

## Environment Ministers make climate change a priority

**Brudenell, PEI – September 11, 2014** – Federal, provincial and territorial environment ministers today agreed that climate change will be on the agenda for the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) moving forward on an ongoing basis, with the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris as the topic of their meeting in 2015. After 2015, Ministers, in collaboration with senior officials, will decide the topic for the following years.

"Canadians attach the greatest importance to the protection and enhancement of the environment," said Janice Sherry, PEI's Minister of Environment, Labour and Justice, who hosted her colleagues at the annual meeting of CCME. "As ministers, we are working together to ensure that environmental initiatives are effective and that they contribute to the well-being of Canadians."

Ministers agreed to work collaboratively within provincial and territorial jurisdictions to achieve real reductions in greenhouse gases, which will support economic competitiveness as Canada transitions to a low carbon economy.

Ministers shared information about the various approaches jurisdictions are taking to address climate change. They also discussed the upcoming round of international negotiations starting with the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Lima, Peru in December 2014. They noted that as a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Canada is expected to identify its post-2020 intended nationally determined contributions in advance of the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in December 2015.

Ministers also adopted a vision for waste management in Canada and committed to take action in their respective jurisdictions on waste. In keeping with the vision, many jurisdictions have already begun to identify sectors and waste streams where they will take action, such as waste from the institutional, commercial and industrial (ICI) sectors, construction, renovation and demolition (CRD) waste, and organic waste.

"While we have made progress on waste management in Canada over the last several years, we must do better," said Minister Sherry. "The vision we have adopted today is to make Canada a world leader in waste management."

CCME will develop tools to support jurisdictions in their efforts to achieve substantial reductions in waste disposed that will help improve Canada's record on recycling and reducing waste.

Ministers adopted four key objectives:

- Improving Canada's recycling rates and reducing the amount of waste created;
- Developing tools for environmentally-sound waste management in Canada;
- Changing producer and consumer behavior; and
- Addressing the challenges faced by remote and northern communities in managing waste.

Governments will also continue to implement extended producer responsibility as agreed under the Canada-wide Action Plan for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) adopted by ministers in 2009. EPR encourages producers to design products with consideration for the environment, creates economic opportunities, and supports local waste programs.

Although Québec agrees with CCME's vision for waste management and supports collaboration in this area, it does not endorse a common evaluation mechanism, since it is already implementing its own Québec Policy on Residual Materials and will report on progress to the National Assembly and to Québec's population.

Ministers considered progress by jurisdictions in implementing the Air Quality Management System, adopted in 2012. Officials reported work on the AQMS is ongoing by all jurisdictions, except Québec, which has already implemented its own regulation. Jurisdictions will work to identify opportunities to address emissions from mobile sources and noted that Environment Canada has published [the first industrial emission requirements](#). Ambient air quality standards for [fine particulate matter and ozone](#) have also been established, while standards for nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide are currently being developed. All jurisdictions will collaborate on developing other elements of the system, notably air zones and airsheds.

Ministers agreed on the importance of cumulative effects management and have committed to identify lessons learned and develop best management practices to support sound environmental decision-making. A cumulative effect is a change in the environment caused by multiple interactions among human activities and natural processes that accumulate across space and time. Ministers noted the linkages between many environmental and energy issues that could benefit from cumulative effects management to control, minimize or prevent adverse consequences.

Ministers share the public's concerns about prevention and response to spills associated with the transportation of hazardous goods. They agreed to review the state of spills prevention and response in Canada and to work together to identify best practices and emerging issues.

Manitoba will host the next meeting of CCME.

CCME is the primary minister-led intergovernmental forum for collective action on environmental issues of national and international concern.

Contact:

Michael Goeres  
Executive Director  
CCME Secretariat  
(204) 948-2172

Wayne Mackinnon  
Sr. Communications Officer  
Environment, Labour and Justice PEI  
(902) 368-5513

