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REPORT FROM THE AMBASSADOR FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Honourable Gilbert Parent, PC



As we face the challenges of a new year, I would like to share with you the highlights of my first year as Ambassador for the Environment.

Since last January, when I assumed my post, I have travelled widely both nationally and internationally. I have attended conferences, at most of which I was invited to give keynote speeches about Canada and the environment, and I delivered Canada's statements on several occasions at the United Nations.

I have visited numerous public and private sector environmental sites and met with many environmental non-governmental organizations, other NGOs, stakeholders, Ministers, Members of Parliament and interested individuals.

I spent 10 weeks chairing roundtable consultations with stakeholders in the capitals of each province and territory in preparation for Canada's National Report to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which will take place in Johannesburg in late August 2002.

Throughout the year, I was astounded by the enormity of the challenges we face in protecting our environment and equally impressed by the many innovations and partnerships that already exist to do just that.

It has been most rewarding to discover the great number of Canadian environmental technologies available that can offset the damage caused to the environment by industrial wastes and population demands. Many of these are ready to be implemented and simply require the green light of recognition and support.

Among these technologies are solutions to the problems of solid waste disposal, the decontamination of toxic wastes and persistent organic pollutants, the clean-up of oil spills, the recycling of polystyrene, and alternative energies.

I have been encouraged by the growth of local environmental initiatives nationwide, which are created and executed, in many cases, by volunteer groups brought together by the common desire to save and reclaim their environments. A recycling program has just been initiated in Iqaluit; the St. Lawrence Action Plan, a successful partnership among three levels of

government and the public, has reduced runoffs of toxic industrial effluents, decontaminated polluted aquatic sites, protected habitats, created a marine park and rehabilitated endangered species; in Annapolis Royal, the local composting facility is part of the town's Zero Waste 2005 Program; Ontario Power Generation has erected a 1.8-megawatt wind turbine in Pickering.

Most large corporations are embracing corporate social responsibility by establishing in-house departments devoted solely to environmental and sustainable development concerns.

The problems are many — climate change, air, water and soil contamination, smog, hazardous wastes, endangered species, deforestation. Yet, as Professor Edward O. Wilson has said: "The 21st century is the Century of the Environment." There is greater global awareness now than ever before that our planet must be saved.

An update of my activities last year follows. I am looking forward to a new year of positives. The World Summit on Sustainable Development will bring together the world's leaders to map out an agenda for the globe's environmental future. In Canada, we will continue to carry out our environmental protection goals, among them the full realization of the right of every Canadian to clean and safe air, water and soil.

I will continue to champion environmental initiatives and technologies as I discover them and to report my findings to Cabinet. I will also closely monitor local, national and international environmental issues and concerns, which affect us all, and bring them to the Government's attention.

We must work together to keep our planet safe.

Hilbert Parent

Conferences Attended as Participant and/or Speaker

National

- First Meeting of Environment Ministers of the Americas, Montreal, Quebec
- met with 16 Canadian NGOs prior to the meeting
 - their views were incorporated in Minister David Anderson's remarks to the Ministers attending

International Best Practices Exchange, Toronto, Ontario

- a meeting of local government officials from around the world to discuss strategies for the reduction of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, most particularly as they relate to smog

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Leading Edge 2001: Focus on the Biosphere, Burlington, Ontario

- discussions of sustainable tourism and eco-tourism in a biosphere reserve, stewardship and community efforts along Ontario's Niagara Escarpment, and the success of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust in Clayoquot, B.C.

Mel Swartz Gibson Lake Conservation Project, Niagara Falls, Ontario

- an endeavour to preserve greenbelts in regions of the Niagara Peninsula

National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy Conference on Conservation, Winnipeg, Manitoba

- government, NGO and First Nations representatives from Canada and the United States discussed conservation projects and needs
- NRTEE breakfast gathering with Hon. Paul Martin, Toronto Ontario

Oceans Stewardship Conference, Vancouver, B.C.

- focused on local, national and international problems of marine pollution
- great emphasis placed on the need for intergovernmental cooperation in order to take all positions into consideration in international negotiations

PICES, Victoria, B.C.

- the 10th anniversary meeting of an international group of experts in the fields of fisheries, fish habitats, climate change and aquaculture

Plastics Industry Association Annual Meeting, Toronto, Ontario

- representatives, from around the world, of seven types of plastics producers met to discuss recycling, sustainable development and waste management of their products

Restoration Across Borders, Niagara Falls, Ontario

- meeting of members, from 31 countries, of the Society for Ecological Restoration to discuss restoration of the Great Lakes on both sides of the border

International

Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society, Phoenix, Arizona

- a symposium on fisheries in a changing climate attended by a large contingent of Canadian experts in the field

Children's Environmental Health II: A Global Forum for Action, Washington, D.C.

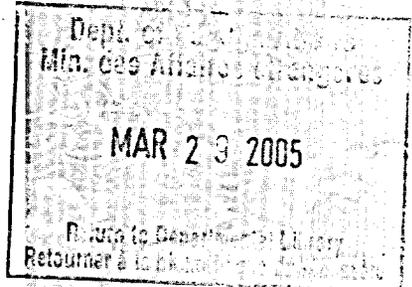
- a conference to discuss the special vulnerability of children and how they are affected by their environments

ECOASIA, Tokyo, Japan

- meeting of Asian Environment Ministers to discuss environmental concerns and preparations for the WSSD in Johannesburg

OECD Forum on Sustainable Development, Paris, France

- international delegates discussed sustainable development and the economy



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**Summit on Sustainable Development and Its Impact on Poverty,
New Delhi, India**

- conference organized by the Tata Energy Research Institute to discuss global sustainable development needs and strategies

**United Nations Conference on Trade and Development/Earth Council
Policy Forum on Trade and Climate Change, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

- discussions of the global opportunities for large-scale trading in greenhouse gas emissions credits
- meetings and environmental visits in Manaus and Brasilia

United Nations Forum on Forests, New York, N.Y.

- preparations for a global plan of action to save forests at risk and improve forest management

WSSD Preparatory Committee Meeting, United Nations, New York, N.Y.

- the first of four preparatory meetings to set the agenda for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg

Speeches

Canadian Club of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba	University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia
Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia	University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta
Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador	University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Niagara College, Niagara Falls, Ontario	University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan
Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario	University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario
Unveiling of Commemorative Monument, Welland Canal, Welland, Ontario	University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia
	University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario

WSSD Roundtable Consultations

Charlottetown, Prince Edward
Island

Fredericton, New Brunswick

Iqaluit, Nunavut

Ottawa, Ontario

Whitehorse, Northwest Territories

Visits Related to Environmental Technologies

Americana 2001, Montreal, Quebec

- a trade show featuring the latest in environmental technologies, including an electric Zamboni machine

Axor, Montreal/Gaspé, Quebec

- operates the wind farms in Matane and Cap Chat

Ballard Power Systems, Burnaby, B.C.

- develops and manufactures fuel cells for transportation vehicles and a wide range of stationary power generators

Canadian Polystyrene Recycling Association, Mississauga, Ontario

- recycles the ubiquitous polystyrene, which is then used for products such as office supplies and outerwear filling

Earth (Canada) Corporation, Montreal, Quebec

- a unique system for cleaning up oil spills on land and water

EcoLogic Inc., Rockwood, Ontario

- decontaminates persistent organic pollutants, military equipment and contaminated sites

Global Thermoelectric Inc., Calgary, Alberta

- develops and manufactures thermoelectric generators and solid oxide fuel cells

Iogen Corporation, Ottawa, Ontario

- an enzyme and ethanol producer, the former used in the pulp and paper, textile, animal feed and grain processing industries; the latter used for fuel that reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 99 percent compared with gasoline

Soconag, Montreal, Quebec

- uses "Smart Soil," a bioreactor, to decontaminate soils, residues, sediments and compost
 - its applications can be used for both aerobic and anaerobic waste management
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SUBBOR, Guelph, Ontario

- an anaerobic solid waste disposal process that takes care of 100 percent of unsorted waste, deals with recyclables and generates "clean" electricity

SunLine Transit Agency, Thousand Palms, California

- operates a fleet of 54 hydrogen fuel cell powered buses, street cleaners, trucks, etc., in partnership with Ballard Automotive of Burnaby, B.C.

VisionQuest Energy, Pincher Creek, Alberta

- operates the Castle River Wind Farm in Pincher Creek, which powers several thousand households and a light rail system in Calgary

Wintec Energy, Palm Springs, California

- a 3500-turbine wind farm, producing part of California's 4600 megawatts of wind power, which generates electricity for 1.7 million households

Visits to Environmental Sites

Annapolis Royal Engineered

Wetland for Wastewater
Treatment, Annapolis Royal,
Nova Scotia

Annapolis Royal Zero Waste 2005

Program Composting Facility,
Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia

Argentia Military Base, Argentia,

Newfoundland and Labrador

Biosphere/Ecowatch Centre,

Montreal, Quebec

Bird Reserve, Johnson's Mill,

New Brunswick

Bluenose Atlantic Coastal Action

Program, Lunenburg,
Nova Scotia

Britannia Mine, Howe Sound, B.C.

Burns Bog, Vancouver, B.C.

**The Canadian Hurricane Centre,
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia**

**Clean Annapolis River Project,
Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia**

Come by Chance Refinery,

Come by Chance, Newfoundland
and Labrador

Decommissioned Phosphorous

Plant, Long Harbour,
Newfoundland and Labrador

Defunct Shipbuilding Operation,

St. Mary's, Newfoundland and
Labrador

Edmonton Waste Management

Centre, Edmonton, Alberta

Electric Vehicle Project, Montreal,

Quebec

Environment Technology Centre,

Ottawa, Ontario

Hoover Dam, Boulder City, Nevada

**Miramar Giant Mine, Yellowknife,
N.W.T.**

National Headquarters of the

Meteorological Service of
Canada, Downsview, Ontario

**National Water Research Institute
at the Canada Centre for Inland
Waters, Burlington, Ontario**

National Wildlife Area and Nature
Centre, Cape Jourimain,
New Brunswick

Off-Shore Buoy Program, Bedford,
Nova Scotia

Placentia Bay, Newfoundland and
Labrador

Sackville Waterfowl Park, Sackville,
New Brunswick

Tidal Power Plant, Annapolis
Royal, Nova Scotia

Watercraft Waste Disposal, Mahone
Bay, Nova Scotia

Wildlife Reserve, Cap Tourmente,
Quebec

Wildlife Service Office, Vancouver,
B.C.

Meetings with Representatives of ENGOs, NGOs, Industry, Commissions

B.C. Network

Brazilian Ambassador

Brinkman and Associates
Reforestation Ltd.

British Columbia & Yukon
Chamber of Mines

British High Commissioner

Burrard Communications

Business Council of B.C.

Canadian Association of Petroleum
Producers

Canadian Institute of Child Health

Canadian Parks and Wilderness
Society

Canadian Plastics Industry
Association

Canadian Steel Producers
Association

Cascadia Foundation

Clean Environment Commission

Commissioner of the Environment
and Sustainable Development

Communications Consultants Ltd.

Conservation Corps

Conservation Ontario

Czech Ambassador

Dow Chemical

Ducks Unlimited Canada

EcoLogic Inc.

Environmental Commissioner
of Ontario

Evergreen

Former Minister of the
Environment for Ontario

Fraser Basin Council

German Ambassador

Governor of Brasilia

Greater Vancouver Regional
District

Hungarian Ambassador

Inco Limited

International Institute for
Sustainable Development

International Joint Commission
Inuit Circumpolar Conference
(Canada)
JTI-Macdonald Corp.
Latvian Ambassador
Lyonnaise des Eaux
Mexican Ambassador
Niagara Escarpment Commission
Niagara Peninsula Conservation
Authority
National Round Table on the
Environment and the Economy
Natural Heritage Stewardship
Secretariat
Nature Conservancy of Canada
Netherlands Ambassador
Northern Climate Exchange
Northern Forest Products
Association
North Shore Health Region
North-South Institute
Oakhill Environmental
Ontario Minister of Municipal
Affairs

Ontario Power Generation
Pentagon Capital Partners
Program for Sustainable Cities
RiverSides Stewardship Alliance
Russian Ambassador
R.V. Anderson Associates
St. John's Harbour ACAP Inc.
Senate Majority Leader of Brazil
SheerKnowledge Inc.
Sierra Club of Canada
Stuart Energy
Suncor
Sustainable Development Research
Institute
Swedish Ambassador
Toronto Atmospheric Fund
Toronto Environmental Services
TransAlta
Tsarslip First Nation
Union of B.C. Municipalities
United States Ambassador
