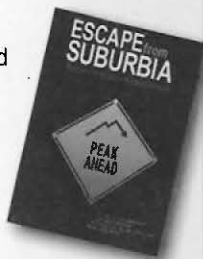


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Directed by Gregory Greene, 2007

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Periodical Profile

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Earth Island Journal

(Earthisland.org/journal)

IN ITS 24TH PUBLISHING YEAR, *Earth Island Journal* is an excellent source of environmental news, features and essays. It is an American publication with a decidedly international focus.

Around the World is a regular section that compiles news briefs from a variety of sources, organized by continent. The pieces are tightly edited to be short yet informative. In Review focuses on what the title suggests.

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Other features include a scientific look at bee species depletion and the role of the commercial bee rearing industry, and the state of Mexico's Lerma Santiago river, a tale of pollution, government negligence and community action.

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The design is quite straightforward and easy to navigate. Not uncommonly, green is overused in the template and is the sole colour on most pages. The magazine does not emphasize art or photography with every article, but helps make up for it with a section called 1,000 Words (this issue features woodcuts of California mountains).

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The non-profit institute also gives out the annual Brower Youth Awards. Manitoban Robin Bryan, a Western Canada Wilderness Committee activist, was a 2009 recipient.

—Joel Trenaman



Earth Island Brower Award

Robin Bryan, public outreach co-ordinator for the MB office of the Wilderness Committee, speaks to participants at an April 2009 open house regarding the proposed camp development at Meditation Lake. Bryan was one of six winners of the 2009 Brower Youth Award, and only the second Canadian to win in the award's 10-year history. Bryan received his award at a ceremony (followed by a camping trip) hosted by the Earth Island Institute in San Francisco in October, where he took the opportunity to draw attention to his current campaign: the East Shore Wilderness Area.



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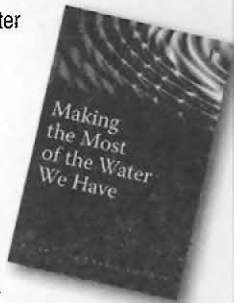
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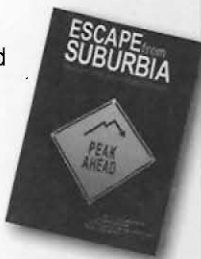


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Grass River Logging Road to Proceed

Minister denies appeals from public, government departments, offers no explanation

By Tessa Vanderhart, Communications Co-ordinator,
Western Canada Wilderness Committee

MANITOBA CONSERVATION ANNOUNCED on Oct. 16 that it will uphold the licence of a Tolko Industries Ltd. logging road that cuts directly through Grass River Provincial Park. The government also failed to provide any explanation for its decision to deny the formal appeals of three groups and 259 individuals.

The Dickstone South Road will bisect the park to provide a more direct link to Tolko's Loonhead Lake logging area north of the park. Tolko's website estimates that using the 17 km road will save two hours each trip.

Legislation to ban logging in Manitoba's provincial parks (excluding Duck Mountain) became effective June 11, 2009, but this licence was issued two months after, on Aug. 12. Oddly enough, the licence specifically states that the road can only be used for logging purposes.

The Western Canada Wilderness Committee (WCWC), along with Manitoba Wildlands, the Manitoba Liberal party and the Green Party of Manitoba, appealed the licence decision, demanding to know how a logging road could have been authorized through a provincial park.

The groups condemned the decision, and their appeals were included in a summary document that also contained recommendations from three branches of the provincial government not to build the road.

Water Stewardship's report on the road noted that the CEC classified the Upper Grass River as "High Water Quality" surface waters. Both Water Stewardship and the Parks branch of Manitoba Conservation requested one of the proposed alternate routes be used, in order to bypass the park.

In its appeal of the road, the Parks branch noted that the logging road was approved as part of Tolko's 1984-2009 Forest Management Licence Agreement (FMLA), which will expire before the road is built. Further, when approved in principle 25 years ago the road would have been for logging in the park, not in

the current area north of Grass River.

However, none of the 39 pages of summary files yielded an amendment or even an explanation. Then-conservation minister Stan Struthers announced that the licence would be upheld on Oct. 16, 2009, citing the Environment Act, 27 (2) (d):

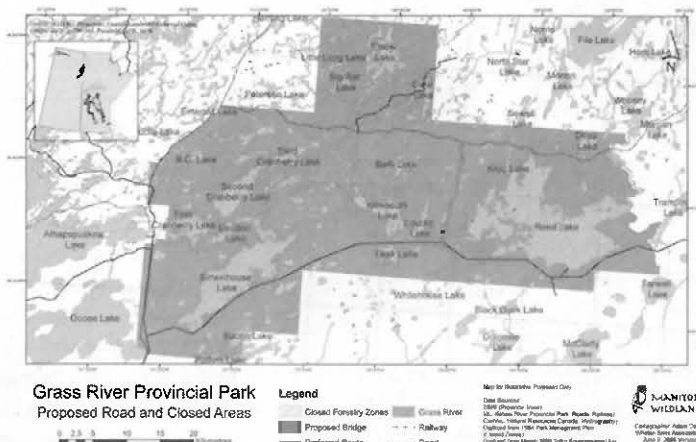
"Where an appeal is made to the minister pursuant to subsection (1), the minister may, on such considerations as the minister deems advisable do any or all of the following [...] (d) dismiss the appeal."

This case is precedent-setting, and could be used by other logging companies to the same end: scoring concessions to make up for the ban on logging in provincial parks.

As the Northwest Region department of Manitoba Conservation elucidated in its report on the road, "the Region strongly suspects that other potential users (for activities such as mineral exploration or recreational resource use) will seek the approval of Tolko to use this road, and in the case of commercial activities the company may see this as an opportunity to offset some of the construction costs."

That the road must be controlled by electronic gates is a clear sign that Manitoba Conservation is aware of the environmental damage that comes with an all-weather road. And while it's called a temporary road, the reality is that its impact on the soil, wildlife habitat and watershed will last for decades.

The road will cut through habitat of the Naosap caribou range, and facilitate logging in the Wimapedi caribou range. Woodland caribou are classified as a threatened species provincially and federally, which includes habitat protection. Along with the Manito-



Pristine Grass River Falls will be the site of the proposed road's bridge.

ba chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), the Wilderness Committee held a press conference in September remonstrating that the province does not have a Recovery Action Plan (required by Manitoba law) in place for either range; the Wimapedi are not even listed as a protected range.

But the biggest cause for concern is that Manitoba Conservation was able to dismiss the appeal without so much as a reason. At minimum, Manitobans deserve to know why the decision to build a logging road through a provincial park was upheld, despite the strong appeals provided by the Wilderness Committee, and even departments of the provincial government.

To date, a second appeal, sent from the Wilderness Committee and Manitoba Wildlands to Premier Selinger on Oct. 27 has received no response. With a new premier and conservation minister, perhaps the reflex to deny the public an explanation and defer to logging companies will change—if not, the law must.

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