

Vision Green

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Green Party of Canada

Since 2007, the Green Party of Canada has presented a comprehensive statement of our policies and programmes.

In August 2010, speaking at our party's Biannual General Meeting, former Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance, and senior economist to the TD Bank, Don Drummond, noted that we were the only party to have done so. He gave the document a B+ and suggested the other parties get an F for not having placed their vision before Canadians.

Periodically we update and expand this document to ensure we are ready at any time to put forward a positive vision, grounded in current realities.

Vision Green presents a well-researched analysis of critical environmental, economic and social challenges facing Canadians from coast to coast to coast, and presents practical solutions that can be achieved if there is the political will and leadership to take forward-looking action. It was developed by our Green Cabinet and was informed by experts, activists and citizens who participated in policy workshops held across Canada. Our vision is based on policies approved by the membership of the Green Party.

Our solutions are realistic because they follow "best practices" already in place in parts of Canada and around the world. These practices are cost-effective, deliver results, and benefit people, the economy and the environment.

The Green Party's down-to-earth solutions will work in Canada because they have worked around the world. Many have been successfully applied in Europe, where Greens are elected at all political levels, including the European Union and national parliaments. Countries where Greens have served in government are the countries creating new high-paying jobs while simultaneously meeting targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They are the countries where the gap between rich and poor is small and the standard of living is high. These countries

don't trade off the environment for the economy. Their economies and environmental laws are both strong.

Green Party solutions are rational because the Green Party, unlike other parties, understands the scientific reality of limits to growth set by the carrying capacity of our planet. We must work within these limits. Otherwise, we will exhaust resources, degrade our environment and put our economy, health and children's future at risk. Many people find it hard to position the Green Party on the old political spectrum. We believe in sound fiscal management and strengthening our economy while ensuring that it is sustainable. Does that mean we are "right wing"? We believe that government must provide needed social services while protecting our environment and the rights of women, minorities and disadvantaged people. Does that make us "left wing"? We don't think so. More and more people are simply thinking of the Green Party as the party of the future.

The Green Party is different from other parties in another important way. We will never place the pursuit of power above principle. We will not allow partisan politics to get in the way of good ideas and needed action. We agree with Canadians who say it's time for parties in parliament to stop bickering and get on with the job of governing, combating climate change and taking better care of our environment, our health and our economy.

The Green Party of Canada, founded in 1983, is now a major force in Canadian politics. Nearly one million Canadians voted Green in the 2008 federal election. More than 1 in 10 Canadians are now saying they plan to vote Green.

Green directions point to more jobs, more time with family, and a livable world, now and for our children and their children.

We will strive to support a society where the pressure to make a living does not crowd out having a life; where having more does not supplant being more.

In our green vision, Canadians enjoy a higher quality of life, experiencing health and wellness, education and meaningful work, prosperity and economic success supported by ecological health.

In our vision of Canada, ability or disability, economic, racial, or cultural backgrounds do not preclude individuals from contributing to and benefiting from a prosperous Canada.

Canadian communities – urban and rural – thrive in our green vision, including communities dependent on fisheries, forestry and agriculture.

Canada plays a positive role in the world, working cooperatively with governments, North and South, to ensure equity, global peace and security.

“WE ARE ENTERING AN ERA OF
CONSEQUENCES.”
Sir Winston Churchill

In her last book, Dark Age Ahead, Canadian urban planner and legendary author Jane Jacobs wrote that five pillars of our civilization and culture are under assault. She wrote that government policies have been contributing to the “ominous signs of decay” eroding family, community and education. She warned that family, community and higher education, as well as the practice of science and proper taxation were “in the process of becoming irrelevant, and so are dangerously close to the brink of lost memory and cultural uselessness.”

We feel this in our bones. Yet, what political party is addressing the threat?

Real policies in the real world can lead us to a better future. Poor policies, badly conceived, imperfectly imagined and poorly implemented, could leave our children and their children in an

unlivable world. The Green Party believes improvement can be made immediately while recognizing that long-term planning is essential if generations to come are to benefit.

This is the Green Plan for Canada. These are the steps we will take when we form government. These are the policies we will advance to other parties until that time. We will work collaboratively in the House of Commons to shift priorities, to promote those innovative ideas whose time has come.

“NOTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD...
NOT ALL THE ARMIES... IS SO
POWERFUL AS AN IDEA WHOSE
TIME HAS COME.”

Victor Hugo

We start with a vision of the society we want.

- Does it advance the common good?
- Does it advance global peace and security?
- Does it address the needs of children?
- Does it ensure Canada’s continued quality of life and economic health?
- Does it make families more secure?
- Does it protect, enhance and restore the life support systems of the planet?
- Does it promote systems – cultural, institutional, and technological – that are resilient and capable of adapting to shocks in a more unpredictable world?

The Green Government will jettison the baggage of currently stagnant political thinking. The Greens will leave the old-line parties to fight for turf at the cutting edge of the status quo.

We have a vision. With your vote and your help, we can make it real.

“WITHOUT VISION,
THE PEOPLE PERISH.”

Proverbs, Hebrew Testament

What kind of Canada do we want in 2020? How do we get there from here?

The Green Party holds a positive vision of Canada, now and into the future.

PART 1: THE GREEN ECONOMY

Overall, Canada has weathered the global financial meltdown better than some other nations. However, premature statements of self-congratulation are unwise. Are we prepared for the very real possibility that a fragile global economy might slide back into recession? A smart economy is one that is resilient. A smart economy resists complacency when global signals, such as the rapid increase in energy and food costs, suggest we are not out of the woods yet.

Even in these difficult economic times, most Canadians enjoy one of the highest qualities of life of any people in the world. We are blessed with abundant resources, a skilled and educated workforce, and a highly innovative corporate culture.

Still, the economic recovery is fragile. Too many small businesses are going bankrupt, while major industrial sectors such as manufacturing and forestry struggle to stay afloat. Meanwhile, the auto sector has received giant bailouts from provincial and federal governments without adequately protecting Canadian jobs or committing to making the transition to green technology. Unfortunately, employed Canadians are also among the most overworked citizens in the industrialized world. A report from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) states that the richest 10 per cent of Canadians are the only ones not working longer hours. The report concludes that, despite being better educated and working harder, Canadian families are now “running faster just to stay put and the bottom half is actually falling behind.”

As the ranks of the unemployed expanded, access to the insurance system designed for times such as recessions was reduced. Now that we are coming out of the recession, the federal government has announced a significant ramping up of premiums from employers and employees to make up for the temporary freeze on EI premiums in 2009 and 2010. The government will recoup deficits in EI by increasing EI premiums (up to 15% a year) starting in 2011. In effect a \$10 billion increase in EI premiums is planned over the next five years.

It is essential that we become far more creative in reducing our unbalanced dependence on trade with U.S., and that we significantly invest in a National Clean Tech/Energy program to remain price competitive and sanction-free. And finally that we conserve natural resources and invest more in long-term education and re-training.

Sadly, Canadians just experienced the only economic stimulus package in the world that deliberately ignored the new economy. Around the world, governments invested significant resources to stimulate the economy. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon called for a “Green New Deal” with investments focused on renewable green energy, green jobs and greater energy efficiency. The Obama Administration in the U.S. invested \$150 billion in renewable energy to create 1.5 million new jobs. President Obama has an aggressive plan to reduce dependence on imported oil as well as to invest \$13 billion in expanded passenger rail. European Union governments also embraced the Green New Deal, lining up economic objectives with climate-protecting goals. The Government of China made the largest investment in green technology to confront the recession – \$600 billion in new green investments. The Harper Government has made Canada the only country in the industrialized world to cut environmental protection and to reduce investments in green energy as part of a stimulus package.

This generation has the potential to capitalize on the single biggest business opportunity in human history – the shift to a low-carbon economy. Whether this is driven by the need to end the recession through economic stimulus, high energy prices, dwindling oil supplies, strategic

geopolitical threats to foreign oil, the climate crisis or all of them combined, the country that mobilizes resources to develop and commercialize low-carbon technologies (e.g. alternate fuels, renewable energy and energy efficiency) will survive the price shocks of fossil fuel's last gasps and emerge with a thriving economy. Canada should be that country.

1.1 Principles guiding the Smart Economy, the Green Economic Plan

1.1.1 Reducing waste: Improving our lives

Greens are committed to improving our collective well-being. Greens recognize that we need new measurements of our societal health and well-being. Greens know that the notion of unending economic growth is a dangerous illusion. We can do far more with far less. The central driving principle of Green Economic Policy is to improve well-being by increasing efficiency and eliminating waste. Our society has embedded wasteful practices at every turn. We waste raw materials, waste water and waste energy. In fact of all the energy used by Canadians, more than half is wasted. Green economic policies aim to improve the efficiency of resource and energy use by a factor of four.

In their seminal book, *Factor Four*, Ernst von Weizacker, Amory B. Lovins and L. Hunter Lovins concluded:

“THE AMOUNT OF WEALTH EXTRACTED FROM ONE UNIT OF NATURAL RESOURCES CAN QUADRUPLE. THUS WE CAN LIVE TWICE AS WELL – YET USE HALF AS MUCH.”

There is abundant evidence to support this contention. Improvements in labour productivity drove economic growth after World War II. We must now repeat the exercise as we improve the efficiency of resource and energy use.

1.1.2 Get the prices right

To get there from here, market distortions created by a failure to internalize externalities must be removed. In other words, we must get the prices right. The single most significant government policy tool to advance or retard economic sustainability resides in the fiscal framework.

Our fiscal plan is straightforward. Use the tax system to help meet societal and ecological goals. Get the prices right. Allow business to pursue profit, with clear signals of environmental and societal objectives.

The Green commitment to Green tax relief will:

- Reduce income taxes, including a stop to the practice of over-taxing married couples;
- Reduce payroll taxes; and,
- Introduce a carbon tax, sending a clear economic signal that wasting energy and resources implies real costs.

According to an editorial in *The Economist*, September 9, 2006:

“IDEALLY, POLITICIANS WOULD CHOOSE THE MORE EFFICIENT CARBON TAX, WHICH IMPLIES A RELATIVELY STABLE PRICE THAT PRODUCERS CAN BUILD INTO THEIR INVESTMENT PLANS.”

The Greens will also eliminate large corporate subsidies and grants programs.

It makes no sense to subsidize the wealthiest companies on Earth to make the world's most profitable product – a barrel of oil. The 2010 report of the International Energy Agency called for the removal of fossil fuel subsidies. Globally, they amount to over \$300 billion a year, while renewables received approximately \$30 billion. These perverse subsidies must be removed. It makes sense to reduce taxes on things we want – income and employment – while increasing taxes on things we do not want, like greenhouse gases and pollution that causes smog.

Canadian businesses want two things from their government: predictability and policy coherence. The Green Government will ensure that the rules are clear, the playing field is level and decision making is transparent.

Key societal goals:

- Ensure Canadians have more time for friends, family and community engagement.
- Send the right price signals to the economy. The days of cheap, abundant energy are over. A carbon tax will send that signal and generate the revenue to cut income taxes, allow “income splitting” and reduce the tax burden on small business.
- Eliminate perverse corporate subsidies. No more “corporate welfare bums.” No more unpaid “loans” to government granting agencies.

1.2 Applying these principles to economic decision making

The bigger the challenge, the greater the opportunity. Canada and the world community face an environmentally-linked energy challenge of historic proportions over the next few decades. The reality of rising fossil fuel prices, increased losses due to extreme weather events caused by the worsening climate crisis, higher global temperatures, and worsening pollution levels will make mitigation and adaptation responses absolutely essential. Focusing community economic development and investment towards clean technology and services is both a smart economic development strategy and a superb investment opportunity.

Green technology has been called the greatest business opportunity of this century. All levels of government need to advance this green economic approach through effective tax and policy measures, and appropriate skills and trades training at the secondary and post-secondary levels.

As part of the federal government's contribution to advancing this green economic vision, the Green Party of Canada Government will gradually and progressively shift current consumption taxes onto products and services that harm people and the environment, while reducing taxes on income, products and economic activities that do no harm. As pollution taxes increase, other taxes, such as income and payroll, decrease. This approach is called being “revenue neutral.”

By moving to “true” or “full-cost” accounting, whereby products and services are priced according to the positive or negative impacts they cause throughout their life cycle, our society can make rational market choices that will guide the economy toward environmental sustainability.

1.3 Reporting the well-being of the nation more accurately

By some accounts, the Canadian economy is performing quite well. But national prosperity is more than just the exchange of dollars. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – our national bottom line – is a measure of money changing hands without regard to whether we are reducing social inequalities, advancing sustainability or safeguarding our natural capital of primary resources such as wild fish populations, natural forests and fertile soils. Most economists agree that GDP is a poor measure of economic well-being or quality of life, yet our government continues to use it as the basis for its most important taxation and policy decisions.

The Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI) is a new and innovative accounting method that embraces a more systematic and comprehensive definition of well-being. Literacy, health and fitness, housework, family time, public infrastructure, cultural institutions, community volunteerism, water and air quality, forests, farmland, wetlands and employment are all measured by the GPI. Other countries, led by France following a ground-breaking study by Nobel award winners in economics, Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen, are working to broaden measurements of prosperity beyond the GDP. Canada needs to catch up.

Green Party Members of Parliament (MPs) will:

- Introduce legislation to establish a national GPI, such as the Canadian Index of Well-being developed by the Institute of Well-being, to provide the government with better information so it can do a better job of taxation and revenue-sharing with the other levels of government.
- Modify Canada's existing system of national accounts so that annual changes in the depletion and addition to Canada's principal natural resources are measured as an integral part of Canada's worth.

“TOO MUCH AND TOO LONG, WE HAVE SURRENDERED COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY VALUES IN THE MERE ACCUMULATION OF MATERIAL THINGS....THE (GDP) COUNTS AIR POLLUTION AND CIGARETTE ADVERTISING AND AMBULANCES TO CLEAR OUR HIGHWAYS OF CARNAGE. YET THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT DOES NOT ALLOW FOR THE HEALTH OF OUR CHILDREN, THE QUALITY OF THEIR EDUCATION, OR THE JOY OF THEIR PLAY. IT MEASURES NEITHER OUR WIT NOR OUR COURAGE; NEITHER OUR WISDOM NOR OUR LEARNING; NEITHER OUR COMPASSION NOR OUR DEVOTION TO OUR COUNTRY. IT MEASURES EVERYTHING, IN SHORT, EXCEPT THAT WHICH MAKES LIFE WORTHWHILE.”
Senator Robert F. Kennedy, 1968

1.4 Fair taxes – fiscal reform

Most Canadians do not like paying taxes, especially if they think that the taxes are unfair or do not deliver good value for money. People do not like wasteful spending by an over-bureaucratized government. Fair enough. However, about half of Canadians say that they would not mind paying more taxes for a cleaner environment, better health care and education, and to support people in need.

Taxation and spending policies shape society by sending signals about which sectors of society governments think are important. Over the last six years, both the Conservatives and Liberals have used our tax system to benefit large corporations, reducing federal corporate taxes. Back in 2000, the general rate of taxation on corporate profits was 29.1%. By 2006, when the Harper government came into office, the corporate tax rate had been cut to 22.1%. We all remember our budgets consistently posted surpluses at that time.

No longer. Canada moved into a deficit just before the economic meltdown in September 2008. Due to cutting the GST, cuts to corporate income taxes and increased spending, the Harper government had eradicated the surplus just in time for a recession. With an empty cupboard, Canada has moved further into debt to fund the stimulus package. The latest estimate is that we are now running a \$45-56 billion deficit.

Meanwhile, all through the recession, the Conservatives have continued to cut the corporate tax rate. Last year the rate fell to 18%. As of January 1, 2011, it fell to 16.5%, with a further cut to 15% planned for next year.

At the same time, the cost of living has increased. Canadians save less, carry more debt and work more hours for the same money. Even before the current recession hit, people were having a harder time providing for their families and paying for a decent place to live.

The Green Party believes in reforming our tax system to make it fairer and more in tune with Canadians' desire for a healthy environment, a sustainable economy and a vibrant, caring society. It makes no sense to subsidize the wealthiest corporations on Earth – the oil companies. We must remove these perverse subsidies immediately, not in the slow, “grandfathered” approach of the Conservatives' 2007 budget.

The Green Party will reduce taxes on things we all want, like income and employment, and we will increase taxes on things we do not want – like pollution that harms people and our environment.

Our "green tax cuts" will be progressive, with a schedule that gives industry time to gear up or down. And they will be revenue neutral because a tax shift is not a tax grab. Income and payroll taxes will decline and the changes will help, not hurt, less fortunate members of our society.

To set the right prices, we have to change to a "true" or "full-cost" accounting method that incorporates economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits in the national accounts. Using this method, products and services are taxed, and thus priced, according to the positive or negative impacts caused throughout their lifecycle. We have already done this with tobacco products. Such taxes help consumers make more rational choices.

There are other ways to put taxes to work improving our society. Our tax system must be designed to reduce poverty, encourage environmentally-beneficial activities, and generate more wealth for the 90 % of Canadian families who are currently working harder without getting further ahead.

The Greens' fiscal plan is straightforward: gradually reduce our debt, give clear tax signals that enable companies to pursue profits on a level playing field, and shift taxes to ensure that both revenue streams and expenditures meet social, economic and ecological goals.

Green Party MPs will:

- Institute a full range of “polluter pays” taxes, including a carbon tax designed to reduce the use of fossil fuels by making them more expensive to produce and burn. All these taxes will be revenue neutral. The revenues generated will be offset by reduced taxes on personal income, payroll and on green products and technologies. The new taxes will also be non-regressive (e.g., the carbon tax will include a rebate program for low-income Canadians and for Canadians living in rural areas).
- Phase-in carbon taxes to allow businesses and individuals time to make adjustments. In order to maintain a level playing field for Canadian businesses with respect to foreign competitors, carbon-based tariffs will be introduced against countries that apply no

carbon tax (or other equivalent mechanism to curb GHG emissions) or apply a lower rate of carbon tax than Canada.

- Eliminate personal taxes on incomes below the low-income cut-off (no taxes on incomes of \$20,000 or less).
- Work with the provinces to increase taxes on tobacco and alcohol.
- Encourage use of Canada Revenue Agency's online NETFILE tax filing system, which saves Revenue Canada money, by giving users an automatic \$10 tax credit.
- Develop a specific tax-shifting schedule to provide tax incentives and direct rebates to businesses and individuals investing in the low-carbon economy (e.g. installing solar hot water systems, refitting homes and businesses to conserve energy).
- Provide increased tax breaks for Canadians who donate to registered charities.

(See Part 4: PEOPLE for more on family-friendly taxation, including income splitting)

1.5 Balanced budget – debt reduction

For the first time in decades, the economic situation has pushed many governments to accept deficits. The return of Keynesian economics, and the welcome sidelining of Milton Friedman's approach, have been mandated due to the serious economic crisis created by the U.S. credit collapse. Greed and an addiction to higher-than-achievable rates of return on investments created a casino economy. Greens favour a steady economy, maximizing meaningful work and economic health. The highs and lows of booms and busts may be bearable for those with lots of chips to gamble away, but are brutal for the average Canadian.

Now that Canada is in the business of increasing deficits to end the recession, we have to be very mindful of how we get out of a deficit. The Harper 2011 budget is on track to create a whopping \$40 billion deficit last year alone, with a poor plan to get out of it.

Economists warn of creating a "structural deficit." Greens are very concerned. A future structural deficit could threaten our health care system and other indispensable government-funded programs. Prime Minister Harper's government had already eliminated Canada's surpluses before the recession hit, by cutting taxes and increasing government spending. Some economists have argued that Canada was in a recession even before the September '08 economic crisis. Now Greens are concerned that the Harper government is creating a structural deficit by cutting income taxes, increasing government spending, and not finding any new forms of government revenues, as Greens would do through a carbon tax.

As long as a country is in deficit, it cannot find the resources to pay down the debt.

Canada's debt is projected to be \$591 billion in 2011-2012. The cost of servicing that debt will be \$33 billion. Our government pays \$93 million in interest every day. That debt burden drains support from essential government programs. Imagine what \$33 billion could do to alleviate poverty and provide affordable housing and affordable post-secondary education in Canada.

Being indebted to external creditors also makes our political decision makers vulnerable to pressures from outside our country. The 1994 International Monetary Fund (IMF) Report to Canada recommended that our government reduce the number of hospital beds, convert student bursaries to interest-bearing student loans and cut funding to the National Film Board, the CBC and VIA Rail. The government of the day implemented all of these cuts. Canadians lost 10 % of our hospital beds the following year and today we have a wait time crisis in our health care system. If we had no debt, we would no longer be beholden to the IMF and global credit rating agencies.

The Green Party believes in living within our limits, ecologically and fiscally. We are committed to a balanced budget and to reducing the national debt. It won't be easy. To pay down the debt while supporting programs that meet immediate social, economic and environmental needs, we must maintain a healthy and fair level of taxation and we must ensure that Canadians get good value for their tax dollars.

Green Party MPs will:

- Ensure we can climb out of the deficit once the recession is over, by placing taxes on pollution to replace those cut in income by avoiding the creation of a structural deficit.
- Set a disciplined schedule to gradually pay down the debt while maintaining public services and programmes that meet immediate social and environmental needs, increasing debt reduction over time but starting with modest targets to permit investment in critical programs.

1.6 Removing corporate subsidies: Distorting the market

“GOVERNMENTS ARE NOT ADEPT AT PICKING WINNERS,
BUT LOSERS ARE ADEPT AT PICKING GOVERNMENTS.”

Mark Milke, A Nation of Serfs.

The federal government has paid the nuclear industry \$17 billion in subsidies over the last four decades. Various regional development programs (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Western Economic Diversification, Canadian Economic Development in Quebec) have funneled billions into failed enterprises. Since 1982, Industry Canada has made grants totaling more than \$5.8 billion to some of Canada's largest corporations. Technology Partnerships Canada has swallowed up \$2 billion and the accelerated capital cost allowance to the tar sands industries totals over \$1.3 billion a year.

Perverse subsidies distort the market and send mixed messages: reduce carbon/use more fossil fuels; create jobs/reorganize through lay-offs. Subsidies to Canada's oil and gas industry from 1996 to 2002 totaled \$8.3 billion. During the same period the government allocated \$3.7 billion to achieve its Kyoto greenhouse gas reduction targets. The funding to meet Kyoto has been abandoned, but the fossil fuel subsidies continue.

Greens want an end to corporate subsidies and a start to the green tax shifting that will make the fiscal system more coherent.

Green Party MPs will:

- Eliminate perverse corporate subsidies and institute new taxes on corporate activities that harm the environment.
- Introduce more effective antitrust laws in concentrated industry sectors.
- Require corporations to provide detailed information about their records of compliance with labour, environmental, human rights, consumer, health and safety, criminal, competition, and tax laws or policies, and protect those who expose non-compliers.
- Support broad-based, democratically-structured citizens' watchdog groups to monitor major sectors of the economy.

1.7 Income trusts

Based on the Conservative Party's 2006 campaign promise to allow income trusts to retain their non-tax status, more than a million Canadians invested in income trusts. The Conservatives broke their election

promise and these investors lost over \$30 billion. Many older Canadians saw their retirement savings disappear within hours.

The reason given for breaking the promise was that the government was losing revenue because the trusts did not pay tax. Finance Canada proceeded as if there was no tax revenue from income trusts. This was wrong. The trusts made payments to their investors and those payments were taxed. Recently, it has been revealed that the reason put forward by Stephen Harper at the time was not his real motivation.¹

There are public policy reasons to constrain or even discourage income trusts. If it could be proved that, over time, such arrangements led to a failure to re-invest profits in modernizing and expanding Canadian operations, action would be appropriate. So far this reasoning is intuitive and not empirical. What is clear is that the stated reason for breaking the promise, tax leakage, was not justified.

The Green Party condemns the Harper government for breaking an election promise and leaving citizens and companies in the lurch. The decision to tax income trusts has left Canadian companies more vulnerable to foreign takeover. It will be years before we fully understand the damage caused by this decision.

Green Party MPs will:

- Review and redress the significant damage to Canadians caused by the broken promise and adjust tax rates in light of that error.
- Instruct Finance Canada to complete a study sampling full-cost accounting of income trusts, including lost corporate revenues and personal income tax revenues from investors, to determine a fair taxation rate on income trust incomes and dividends.
- Push government to adopt these fair taxation rates. Ensure foreign holders of income trusts are taxed at a higher rate. In the interim, tax income trusts at 10 %.
- Inform both companies and investors of the process to determine fair tax rates on income trusts.

1.8 Labour

Canadians are among the most overworked people in the industrialized world. The Green Party wants to help restore balance in the lives of Canadian workers by increasing paid vacation entitlement at the federal level, and supporting provincial policies mandating shorter working hours.

The Green Party will raise the minimum paid vacation entitlement to three weeks. Many countries with minimum standards of four weeks and longer also have more productive and internationally-competitive economies than Canada's.

Countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands have much higher labour standards and far lower rates of unemployment than Canada, resulting in lower social costs to the country as a whole. Scandinavian

¹ Lawrence Martin. (2010) *Harperland: The Politics of Control*. Toronto: Viking Canada.

countries, with the world's highest labour and social standards, rank near the top in international competitiveness.

Recent studies show that a growing number of Canadians are not taking their full vacation or any vacation at all, and are working more unpaid overtime. This high-stress lifestyle is costing Canada's already overburdened health care system more than \$5 billion a year, according to the National Work-Life Conflict Study produced for Health Canada.

Canada's current payroll tax system discourages employers from hiring more workers, even when the business needs them. The Harper government's planned increases in EI premiums will be a further downward pressure on job creation. It particularly discourages employers from hiring full-time salaried staff who are entitled to benefits other than an hourly wage or monthly salary. It is more cost-effective to hire temporary and short-term workers or get existing workers to work longer hours, including paid overtime, than to hire additional staff. This leads to greater worker and family stress. Revenue from the carbon tax will allow the Green Party Government to reduce payroll taxes and reduce this perverse incentive.

In a progressive society, labour and business interests work together. In Canada, the Conservative government has worked against this spirit of cooperation in cutting funding to the Canadian Labour and Business Centre, Canada's longest-standing business and labour forum. It has cut funding to Status of Women Canada and passed legislation to remove pay equity from women in the federal civil service, despite the recommendation of a two-year federal review of pay equity in Canada.

The Green Party believes in the rights of workers to organize and in the free collective bargaining process. Labour rights are human rights. We believe in pay equity for women, in the equal treatment of organized and non-organized workers, and in workers' right to fair wages, healthy and safe working conditions and working hours compatible with a good quality of life.

Our jobs strategy is directly linked to the development of a green economy. There are tens of thousands of "green collar" jobs, for example, associated with refitting Canadian homes and businesses for energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The Green Party wants Canada to follow the example of countries that treat their workers well and reap the benefits of low unemployment rates, less stress-related illness, and economies that rank among the world's best in productivity and international competitiveness.

Green Party MPs will:

- Establish a federal minimum wage of \$10 an hour under the Canada Labour Code.
- Advocate for changes in the Canada Labour Code that establish a minimum of three weeks paid vacation and a managed reduction in the standard work week to 35 hours.
- Support federal "anti-scab" legislation.
- Support changes to the Employment Standards law to provide equal protection to contract and temporary workers.
- Strengthen non-union workers' rights and protections to close the widening gap between union and non-union workplaces.
- Increase federal inspections and establish stronger deterrents to illegal unpaid overtime work to achieve full compliance with Canada Labour Code standards. This will save money by reducing the costs related to the stress and social impacts of this practice.
- Change federal labour law to include a requirement that a poster outlining workers' rights be placed in all federally-regulated workplaces as is the case under all provincial labour laws.

- Re-establish in law the rights to equal pay for work of equal value.
- Offer tax rebates to companies that provide on-site daycare, healthy food and facilities for exercise and commuting by bicycle.

1.9 Open source computer software

As computer hardware improves, it is important that software programs are readily modifiable by the people who buy and use them. Developing alongside the proprietary software sector is Free/Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS). This software is generally available at little or no cost, making it very popular in the developing world. It can be used, copied, studied, modified and redistributed with little or no restriction. Businesses can adapt the software to their specific needs.

Under the free software business model, vendors may charge a fee for distribution and offer paid support and customization services. Free software gives users the ability to work together enhancing and refining the programs they use. It is a pure public good rather than a private good.

The Green Party supports the goals and ideals of Free/Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS) and believes that Canada's competitiveness in global information technology (IT) will be greatly enhanced by strongly supporting FLOSS.

Green Party MPs will:

- Ensure that all new software developed for or by government is based on open standards and encourage and support a nationwide transition to FLOSS in all critical government IT systems. This will make Canada's IT infrastructure more secure and robust, lower administration and licensing costs, and develop IT skills.
- Support the transition to FLOSS throughout the post-secondary educational system.

1.10 Small business loans and entrepreneurial incentives

Raising venture capital has become a lot more difficult since the 2008 financial market meltdown, particularly for small businesses and new technologies. The shift to a smart, lower-carbon economy requires venture capital investment in a wide range of innovative firms across Canada, including smaller firms that historically have had a much more difficult time in raising capital.

An easily-accessible and integrated system for business development and growth must be made available in cities of all sizes in Canada to create the business climate that will entice home-grown entrepreneurs to stay. This model has been very successfully applied in Sweden in the form of Technology Centres or "Incubators for Mutual Support and Shared Services." Most successful applied research and commercialization is done by small and medium-sized businesses, and these business "clusters" attract new businesses seeking the direct and indirect benefits of networking and collaboration.

Green Party MPs will:

- Establish a federally-funded Green Venture Capital Fund to support viable small local green business start-ups
- Set up a Green Venture Capital Funding Program providing matching federal funds for locally-raised venture capital up to a set limit per community.
- Reduce the paperwork burden on small businesses by eliminating duplicative tax filings and red tape. Government agencies will operate using shared information from the same database.

1.11 Co-operatives

The United Nations has declared 2012 the International Year of Co-operatives. Co-operatives have historically played an important role in Canadian economic activities.

The Green party believes that consumer and producer cooperatives should play a greater role in Canada's economy and society.

Green Party MPs will:

- Work to have the Government of Canada examine the laws, regulations and tax system of Canada to determine how they may be changed to enhance opportunities for co-operatives, including cooperative federations incorporating banks or credit unions such as the highly successful Mondragon and Valencia cooperative federations of Spain.
- Launch a Federal Co-operative Investment Strategy with two components: a Canadian Co-operative Development Fund and a federal Co-operative Investment Plan.
- Make the federal Co-operative Development Initiative permanent and expand it into the new area of conversions of existing business, that are contemplating winding up into worker co-operatives.
- Re-establish funding for housing co-operatives through a newly mandated Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to help solve the growing problems of homelessness and shortage of affordable housing.

1.12 Railroads – re-establishing the national dream

Canada's national rail systems are in decline. We are the only country in the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with no national transportation strategy. While Europeans have highly efficient inter-modal connectivity, with high speed rail linking downtown cores to airports, with bicycle lanes allowing people to move around cities safely, efficiently and pollution-free, with streetcars in the downtowns and even rural areas serviced by bus and rail, Canadian communities are increasingly stranded. Except for Vancouver, which has a downtown to airport rapid transit line built for the 2010 Olympics, nothing links our downtowns to airports other than a stretch of gridlocked traffic. Even along the Windsor-Quebec corridor, passenger rail is increasingly infrequent and outmoded. In much of Canada, rail routes that once moved thousands of people are abandoned. Edmonton to Calgary, Saskatoon to Regina, Halifax to Sydney have all been axed, despite their profitability.

Sir John A. Macdonald understood that to be a nation, to have a sense of shared identity and common purpose, Canada needed effective east-west links in communications, in energy delivery and in transportation.

To renew this “national dream” today requires a complete overhaul of our rail system for both passenger and freight. It will mean shifting cargo containers off highways and onto freight trains, driving the development of freight distribution nodes (off-loading containers onto local trucks) along new “green corridors.”

The rail system changes will include a separate line for passenger trains. At the moment, freight owns the tracks and controls the traffic signals. Passengers are at the mercy of freight. New high-speed commuter

trains will almost halve the travel time between Toronto and Ottawa and Toronto and Montreal to about two and a half hours. With downtown-to-downtown service, the train will be faster than the plane, when security and other airport delays are factored in. Reducing air travel will reduce greenhouse gases and remove the need to expand airports or build new ones, including the Pickering airport near Toronto. Better rail service will take cars off the roads between major cities, reducing air pollution, congestion and loss of life in traffic accidents. An improved rail system will make Canada more economically competitive and provide thousands of new jobs.

Green Party MPs will re-establish Canada's National Dream and:

- Re-invest in our national rail systems, building more train cars in Canada, increasing train speeds and phasing in high speed rail where feasible, and creating green transportation and energy infrastructure corridors in key regions.
- Improve rail infrastructure and intermodal connections, increasing joint federal-municipal light rail investments, as well as improving VIA rail service nationwide.
- Work with railway companies to improve rail infrastructure and to restore VIA rail service to all major regional cities.
- Create a national clean freight initiative, using both regulation and financial incentives to improve fleet efficiency and safety.
- Support the trucking industry, reducing pollution through add-on generators to avoid the need to idle to maintain air conditioning and refrigeration, while ensuring the right fit of trucking in a more efficient, rail-based intermodal system.

1.13 Green urban transportation

Urban sprawl means commuters crawl. More roads don't solve the problem; they make it worse. Gridlock means more air pollution and more greenhouse gas emissions. A transition to efficient light rail transit and coordinated buses will take cars off our roads, breaking the cycle of an increasing number of cars on increasingly-crowded roads to make our cities more livable.

We must build our way out of the problem of clogged roads and smog-choked cities, not by building more roads and bridges and more distant suburbs, but by building "smart growth" infrastructure. Excellent public transit and efficient housing in high-density nodes along existing transit corridors will make cities more livable and people-friendly. The federal government must take the lead in funding the "greening" of Canada's cities. (see Section 1.14 Infrastructure and Communities for more on federal-municipal relations.)

Green Party MPs will:

- Increase federal funding for pedestrian, cycle and car-sharing infrastructure in towns and cities.
- Double existing funding to stimulate a massive re-investment in public transportation infrastructure in all Canadian towns and cities to make it convenient, safe, comfortable and affordable.
- Make employer-provided transit passes tax-free by exempting them from taxable benefit status, to encourage workers and businesses to use public transport, and provide financial support to provinces that provide free public transit passes to people living below the poverty line.
- Oppose funding for highway and bridge expansions (like the Gateway Program currently being built in Greater Vancouver) that encourage urban sprawl, increase private vehicle use and truck transport of goods, and consequently increase greenhouse gas emissions.

- Ensure federal infrastructure funding does not go to expanding highways and roads, but is rather spent on more efficient light rail systems.

1.14 Infrastructure and communities

At Confederation, Canada was a predominantly rural country where fewer than one in ten people lived in cities. Our constitution set up a taxation system that greatly favoured the federal and provincial governments over municipal governments. Today eight in ten Canadians live in urban areas.

Urban Canadians need their garbage collected, good transit services, safe roads and dependable water supplies. They also want new investment in green urban infrastructure including recycling, mass transit, energy efficiency upgrades to buildings, water conservation, and community amenities like parks, sports fields and arts, culture and community centres. Underlying this is an urgent need to replace aging sewer systems, roadways and water pipes.

All of these are municipal responsibilities, but Canadian municipalities simply don't have enough money to do it all. According to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 50 % of Canadian tax revenue is spent on federal programs, 42 % goes to the provinces and only 8 % goes to municipal governments. Canada's biggest fiscal imbalance is the imbalance between municipal governments and everyone else.

As Jane Jacobs pointed out in Dark Age Ahead, taxes are collected disproportionately at the wrong level. Most Canadians' experience their government at the level where it collects their recycling, runs their buses and provides their water.

The Green Party will redress the real fiscal imbalance facing the level of government least able to tax fully to cover its costs.

To support communities, we need to invest in critical infrastructure of transport and water works to modernize and reduce energy demand. Green Government will continue the gas tax commitment as envisioned by the previous government to allow for stable and predictable funding. As well, Green Government will liberate billions of dollars a year through RRSP deductions for municipal bonds.

Municipalities need stable and predictable funding so that they can invest in critical infrastructure such as mass transit, sewage treatment, energy efficiency improvements, better water systems to reduce waste and cope with erratic precipitation patterns of a changing global climate, as well as community amenities like sports fields, arts and cultural opportunities.

The Greens will create a new pool of municipal infrastructure funding by changing tax rules to create a Municipal Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs) bond that can be held in RRSPs and self-directed RRSPs. Between January and March 2011, Canadians spent \$9 billion in mutual funds. Imagine if even half of that was available to our communities.

This will be in addition to allocating an additional portion of the federal gasoline tax directly to the provinces for transfer to municipalities. Municipal governments must enter into agreements to ensure that sprawl is not facilitated through extensive infrastructure funding. Densification, speedy, safe and pleasant mass transit, safe cycling paths and other investments to conserve electricity and water will all merit stable financing.

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- Change tax policy to create a new pool of long-term municipal infrastructure funding by allowing municipalities to issue new Municipal Registered Retirement Savings Plans Bonds (MRRSPsBs) which can be held in RRSPs and self-directed RRSPs.
- Fund “Green Cities” initiatives, ensuring (through contractual agreements) that the funding is not used in ways that encourage urban sprawl, but instead to reduce sprawl and greenhouse gas emissions, conserve electricity and water, increase densification, expand convenient, safe, reliable and affordable public transit, and build cycling and walking paths.

This funding will be transferred through Municipal Superfunds:

Create six Municipal Superfunds of \$500 million/fund/year (an average of \$100 for every citizen per year) to which municipalities can apply for grant funding to replace the less specific Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund (CSIF). The proposed funds are:

1. Community Brownfield Remediation (CBR) Fund to provide assistance in cleaning up toxic and brownfield sites;
 2. Water and Waste Treatment Facilities (WWTF) Fund to upgrade water treatment, sewage treatment and recycling facilities to make them efficient, safe and sustainable;
 3. Sports, Cultural and Recreational Facilities (SCRF) Fund to support the development of green recreational and cultural facilities and refurbish existing facilities;
 4. Mass Transit Promotion (MTP) Fund to improve and expand urban mass transit infrastructure and inter-modal connections, as well as car-sharing initiatives;
 5. Cycling and Pedestrian Promotion (CPP) Fund to support pedestrian and cycling infrastructure and smart-growth developments that transform urban areas and towns into walkable communities linked by transit to reduce the need for owning and using cars; and,
 6. Community Housing Options Promotion (CHOP) Fund supporting a national housing program to build energy efficient co-operatives and affordable housing units where there is a shortage of such housing options.
- Increase the Gas Tax Transfer to municipalities to 5 cents/litre to be used in funding the above sustainable transportation initiatives such as public transit, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure and rural roads.
 - Recognize that access to high-speed internet connections is now a critical aspect of infrastructure and work to expand access to address the “digital divide.”
 - Make employer-provided transit passes tax-free by exempting them from taxable benefit status, thereby encouraging workers and businesses to use public transport, and make employee parking a taxable benefit.

1.15 Agriculture and food

For centuries, family farms were the foundation of our society and economy. Over the last five decades, federal policies, subsidies and changing technologies have shifted food production from small ecologically-sustainable family farms to giant agribusinesses. This shift has given multinational corporations control over our food supply. Meanwhile, farmers increasingly rely on off-farm income to survive.

Our food security and safety are threatened directly by agribusiness, as factory farms crowd chickens, turkeys, cows and pigs into inhumane and unhygienic conditions, creating the risk of serious health threats from toxic spinach to mad cow disease and swine flu. Animals are often

pumped full of antibiotics and hormones, while many crops are now genetically modified and treated with pesticides.

Meanwhile, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has a credibility problem. CFIA has an inherent conflict of interest, mandated to regulate for food safety, while at the same time mandated to promote Canadian food products in Canada and abroad. This, plus a lack of preparedness, accounts for the delay on blowing the whistle on the listeriosis outbreak due to Maple Leaf luncheon meats in 2008, in which 22 people died. The report on the outbreak from independent investigator Sheila Weatherill (former head of Edmonton's health system) noted that increasingly large, factory food preparation increased risks to health and safety.² However, the recommendations focused only on more inspections and more chemical cleaning instead of reforming the food system to encourage smaller, more traceable operations.

Just when Canadians were reeling from the listeriosis outbreak, a memo from inside CFIA was leaked indicating the Harper government's plans to cut the number of inspectors. The inspector who found the Treasury Board memo outlining the planned cuts (on a shared server at CFIA) and sent it to his union was fired.³

The health of Canada's population today and in the future depends on the environmentally sustainable production of wholesome food. We believe that local organic agriculture must play a role in mitigating and reversing climate change, providing food security, restoring soil health, improving human health, protecting water, and providing sustainable livelihoods for citizens. We must restructure our agricultural markets to sustain farming and provide farm families with a fair share of the consumer food dollar. We want to expand local small-scale agriculture and support a rapid transition to organic agriculture rather than subsidizing costly agro-chemicals, industrial food production and genetically modified crops.

People need healthy food and the healthiest food choices are local. With growing concerns over economic and climatic instability, a reliable domestic food supply is essential. Family-owned and operated farms of small to medium size constitute the most reliable, high quality and economical food production system, now and into our uncertain future.

The infrastructure needed to support local agriculture is rapidly disappearing. Increasingly, large corporations and centralized operations are shutting down small community slaughter houses to grain elevators and canneries. The lack of local control over means of production is forcing more and more farmers to abandon agriculture. Greens support family farmers as environmental stewards and as efficient producers of nutritious food. The family farm is the primary unit of production. Agricultural policies must be designed to keep family farms economically viable. We support the active participation of Canadian

² Government of Canada. 2011. Listeriosis Investigation. Ottawa: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Available: <http://www.listeriosis-listeriose.investigation-enquete.gc.ca/>. Accessed March 2011.

³ El Akkad, Omar (2008, 07, 09). Food inspection worked fired for what he found on shared computer, union says. Available: www.healthcoalition.ca/archive/glcfia.pdf. Accessed March 2011.

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farmers in export markets where this is consistent with achieving their most important role – providing domestic markets with healthy food and sustaining Canada’s agriculture resource base. We support education of Canadian consumers regarding the value of wholesome, locally grown food.

Green Party MPs will develop a National Agricultural and Food Policy which:

Improves Food Safety by:

- Amending the Canadian Food Inspection Agency mandate to remove any obligation to promote Canadian agri-business, ensuring the focus is on food safety and food safety only, with enhanced resources for inspection and monitoring.
- Ensuring the quality and wholesomeness of food by strengthening the monitoring of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, growth hormones, non-therapeutic antibiotics and insecticides in food production, processing and storage, with the goal of an orderly reduction in detectable residues of these substances until they reach undetectable limits.
- Establishing federally funded, community-guided school lunch programs across Canada to ensure that our children have daily access to healthy local food and can learn about sustainable food production and healthy eating.
- Strengthening Plant Protection and Health of Animals Programs with measures to ensure the integrity of farm food products.
- Improving and strengthening the Canadian Organic Standard.
- Providing transitional assistance for those switching to certified organic farming practices.
- Ensuring that no animal by-products are used in ruminant animal feed.
- Strengthen testing for BSE by implementing 100% testing (testing of every slaughtered animal) as soon as the process of detecting BSE in blood samples is perfected.

Provides Food Security by:

- Moving towards regional food self-sufficiency across Canada, as we begin the shift to organic agriculture as the dominant model of production.
- Supporting the “200 kilometre diet” and locally grown food through expansion of farmers’ markets and local culinary tourism activities.
- Promoting roof top gardens, cultivation of green urban space for agriculture, food production in cities and suburbs, and community gardens.
- Protecting the right of farmers to save their own seed.
- Promoting heritage seed banks and seed exchange programs.

Reduce Corporate Control of the Food supply by:

- Reforming agriculture regulations to challenge corporate concentration.
- Ensuring that farm support payments are farm-based (not production-based) to encourage more farms and more farmers.
- Encouraging organic farming methods to improve farm profitability and sustainability.

Supports Local Food markets by:

- Enabling local areas without industrial-scale agriculture to develop area-specific food safety regulations meeting national standards without placing undue financial burdens on local farmers and food processors.
- Encouraging and supporting the consumption of locally-grown food by promoting adequate shelf space in grocery chains for products from local farms and local food processors.

Improves Agricultural Research by:

- Ensuring that new plant cultivars and animal breeds remain in the public domain.
- Shifting government-supported research away from biotechnology and energy-intensive farming and towards organic food production.
- Increasing publicly-funded research into organic farming techniques.
- Establishing new policies for private research efforts to ensure that they are in the best interests of family farmers and consumers.
- Preventing the patenting of life forms.
- Ensuring that developers of genetically engineered crops are liable for any damage those crops cause.

Ensures Fair Trade by:

- Prioritizing fair trade in agricultural exports and imports.
- Ensuring that supply management systems provide stable domestic markets, provide viable farm income and permit unregulated production by smaller and family farms that sell to local markets.
- Supporting the Canadian Wheat Board to ensure the fair trading of high quality Canadian grains.
- Eliminating the dumping of food into the economies of developing countries.

Stops the Loss of Agricultural Land to development by:

- Calling for negotiated agreements with the provinces to secure the preservation of the prime agricultural land in Canada.
- Reinstating the Canada Land Inventory program with adequate funding to update and keep current a comprehensive record of land capability and land use as a vital ongoing aid to local planning.
- Providing sufficient fiscal incentives to other levels of government including municipalities, to preserve farmlands under their jurisdictions.

Supports Environmental Stewardship by:

- Protecting and improving the quality of water in our streams, lakes and aquifers;
- Working with provinces to ensure that all livestock waste is recycled safely and contamination by agricultural run-off is avoided;
- Introducing cost-shared programs to help farmers protect wildlife habitat areas and marginal lands, maintain water quality in streams, lakes and aquifers, and retain and improve soil quality;
- Creating a national Environmental Farm Plan Program to provide new funding sources for implementation at the farm level.

Assists farmers in climate change adaptation by:

- Encouraging farming methods that increase carbon sequestration and decrease water requirements.
- Establishing greenhouse gas emission targets for all components of the agri-food system, and collaborating with industry to meet targets.
- Restructuring Canada's Business Risk Management Programs to help farmers cope with climate risk, especially in disaster assistance.

1.16 Genetically engineered organisms

Genetically engineered (GE) organisms pose a potentially serious threat to human health and the health of natural ecosystems. Many Canadians want to follow the example of the European Union and ban GE crops. At a minimum, GE products must be labelled, giving consumers the right to know, and to say no to GE foods.

Although polls show that 8 in 10 Canadians want mandatory labeling of GE foods and food ingredients, the federal government has not acted. In 2004, the Standards Council of Canada adopted a Standard for Voluntary Labelling but it has not been widely adopted.

The government is not exercising enough oversight and control. In fact, Agriculture Canada is promoting GE technology, forming partnerships with biotech companies and partnering in the research initiated by the biotech industry. Agriculture has already experienced the harmful impact of GE crops. Herbicide-resistant (Roundup Ready) canola has escaped and become a noxious weed.

Greens understand that GE organisms and “terminator” technologies come with health and environmental risks. All food products containing GE organisms or their products must be labeled. It is up to the companies that produce and promote GE organisms to prove that they are safe. No such organism should be released into the environment until it is proven to pose no unacceptable risks to human or animal health or to the environment.

Green Party MPs will work to:

- Ban experimentation with planting and promotion of new GE crops. This includes a ban on further GE research (except for traditional seed selection and grafting) at Agriculture Canada and a ban on companies such as Monsanto owning patents to GE products developed through joint research with Agriculture Canada.
- Implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, a protocol within the UN Biodiversity Convention, which Canada signed and ratified in 1992 and which came into force in 2003. The Cartagena Protocol requires the adoption of new products to be guided by the precautionary principle, which balances the economic benefits of innovation with public health and ecological integrity.
- Require mandatory labeling of all GE foods and food ingredients.
- Support local, provincial and territorial GE organism-free zones where these local jurisdictions declare that genetically modified plants and animals are not to be part of the agricultural mix.
- Prohibit field testing, commercial use, sale and importation of “terminator” (genetic use restriction) technologies.
- Maintain the ban on GE wheat and oppose GE alfalfa.
- Place a moratorium on field-testing genetically modified trees while an expert panel of the Royal Society of Canada examines the risks.

1.17 Fisheries

Canada’s most conspicuous environmental and economic tragedy has been the collapse of our wild fisheries. We thought that the sea would give us unlimited fish forever. That erroneous belief led to the 1990s collapse of the Atlantic cod fishery after decades of year-round over-fishing by domestic and foreign fleets of large trawlers. This ecological disaster, the result of federal government mismanagement, resulted in the loss of 30,000 jobs. During the same period (1990 to 2002), British Columbia's salmon catch fell by 66 % from 96,000 to 33,000 tonnes (\$263.4 million to \$51.6 million). The 2009 crisis of the missing 8 million returning sockeye salmon in the B.C. wild fishery underscores how little progress has been made towards sustainable fisheries. The historically large return of B.C. sockeye in 2010 is equally

mysterious. While undeniably good news, it does not answer the long-standing questions about how we sustainably manage Canadian fisheries.

Over the last few decades, the fishing industry has installed large, powerful gear on ships equipped with sophisticated navigation and fish-finding technology. This has caused serious depletion of cod, haddock, bluefin tuna and other species, leading to the collapse of local economies and loss of important biodiversity from ocean to ocean. To save our gravely-depleted fish stocks, something must go: either the high-yield fishing technology or the excessive number of licenses to fish.

To make a dire situation worse, fisheries face other serious problems besides over-fishing: habitat destruction, and a lack of scientific knowledge of the status of marine resources and how oceanic food chains operate. Federal government policies allow the over-fishing of critical food chain species such as Pacific coast herring, ground fish and Atlantic coast capelin. Current laws do not adequately protect marine habitat from a range of destructive forces, including the devastating practice of bottom-trawling, bioaccumulation of toxic chemicals that flow into the sea from various land practices, and spillage from oil and gas exploration. The coming years will see new threats to fisheries from ocean changes caused by acidification from increased CO₂ in the atmosphere and increased water temperatures and shifted ocean currents due to climate change. We must do the right thing today to protect our fisheries for tomorrow.

The harvesting capacity of our fishing fleets has far outdistanced our fisheries regulations, management skills and the ability of fish populations to recover. But we believe that Canada can restore its wild fish populations and protect Canadian fishermen with strictly enforced regulations governing gear types, fishing practices and catch limits.

All evidence points to the need to ban bottom-trawling. Yet the only major instance of the current Conservative government differing from that of former U.S. President George W. Bush was its refusal to support international efforts to ban bottom-trawling. Because fish cross international boundaries, we must lead efforts for a global ban on harmful open ocean fishing practices as part of a renewed commitment to sustainable fisheries management. This requires reforming the federal government's administrative and research priorities.

To protect precious fish habitat, we must also place a permanent legislated moratorium on oil and gas exploration and development in ecologically sensitive areas, particularly the west coast of British Columbia and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Fishermen must be allowed to have a greater role in managing fisheries through co-management provisions yet to be activated through the Oceans Act. We oppose the current approach that favours fish farms and presumes that aquaculture can make up for dwindling wild stocks.

Green Party MPs will work to:

- Sign and ratify the global treaty to ban bottom-trawling.
- Strengthen the Fisheries Act to:
 1. Require evaluation of threats to fish stocks and include provisions to protect fish stocks and the marine environment.
 2. Make protection of critical stocks and habitat mandatory.
 3. Require that the management and conservation of wild fisheries take precedence over aquaculture, wherever there are conflicts.
 4. Increase penalties for contravening the Fisheries Act.
 5. Improve public participation in decision making, under the principles of the Oceans Act, in particular engaging coastal communities in local fisheries management.
- Restructure Fisheries and Oceans Canada into three separate branches: Management; Monitoring and Enforcement; and Research.

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- Strengthen legislation that protects fish habitats and fish stocks from over-fishing and pollution.
- Implement measures to quickly phase out open-ocean net-cage fish farms and ensure that this aquaculture industry does not continue to harm wild fisheries.
- Give funding priority to small-scale projects to restore and enhance wild fish stocks, especially with Aboriginal peoples and traditional fishing communities using traditional technologies.
- Enforce sustainable harvesting technologies such as long lines, cod traps or significantly modified mobile gear to reduce by-catch of untargeted and threatened species, and monitor results to ensure the return of healthy stocks and stop the loss of biodiversity.
- Shift from interception fisheries management practices to selective terminal fisheries.
- Ban bottom-trawling in domestic waters and work internationally to institute a global ban.
- Appraise and support development of different kinds of fishing gear that make a profit, while minimizing by-catch and habitat impact.
- Support development of more sustainable ways of harvesting marine resources, including value-added processing, and developing environmentally-friendly biochemical and pharmaceutical products.
- Support research and development of ecotourism as a non-consumptive use of marine biodiversity.
- Provide funding and support to ecological research to discover what factors have enabled natural marine ecosystems to work so well in the past with the objective of restoring abundant stocks and rehabilitating degraded systems.
- Establish an Independent Review Commission made up of marine biologists, ecologists and resource economists to investigate (with input from fishermen, fishing communities and indigenous peoples) the causes of the enormous decline in Canada's fisheries resources, and recommend policies and programs to restore offshore and inshore fisheries.
- Repeal the Canada Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Act and the Canada Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Act and adjust regional agreements to give fisheries greater protection from petroleum exploration and development.
- Extend permanent bans on oil and gas exploration and development in ecologically-sensitive areas, particularly the coast of British Columbia and the Gulf of St. Lawrence.
- Encourage a greater role for fishermen and Aboriginal peoples in managing fisheries through co-management provisions in the Oceans Act.
- Ensure that lighthouses remain staffed to perform the essential safety and security work they perform.
- Work with provincial governments to eliminate aquaculture practices that damage the marine environment and threaten human health and seek:
 1. A moratorium on new open-ocean net-pen salmon farms and a phase-out of existing farms within 10 years.
 2. In the meantime, the fallowing of sea pens during wild-hatch salmon runs.

1.18 Green forest vision

Canada's incredible forest heritage - 300 million hectares or 10% of all the world's forests - is a source of enormous national pride and economic value. 30% of the world's boreal forests grow in Canada and this great northern forest ecosystem, covering half of our country, acts as a huge carbon reservoir and sink.

The value of these forests is difficult to measure, but can be expressed in several ways: the wood and paper products industries directly employ over 350,000 people and generate over \$58 billion in sales annually – more than half our annual trade surplus. Economists estimate the value of Canada's boreal forest at \$3.7 trillion, but arguably it is priceless.

The Green Party understands that forests are the foundation of complex ecological systems performing important services that purify our air and water, prevent floods and erosion, and stabilize our climate. Two-thirds of Canada's plant and animal species live in forests. Large expanses of forest, especially old growth forests, must remain intact to maintain natural habitats and biodiversity. Our forests also sustain subsistence hunters and those who seek recreation and rejuvenation in the wilderness.

Canada cuts about one million hectares of forest a year. We must improve our logging practices and become a world leader in sustainable management of this potentially fully renewable resource. We must extract more economic value from every tree cut and move quickly towards eliminating raw log exports.

We can reap better economic, environmental and social benefits from our forests. A Green Party government, in partnership with the provincial and territorial governments with primary jurisdiction, will require that all of Canada's managed forests be managed sustainably and certified by the Forest Stewardship Council within the ongoing Forest Accord process.

The forest products sector is a little-known climate change success story. It has not only achieved its Kyoto greenhouse gas reductions target, it has exceeded that target by a factor of seven mainly by drastically reducing its use of fossil fuels in processing plants and generating its own power through wood waste. The Green Government will support its claim for credit. Meanwhile, all forest companies will pay a carbon tax to reflect the net loss of carbon storage from their lands or they will get a rebate to reflect net gain of carbon sinks, based on an independent audit every five years.

Working within the Canadian Boreal Initiative's corporate, First Nations and conservation framework, we will also ensure that at least half of Canada's boreal forest is protected, while all is maintained in a state of ecological integrity. Its value as a carbon reservoir will far outweigh short-term economic gains from logging it.

Green Party MPs will work to:

- Renegotiate trade agreements so that Canada has the power to encourage more domestic value-added manufacturing of wood products by restricting the export of raw logs with a substantial whole log export tax.
- Within the on-going Forest Accord process and in partnership with the provincial and territorial governments who have primary jurisdiction, shift all economic forests to eco-forestry practices, including certification by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).
- With the provinces, First Nations and the logging industry, devise incentives that promote the use of single stem selection logging and longer rotations that conserve natural forest ecosystems and grow higher value wood.
- Support the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework agreement finalized in 2010 between a number of major forestry companies, First Nations and environment groups to protect at least half of Canada's Boreal Forest in a network of large interconnected protected areas, and institute state-of-the-art ecosystem based management and stewardship on the remaining landscape.
- Provide more federal funding to research the best way to harvest pine beetle-killed trees, while leaving unaffected trees, and to mitigate the economic impact of the pine beetle epidemic.

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- Develop a Genuine Forest Health Indicator (GFHI) that assesses the state of the forests every decade and measures changes in all forest values, including those that mitigate climate change directly or indirectly.
- Promote hemp and agricultural cellulose waste as sources of paper fibre to reduce the pressure on standing forests.
- Promote the use of wood waste, rather than foods such as corn, to produce bio-fuels.
- Give FSC-certified forest companies a five-year full tax break upon certification.

1.19 Expanding cultural tourism and ecotourism

Travel and tourism is the world's number one employer and represents more than 10% of global spending. The tourism sector in Canada is unique in that it makes a significant contribution to every region's cultural and economic well-being. It goes beyond creating jobs and foreign exchange revenue. It enables Canadians to explore our land and helps knit our country together. With revenues of over \$74 billion in 2008, tourism constituted 2 % of Canada's GDP and employed over 660,000 Canadians. This is nearly as much as our forestry and agricultural industries combined. Within the federal government, the Ministry of Industry has the lead responsibility for tourism policy.

The Greens believe we must foster a sustainable, green, low-carbon tourism industry and market it responsibly throughout the world. We believe we must provide exceptional tourist experiences by having the finest National Park system, the best museums and cultural activities and the most hospitable service. To do this, the Canadian government must play a bigger role in promoting, coordinating and guiding efforts across the entire country.

Green Party MPs will:

- Create a separate federal Department of Tourism to coordinate all aspects of tourism. This ministry will focus on helping the fastest-growing sector of global tourism, ecotourism, become stronger, and through special programs encourage Aboriginal Canadians to assume a bigger role in it.
- Increase funding to the arts, culture and heritage sector (see Part 4.15 Arts and Culture)
- Work to make sure our borders are open and security measures are reasonable.
- Reverse the Conservative government's decision to eliminate the GST rebate for foreign visitors.
- Build a low-carbon tourism sector based on intermodal rail and bicycle touring.

1.20 Mining

While the control of natural resources is allocated to provincial governments, the consequences of mining often encroach on areas of federal jurisdiction, especially on fisheries. This energy intensive industry also contributes nearly twice as much to Canada's greenhouse gas emissions as do all domestic flights in Canada.

The Greens support triple bottom line analysis, measuring social, environmental and economic costs and benefits. Such an analysis must be conducted before approval is given for a mine. We should not be mining products in Canada, like asbestos and uranium, that are highly toxic to our environment and to human health. The Green Party will require that mine reclamation plans include detailed plans and effective measures to deal with acid mine drainage and are in place before active mining begins. The Greens will also provide tax benefits to reward full recycling of metals, as recycling is a far more cost-

effective way to produce metals than to mine virgin materials. Mining should be subjected to full cost accounting. The reality is that mining may contribute very little local employment, but leaves behind the residues, leaching ponds, poisoning of the water table, damaged roads due to heavy trucks (becoming a township, local taxpayer expense) and the real gains, if they are real, are in value added jobs elsewhere. New mines, even exploration, often are a disincentive to other investments and land uses, since the threat of mining lowers land values. For instance, there is currently no monitoring of the impacts of uranium mining on ground water, agricultural lands, or air quality as wind carries pollutant loads to other provinces.

Green Party MPs will:

- Call for government action to require life-cycle product stewardship of metals to ensure that once mined, they remain in economic service for generations.
- Vigorously oppose the permitting of any new uranium mines and notify current uranium-permit holders of plans to phase out this industry in Canada, including exports.
- Prohibit the export of fissionable nuclear material.
- Develop plans to fast-track the end to asbestos mining in Canada and assist the Quebec government and industry in phasing out the chrysotile mining industry, providing transition support for affected workers, families and communities. (Chrysotile asbestos is a known carcinogen with no known safe threshold to avoid sickness. The European Union has banned importation of this mineral. Currently Canada exports 220,000 tonnes of chrysotile asbestos, mostly to developing countries that do not have the resources to handle it safely.)
- Shift Canada's position to support Prior Informed Consent rules under the Rotterdam Convention for asbestos.
- Push for an end to all subsidies to the mining sector to ensure full-cost accounting. End the tax benefits to flow-through shares promoting prospecting and exploration in unlikely areas. End prospecting for tax write-offs.
- Work with provinces, territories and industry to ensure that all mining operations are insured for environmental liabilities, and have an adequate pre-funded plan for remediation, both for the short and long-term, when a mine closes.
- Introduce a Corporate Social Responsibility Act to regulate the mining industry, requiring the highest environmental practices both in Canada and wherever Canadian companies operate, and ensure that waters are not contaminated during mining operations and after a mine closes.

1.21 Energy industry: No to nuclear

Can nuclear power meet our energy needs and be the solution to climate change? Not when one considers the cost, pollution and threat to global security associated with nuclear power.

The Greens insist that energy choices should be economically rational. The best energy choices to respond to the climate crisis should be those that deliver the greatest reduction of GHG per dollar invested. By this criterion, nuclear energy is among the very worst options. Reactors cost billions of dollars, take more than a decade to build, operate unreliably after about the first dozen years of operation, and only produce one type of energy: electricity. Even if the industry were "green and clean" as claimed by the pro-nuclear propaganda efforts, it fails on the economics. Nevertheless, it is neither clean nor green.

Recent studies also note that once the current high-grade uranium deposits are depleted, carbon emissions will greatly increase as low-quality ores have to be refined. In addition, radioactive emissions that

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routinely leak from current facilities in Ontario have a half-life of over 5000 years. The spent fuel has over 200 cancer-causing elements. Plutonium, for example, has a half-life of 24,400 years, while other harmful substances persist millions of years in our environment with no known safety treatment nor storage place.

Nuclear energy is inevitably linked to nuclear weapons proliferation. India made its first bomb from spent fuel from a Canadian research reactor. As well, depleted uranium waste is increasingly and routinely used to coat armor-piercing bullets and missiles in “conventional” warfare, leaving a legacy of toxic metal and radioactive contamination as an on-going health and environmental threat to civilians post-conflict.

The least expensive energy alternative for Canada is investment in enhanced energy productivity through energy efficiency and conserving energy. With existing technology, fully implemented, Canada could easily reduce energy demand by 50 %. The Greens support a full portfolio of sensible energy choices – 100 % clean and green power.

Canada’s potential wind and tidal resources are amongst the best in the world. Yet, they have hardly been tapped. The Greens globally have said “no” to nuclear energy because it is neither safe, nor clean, nor economical. Federal climate change policies should encourage the most efficient, effective and environmentally friendly measures to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

Green Party MPs will:

- Work with provinces to phase out existing nuclear power, to stem the buildup of nuclear wastes, and to institute a Canada-wide moratorium on uranium mining and refining.
- End all subsidies and supports to the nuclear industry except those required to maintain the safety of existing facilities, and assist in phasing out and decommissioning facilities and sequestering associated radioactive wastes.
- Call for the federal government to stop subsidizing all phases of the nuclear industry and Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL) and stop promoting CANDU reactors.
- Demand that the operations of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) and AECL are transparent and at arm’s-length from government and require the disclosure of the minutes of all meetings with AECL. Repeal amendments to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission Act that require the CNSC to consider production quotas and safety at the same time.
- Seek an amendment to the Nuclear Liability Act, increasing maximum insured liabilities from \$75 million to \$13 billion (the amount for which U.S. reactors are insured) so that federal legislation will no longer limit the liability of the nuclear industry to a minuscule portion of potential costs of a nuclear accident.

PART 2: AVERTING CLIMATE CATASTROPHE

“IF HUMANITY WISHES TO PRESERVE A PLANET SIMILAR TO THAT ON WHICH CIVILIZATION DEVELOPED AND TO WHICH LIFE ON EARTH IS ADAPTED, PALEOCLIMATE EVIDENCE AND ONGOING CLIMATE CHANGE SUGGEST THAT CO₂ WILL NEED TO BE REDUCED FROM ITS CURRENT 385 PPM TO AT MOST 350 PPM”

James Hansen, NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies

Canada was once a leader in addressing climate change. During a Toronto heat wave in 1988, we hosted the first-ever international scientific conference on climate change, “Our Changing Atmosphere: Implications for Global Security”. The consensus statement from the assembled scientists was “Humanity is conducting an unintended, uncontrolled, globally pervasive experiment, whose ultimate consequences are second only to global nuclear war.”

When the Kyoto agreement was signed, Canada committed to reducing its emissions by 6% below 1990 levels during the period 2008-2012.

Due to government inaction, our emissions during the Kyoto commitment period of 2008-2012 are expected to be about 30% higher than we promised. Meanwhile, other countries, such as Germany, Sweden and England, have achieved double-digit emissions reductions since signing onto the Kyoto Protocol.

Globally, emissions have risen faster than any of the models produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), with alarming results. Glaciers are melting, threatening global water supplies. Polar ice is receding at an alarming rate and what remains is spongy and vulnerable, so many climate scientists now expect Arctic ice to disappear many decades ahead of when they believed just a few short years ago. Sea levels are rising, leading to evacuations of people from low-lying island nations and increasing the threats of storm damage due to tidal surges in coastal areas. Storm intensities with higher precipitation are increasing. Coral reefs are dying. Tropical storms are intensifying. The Amazon is drying out and becoming a tinderbox. Many areas are experiencing unprecedented heat waves and droughts. Conflict in places like Darfur is exacerbated by climate-induced drought, and heralds the arrival of resource wars fueled by the climate crisis.

The situation is getting worse. As the ice melts in the Arctic, less sunlight is reflected and the ocean heats up more quickly. This accelerates the melting of permafrost, releasing ancient deposits of methane (a greenhouse gas more than twenty times as powerful as carbon dioxide) into the atmosphere. The oceans are slowly absorbing some of the increased atmospheric carbon, but this causes ocean acidification, which harms many of the organisms in the food chain on which our fisheries depend.

It is estimated that climate change now claims the lives of over 315,000 people annually and is expected to create 700 million environmental refugees by mid-century. If unchecked, it will reduce the Earth's human carrying capacity to less than a billion by century's end. Less than a tenth of humanity may survive unless we act now.

Canadians have already felt the impacts from coast to coast to coast: more floods and firestorms, droughts and water shortages, heat waves and smoggy days, hurricanes, catastrophic wind and ice storms shutting down communities, insect infestations killing millions of hectares of trees.

The permafrost from Siberia to the Mackenzie Valley is melting. As it melts, whole villages face the need to relocate, and caribou sink in the mud as they try to migrate. The glaciers, whether in the Alps, the Rockies, the Yukon, or the Andes, are all in rapid retreat.

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The intensity of hurricanes is increasing. While some hurricane specialists are not yet convinced, increasingly research at MIT and Princeton demonstrates that the energy packed in the hurricane's punch has increased by 50-80% from 1950 to 2003. Warmer waters in the ocean lead to more severe hurricanes. In the fall of 2003, Hurricane Juan was the first full force tropical hurricane ever to slam into Nova Scotia. Formerly, cooler ocean water to our south would have downgraded Juan to a tropical storm, but, with warmer ocean surface waters, it hit Nova Scotia as a tropical hurricane.

Scientists are increasingly talking about climate change as being less a dial, than a switch. What is described in the literature as "non-linear perturbations" can be translated as "nasty shocks" or sudden and abrupt climate catastrophes.

A number of scientists have determined that the risk of "tipping point events" -- the loss of the Gulf Stream, the collapse of the Western Antarctic Ice Shelf, and the melting of the Greenland Ice Sheet -- is increased if global average temperature goes up by 2 degrees C above the pre-Industrial Revolution temperature. This, they estimate, could happen if concentrations of CO₂ in the atmosphere were to increase to somewhere between 400 to 450 ppm. We are at 389 ppm now, up from 275 ppm in the 1800s, and now it is rising at 3 ppm per year. And yet, our government resists shifting to a low-carbon economy. Many other countries have begun to make this shift successfully.

When Prime Minister Harper first formed government in 2006, he first said he had no intention of honouring Kyoto or doing anything about climate change at all. Due to pressure from Canadians, his policy didn't change, but his rhetoric did. He claimed our targets had to change to be "realistic."

In 2007, in Bali, industrialized nations agreed to negotiate reductions in the range of 25-40% below 1990 levels by 2020. Canadian negotiators only very reluctantly agreed, and yet the Harper government immediately announced it had no intention of signing binding treaties in that range, and shortly afterwards announced that Canada's position was not "made in Canada" after all, but "made in the USA."

Canadian negotiators in Copenhagen in 2009 proposed reductions of just 2% below 1990 levels, and a month later, in January 2010, announced the new Canadian target of 3% above 1990 levels. This is not just failing to meet our Kyoto commitments a decade too late, it is promising to continue in the wrong direction. In an effort to confuse, the Harper government routinely expresses this new target as 17% below 2005 levels by 2020.

While the rhetoric of the current government remains framed around US efforts in a strongly related continental economy, when the US does take action on climate, the Harper government does not follow. Canada's move to the same base year as the United States (2005) weakened our targets while the same move by the United States strengthened its targets. It's also untrue because the Obama Administration is acting to meet the target they have set. Canada is not.

The 25-40% emissions reduction range is likely insufficient. It is based on a stabilization target of 450 ppm of atmospheric CO₂. Based on recently observed trends, a 350 ppm goal is now being embraced by climatologists and is becoming the new scientific consensus. To achieve this new goal, we would have to either virtually eliminate carbon emissions this decade, or set on a slightly less aggressive trajectory now and hope for technology that can reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide to emerge in the future.

The international agreements which were concluded in Cancun, Mexico in December 2010, agreed to by the Harper government, acknowledged that the 2 degree targeted limit to increased global temperature may well be too high, and that the commitments made by countries to date to reduce greenhouse gas emissions fall far short of what would be required to reach even this inadequate goal.

The coming decade will largely determine the type of planet we will have at century's end and for millennia thereafter. If we act boldly and decisively to reduce our dependence on finite polluting energy, we can still deliver a planet that sustains humanity and most other life. If we fail to change existing patterns, we will almost surely usher in an era of conflict and irreversible changes. Canada must once again become a leader in global climate negotiations. It must also, for the first time, make substantial progress in reducing greenhouse gases by embracing a truly green economy.

Canada must take the lead in global negotiations by adopting these positions on the targets we will meet: An opening offer to reduce Canadian emissions 30% below 1990 levels by 2020, and to 85% reduction below 1990 by 2040 regardless of what other countries do.

A commitment to push for the global reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that are required to achieve a target of 350 ppm to cap the maximum global temperature increase at 1.5 degrees.

A promise to adopt the far more aggressive emission reductions which would be required if other industrialized countries also participate.

A commitment to periodically reassess these targets in light of emerging scientific evidence, to adopt more aggressive targets if needed, and to push for an international system of periodic review, reassessment and target renewal.

Phasing out carbon emissions as quickly as possible until we become “carbon neutral” must be the overarching goal. A complete phase-out will occur eventually in any case as fossil fuels run out and the sooner we embrace a low-carbon economy, the better off we will be.

We must implement policies that make it possible to meet the greenhouse gas emissions targets to which we commit and then we must allocate the necessary resources to ensure that we actually achieve these objectives.

Finally, we must also commit to technology transfers and to provide the financing necessary to help developing countries achieve their emissions targets.

"WE ARE RISKING THE ABILITY OF THE HUMAN RACE TO SURVIVE."

Dr. Rajendra Pachauri, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

2.1 Making real reductions in CO₂ emissions

Climate change remains a major concern for Canadians. Despite the immediate concerns over the recession and loss of jobs, Canadians have (by large majorities) continued to say they will not trade off environmental protection to help the economy. In fact, Canadians understand that ending waste is good economics. Real solutions enhance the economy and the environment at the same time.

While completely phasing out carbon emissions seems daunting, the challenge looks much less intimidating when we realize that more than half the energy we release is never used, but escapes into the environment as waste heat. Even what is traditionally considered useful energy is questionably so. Is it useful to move 2 tonnes of steel, glass and rubber when our real objective is to move an 80 kg person? Is it useful to heat a home that's so leaky that most of the heat escapes within an hour? Is it useful to keep light bulbs and televisions on when no one is home? Our real energy needs are a fraction of what we use. Efficiency is our friend.

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Creating energy from non-polluting sources is neither novel nor difficult. The only challenge is ensuring that energy is available when and where we need it. Fully renewable electrical grids are now being modelled in Germany. Canada is fortunate to have vast renewable energy resources and a sparse population which make a fully renewable electricity system much easier to achieve here than most places on Earth. The Green Party embraces the challenge set by Al Gore and James Hansen to replace all power generation from fossil fuels with renewable energy within a decade.

In his report to the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Nicholas Stern, former senior economist to the World Bank, warned that, left unchecked, climate change could constitute a \$7 trillion hit to the world economy, create water shortages for 1 in 6 people planet-wide, cause the extinction of up to 40 % of species, and result in up to 200 million environmental refugees.

Taking action now, says Stern, would cost just one to 3% of global gross domestic product annually. In Canada, based on our 2010 GDP estimate of \$1.335 trillion, 1% means about \$13 billion – \$3 billion less than the government's commitment to buy and maintain 65 stealth fighter jets.

We will build an economy powered by the renewable energy sources. We will discourage wasteful practices, dramatically reducing our overall energy needs. By phasing out carbon emissions, we will simultaneously clean up our air, improve water quality and help re-establish healthier forests. We will transform our buildings so they stay warm in winter and cool in summer without burning fossil fuels. We will change the way we move, rapidly bringing in an efficient and convenient public transit system supported by non-polluting personal vehicles. We will create thousands of jobs manufacturing, installing, operating and maintaining wind turbines, solar panels, public transit vehicles and infrastructure, insulation, rail stock and other elements of a clean and efficient economy. We will build local economies and strong communities responsive to local needs.

In addition to tax shifting and cap and trade of industry, a Green government will leave no stone unturned to establish practical and pragmatic programs in all areas of the economy to accelerate our reduction in carbon emissions, including the following:

- 2.1.1 Government Operations
- 2.1.2 Buildings
- 2.1.3 Efficiency
- 2.1.4 Renewable energy
- 2.1.5 Transport
- 2.1.6 Communities
- 2.1.7 Industry
- 2.1.8 Forestry
- 2.1.9 Agriculture
- 2.1.10 Fossil fuels
- 2.1.11 Global

2.1.1 Government operations

The federal government should apply the same national GHG reduction goals to all its own operations. All new federal government buildings must meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) standards. Federally- owned buildings must adhere to LEED® Gold; leased buildings LEED® Silver standards. Standards should be continuously upgraded.

Carbon conditionality clauses. A Green government will negotiate with the provinces and every business, NGO, institution, city, province or territory that receives funding of any kind from the federal government to establish benchmarks and policies to reduce its GHG emissions in accordance with Canada's goals. This will be phased on so that after 2012, 25% of all funding will include carbon reduction requirements, rising to 100% by 2025. Carbon conditionality will be a part of a wider set of sustainability conditionality clauses, reflecting other changes that are needed on the road to a healthier economy.

2.1.2 Buildings

Most of today's housing stock will still be standing in 2040, the date we target to have achieved an 85% overall reduction in Canada's carbon emissions, so retrofitting Canada's existing stock of buildings for energy conservation is critical.

Green Party MPs will:

- Develop a national energy retrofit standard designed for a post-carbon economy that will reduce energy use in existing buildings by an average of at least 80% below that of 2009 average structures.
- Develop timelines and targets for raising existing building stock to the new standard with the goal of retrofitting 100% of Canada's buildings to a high level of energy efficiency by 2025.
- Promote the adoption of this high efficiency standard by:
 - Providing revolving federal loans for retrofits to homeowners.
 - Funding a nation-wide program to upgrade all low-income rental housing on a phased year-by-year basis to be completed by 2025, as Germany is doing.
 - Identifying the barriers to sustainable energy retrofits and eliminating them.
 - Providing refundable tax credits for all energy retrofit costs, based on before-and-after EnerGuide or infrared heat tests for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional buildings.
 - Promoting tax-deductible Green Mortgages for home-owner energy retrofit costs.
 - Introducing a national program of energy retrofits to public sector buildings such as universities, schools, museums and hospitals.
 - Establishing a 100% Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance for all businesses for energy retrofit costs.
 - Providing revolving federal loans for residential or business energy retrofits.
 - Instituting mandatory energy audits of buildings that become available for sale and requiring that the audit results be made available.
- Work with provinces and territories to develop and implement within two years, and update annually after that, a new national building code that:
 - Reduces overall energy demand to 15% of current conventional structures.
 - Minimizes the use of fossil fuel based heating and cooling systems.
 - Considers the embodied energy of construction materials.
 - Results in structures where possible that produce more energy than they consume.

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- Promotes structures that harvest, reuse and purify their own water.
- Is performance-based, opening the way to innovation and unlocking barriers to green design.
- Require mandatory installation of solar hot water systems and pre-wiring for solar PV on all new buildings.
- Provide grants of 50% of the cost of solar thermal roofs or walls including solar hot water, as in Sweden; Green Mortgage loans for the remainder of the cost.
- Establish free energy audits.
- Provide GST credits for all materials used in buildings that are LEED® Silver or better.

2.1.3 Efficiency

Set high performance standards for all major appliances sold in Canada and continuously update this standard.

Eliminate incandescent light bulbs and very inefficient appliances.

Encourage industrial efficiency for Large Final emitters (LFEs) through a cap and trade system.

Support reductions in emissions through tax-deductible Green Industrial Mortgages, based on annual energy use per unit of production.

2.1.4 Renewable energy

The Green Party embraces the challenge set by Al Gore and James Hansen to replace all power generation from fossil fuels within a decade, beginning with a rapid phase-out of coal.

A successful efficiency and building retrofit program coupled with peak load reductions could reduce the required capacity by 25%. Population increase could raise the capacity requirements again, as will the electrification of transport.

Electric vehicle producers should be encouraged to ensure the production of whatever additional electrical capacity (from renewable sources) their cars will require, as some producers offer to do. Vehicle batteries can provide useful support for load shifting to and from the grid, powering up at night when demand is low and potentially releasing energy back to the grid if it is needed at times of peak demand. This can make electric vehicles more affordable.

All carbon-based fuels will be subject to rising carbon taxes and industrial cap and trade.

Federal approvals for new oil or coal-fired power generation will not be granted. Permits to convert oil or coal-fired plants to natural gas will be allowed in the short term until renewable energy capacity increases to replace them.

Green Party MPs will:

- Establish the design and management principals of a trans-Canada nationally integrated electrical power grid capable of efficiently transporting high electrical loads and accommodating many diverse sources of renewable electrical energy
- Develop a transition plan that will transform the existing electrical distribution system into a high efficiency national grid.
- Work with Canada's wind industry and the Canadian Wind Energy Association (CANWEA) to accelerate the rapid deployment of wind turbines to achieve 17 GW of firm power.
- Restore the Wind Power Production Incentive and incentives for projects with approved Advanced Renewable Tariffs that provide power purchase contracts for a diversity of small renewable energy projects.

- Provide a 2 cent/kWh subsidy for renewable energy produced in any province or territory adopting ART+ (Advanced Renewable Tariffs, net metering, peak power pricing and plans for renewable grid extensions).
- Support local energy co-operatives forming in provinces or territories adopting ART+.
- Provide substantial research and development (R&D) funding for ocean energy technologies in provinces and territories adopting ART+.
- Provide substantial R&D funding for electricity storage technologies in provinces adopting ART+.
- Provide support for power grid extensions to bring wind and ocean power from remote areas in provinces and territories adopting ART+.
- Work with the solar industry to rapidly install 25 gigawatts (GW) of solar PV.
- Work with renewable energy industries to introduce 12 GW of ocean energy and to set specific goals for production of biomass and micro hydro energy.
- Work with the geothermal energy industry and the oil industry (for their drilling expertise) in a well-funded R&D program to develop Enhanced Geothermal Systems (EGS), drilling down to 10 km to extract 25 GW of power.
- Develop cogeneration and peak power production from methane obtained from the anaerobic digestion of organic waste.
- Develop peak power production from burning demonstrably sustainable agricultural and forest waste as necessary to meet peak power demands but within the constraints of maintaining soil nutrients.

2.1.5 Transport

Employing currently available green technologies and encouraging transportation shareholders to be more efficient will dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector, which accounts for about 20% of Canada's emissions.

Carbon conditionality. A Green government will establish transport-based carbon conditionality clauses affecting all federal funds and loans.

Walking and cycling. All bicycles and bicycle gear will be tax deductible and GST free. All federal staff will receive a cycling allowance equal to the vehicle allowance.

A Green government will match provincial and municipal investments designed to increase walking and cycling, with a baseline contribution of 25% of the total cost, rising to 50% where provinces pay bicycle allowances to their staff and equip all government buildings with cycling facilities, and where cities do likewise, increasing the kilometers of cycling lanes and trails, and establishing policies to encourage smart growth and prevent sprawl.

Access to Canada's National Parks will be free to all those who enter on bicycles or on foot.

Transit and Light Rail Transit. A Green government will match provincial and territorial investments in transit with a baseline contribution of 25% of the total cost, rising to 75% where municipalities have established working policies to encourage smart growth and prevent sprawl, and where transit authorities introduce progressive programs designed to increase ridership such as annual U-passes for colleges, eco-passes for neighbourhoods, commuter passes for businesses, and requirements that new developments must be served by transit. A Green government will make it compulsory for developers to provide three-year transit passes for all their development's new residents (as in Boulder, Colorado).

Long-Distance Coaches. A Green government will liberalize the licensing for long-distance coach lines to encourage competition and greater ridership, while maintaining rigorous safety standards. It will eliminate the fuel tax (but not the carbon tax) for companies that sign a carbon conditionality agreement

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to upgrade their fleets to high efficiency technologies and train their drivers in efficient driving. It will provide federal funding for upgrades to coach stations to a standard that will be attractive to everyone.

Rail. A Green government will re-invest in our national passenger rail infrastructure, working toward high speed rail connections in Canada's busiest passenger corridors. A Green government will invest in intermodal connections, increase funding for joint federal-municipal light rail projects, as well as restore VIA rail service to all major regional cities. A Green government will create a national clean rail freight initiative that uses both regulatory means and financial incentives to improve fleet efficiency and safety

Teleworking. A Green government will pay a no-trip vehicle allowance to all federal staff working from home, give a tax credit for the cost of establishing a home office, and establish a parking cash-out system (cash to employees not using a company parking space) to encourage reduced use of cars and parking.

Vehicles. When it comes to vehicle technologies, corn and grain-based biofuels pose an unacceptable cost in reducing food available for people as well as having dubious net greenhouse gas reductions. Hydrogen will not deliver in the near term nor possibly in the long-term due to inherent storage, distribution and production efficiency reasons. Cellulosic ethanol offers some potential, but electric vehicles have recently leapt ahead. Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles can be 100% electric for short distance trips and fully electric vehicles are already available. Today's fully electric vehicles are economical for city driving and models are in development that can economically replace the full function of an internal combustion engine vehicle. As more electric and hybrid vehicles become available at affordable prices, non-hybrid internal combustion engine personal vehicles should be phased out.

Green Party MPs will:

- Work with the motor industry, provinces, territories and other partners to develop a sustainable vehicles strategy, leading to an 85% reduction in emissions below today's level by 2040.
- Adopt California standards requiring a 30% reduction in CO2 emissions from new vehicles sold in Canada by 2015, 50% by 2020 and 90% by 2025. This will drive the manufacture of zero-emission vehicles and the infrastructure to support them. It will also create fuel efficiency standards in line with leading U.S. states for the 2011 model year.
- Accelerate the market arrival of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) and fully electric vehicles by signing the Plug-In Partners advanced purchasing agreement (creating a federal buying pool) with a commitment to buy large numbers of PHEVs for federal government use as soon as they are available. Carbon conditionality clauses in federal contracts will include a requirement for the purchase of plug-in vehicles as soon as they are more readily available.
- Work with all governments and businesses in Canada to join a Canadian green car buying pool and to join the Plug-In Partners buying pool.
- Offer scale-based rebates of up to \$5,000 for the purchase of the most efficient vehicles, and scale-based fees on the purchase of inefficient vehicles.
- Require mandatory vehicle fuel efficiency labelling, adopting the European system.
- Allow tax write-off benefits only for energy efficient company cars.
- Provide incentives for Canadian manufacturers of electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.
- Establish a new authority to create a just transition fund for the automobile sector, funded by an additional fee on all sales of inefficient cars in Canada.

Even with electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles, liquid fuel will still be required though possibly up to 80% less than is used today. A Green government will support research and development of cellulosic ethanol from domestic farm and forest wastes as long as these "wastes" are surplus to the need to sustain

soils. The Green Party opposes the development, manufacture and use of ethanol or biodiesel (biofuels) derived from food crops. The Green Party opposes current laws requiring the use of biofuels and will only support standards for biofuel use when supplies of biofuels that are derived from demonstrably-sustainable waste sources become available.

Aviation: A Green government will work with the aviation industry to develop a sustainability strategy, leading to an 85% reduction in overall emissions by 2040. This will likely mean a reduction in number of flights, especially short distance flights. We will impose a two-year moratorium on all airport expansions in order to develop a sensible post-carbon aviation plan.

All aviation fuel will carry both a regular fuel tax and the carbon tax. The carbon tax will be rated for the carbon equivalency of aviation impact. Long-distance flights at high altitude and night flights will pay a carbon tax at up to twice the regular rate to cover the climate impact of nitrous oxide emissions (which convert to tropospheric ozone, a greenhouse gas) and high level cloud cover which more slowly dissipates at night (which traps heat).

A Green Government will work with business partners to secure the installation of video-conferencing facilities in every community larger than 1,000 people by 2015.

Video-conferencing facilities for meetings and conferences will be free of GST and will qualify for an Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance. The federal government will achieve a 50% reduction in meetings that would otherwise involve flying by 2010, and an 80% reduction by 2015. MPs with rural ridings will be encouraged to meet constituents by video-link.

2.1.6 Communities

A Green Government will institute a methane tax on all landfills will be charge based on the amount of emissions. After 2014, the tax will increase by 50% a year, and after 2017 no landfill will be allowed to operate without methane capture.

All federal support for municipalities will be subject to carbon conditionality clauses. All current federal funding that encourages urban sprawl and greater vehicle use will be eliminated. The existing Green Infrastructure Fund, gas tax, and other funding will continue.

A Green Government will restructure the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund and establish “Municipal Superfunds” for urban and suburban municipalities with funding contingent on a municipality regulating new developments to achieve higher densities that are conducive to the development of mass transit while at the same time protecting open spaces and agricultural lands.

Support will be provided to local non-profits and associations that sponsor programs that concretely reduce carbon emissions.

Federal disaster assistance will be available to help communities prepare for climate change impacts (floods, storms, disasters), subject to carbon conditionality clauses. Provinces and communities that do not satisfy the clauses will not be eligible for federal disaster assistance. This requirement is similar to an insurance company refusing fire insurance on a building that does not meet code requirements for fire safety.

2.1.7 Industry

Large Final Emitters (LFEs) will be subject to the carbon tax and cap and trade policies described above. All industrial buildings will be eligible for incentives to become more energy efficient, as above, and structurally safe.

Use of the greenhouse gas halocarbons CFCs, HFCs, PFCs and SF6 will be phased out between 2012 and 2017. There will be federal support for R&D to develop new climate-friendly, non-toxic alternatives. A Nitrous Oxide Task Force will be established to recommend ways to reduce Canada's N2O emissions by 85% by 2025.

All federal grants and loans to industry will be subject to carbon conditionality clauses designed to steer all industry and manufacturing towards 100% sustainable processes and practices.

Megastore retail outlets which depend on customer use of cars will be encouraged to adopt parking charges, combined with transit access and the home delivery of purchases by means of conditionality clauses signed with municipalities seeking federal funds.

Legislation will be introduced that requires all manufactured goods, including vehicles, to be designed for easy dismantling, re-use and/or recycling, and to contain 90% recycled materials by 2025 (as in Germany).

Legislation will be introduced that requires all appliance and equipment retail outlets to receive broken and worn-out goods they have sold for recycling or repair. Industry will be helped to establish a national deposit system, recycling systems and third party management to help them fulfill the obligation (like Germany's Recycling Law).

2.1.8 Forestry

Canada will negotiate international agreements for forest preservation in parallel with emissions reductions. Forest protection will not be traded for reductions in fossil fuel emissions as meeting both targets is urgently required. Furthermore, increasingly stringent international requirements and monitoring will be set in place for forestry operations, that take into account long-term sustainability and the total carbon releases including those from the waste wood left behind and organics in the soil that decay and emit CO2 when forests are cut or burned.

All forest companies will pay a carbon tax to reflect the net loss of carbon storage from their lands, or receive a carbon rebate to reflect net gain of sequestered carbon, based on an independent audit every five years.

All forest companies managing FSC certified lands will be granted a 5-year tax break for those lands upon certification.

2.1.9 Agriculture

Of the GhG emissions generated from agriculture, 43% comes from dairy and beef herds emitting methane; 40% from poor soil fertilization practices releasing N2O; 15% from poor manure management from penned livestock herds; and 2% from other sources. Because of the multiple benefits of organic farming methods, including a big reduction in GhG emissions, a Green government will work to assist non-organic farmers who wish to transit to organics to make the switch. Local food production will be encouraged to reduce emissions from transport.

A Green government will promote the use of manure and farm waste to build soil nutrition and organic content. We will pay farmers for carbon sequestration in soils within a domestic carbon market. This will promote no-till agriculture practices which will in turn slow and reverse the process of soil depletion. We will plan for transition to 100% organic farming.

Urban agriculture will be encouraged to provide more local food, including more green roofs, reducing air conditioning demand and run-off in deluge rains.

2.1.10 Fossil fuels

Green MPs will:

- Remove all subsidies and supports to the oil, coal, gas and coalbed methane industries in Canada.
- Apply escalating carbon taxes to all CO₂, methane, N₂O, fugitive, and other GHG emissions.
- Require all members of the fossil fuel industry to participate in the LFE cap and trade system, as above.
- Cancel all funding for Carbon Capture and Sequestration (CSC) which new evidence from the Weyburn, Saskatchewan project reveals has severe negative environmental impacts and also because CO₂ the storage of CO₂ for this purpose facilitates greater production of oil and gas and redirect the federally earmarked CSC funding to renewable solar, wind, tidal and geothermal energy projects in Canada.
- Not approve new coal-fired electrical generation plants.
- Impose a carbon tax on all exports of coal, oil and gas from Canada.
- Pass legislation to keep Canada's west coast crude oil tanker-free, ensuring both that a new West Coast oil crude oil port will not be built and that current crude oil tanker traffic in the Port of Vancouver be rapidly phased out.

Green Party MPs will:

- Work to establish a Federal Ministry of Energy Transition Plan to co-ordinate the transition from a fossil fuel based economy to one based on renewable energy.
- Support the establishment of a Canada-first National Energy Plan to regain control over Canada's energy supply and to ensure Canada's energy needs are met prior to any export, and assist in the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.
- Work to establish a Strategic Petroleum and Natural Gas Reserve to address secure domestic petroleum supply in the event of shortages both short term and long-term; a Natural Gas Emergency Preparedness Plan that addresses potential natural gas supply shortages, and an Emergency Preparedness Plan to address other energy supply crises.

2.1.11 Global

Under a Green government, Canada will work with other nations to achieve the development of a new global post-Kyoto Treaty with the targets outlined above.

Canada will commit to the necessary technology transfers and funding required for developing nations to transition to a post-carbon economy in a fair and equitable way, keeping in mind Canada's obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to absorb some of the costs of mitigation and adaptation based on past responsibility for the crisis and our country's capability to pay.

Canada will work to continue and enhance Kyoto's Clean Development Mechanism to improve and strengthen verification of greenhouse gas reductions so that we can have a reliable method in place to invest confidently in greenhouse gas reductions in developing nations.

Canada will support the extension of the Kyoto Accord to cover international aviation and shipping.

Canada will work to include China, India, the United States and all other nations in the new post-Kyoto international treaty that boldly and adequately addresses the problem of anthropogenic global warming causing climate change.

2.2 Adapting to climate change

One of the binding commitments of nations signing on to the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was to prepare adaptation strategies to cope with that level of climatic disruption that is no longer avoidable. If anything, this commitment has been ignored by Canada even more than the obligation to reduce emissions. Sectors requiring immediate attention include agriculture, forestry, fishing and tourism. Protecting vulnerable areas and population also need to be addressed. Climatic impacts have already cost the Canadian economy billions of dollars.

The Green Party believes that the federal government must show leadership in developing an adaptation strategy in collaboration with the provincial/territorial governments and municipalities that aims to mitigate and reduce the impacts of climate change. Even with significant global GHG reductions to stabilize the climate, it will take decades, perhaps centuries, to arrest climate change.

We must improve municipal infrastructure, especially water treatment facilities, to meet a changing water regime. We are already experiencing increased deluge precipitation events during which current systems allow raw sewage to bypass treatment. We must start curtailing developments in areas of high vulnerability (for example floodplains, low-elevation coastal areas, steep hillsides, regions of permafrost, and places adjacent to forests at increased risk of fires). We must undertake greater flood control measures like raising dykes in areas made more prone to flooding because of climate change.

The most urgent community crises are in the Canadian Arctic where peoples of the North face losing their hunting culture and relocation of their communities due to the melting of permafrost, and Arctic ice. Meanwhile in the interior of British Columbia an area of forest twice the size of Sweden has been killed by a climate-caused pine beetle epidemic. The pine beetle epidemic is an economic disaster for many forest dependent communities. Eighty % of this vast region's forests are affected.

We must act to reduce emissions and we must prepare for the “new normal” of a destabilized climate. These are not, as often presented, mutually exclusive goals. We need both and we needed them yesterday.

Green Party MPs will:

- Establish special task forces involving all stakeholders, all levels of government and scientific experts to prepare, over the next two years, area-specific climate change adaptation strategies. The first of such task forces shall be set up in places particularly vulnerable to climate shift and disruptions, the Canadian Arctic, coastal zones, the Prairies, and the Interior of British Columbia.
- Establish a Climate Change Adaptation Fund to assist those areas hard hit by “natural” disasters linked to climate change.
- Increase financial support to the developing world for adaptation strategies.

PART 3: PRESERVING AND RESTORING THE ENVIRONMENT

Our natural environment is the source of our wealth and our health. Canada's forests, water, soil and energy resources fuel our economy. However, if we treat our environment like a business in liquidation, those resources and our economy will suffer. The lack of federal regulation, monitoring, and action has made Canada one of the world's biggest and most tragic offenders against the environment. We rank amongst the world's worst for wasteful use of natural resources. Our soil, air and waters are dumping grounds for toxic chemicals. Through inadequate environmental protection we risk leaving our children the deplorable legacy of a debilitated and degraded environment. How can we be so thoughtless?

The Green Party of Canada has set out its plan for a sustainable future grounded in fiscal responsibility, ecological health and social justice.

As the only party working within a triple bottom line (economic, ecological and social) approach to every policy, our position on key environmental issues is clear.

It is urgent that the Canadian government set real targets, with measurable objectives, and put in place the resources to deliver on those goals. Recent history makes it clear that purely voluntary efforts do not work. Recent history also demonstrates that policies must be consistently applied. For example, it is not possible to reduce greenhouse gases while subsidizing the planet's single biggest environment-damaging industrial development project and most carbon-intensive oil – crude from the Athabasca tar sands. The tar sands

We need to correct the perception that economic success is dependent on growth and build understanding of the benefits of a steady-state economy (non-boom/bust economy). Continued exponential growth is counter to the realities of a finite planet.

3.1. Air quality

Canada faces an epidemic level of respiratory diseases, exacerbated by poor air quality. On smog alert days our emergency wards are packed. Asthma is the leading cause of absenteeism from school and the third leading cause of work loss. Three million Canadians, about 8.4 % of the country's population, and 1 in 8 children suffer from asthma, and the numbers are increasing rapidly.

Yet, Canada's regulation of air quality lags behind that of other nations. Canada allows sulphur dioxide at concentrations of 115 parts per million (ppm) while the European Union, for example, allows 48 and Australia permits 80.

The issue of air quality is intimately connected with climate change. The formula is: air pollution + heat = smog. A failure to confront the climate crisis, directly and soon, will result in more extreme heat conditions during the summer months. The more 30+ degree days that Canadians experience, the more smog days that will occur.

More stringently regulating to reduce the precursors of smog (particulates, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide) as well as to reduce serious neuro-toxic contamination of air with mercury is necessary and is immediately possible within the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA). Regulating to reduce these contaminants must be coupled with reducing the burning of fossil fuels that emit particulates as well as climate-warming greenhouse gases (GHGs). Measures to meet climate protection targets by reducing reliance on fossil fuels will have important benefits in avoiding ever-worsening heat impacts and these contaminants.

Green Party MPs will:

- Strengthen CEPA with specific and strong regulations to reduce particulates, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, and other airborne contaminants.
- Address smog-causing heat and pollution through solutions outlined in Part 2: Averting Climate Catastrophe in this document.

3.2 Water protection and conservation

Freshwater is the lifeblood of Earth. Protecting and conserving freshwater is a major political challenge for the 21st century. Looking down from space, one sees that Canada encompasses one of the Earth's most freshwater-abundant regions. On the ground, however, the story is different. Our water use is geographically concentrated. Sixty % of our water flows north while over 90 % of our population is concentrated along our southern border. Sadly, Canadians are among the world's most inefficient users of water, wasting more water per capita than any other nation on Earth except for the United States. While Europe has considerably reduced its water consumption, Canadians continue to put a heavy strain on water infrastructures and drain our valuable freshwater reserves.

As stewards of 9 % of the world's renewable water, we are ethically bound to conserving it for this and future generations. Ground water in Canada makes up over 90% of Canada's fresh water. This resource is being exploited by oil and gas activities all across Canada with little to no knowledge of the impacts to major aquifers that are supported by the surface water. While most citizens have access to safe water, Health Canada indicates that as many as 85 First Nations communities (under the sole jurisdiction of the federal government) are under boil-water advisories. As our population, economic activities and communities grow, water problems will become increasingly common. Some, like Walkerton and Kashechewan, are related to water quality; others, like recent droughts in the prairies and southern Ontario are water quantity issues; some span provincial borders; others national borders. All speak to a need for renewed attention to national water policy developed by the federal government in partnership with provinces, territories, First Nations, NGOs and municipalities.

Sustainable communities and sustainable livelihoods need healthy watersheds. The Green Party is committed to responsible water stewardship. That includes protecting watersheds from industrial and urban activities and restoring those that have been damaged by such activities. We advocate a renewed federal government role in water management, focused on strong regulations and programs created in collaboration with provincial and municipal governments. When it comes to our vision for freshwater, the Green message is clear: Keep it. Conserve it. Protect it.

- Keep it. Pressure is mounting to export freshwater south of the border, with trade agreements such as North American Trade Agreement (NAFTA) leaving us susceptible to relinquishing control over our water. The Green Party supports current Federal Water Policy that emphatically opposes large-scale exports (bulk exports) of our freshwater.
- Conserve it. The federal government must work to ensure sustainable use of our water resources and at the same time maintain and improve access to safe water for all Canadians.

This includes water metering and pricing that both reflect a fair value for water and foster efficient use, and regulations that protect and enhance water quality and ensure that Canada does not become a haven for water-wasting industrial technologies.

- Protect it. To protect and restore freshwater ecosystems and their ecological services (e.g. as habitats for fish and freshwater species, as domestic water supplies for energy-generation and recreation, as sources of water for irrigation and other economic uses) the federal government has to use its powers, including the Fisheries Act, and its role in inter-jurisdictional water sharing. This is especially important when considering the changes in quality and quantity of Canada's freshwater that will occur due to climate change. The Great Lakes' levels will fall, resulting in higher concentrations of toxic chemicals and other pollutants; B.C. rivers will become over-heated, preventing salmon spawning; and farmers will face increasing drought. The Athabasca River is already experiencing significant declines in flow and water quality due to climatic impacts and tar sand developments.

The federal government needs to ensure that watershed protection is the first priority of water protection and establish in-stream flow needs in every 1st and 2nd order stream in Canada. Ecological function of river basins must be protected through strict land use management in those river basins.

Green Party MPs will:

- Protect the fundamental right to clean freshwater for all Canadians today and in future generations by amending the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to enshrine the right of future Canadians to an ecological heritage that includes breathable air and drinkable water.
- Push government to strategically implement the 1987 Federal Water Policy to meet the requirements of sustainable water management - equity, efficiency and ecological integrity - by:
 1. Passing federal legislation to prohibit bulk water exports and immediately remove water from the scope of the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) currently being negotiated.
 2. Take action to prevent radioactive waste shipments such as the highly radioactive worn out steam generators from nuclear reactors approved to be shipped out the Owen Sound harbour, through the St. Lawrence seaway and to Sweden.
 3. Establishing regulations and product standards to promote water-efficient technologies in Canada.
 4. Ensuring secure, safe water supplies for all citizens with a focus on First Nations communities through establishing regulations requiring protection of drinking water at its source, public inspection of domestic water supplies, and mandatory and regular drinking water testing.
 5. Provide funding to municipalities through a new "Water and Waste Treatment Facilities Municipal Superfund" (see Section 1.14 Infrastructure and Communities for more on federal-municipal relations) to enable replacement of chlorination systems with ozonation, ultraviolet sterilization, sand filtration and other safe water purification systems.
 6. Conduct an inventory of all polluted groundwater and water bodies. Develop and implement strategies for cleaning them.
 7. Enhance the capacity of federal departments and agencies to protect and restore the health of aquatic ecosystems.
- Ensure that water is managed in a way that helps create healthy, sustainable communities and fosters sustainable livelihoods by demanding that government:
 1. Replace federal guidelines for drinking water quality with binding national standards that secure clean drinking water and human health.

2. Make federal funding for urban water infrastructure contingent on water efficiency plans that include measurable and enforceable goals and objectives.
3. Provide adequate funding for local and regional flood protection and drought management planning.
4. Provide strategic climate change program funding for water conservation on the basis that water conservation results in energy savings and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
5. Revive the InfraGuide program (quietly eliminated by Environment Minister John Baird) that supported graduate internships in leading-edge municipal infrastructure projects.
6. Shift subsidies and funding away from dams and diversions (including feasibility studies) toward comprehensive “ground to the glass” drinking water protection strategies, especially source water protection, watershed restoration and community-based water conservation and efficiency planning and programs.
7. Review federal agricultural subsidies and develop transitional strategies to shift production away from water-intensive crops toward less water-intensive local sustainable agriculture.

Address inter-provincial/territorial and international water-related concerns by demanding that government:

Restore ecosystem health to Canada’s coastline and inland watersheds by funding improvements to municipal wastewater treatment systems, with particular emphasis on ensuring shoreline communities and industries stop dumping untreated waste into rivers, lakes and oceans.

Ensure that binding water-sharing agreements among provincial, territorial and federal governments are created within the Mackenzie Basin (within 1 year). The agreements must reflect contemporary scientific knowledge and principles of social equity, efficiency and ecological integrity. Elements to include:

1. Capping withdrawals from the Athabasca River based on assessment of instream flow needs.
2. Ensuring oil sands developers deal responsibly with polluted waters in storage ponds (largest man-made structures on Earth).
3. Placing a moratorium on further oil sands development (i.e. increases in annual production).

Review the Prairie Provinces Water Board Master Agreement on Apportionment to ensure it is consistent with contemporary scientific knowledge and principles of social equity, efficiency and ecological integrity.

Address invasive species in the Great Lakes by developing stringent, science-based protocols for ballast water flushing prior to entering the St. Lawrence waterway, and funding for monitoring and enforcement of these protocols.

Strengthen the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement to ensure it deals with emerging issues such as endocrine disrupters and pharmaceuticals.

Support international momentum for the human right to water by establishing a national legally binding human right to basic water requirements for all Canadians (both quality and quantity).

Increase Canadian aid for access to basic water requirements and sanitation consistent with the Millennium Development Goals.

- Fulfill the need to increase science capacity related to water issues by demanding the government:
 1. Enhance funding for data collection and integrated information systems on water use, availability and quality.
 2. Link research spending in the natural and social sciences to water policy goals to ensure our higher education institutions create the knowledge base needed for 21st century water management (e.g. emerging issues such as endocrine disrupters,

pharmaceuticals and toxics, instream flows and sustainable groundwater yield, climate change adaptation).

3.3 National Parks

Every Prime Minister of Canada for the last twenty years has committed to the completion of the national parks system and the creation of Marine Protected Areas sufficient to protect marine ecosystems – except the current Prime Minister. The 2005 Liberal Budget committed \$209 million over five years to capital maintenance and acquisition in existing parks, but did not increase funding to create new parks. Key ecological areas are under assault. Unless government acts soon, areas like the South Okanagan (Canada’s only area of true desert) in British Columbia, the wilderness in Labrador, or the Flathead region in southeast British Columbia, will no longer be available for protection. They will be lost due to development pressures.

The UNESCO World Heritage Committee has warned Canada that we are allowing dangerous erosion of existing parks that are designated as World Heritage Sites, particularly Banff, Jasper, Kootenay and Yoho National Parks, as well as several provincial reserves. The UNESCO Committee pointed to the risk of “adverse impacts of the operation of the Cheviot mine on the integrity” of Jasper, in particular.

UNESCO also warned that Canada was not doing enough to ensure that “various mining, mineral, oil and gas explorations activities” around Nahanni National Park, located in the southwest corner of the Northwest Territories, not be allowed to erode the ecological integrity of the park.

The progress on Marine Protected Areas is even worse. While Canada has protected less than 1% of its marine areas, Australia has protected 7.5%.

Yet, Canadians do care. Polls reveal that 90 % of Canadians consider time spent in natural areas as children very important; 85 % participate regularly in nature-related activities; 98 % view nature as essential to human survival.

We are committed to reversing the disappointing recent trend of the federal government to devalue park protection, with firm and unwavering action to protect existing parks and expand our terrestrial and marine park systems. We must rapidly establish “no-take” marine parks as a last chance to save our vast tracts of critically-threatened and over-fished coastlines.

Green Party MPs will:

- Re-commit to the completion of the National Parks system that consists of a representative network of Canada’s terrestrial and marine ecosystems, setting a target date of 2020 with emphasis on:
 1. Fast-tracking the establishment of “no-take” marine protected areas: consultation with fisheries communities and sectors is essential, drawing on experience from New Zealand and elsewhere where “no-take” areas have actually improved the economically viable fisheries.
 2. Extending, in partnership with provinces, territories, and Aboriginal peoples, Canada’s network of land, freshwater and marine protected areas and linking them up with provincial and territorial protected areas wherever possible, and establishing compatible-use buffer zones around national parks for the maintenance of natural biological diversity and ecosystem health.
 3. Providing Parks Canada with the funding necessary to protect the ecological integrity of Canada’s National Parks.

- Establish a National Parks Completion Budget of \$500 million annually to meet the goal of completing our National Parks and Marine Protected Areas Systems by 2020.
- Implement the recommendations of conservation scientists for effective action to preserve:
 1. Critically threatened habitats.
 2. Keystone species⁴, endangered species, and species of commercial or cultural value, especially those of value to First Nations communities.
 3. Habitats specifically threatened by climate change.
 4. Continuous interconnected tracts of habitat for wide-range migrating species sufficient to maintain viable populations.
- Advocate the purchase of private land, where necessary, to help protect critical habitats, especially of endangered species.
- Increase monitoring and protection efforts, including an increase in the number of park rangers and guides with interpretation skills to educate Canadians and visitors on the vast beauty and value of our National Parks.
- Work with provincial and territorial governments to end all trophy hunting in Canada while supporting subsistence hunting by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians of wild animals that are not threatened or endangered.

3.4 Species at risk

Globally our wealth of species is being lost at an astounding rate. Canada's rich heritage of wildlife is disappearing. While Canada's Species at Risk Act (SARA), proclaimed in 2003, has some redeeming qualities, overall its flaws make it ineffective in protecting Canada's threatened species. It provides basic protection only for species on federal lands - about 5 % of the lands in Canada. It lets the federal cabinet rather than the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) scientists decide which species are on the "species at risk" list. Habitat protection and recovery plans are voluntary.

The legal listing of species at risk has become more political and less scientific each year. Cultus Lake sockeye salmon were not listed to avoid "significant socio-economic impacts on sockeye fishermen and coastal communities." Eight aquatic species recommended by COSEWIC were not listed by federal cabinet in 2006. Former Fisheries Minister Loyola Hearn said it was "to ensure that we don't negatively affect the fishing industry."

In the last few years, despite rhetoric about "safety nets", the federal government has refused to issue emergency orders to protect critical habitat on non-federal lands. Ottawa has looked the other way as the B.C. government has permitted logging in Northern spotted owl habitat, condemning the species, with only a few pairs left, to extinction in Canada.

The Greens know that the conservation of species diversity is essential part to a healthy environment. To conserve species we must strengthen Canada's SARA and make it an effective tool that actually protects endangered species and their habitats everywhere in Canada including all federal, provincial, territorial,

⁴ A keystone species is an ecological term that refers to a species that plays a critical role in maintaining an ecosystem.

First Nations and private lands. We envision an Act that includes powers to enforce prescribed measures to protect species at risk and stop acts of non-compliance. We believe the COSEWIC scientists should have the final say on the designation of threatened species and not have its recommendations subject to Cabinet approval, a condition that greatly weakens COSEWIC's power and ability to protect species at risk.

Green Party MPs will:

- Amend Canada's SARA to:
 1. Ensure that listing under this Act is based on scientific, and not political, processes. COSEWIC's determination will be the actual legal listing. Cabinet approval will be removed.
 2. Ensure that recovery-planning efforts identify and then appropriately manage, protect and/or restore the habitat that species need to recover, through consultative, collaborative efforts with stakeholders, land-owners, provinces, municipalities, and First Nations governments.
 3. Make it a criminal offence, made punishable as a *mens rea* offence, to kill a listed species, regardless of whether the offence occurred on federal or provincial land.
 4. Identify ecologically significant areas and establish a Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan for Canada, working with the provinces to establish and protect wildlife corridors through land use management plans at the regional and provincial level.

3.5 Toxic chemicals and health risks from radiation

It is shameful that Canada ranked nearly last amongst Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in our generation of pollution and nuclear and hazardous wastes. (The 30 OECD member countries represent approximately 60 % of the world's economy, 70 % of world trade and 20 % of the world's population.)

Canada also lagged behind in the effectiveness of regulations covering toxic and chemical waste.

The Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) is now in its legislated five-year review. Industry groups are lobbying the government to water down the term "toxic" in the Act. They are concerned about the "stigma" associated with the term when it is applied to materials they produce. However, "toxic" accurately describes substances that are potentially harmful to human health and the environment, and weakening the term sends a signal to the public and to government that taking action to protect Canadians' health and the environment is not urgent. It is therefore essential that the legal framework of "toxic" substances not be eroded. The definitions within the act must remain unchanged, although the subject heading could be expanded to "Toxic and other harmful substances."

Greens remain concerned that Canada's key legislation to protect human health and the environment from threats posed by human-generated substances does not include pesticides or radionuclides. Now is the time to remedy this gap and amend CEPA to cover the non-commercial aspects of pesticides, thus allowing the Pest Control Products Act to continue to regulate the registration and use of pesticide products, but allowing banning of dangerous substances and handling of disposal and spills to move into CEPA.

The historic tradition of secrecy surrounding the nuclear industry has kept emissions from nuclear power plants off CEPA's list. Levels of tritium in Ontario's water are high enough to be of concern, but they fall into a regulatory lacuna. Similarly, other harmful substances found in consumer products are not

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regulated by CEPA. While other laws such as the Hazardous Products Act (HPA) and the Food and Drugs Act (FDA) can sometimes be used to regulate such products, these laws are inadequate in addressing the human health and environmental risks. For example, the HPA bans lead in children's jewelry, but allows this proven toxic in a wide range of other products. The HPA and FDA also do not deal with substances that pose a threat to humans via their persistence in our environment, such as perfluorinated compounds and other substances that are persistent and bioaccumulative.

Despite having its objective of maintaining an "ecosystem-based approach," CEPA fails to provide specific protection for Canada's most significant and vulnerable ecosystems, in particular the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin, Georgia and Juan de Fuca Straits, and the Arctic. The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin is the world's largest freshwater ecosystem. It supports one third of Canada's population and generates one half of our economic activity. Nearly one half of Canada's air pollution is also generated within this region. Now the federal government is so lacking in precautionary judgment that it has approved shipping radioactive used parts of nuclear reactors through these waters for shipment to Europe. Juan de Fuca Strait on the west coast is home to an endangered population of killer whales whose bodies are so contaminated from bioaccumulation of toxins that they have to be classified as hazardous waste. Some of the pollutants generated in southern Canada end up in the high Arctic (through airborne contamination - see Section 3.1 Air Quality), causing irreparable harm to wildlife and poisoning the food system that many Inuit rely upon.

The Greens believe the onus should be on industry to show that the products they produce are safe, contrary to the current onus on government to demonstrate harm from these products. An industry onus is a key feature of the emerging REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals) system for regulating chemicals in the European Union (EU) that came into force on June 1, 2007. Europe is the largest chemicals market in the world. We believe that Canada must follow their lead. It is essential that the legal framework of "toxic" substances not be eroded in CEPA, but rather, be expanded. We believe CEPA must be amended to cover the non-commercial uses of pesticides, thus allowing the Pest Control Products Act to continue to regulate the registration and use of pesticide products, while banning of dangerous pesticide substances and handling of disposal and spills are dealt with by CEPA. We believe CEPA should be extended to control toxic radionuclides, pesticides and many other substances shown to be of significant risk to health.

Green Party MPs will:

- Amend the CEPA to:
 1. Cover non-commercial handling and disposal of pesticides and radionuclides.
 2. Cover regulation of all substances shown to be a significant risk to human health including those causing cancer, immuno-suppression, endocrine disruption, neuro-toxicity, birth defects and/or genetic mutations.
 3. Register and restrict the use of the toxic chemicals mentioned above, with the goal of first eliminating the exposure of vulnerable groups within society (pregnant women, the unborn, children, the sick, the poor, the elderly and Aboriginals) to them and ultimately eliminating their use altogether.
 4. Require a precautionary principle approach towards chemical management: instead of determining the safety or harm of a product after it is already in the marketplace, companies that make a chemical will be responsible for proving the safety of it before it can be used, as is done with pharmaceuticals.
 5. Add pollution prevention to the CEPA mandate.
- Establish a significant Toxic Chemical Tax (TCT) on harmful chemicals to make industry accountable for chemicals it produces and to prod industry to reduce and eliminate the production of toxic substances registered under the CEPA.
- End the production and use of the most dangerous toxic chemicals in Canada by 2015.

- End the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes in Canada by 2013.
- Establish a CEPA taskforce to focus on pollution reduction in the Great Lakes – Saint Lawrence Basin and the Juan de Fuca-Georgia Strait region.
- Create a large Clean Canada Fund to clean up toxic sites.
- Ban the importation of toxic waste and their incineration.
- Clean up all toxic waste sites by 2030, with a priority placed on those communities most at risk.
- Advocate for a ban of the use of nanomaterials in all food products and for mandatory clear labelling when these nanomaterials are used in all other products.
- Support government research into the possible harmful effects non-naturally occurring nanomaterials may have on health and the environment.
- Limit human exposure to extremely low frequency (ELF) magnetic fields and to radio frequency radiation (RFR) to meet or exceed German 2009 standards.

3.6 Environmental science support: Reverse the “brain drain” in federal science capacity

In the last two decades much has occurred to erode the scientific capacity of the federal civil service.

The deep cuts in budgets through the “program review” phase of the former Liberal Government happened to coincide with a widespread (or at least within the OECD) fad for “smaller government” and the injection of a managerial fetish in the civil service. Many experienced scientists took early retirement on very favourable terms. Managers from other departments, without any policy strength or scientific background, moved into key positions in departments such as Environment Canada and Fisheries and Oceans.

Many have decried the shift to a managerial culture, in which policy expertise is degraded in preference to some generic management experience. The professional union representing civil servants has also noted that the careerist ambitions of the new civil service culture do not serve the public interest. The previous esprit de corps and expertise within scientifically-grounded departments better served the public interest.

While Greens do not favour big government for its own sake, it is penny-wise and pound-foolish to allow government policy to be starved of solid scientific in-house expertise. The Green Party notes another economic reality of operating with a “leaner” civil service. Much work ends up being “out-sourced” at a higher cost than if the government had its own scientific strength.

The Greens believe that the federal government must signal to the civil service that it values and supports a strong scientific capacity for the Government of Canada. That includes regularly seeking scientific advice regarding all levels of environmentally-related decision making. We decry the shift to a managerial culture, in which policy expertise is degraded in preference to management experience.

Green Party MPs will:

- Direct the Clerk of the Privy Council to reform the civil service to elevate core competence over a managerial culture.
- Include \$15 million annually to the federal budget to be used for adding knowledgeable scientific staff to Environment Canada, Health Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans (\$5 million each) thereby increasing their competency.

- Re-establish the posts of Ambassador for the Environment and Sustainable Development, a position that was eliminated by the Conservatives in 2006, and of a Science Advisor to the Prime Minister.
- Ensure the independence of the Commissioner for the Environment and Sustainable Development, through a stand-alone piece of legislation allowing the Commissioner to report directly to the House of Commons.

3.7 Zero waste

Earlier generations grew up living by the aphorism “waste not, want not.” Our generation seems to embrace “shop till you drop.”

Landfills, formerly called garbage dumps, account for more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions than do mining, construction and domestic aviation combined. Most of these GHG emissions are in the form of methane gas, which is over 20 times more heat absorbing than carbon dioxide. Landfills also leach toxic chemicals into soil and water. There has to be a better way to deal with garbage.

The Green goal is “zero waste.” This means shifting from thinking of waste as a problem to considering waste as a resource. Canada’s failure to manage waste properly represents a huge loss of resources and revenue. Reusing and recycling wastes have been shown to generate 10 to 15 times more jobs than incineration or landfilling. We believe that strong incentives must be in place for industry and consumers to reduce waste to zero. Setting a goal of zero waste will provide direction and inspiration.

Green Party MPs will:

- Work in cooperation with provincial and municipal authorities to expand product responsibility programs where manufacturers are responsible for the entire lifespan of their products, including recycling at the end of usefulness.
- Provide assistance to municipalities (through the Waste and Waste Treatment Facilities Municipalities Superfund – see Section 1.14, Infrastructure and Communities) in carrying out major waste reduction activities including recycling and central composting facilities.
- Pass laws, such as those in Germany, requiring manufacturers to accept lifetime stewardship of all products, including packaging. Once goods are returned to the manufacturer, the materials are better designed to be re-usable and recoverable.
- Move to full reclamation of all electronic and hazardous materials by initiating a recycling deposit tax to be paid when purchasing goods.
- In cooperation with provincial and territorial governments, fund, implement and adopt an expedient timetable to achieve a national phase-out of the use of landfills for the disposal of unsorted waste.
- Work with provincial and territorial governments to develop and implement a national e-waste collection and processing strategy to remove electronic equipment from the general waste stream and eliminate the export of these toxic waste materials to other countries.
- Introduce a green labelling system for products that are biodegradable, reusable or recyclable, and for products that are primarily made from recycled materials.

3.8 Commercial seal hunt

The seal hunt is viewed by many people in Canada, and abroad, as an inhumane activity that is ecologically unsound and unsustainable. This is particularly true now that climate change has increased pup mortality in spring due to thin ice and/or a lack of ice.

The annual seal hunt is the largest killing of marine mammals anywhere on the planet. Its enormity threatens Canada's overseas reputation for little local value.

The Green Party does not support the current industrial, commercial seal hunt in Canada. We are not opposed to subsistence hunting by Aboriginal peoples and local communities. However, we consider seal hunting, like whaling, to be a threat to the marine ecosystem. The loss of ice due to climate change threatens seal populations and exacerbates what many believe is an already unsustainable level of hunting:

Green Party MPs will:

- End federal assistance to the commercial seal hunt and support an end to the seal hunt.
- Work with fishermen, fisheries unions and local communities to develop a fair federal buyout of sealing licenses.
- Work with local communities affected to implement training programs and other resources needed to enhance a sealing industry buyout.
- Work with other levels of government to find sustainable economic alternatives for sealers and their communities, and provide full compensation to sealers for lost income.

3.9 Commercial whale hunting

Since 1972 Canada has banned commercial whaling in Canadian waters. Originally a member of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), Canada disagreed with efforts in 1980 to declare a moratorium on commercial whaling. Canada argued that, in the absence of a clear and scientifically-justified recommendation for such action from the commission's scientific committee, conservation requirements could be met under the commission's management procedure, which provides for selective moratoria. Canada's position on the moratorium issue earned a great deal of criticism from anti-whaling groups around the world. Canada withdrew its IWC membership in 1982 in protest over this issue. In 1986 the IWC adopted a moratorium on commercial whaling. Although Canada is no longer a member of the IWC, Canada continues to ban commercial whaling in its waters.

The Green Party believes that Canada should take a more active role in opposing whaling internationally

Green Party MPs will:

- Actively work towards instituting a complete worldwide ban on commercial whaling including the so called 'research whaling' currently carried out by Japanese whalers and so-called "traditional whaling" done by Norway..
- Oppose all hunting of bowhead whales, including Canadian Aboriginal subsistence hunting, due to the critically endangered state of this species.

3.10 Animal welfare

While everyone is against cruelty to animals, factory farming has been allowed to create systematic and routine cruelty to livestock production. Chickens are packed tightly in cages their whole lives, cattle crowd in feedlots, and pigs are kept indoors in cages on slatted metal floors all their lives. Most people

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believe that animals, including domesticated animals, have the right to be treated humanely. The current federal laws protect animals from cruelty under the Criminal Code, but animals fall into the property section. Thus, cruelty to animal offences are among the very few offences that can only be convicted as summary convictions (minor offences, with limited penalties). As well, the Criminal Code uses the term ‘willful intent’, making it very hard to prove a person has violated the code.

We believe that animals should be treated humanely and with respect at all times. Farming practices must allow animals to live without undue stress and in conditions where they are able to exercise normal behaviours. Many animals that live in intensive farming systems show signs of stress such as stereotypes (repetitive behaviours with no purpose) and aggression. Some animals, such as chicken breeder broilers and sows (mothers of pigs used for meat), are kept in a state of starvation in order to keep them at healthy weight, despite their bred-in genetic predisposition to gain weight. Mortalities, disease and injuries from long transport are a common occurrence, since abattoirs are often long distances from farms.

Green Party MPs will:

- Adopt animal welfare legislation to prevent inhumane treatment of farm animals including intensive factory farming methods. The Act will set minimum standards of treatment and have a timetable for the phase-out of intensive factory farming and other inhumane animal husbandry practices. It will set standards for distances live animals can be transported, conditions of animals in slaughterhouses, auctions, and entertainment, and it will prohibit trade in exotic animals.
- Update Canada’s criminal code as it pertains to animal protection, moving crimes against animals from the property section, and recognizing animals as sentient beings.
- Invest resources in the development and training of police officers to deal with cruelty cases.
- Establish a Parliamentary Committee on Animal Welfare tasked with examining legislation affecting animal concerns and dealing with the animal welfare community, creating a setting in parliament where animal welfare issues can be properly researched and debated and recommendations made as required.
- Work to improve conditions for animals during transport.

- Sponsor legislation that:
 1. Makes the acts of cruelty to animals an offence under the criminal code instead of a property offence.
 2. Clearly defines an animal as 'a vertebrate other than a human being'.
 3. Changes the term 'willful neglect' of animals used in the current legislation to simply 'neglect' with the term 'neglect' being defined as 'departing markedly from the standard of care that a reasonable person would use' so as to make convictions under the Act more achievable.
 4. Makes it an offence to kill any animal without a lawful reason.
 5. Makes it an offence to train an animal to fight and receive money for animal fighting and training, and prohibit all spectacles, animal shows and presentations that involve injuring, baiting, fighting, intimidation, harassment, causing fear and/or other negative actions that are potentially harmful to the animals involved; including bullfights, cock fights, and dog fights.
 6. Bans the use of animals as experimental objects in military research and cosmetic testing.
 7. Bans importing animals for zoos, except where importing will assist the overall conservation of that species.
 8. Prohibits the use of wild animals in circuses, novelty acts, travelling shows and other temporary spectacles.
 9. Requires all zoos to be licensed, to operate at a professional standard, be subject to strict animal welfare and public safety regulations, and subject to regular reviews and inspections.
 10. Prohibits importing marine mammals for public display in zoos, marine parks and aquariums.
 11. Prohibits the captive breeding of animals in zoos and marine parks, except for verifiable conservation purposes.
 12. Establishes strict animal welfare and public safety regulations for the use of wild animals in film and television productions.
 13. Establishes retirement/sanctuary facilities for wild animals seized by federal, provincial and municipal law enforcement agencies.
 14. Strives for the reduction and ultimate replacement of animal use for research, testing, and educational purposes.
 15. Makes the use of animals for research, testing and educational purposes unlawful where a non-animal method or approach is reasonably or practicably available (consistent with EU Directive 86/609).
 16. Establishes a coordinated approach to identifying alternatives to replace or reduce the use of animals for testing and research, and commits resources to developing and validating non-animal test methods in coordination with parallel efforts elsewhere.
 17. Ensures the automatic regulatory acceptance of every non-animal test method deemed scientifically valid by the European Centre for the Validation of Alternative Methods (ECVAM) and the automatic prohibition of the animal-based test method it replaces.
 18. Ensures that all new or revised animal and non-animal toxicity test methods are scientifically validated before their use is required, recommended or encouraged by regulatory authorities.
 19. Enhances the current system of oversight consisting of voluntary guidelines and peer review administered by the Canadian Council on Animal Care, a federally regulated licensing program, whereby prospective animal users must apply to a federal Animal & Alternatives Research Review Board, which will be responsible for:
 - Evaluating the costs and benefits of the proposed research.
 - Rigorously assessing the availability of non-animal methods or approaches.

- Granting or denying a project license.
 - Where a license is granted, monitoring compliance with animal care standards; and improving government and industry accountability and public access to information regarding the use of animals for research.
20. Outlaws the mandatory surrender of dogs and cats from municipal pounds and animal shelters (known as “pound seizure”) for research use.
 21. Bans all use of non-human primates for genetic manipulation and cloning, invasive psychological and behavioural research, substance abuse research, and warfare research.
 22. Bans the use of animals to assess the safety of personal care and household cleaning products, as defined by the Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics; animal-based tests for skin corrosion, skin irritation, skin absorption, phototoxicity, pyrogenicity, genetic toxicity to be replaced by scientifically-validated non-animal methods.
 23. Bans “lethal dose” toxicity studies on vertebrates.
 24. Prohibits any industry involving single organ trade.
 25. Increases monitoring and enforcement budgets.
 26. Includes provisions to facilitate promotion of alternatives to use of wild animal ingredients by traditional medicine practitioners.

3.11 Arctic strategy

The Canadian Arctic is a stunningly beautiful environment. It has been the home of Inuit and northern First Nations peoples since time immemorial. And this highly sensitive region is now on the front line of climate change.

Reports from scientists and elders indicate that the Arctic will be free of summer sea ice within the next several years. This is a profound change that will impact not only the Arctic, but the entire planet. What happens in the Arctic, doesn't stay in the Arctic.

The North is already experiencing high levels of development pressure from oil, gas and mining; these are expected to increase as the ice melts, with additional pressures arising from commercial shipping, fishing, and tourism. One can argue whether the development has more positive or negative effects, but there is no doubt that the impacts threaten to irreversibly change the northern environment and the unique way of life enjoyed by indigenous and northern peoples.

In recent years, we have also experienced pressure on our Arctic sovereignty. The offshore boundary between the Yukon and Alaska remains in dispute. Several nations claim that the Northwest Passage through our Arctic archipelago is an international waterway.

While the Arctic continues to melt, the United States Geological Survey has released a detailed study estimating that the Arctic holds approximately one-quarter of the world's oil and gas reserves. These factors have effectively created a land rush by those nations wanting to lay claim to parts of the Arctic. The North has now become politically significant on a global scale.

Forty % of Canada's land mass and much of its identity lies in the North. Rapid change is now inevitable. And it is a dark irony that the global use of oil and gas is melting out the Arctic, which in turn is providing access to the last great storehouse of oil and gas. We need to move quickly beyond the issue of sovereignty for its own sake, and chart a path forward that will sustain us through and beyond the challenges ahead.

The Green Party is committed to working with Northerners as the North realizes its true potential as a healthy and prosperous region within a strong and sovereign Canada. Decision making and action must build on the northern tradition of respect for the land and on the principles of responsible and sustainable development. And it is time we honour the intent of our Land Claims Agreements (see Section 4.9.5 on Aboriginal policy).

There is a clear rationale for Canada to claim as much of the sub-sea Arctic territory as possible. However, it is critical, at the same time, for the Canadian government (in close partnership with northern peoples) to establish a vision for how the Arctic will develop and how it will be protected. This vision should build upon the federal government's Northern Strategy in close collaboration with the three northern territories. Through the Arctic Council, we should seek to extend this vision throughout the Circumpolar North.

Green Party MPs will:

- Recognize and respect that our Arctic sovereignty is already established through the presence of Canadians in the North, including the continuous use and occupation of Arctic lands and waters by indigenous peoples.
- Reinforce Canada's Arctic sovereignty through community infrastructure development, regional sustainability projects, northern research, northern culture, and other regional socio-economic activities rather than through military presence.
- Honour the spirit and intent of Land Claims Agreements, and uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Expand funding for Arctic research, including support for and recognition of traditional knowledge, particularly critical in light of the increasing climate change threat.
- Improve and increase monitoring of indigenous food (e.g. caribou, salmon, etc.) to ensure Inuit and First Nations, particularly pregnant women and nursing mothers, are not being over-exposed to persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals that build up through the global food chain and pool at high levels in the Arctic. Work to develop collaborative community based education programs to promote the consumption of food with less toxicity.
- Invest in renewable local energy sources to avoid the dependency on very expensive and polluting imported diesel.
- Support training and equipping the Canadian Rangers, many of whom are Inuit and First Nations people who live in the North and are experienced survival experts on land and sea, to comprise the backbone of emergency support throughout the Arctic.
- Commission a major class of icebreaker, capable of rescue work with any likely depth of ice.
- Develop a comprehensive pan-Arctic waste management strategy that addresses issues like dumping of wastes into water and open dump burning on land, and that integrates community, mining, fishing, tourism, shipping and military waste management strategies.
- Establish, with the partnership of indigenous peoples, protected areas - terrestrial, marine, and ice - in an ecologically- representative network in the three northern Territories.
- Restore the post of Ambassador to the Circumpolar North.
- Extend Canada's sovereignty of Arctic sub-sea resources through a submission to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- Engage Canadians in an open discussion to create a development/protection plan for any new sub-sea territory and include in that discussion northern voices.
- Advocate for the Arctic Council to be the primary forum for the diplomatic resolution of Arctic territorial disputes and the negotiation of multilateral treaties, thus allowing for the formal participation of territorial and indigenous leaders.

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- Seek a constructive multilateral Arctic maritime treaty, negotiated through the Arctic Council, to regulate all maritime activity in the Arctic, with the exception of traditional Aboriginal activity, such that the health and well-being of the Arctic ecosystem and its northern inhabitants are safeguarded.
- Promote the creation of an internationally- recognized Arctic Protected Zone where no mineral exploration will be permitted by any country, similar to the internationally- recognized Antarctic Protected Area.

3.12 Measuring and protecting Canada's natural accounts

The Greens support extending Canada's existing system of national accounts to include measures of annual changes in the depletion of and addition to Canada's principal biological resources. Wild fish, natural forests and productive agricultural soils represent some of the real wealth of a nation. It is felt that as depletion or addition to fish, trees and soils takes place, these should be reflected in measures of Canada's worth.

A serious analysis must be made of the economic costs/values/benefits of key ecological functions. This will allow better public policies and more comprehensive statements about the true economic value of biodiversity as a whole.

Purely economic measurements – such as GDP – ignore key factors underpinning well-being. The Green Party believes that the application of an evaluation method that seeks to account for key social, environmental, and long-term economic features in different parts of the country and local communities could provide new insights and rationales for the conservation of local and regional biodiversity. These tools stand to play a key role in making citizens aware of the attributes of strong biodiversity, and help achieve the intent of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Greens will continue to support 'quality of life' evaluation methods such as the Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI) as a means to improve quality of life and protect biodiversity. The Green Party will also support research into the economics of protecting biodiversity and the development of fiscal tools to limit the negative impact of human activity on the Ecosphere. Eliminating capital gains on donations of ecologically significant land and more appropriate land-use taxes are key measures to limit demand-side pressures on biodiversity (see Part 1: The Green Economy).

PART 4: PEOPLE

Once we envision the society we want, we clearly see its outlines.

Vibrant communities are places where, as Jane Jacobs described, people know their neighbours, streets are safe and friendly, and volunteering for the public good is common, leading to feelings of affiliation, belonging, and empowerment.

Without intending to do so, government policy, by treating such goals as peripheral to economic growth, has allowed feelings of alienation, hostility, and selfishness to crowd out shared values of decades ago.

As Martin Luther King Jr. noted, you cannot legislate morality. Nevertheless, when the human scale of government policy is ignored, when the tax system, employment strategies, and labour policies all mitigate towards less leisure and family time, more time in long commutes, and an increasingly “time-stressed” population, as measured by Statistics Canada, government policy should adjust its goals to re-balance and protect these fundamental pillars of our civilization – family and community.

In the last few years, quality of life, as measured in our ability to get ahead and enjoy more leisure time, has declined for 90 % of Canadians. Homelessness, and mental health and drug addiction problems, have increased. The cost of post-secondary education and training has sky-rocketed. The gap between rich and poor in Canada has widened. Women, on average, still earn far less than men. The middle class is struggling. Given the wealth and resources of our country, this is tragic.

4.1 Family-focused program

Increasingly, national and international studies document significant stress on Canadian children and their parents.⁵ While it is true that an unacceptably large number of Canadian families live in poverty, many more are suffering from “time poverty.” Statistics Canada tracks time stress of Canadians and reports a steady increase in Canadians who report not having enough time in their lives to accomplish all required tasks. Longer commutes rob Canadians of time at home. Longer working hours rob community members of time for volunteer activities. Poorly planned transit and the lack of convenient workplace child care spaces rob parents of time with their kids.

There is a real cost to society as citizens have less and less time to contribute to community and school activities. Not surprisingly, Statistics Canada also reports a steady decline in volunteer hours donated by Canadians. Lack of time to contribute to community also leads to feelings of loss and alienation. On the other hand, time spent in effort to better our society leads to positive feelings of affiliation (belonging) and of empowerment (knowing one’s actions make a difference.)

Greens will address this multi-layered problem in many policies: fiscal, labour and social programs.

⁵ In 2007, UNICEF recently ranked Canada 12th out of 24 in its index of child well-being in industrialized countries, noting children in the survey do not have enough time with parents. Vanier Institute of the Family noted a lack of family and community cohesion in their findings of increasingly aggressive and anti-social youth behaviour.

The tax policy of a Green Government will increase the opportunity for Canadians to spend more time with family. More and more adults with full-time employment outside the home are stressed and stretched to care for elderly parents, children, partners or spouses with debilitating illness, and any family members with disabilities. Families deserve the option of having one partner work from home, maintaining a family garden, pursuing a career in the arts where steady paid work is hard to secure, or for any number of reasons.

The Greens are committed to nurturing families and communities through integrated policies that focus on the welfare of the child, starting with prenatal nutrition all the way to affordable housing and accessible post-secondary education. We believe we must stop designing our communities around the car and start designing them around families and children. There are no easy solutions. We have to address the multi-layered problems facing families through new, innovative fiscal, labour, and social policies.

Green Party MPs will:

- Urge reforms to our tax and labour policies in ways that will increase the opportunity for Canadians to spend more time with family.
- Promote an integrated program of supports, tax cuts, and awareness-raising emphasizing that time spent with children and/or in the community is essential for the continuation of our society.

4.2 Relief for the middle class

A healthy democracy requires a large, strong, healthy middle class. The well-being of Canada's middle class is threatened as the gap between the rich and the poor widens and middle class families find it harder to meet all their needs, in terms of both money and time.

We believe one way to provide relief for Canada's middle class is through revamping our tax system to enable income splitting within families, and thus a joint calculation of income that will reduce taxes. Approximately 18.7 million Canadians live in families with two or more income earners. Households where one partner is in a higher tax bracket than the other will end up paying less tax when they are allowed to split income on their tax returns. So far the government has only allowed the splitting of pension income, not total income, between senior couples and those caring for a child with a disability. The public groundswell of support for allowing income splitting of all incomes by all couples is growing.

While income splitting does not benefit low-income families or families where income earners earn about the same amount, failure to solve all problems through one measure is not a good reason to fail to solve many problems. Those not helped by the income-splitting move will be helped through targeted programs to assist low-income families.

A major misconception about this measure is that it will increase pressure on women to stay at home to raise their children. Greens believe women's place in the workforce is now well-entrenched. Women's rights to make choices about "time-out" in their careers or to stay in the workplace with children must be respected. Income splitting creates more choice. It will allow one spouse the option to take care of an ill or infirm parent or family member, or to take a lower paying job in charitable or NGO work. It will allow one spouse to work from home in growing a garden, in developing artistic talents, in writing for what is often perilously low income. The argument that income splitting will be a socially regressive measure is an important consideration and can be met with programs to ensure women who wish to maintain an unbroken career path after having children, or who wish to return to the workforce after the early years at home, are supported in doing so. Because parents should be able to choose to stay at home with young

children, or equally, be supported through high-quality child care if they wish to remain in the workforce, we advocate a range of programs. There is no cookie-cutter, one size fits all, solution for Canadian families. What matters is that programs support choice and the well-being of that which is most precious – our families and children.

Income splitting, with an economic “hit” estimated to be from \$3 to 5 billion, will be made possible through revenues from taxing pollution.

Green Party MPs will:

- Modify the Income Tax Act to enable income splitting, which offers tax benefits particularly to middle income couples where there is a significant differential in the level of income between partners.
- Reduce income taxes through revenue neutral tax shifting made possible through the carbon tax.

4.3 Child care

Canadian families need access to affordable, high-quality child care as an aspect of early childhood education. There are also clear benefits to maximizing time together for parents with young children. Canadians want a program with flexibility. A cheque for \$100/month does not begin to address these needs.

The Greens are committed to a high-quality federally-funded child care program in Canada, accessible to any family that wants to place children into early childhood education. Workplace child care has been shown to improve productivity, decrease employee absenteeism, ensure quality care for children (because parents can “drop in” at any time to see their young children), and permits longer breast-feeding of infants. Work-place child care spaces create other benefits, recognizing the emerging literature that children benefit enormously from time with their mothers, especially when very young.

The beneficent spiral of providing workplace child care also includes making it easier for many working Canadians to use mass transit. When parents and children travel to the same destination, the trip can often be made in less time on public transit, enabling parents to spend more time with children.

Green Party MPs will:

- Restore and revamp the 2005 agreement reached between the federal government, provinces and territories to achieve a universal access child care program in Canada.
- Create a national Children’s Commissioner, as recommended by UNICEF, to ensure children’s best interests are considered in policy development and that services across the country are better coordinated.
- Specifically ensure that Canada’s universal child care program provides workplace child care spaces wherever possible.
- Tax shift to make advertising directed at children ineligible for corporate tax write-offs.
- Accelerate the creation of workplace child care spaces through a direct tax credit to employers (or groups of employers in small businesses) of \$1500 tax credit/child per year.
- Value the decisions of parents who choose to stay home with children.
- Promote and facilitate access to the Roots of Empathy Program, an effective, award-winning program developed by a non-profit educational organization, to all Canadian children at some point in their elementary school years.

4.4 Seniors

Canada is an aging society. Baby boomers are now swelling the ranks of the senior population that is growing in both number and as a proportion of Canada's total population. Canada's seniors are also a diverse population, with varying levels of activity and health, living in urban, rural, and First Nations communities. The majority of these older Canadians are women.

It is true that seniors use a disproportionate amount of health care dollars. Life expectancy is increasing and chronic diseases increase with age. Within 25 years, the number of people living with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia could reach 1.3 million and will have the highest economic, social and health costs of all diseases in Canada. Although many anticipate that this will precipitate a crisis for health care and social services, the Green challenge and opportunity is to provide our seniors with independence, well-being and dignity.

Seniors have a wealth of experience and have contributed immeasurably to the development of the nation we currently celebrate. Seniors are a resource who can contribute to the economic and social life of their communities and country.

Older Canadians are also a vital and vibrant population, embracing healthy life-style choices and an active retirement. Many social policies impact the ability of aging boomers to stay active. Access to preventative and complimentary medicine (see Health care section); access to convenient mass transit as driving may be limited (see climate policy); safe communities (see restorative justice), secure pensions and fairer taxes are all significant Green party policies with real benefits for older Canadians.

Recent debates about pension reform have pitted the Harper government, with its refusal to enhance CPP, against many premiers and Opposition parties. Pension reforms must be built upon the system that will best create decent pensions that will keep the elderly out of poverty, require minimum additional contributions and have low administrative and investment costs.

The only system that is capable of meeting these goals is the CPP - a proven system that is the envy of many countries. Its systems can be modified to offer enhanced benefits. Everyone is familiar with the CPP, which is in sound financial health with the latest actuarial report noting that it is sound for at least the next 70 years.

Approximately 35% of older citizens are still dependent upon Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) to keep them out of poverty. This is partly because current the CPP objective of just replacing 25% of the average industrial wage is too low. A 50% income replacement ratio would dramatically reduce the reliance on GIS to keep the elderly out of poverty and reduce the cost of GIS to the federal government by billions annually

The Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE) should be raised to at least \$90,000 and consideration given to raising it to the full ITA limit for Registered Pension Plans (RPP) of (\$122,222 in 2009) pending an evaluation/review in a decade.

Subject to an actuarial evaluation, it is expected that these benefit could be achieved with a phased in increase of CPP contribution rates although not through increased contributions by employers or deductions from employee wages. Some of the increase could would be covered by redirected reductions in workplace pensions for those with workplace pensions. Redirected GIS savings could be used to offset some of the required contribution increase.

An honest evaluation of the effectiveness of current tax policy will illustrate how inefficient it is for most retirement savings. Net federal RPP's tax expenditures (concessions) were worth \$17.6 and \$11.3 billion in 2007 and 2009. RRSP's cost \$12.1 and \$8.5 billion in the same years. The loss of provincial revenues adds another 35-40%.

Defined Benefit (DB) plans are much more efficient than Defined Contribution (DC) plans in that they produce significantly higher pensions for the same contributions, yet DC plans get the same tax support.

RRSP's are terribly tax inefficient in that for the \$8.5 - \$12.1 billion in annual net tax expenditures (around 30% of total contributions), the median value of RRSP assets by Canadians under age 65 is a woeful \$40,000 and those over 65 have less than \$55,000 – not enough to rely on to supplement to one's pension, especially at today's annuity rates. Only 25% of working Canadians contribute to RRSP's, only 6% with incomes under \$20,000. Prorating tax expenditures to the value of projected pension would bring fairness and equity back into the system.

Phasing in the doubling the target income replacement rate to 50% and the doubling the YMPE over the next 47 years is the most efficient way to ensure that future retirees will be able to retire with dignity without intergenerational subsidies.

Green Party policies will create age-friendly communities, where active living and well-being are promoted, where seniors have financial security, and where housing and transportation needs are met. In accordance with a Canadian Senate report in April 2009, the Green Party recognizes the need for improved support for mental health, and palliative care, and the need to combat ageism, abuse and neglect.

Long-term care should not be the only housing and care choice. In a Balance of Care model, more care can be provided in a cost-effective manner by home and community support services.

We believe that the government must take the lead in educating the public about end of life issues, including the limits to artificial life support systems, surgical operations and chemical therapies to extend life and postpone the inevitable transition from life.

Green Party MPs will:

- Review workplace policies to end mandatory retirement and provide for flexible retirement benefits for those seniors who want to continue working.
- Review federal and provincial laws regulating the administration of pension plans, laws which now allow failure of pension trusts, and the loss of pension benefits which workers have earned, with the view to enacting legislation to protect the pension benefits and recommend that the provincial governments prohibit any business from taking possession of a pension trust fund which it administers, or the earnings thereof.
- Develop, in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, a set of national home care objectives in a National Home Care Policy, that incorporates and improves upon existing policies affecting eldercare, including but not restricted to ensuring couples needing support and care can continue to live together, economic allowances (such as tax rebates), living choices, transportation, and respite care.
- Require that all corporate pension plans be audited to ensure that they are adequately funded and properly managed and set a policy directive to take corrective action when they are not.
- Work to enhance CPP by phasing in the doubling of the target income replacement rate from 25% to 50% of income received during working years.

- Ensure all seniors who qualify are made aware of available federal income supplements and instructed on how to apply for them.
- Review, in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, the current social and legal policies to ensure that citizens and law enforcement officials recognize elder abuse, prevent it where possible, and proceed with appropriate charges and consequences when elder abuse has occurred.
- Help develop national guidelines for care of the frail elderly who have special needs and require care by geriatric specialists.
- Establish and fund a special program to provide grants to non-profit societies setting up palliative care hospices.
- Guarantee the right to draw up a “living will” that gives the power to limit or refuse medical intervention and treatment so the person has the choice of dying with dignity.

4.5 A fair deal for youth

A Nation-wide Employment and Education Initiative For Youth 18 -25.

Economic recessions - especially severe ones like the recession of 2009 -are especially challenging for youth at the beginning of their work careers or in post-secondary studies. They are vulnerable to economic and social dislocation because they lack the skills to compete strongly for scarce new jobs and yet cannot gain these skills without a job. They are in a Catch-22. That is why their unemployment and underemployment numbers often rise the fastest and ultimately go the highest among all demographic groups during economic downturns. To compound their predicament, they often have difficulty paying for rapidly rising post-secondary education tuition because they cannot save up at least some money from summer jobs or find part-time work during the academic year.

The long-term economic and social implications of a growing group of economically disconnected and socially alienated youth is very serious and very costly - in Europe they are called the "NEET" group (Not in Employment, Education or Training). Canada is headed in a similar direction if the economic recovery is slow - as many are now predicting. We absolutely need to be decisive - and not reactive in three or four years - in addressing this emerging youth unemployment/under-employment and education affordability situation while the cost of intervention is in relative terms still low.

Green Party MPs will:

- Develop a Youth Community and Environment Service Corps that will provide federal minimum wage employment for 40,000 youth aged 18 - 25 every year for four years for a total of 160,000 youth positions. At the successful completion of each year-long program, there will be a \$4,000 tuition credit awarded to each participant that can be applied to further education and training. Youth Service teams will vary in size depending on the projects undertaken, and will be given opportunities for career counseling and employment skills training during the course of the program.
- Ensure Youth Community and Environmental Service Corps projects are developed in partnership with municipalities and based on local priorities. They can include numerous measures to minimize damage and injury from future climate change impacts, many different types of environmental protection & rehabilitation work, specially-focused teams that provide social stimulation to institutionalized elderly through arts and music, assistance to low income households for energy efficiency upgrades, recreation programs for children at risk, capacity building for local food systems, etc.

This initiative will employ 160,000 youth over its 4-year life and is budgeted at \$1.25 billion dollars a year for a combined total of \$5 billion.

4.6 Healthier people – healthier health care

Governments keep telling Canadians how they are going to “fix” the health care system. Yet many problems are actually getting worse, including longer wait-lists for diagnosis and surgery, over-crowded emergency rooms, and increasing shortages of family doctors.

The state of our health is getting worse, too. One in five Canadian children have asthma. Almost half of us face cancer at some time in our lives. There is an epidemic of obesity in adults and children. Close to one million Canadians have been diagnosed with Multiple Chemical Sensitivities. Skyrocketing pharmacare costs have now eclipsed all other health care expenditures.

Throwing more money to the provinces, as the federal government has been doing in the last two governments, is not achieving concrete results. The 2004 First Ministers Health Accord committed \$41 billion to health care system improvements, including \$5.5 billion over 10 years to reduce wait times. Benchmarks were established in December 2005 in five key health care areas that have been prone to longer waiting times.

Experts tell us that spending more money does not necessarily produce better results. Economies of scale can be achieved through creating centralized wait lists, moving from a paper system to electronic technology to share information, addressing the staffing shortage and in some cases, the facility and equipment shortages. These steps can help in reducing wait times, but the truth is that Canada does not have enough doctors, nurses, radiologists and other health care providers. Short-sighted, government cut back on the training of doctors in the 1990s and failed to help fast-track the certification of foreign-trained doctors and nurses. Now Canada ranks among the lowest of 30 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in the ratio of doctors and acute care beds per thousand people. In some parts of Canada, 60 % of people have no family doctor. It is a matter of training more doctors and ensuring better allocation of doctors – more family doctors, fewer specialists, and channeling more doctors into working in rural areas.

We have also focused on treating acute health problems after they arise, and failed to place sufficient priority on preventing illness in the first place. We have also failed to provide adequate services for mental health, especially for the young. Services to assist young people and others with addiction issues are also woefully inadequate.

Greens subscribe to the World Health Organization’s definition of health as “a complete state of physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Our present health care system addresses only one dimension – the treatment of disease and/or trauma by qualified professionals in publicly-funded medical facilities.

We believe we can solve health care problems, including excessive wait times for surgeries, within our public health care system, as is being done successfully in Alberta with that province’s hip and knee replacement program, and as is being done in many parts of Europe.

The Greens fully support the Canada Health Act (CHA) and all of its principles. We oppose any level of privatized, for-profit health care. The five criteria of the CHA guiding the provincial public health insurance plans, which we believe to be non-negotiable, are:

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1. Public Administration: The public health insurance plan must be managed in a public, not-for-profit fashion.
2. Comprehensiveness: All residents must be covered for “medically necessary” health services.
3. Universality: All residents must be covered by the public insurance plan on uniform terms and conditions.
4. Portability: All residents must be covered by their public plan, wherever they are treated in Canada.
5. Accessibility: All residents must have access to insured health care services on uniform terms and conditions without direct or indirect financial charges, or discrimination based on age, health status or financial circumstances.

The threat of a NAFTA challenge from the American for-profit health care industry cannot be over-estimated. Allowing for-profit health care would be the “thin end of the wedge” that jeopardizes our entire health system. Based on the rules for “national treatment,” if Canada allows increasing numbers of for-profit facilities, we run the risk of losing our entire universal single payer system in a NAFTA challenge. We cannot take that risk. Fixing our health care system means protecting the core elements of universal single-payer health care.

We need to ensure that every Canadian has a family doctor. We should embrace the vision of “Patient-Centred Primary Care” as developed by the College of Family Physicians of Canada. The health care team, centred on the patient, includes a large number of trained professionals. We can do more to make efficient use of nurse-practitioners, to ensure nurses are well supported with other workers performing cleaning and other essential services. We need more health care professionals and we need more beds to reduce the wait times. We also need adequate funding to ensure that the support staff of cleaners is not compromised. The spread of infection within hospitals has worsened as janitorial staff have been privatized with lower wages and cut back.

In order to keep health care spending from continuing to skyrocket we must find a way to control the cost of drugs. Currently, 20% of our health care budget is spent on pharmaceuticals – and this is the area of health care in which costs are rising most quickly.

Pharmaceutical use must be more rigorously assessed on an evidence-based approach. Used as directed, it is estimated that prescription drug use leads to 150,000 deaths every year in North America. Health Canada has not performed adequately in assessing risks. Canada still lacks any requirement for mandatory reporting of side-effects from prescribed drugs. Far too often, conflict of interest in the relationship between those who advise government agencies, and even physicians who accept trips and promotions from the pharmaceutical industry can influence decisions. There are two and a half drug sales representatives for every physician in Canada.

Getting a handle on the use of prescription drugs can both save lives and cut costs.

The best way to accomplish both life-saving and cost-cutting goals is through a universal pharmacare program, a bulk drug purchasing agency, and make new drug patent protection times shorter. This national agency would follow the principles of the gold-standard for evidence based assessment of the risks and benefits of pharmaceuticals – the Therapeutics Initiative at University of British Columbia. It is critical that no conflict of interest corrupt the drug assessment process. Drugs showing a greater harmful than beneficial effect will not be part of a national Pharmacare programme. The Therapeutic Initiative approach identified Vioxx as such a drug, when Health Canada missed the risks. It is estimated that the TI assessment, and the willingness of the British Columbia Health Department to accept that advice, saved 500 lives in BC. Advice to physicians from TI saved the provincial health care system

approximately \$700 million/year. These kinds of savings – in lives and health care costs – must be pursued across Canada.

By bulk buying prescription drugs, based on a strong evidence-based assessment, costs will come down for the provincial delivery of health care.

As well, we used to have a successful generic drug market in Canada, but changes to the patent laws have almost wiped it out. As patents for a number of commonly prescribed drugs are set to expire in the near future, this presents a great opportunity for the government to step in and provide less expensive generic drugs. The Green Party accepts the principle advocated by the Canadian Diabetes Association that no Canadian should spend more than 3% of his or her total after tax earnings on necessary prescribed medications and other treatments.

Greens understand that health is about more than “health care.” We are in the midst of a cancer epidemic, and no one is willing to speak of it out loud. Hundreds of chemicals used in our everyday life carry risks of increased cancer, infertility, learning disabilities and other intellectual impairment, and damage to the immune system. There are less-toxic substitutes for these products, but industry lobbies to maintain their registration and legal use drown out the voices of concerned health professionals and families concerned about health.

As noted above in the toxics section, the Green Party of Canada will act to remove from use those chemicals known to have a significant risk of human cancer, immunosuppression, endocrine disruption, neurotoxicity and/or mutagenicity. The substances will be regulated within CEPA to restrict use and registration with the goal of reducing and/or eliminating exposure to vulnerable groups within society (pregnant women, the unborn, children, the sick, the poor and the elderly). In addition, emissions of these substances will be subject to a Toxic Tax, offset by reductions elsewhere in the tax system.

We will clean-up toxic waste sites over a multi-year period, with a priority on those communities most at risk. The Green Party of Canada will not rely on “risk management.” A Green government will operate to reduce and manage hazard, not delaying action based on discredited modeling designed to protect chemicals, not people.

Green Party MPs will:

ELIMINATE TWO-TIER HEALTH CARE

- Identify and measure the extent of two-tier health care in Canada and strive for the elimination of two-tier health care as quickly as economically possible.
- Extend the national Health Accord.
- Use the full force of federal spending power under the Canada Health Act to oppose any steps that open the way to further two-tier health care in Canada.

IMPROVE OUR EXISTING ACUTE CARE SYSTEM

- Address the cost crisis that produces long waitlists by providing more money to hire staff to open currently closed beds, fully utilize existing operating rooms in hospitals and purchase new diagnostic equipment.
- Provide funds immediately to begin training more doctors and nurses.
- Work with the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) to immediately establish qualification standards and on-the-job mentorship programs to fast-track certification of foreign trained health care professionals.

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- Provide student loan forgiveness incentives for graduating doctors, nurses, paramedics and other health care professionals who agree to staff rural facilities and family practice clinics where recruitment is currently a problem.
- Provide funds to expand provincial health insurance to cover proven alternative therapies that are less expensive and invasive such as chiropractic, massage, acupuncture.
- Improve access to midwifery services across Canada.
 - Focus resources on recovery beds to move patients to community-centred, lower cost recovery and post-op beds, relying on a decreased patient to nurse ratio, freeing up beds for those needing surgeries.

IMPROVE OUR EXISTING CHRONIC CARE SYSTEM

- Enshrine a policy that seniors' care must be provided in the communities where they or their families live.
- Expand home support and home care programs and assisted-living services to support people with chronic care needs, including the many seniors who wish to stay in their own homes and communities.
- Transfer funds to provinces to build and open more long-term care beds.
- Educate Canadians about end-of-life issues; increase funding for palliative care hospices in hospitals and our communities; enact "living-will" legislation that guarantees people the right to limit or refuse medical intervention and treatment so people can make the choice of dying with dignity (see Section 4.4 Seniors).

REDUCE THE COSTS OF PHARMACARE

- Advocate for immediate action on the 2004 Standing Committee on Health recommendation that Health Canada enforce the current prohibition of all industry-sponsored advertisements on prescription drugs to the public to help reduce the demand for unnecessary prescription drugs.
- Initiate a public inquiry into the rising costs and over-prescription of drugs.
- Require reporting of side-effects requiring a doctor visit or hospitalization due to prescribed drug use.
- Establish, in cooperation with the provinces, a new crown corporation to bulk purchase and dispense prescription drugs, based on a rigorous evidence-based model, and to study the feasibility of establishing a national pharmacare program that ensures that effective pharmaceuticals are available to all Canadians who need them.

SOLVE THE MEDICAL ISOTOPE CRISIS

The use of medical isotopes in the diagnosis of cancer helps patients receive the treatment they need more quickly than with the use of other diagnostic tools. Medical isotopes are also used, to a lesser degree, to treat cancer. Canada has, in the past, been responsible for producing 1/3rd of the world's medical isotopes, using the research reactor at Chalk River. The Chalk River nuclear reactor now is 52 years old and has been shut down on numerous occasions since 2007, due to leaks of radioactive water. It resumed operations in the summer of 2010, but is scheduled permanently shut down in 2016. The Green Party remains opposed to the use of nuclear reactors; however we also recognize the benefits that medical isotopes provide to cancer patients.

The Chalk River facility uses highly-enriched weapons-grade uranium to generate medical isotopes. For years, Canada has imported approximately 20 kg of bomb-grade uranium from the U.S. annually, to make isotopes; 97% of it remains unused. These leftovers, which are now in quantities large enough to create several Hiroshima-sized bombs, are stored at commercial sites. The risk of terrorist activity in order to obtain this radioactive material for the proliferation of nuclear weapons is significant.

International research has demonstrated that isotopes can be produced without a nuclear reactor/reaction. Both particle accelerators and cyclotrons successfully produce medical isotopes; however further assessment is required in order to determine their economic feasibility. Greens will support funding research into these revolutionary alternative technologies, the primary goal of which will be to ensure that Canadians have access to a safe and effective source of medical isotopes.

ACHIEVE BETTER HEALTH THROUGH PREVENTION

- Remove from use those chemicals known to pose a significant risk to human health. (See Part 3: Preserving and Restoring the Environment.)
- Ban all advertisements for tobacco products, and once legalized ensure no advertising is permitted for marijuana products.
- Increase funding to tobacco awareness programs and marijuana-use prevention programs and set a goal for a smoke-free Canada.
- Increase taxes on products known to be deleterious or potentially deleterious to peoples' health (see Section 1.15 Agriculture and Food).
- Move to extend medically required and preventive dental care to the current list of treatments covered by Medicare. Due to costs of this measure, this is a multi-year goal.
- Provide more information to Canadians about healthy food choices and lifestyles.
- Commission Health Canada to do a nationwide body burden study identifying the presence of carcinogens, neurotoxins, hormone disruptors, and the toxicity levels of Canadians.
- Ensure clean drinking water for all Canadian communities by 2012.
- Prohibit by law human reproductive cloning and require a Health Canada license for any organization or institution that performs genetic manipulation for commercial or scientific purposes.

PROMOTE FITNESS, SPORT AND ACTIVE LIVING

- Promote a broad-based national program of active living as a prescription for better health and lower health care costs, to be delivered in partnership with provincial, municipal and non-governmental bodies to achieve the goal agreed to by all ministers responsible for physical activity across Canada of increasing physical activity by 10% over the next five years.
- Introduce a national standard of daily, quality participation in physical activity in schools, colleges and universities to combat the epidemic of youth obesity.
- Make a strategic investment through Health Canada of \$500 million over five years to aggressively address inactivity and obesity.
- Re-introduce a national school-based fitness-testing program.
- Promote the "Walking School Bus," as developed by the Toronto Atmospheric Fund, in which adult volunteers supervise neighbourhood children walking to school, thereby reducing pollution, improving fitness, and promoting community street safety.
- Endorse and promote the Olympic Movement's Agenda 21 for Sport, which advocates sport and recreation management practices that are sustainable, and encourages sustainable practices at all sports events and facilities.
- Support the development of high-performance athletes both by encouraging broad-based participation in sport, and by contributing to the provision of essential facilities, coaching and medical support for high-performance athletes, as outlined in the 2003 Canadian Sport Policy.
- Structure the spending for sports to ensure there is a practical progression of long-term financial support for sport at all levels in the sports continuum.
- Establish a Canadian Sports Spending Accountability Act, to ensure the effective long-term use of tax dollars provided to high performance sports programs.

RECOGNIZE ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVITIES AS A HEALTH CARE ISSUE

- Implement legislation that will result in increased public health protection, by reducing the quantities and variety of toxic chemicals in products, buildings, landscapes and foods, as Canadians move to using only least-toxic strategies, products and materials.
- Promote the inclusion of environmental sensitivities in the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD) that is published by the World Health Organization.
- Earmark funding to provinces to include environmental sensitivities/multiple chemical sensitivities (MCS) in provincial health care billing codes.
- Work with provincial and territorial governments to ensure workplace accommodations, medical accessibility and treatments, access to buildings and other public areas, social support systems, and adequate monetary assistance for people with environmental sensitivities.

PROMOTE A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH

- Increase transfer funding for non-institutionalized mental health patients including children and youth to provide adequate community-based support and outpatient and inpatient care by mental health practitioners, including in rural Canada where lack of facilities and trained professionals is acute.
- Support a public health initiative to reduce the use of psychoactive drugs through better rehabilitation and prevention programs, especially for children.
- Provide increased funding for a robust comprehensive mental health strategy for all Canadians in need.
- Require greater involvement of people dealing with personal mental health problems in research planning, policy development, program evaluation, and other decisions that affect their lives and communities.

REDUCE DRUG ADDICTIONS

- Address drug addiction as a health problem by legalizing marijuana and focusing efforts on harm reduction, treatment and prevention.
- Augment funding to the provinces earmarked to increase the number of detoxification facilities and treatment beds for drug and alcohol rehabilitation, establish more safe injection clinics and needle exchange programs to provide certified addicts with prescription-procured drugs in small, safe doses, and develop educational prevention programs. Ensure the creation of spaces with a non-threatening climate for young people. Young people with drug addictions should not be sharing spaces with far older people going through detoxification programs.

PREVENT THE SPREAD OF HIV/AIDS AND BETTER MANAGE ITS IMPACTS

- Reduce the stigma associated with having HIV. This stigma is a significant barrier to delivery of effective, non-judgmental prevention and treatment programs.
- Put greater resources into the treatment and delivery of antiretroviral therapies to HIV-positive drug users, a marginalized group in Canada, which is currently receiving third-world levels of medical support.
- Put greater resources into harm reduction, prevention and education efforts directed towards high-risk populations.
- Eliminate bureaucratic barriers of misunderstanding and prejudice for HIV-positive foreigners who wish to visit Canada.
- Be a world leader in providing low-cost AIDS medicines and medical services for HIV-positive people in third-world countries, especially the most impacted countries of Africa.

COMBAT FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME

- Take action to educate the public about the underpublicized but widespread problem of fetal alcohol syndrome
- Develop and fund a program to greatly reduce the entirely preventable occurrence of fetal alcohol syndrome.

SEXUAL ABUSE SURVIVORS SUPPORT

- Advocate for the rights of male and female sex abuse survivors and for adequate federal funding for research, for public education, on judicial remedies, and for social service organizations that provide support for survivors.

4.7 Health promotion

“IT IS EQUALLY COMMON SENSE FOR OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM TO PLACE GREATER EMPHASIS ON PREVENTING DISEASE AND PROMOTING HEALTHY LIFESTYLES. THIS IS THE BEST WAY TO SUSTAIN OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM OVER THE LONGER TERM. KEEPING PEOPLE WELL, RATHER THAN TREATING THEM WHEN THEY ARE SICK, IS COMMON SENSE”
Roy Romanow, Future of Health Care in Canada, 2002

Health is more than health care. Prevention and Health Promotion save lives and money.

A significant proportion of illnesses and deaths in this country is preventable. Many Canadians do not have the necessary information, the tools, or the encouragement, to lead healthier lives. Much needless suffering, premature loss of life, and considerable healthcare costs can be avoided through improved health research, screening programs, more timely diagnosis, earlier treatment, improved lifestyles (diet, exercise and smoking cessation), and healthier public policies and environments. For example, it is estimated that at least 50 % of cancers are preventable.

Yet funding allocated for health promotion has fluctuated in the vicinity of 1 % of overall health system funding, despite the demonstrated cost-effectiveness of many disease prevention and health promotion programs.

Health promotion is about more than health care or health education. It is about recognizing the profound health impacts of determinants of health outside the formal healthcare system and working with many stakeholders (policy-makers, NGOs, health agencies, multiple levels of government, the private sector, and most important, affected communities themselves) to reduce, eliminate, or overcome those factors that harm health or act as barriers to health enhancement, and to promote those factors that enhance the health, well-being and quality of life of all Canadians.

We will promote complimentary health care – through support of chiropractic, naturopathic, homeopathic, and other non-western practices. The Green Party of Canada recognizes the value of good health as a fundamental human right, and also the key to the most vibrant, inclusive and sustainable Canadian society possible.

Greens want to move Canada towards being the world's healthiest country by making improved and sustainable health for all a national priority.

To make this vision a reality will require a long journey, a comprehensive effort touching many aspects of Canadian society. In the short term we recommend the following actions to begin this journey. These

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recommendations can have an immediate, positive, and measurable impact on Canadian's health, and turn us away from a health system focused on disease treatment to one where disease prevention and good health promotion are the priority.

Green Party MPs will:

- Push for renewed Canadian leadership in health promotion both nationally and on the international stage. We have some of the best minds, training programs, experienced practitioners, and progressive health promotion coalitions in the world. These can be key building blocks in a renewed federal leadership in health promotion.

Specifically, we recommend the following actions to take place immediately:

- Restore funding for the Canadian Health Network, a key national resource for individuals and health professionals across the country.
- Create a Federal Healthy Community Initiatives Fund to which community organizations can apply for innovative local projects utilizing community development principles and practices to address both human and ecosystem health at the local level.
- Protect children from inappropriate exposure to marketing especially of junk foods and soft drinks (see development of a National Food Policy below).
- Create a Canadian Healthy Living Guide, similar to the recently revised Canada's Food Guide but more comprehensive in scope.
- Work with provincial stakeholders to better compensate family physicians and other health professionals for health education and health promotion services work with key stakeholders such as the Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada (CDPAC), the Canadian Lung Association, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and others to promote integrated, innovative, evidence-based, inter-sectoral and comprehensive approaches to disease prevention and health promotion.
- Institute a GST Health Benefit Exemption for those products/services deemed to have significant health benefit such as sports equipment, fitness centre fees, and some health-promoting health services.
- Institute a Corporate Health Tax Reduction for workplaces that institute a qualified workplace health model or comprehensive healthy workplace settings approach such as that offered by the National Quality Institute.
- Work to reduce the use of pesticides, growth hormones, antibiotics and other chemical and pharmaceutical agents in agriculture.
- Phase out the use of genetically modified food products and 'terminator' seeds
- Seek a Canadian ban on all forms and applications of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies through legislation.
- Promote environmentally sustainable, organic farming practices that protect the health of the land, farmers, and consumers.
- Restore funding for critical food safety testing and new product approvals processes.
- Institute a National Junk Food Tax for non-essential, empty calorie foods and beverages including high-fat, high-sugar and high-salt snack foods.
- Support the development and adoption of a comprehensive national set of protective helmet standards for different sport and vehicle use and the allocation of federal funding for a national education program to encourage protective helmet use.
- Develop a federal Health Impact Assessment Board to incorporate health impact assessment as part of all federal government policy reviews, similar to the current Environmental Assessment Board.
- Support the development of initiatives to reduce the use of psychoactive drugs through better rehabilitation and prevention programs, especially for children.

- Restructure education of health care professionals to incorporate adequate training in health promotion.
- Provide computerized health promotion aids and make them accessible freely to all Canadians.
- Expand healthcare coverage to include basic preventive dental care.
- Expand healthcare coverage to include qualified complementary/alternative health professionals such as naturopaths, acupuncturists, homeopaths, licensed massage therapists, chiropractors, and dietitians.
- Establish a minimum budget for health promotion at 1.5% of the total federal healthcare budget.

4.8 Ending the war on drugs

In 2008, according to the Treasury Board, Canada spent \$61.3 million targeting illicit drugs, with a majority of that money going to law enforcement. Most of that was for the “war” against cannabis (marijuana). Marijuana prohibition is also prohibitively costly in other ways, including criminalizing youth and fostering organized crime. Cannabis prohibition, which has gone on for decades, has utterly failed and has not led to reduced drug use in Canada.

After analyzing the recommendation of the Canadian Senate’s 2002 Special Committee on Drugs and the examples of strategies used by some European countries, the Green Party of Canada has come to the conclusion that it is time to legalize the adult use of marijuana. Furthermore, the Greens believe that drug addictions should be treated as a health problem, not as criminal offences.

Green Party MPs will:

- Legalize marijuana by removing marijuana from the drug schedule.
- Create a regulatory framework for the safe production of marijuana by small, independent growers.
- Develop a taxation rate for marijuana similar to that of tobacco.
- Establish the sale of marijuana to adults for medicinal or personal use through licensed distribution outlets.
- Educate the public about the health threats of marijuana, tobacco and other drug use.
- Launch a public consultation on the decriminalization of illicit drugs, considering the current high costs of the law enforcement effort.
- Provide increased funding to safe injection sites, treatment facilities and addict rehabilitation

4.9 Rights, respect and dignity

4.9.1 Women's equality

Women make up over 50 % of Canada’s population, the majority of seniors, and a disproportionate share of the people living in poverty in Canada. Pay inequity is still the rule. Women earn, on average, only 71 cents for every dollar earned by a man. Women within visible minorities earn 64 cents and Aboriginal women earn only 46 cents. Lack of access to affordable housing, affordable post-secondary education, and affordable child care make the lives of women, who head the majority of single-parent households, much more difficult. Women under 30 earn less than women in that age group, when adjustments are made for inflation, than they did twenty years ago. Women make up only 22% of the MPs in Canada’s Parliament.

The Conservative government has pushed the clock backwards on women's rights in Canada. It refused to accept the recommendations of the Pay Equity Task Force that calls for proactive pay equity legislation to bring Canada in line with its national and international human rights obligations. Instead, elimination of women's pay equity rights was made part of the 2009 budget implementation bill. The Conservative government rolled back the commitment to establish a national affordable child care program. It removed the mandate for promoting women's equality, and even stripped the quest for "women's equality" from the mandate of Status of Women Canada (SWC) and only reinserted it after public outcry.

The Greens will vigorously defend every hard-won victory for women's rights and for women to advance forward towards full equality in Canada. Women's equality is fundamental to a just society. Among the best ways to break down barriers and advance opportunities for women are through poverty eradication, national affordable child care, programs to eliminate the financial barriers to post-secondary education, programs for affordable housing, and the adoption of a Genuine Progress Indicator that includes measures of unpaid and voluntary work by women (see Part 1: The Green Economy).

Green Party MPs will:

- Oppose any possible government move to diminish the right of a woman to a safe, legal abortion. We fully support a woman's right to choose. We will also expand programs in reproductive rights and education to avoid unwanted pregnancies, and expand supports for low-income mothers.
- Pass pay equity legislation, as recommended by the Pay Equity Task Force, immediately implement full pay equity for women employed in the federal sector and develop tax incentives for companies to meet the highest standards of gender and pay equity.
- Oppose the use of religious justice systems such as Sharia Law in Canada that run contrary to our existing rule of law and that specifically subjugate women and diminish the rights of women
- Establish specific job re-entry programs for women with children who want to restart their working lives either part-time or full-time.
- Reestablish funding for Status of Women Canada and other organizations that fund non-profit women's groups and advocate for women's rights.
- Ensure that the criteria for new appointments to public boards and agencies include equal opportunity for women.
- Support greater engagement of women in the political life of Canada by advocating that all political parties nominate, train and support more women candidates.

4.9.2 People with disabilities

Canadians with disabilities and their families live with disproportionate levels of poverty and exclusion. To better understand the underlying factors, the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) and the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) commissioned the Caledon Institute of Social Policy to study the situation and propose solutions. It concluded that:

- Canadians with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty than other Canadians. Poverty is a result of both exclusion and lack of supports, and it contributes to further exclusion and vulnerability in a 'vicious cycle'.
- Children with disabilities are twice as likely as other children to live in households that rely on social assistance as a main source of income.
- Poverty rates of Canadians with disabilities result in large part from the lack of needed disability supports, which enable access to education, training, employment, and community participation.

- Canadians with disabilities are too often exiled to inadequate, stigmatizing and ineffective systems of income support that were never designed to address the real income needs of Canadians with disabilities.
- The federal government has a key role to play in addressing the poverty and income security needs of Canadians – they have done this through Employment Insurance, CPP/QPP, Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement, the National Child Benefit, and Child Disability Benefit, and various tax measures.

The Caledon Institute proposes that the federal government invest in a new initiative, which they have called the Basic Income Program, to best provide the support that Canadians with disabilities desperately need. This program is a floor for the access to resources for people with disabilities; it is not a ceiling. With additional programs to break down barriers, people with disabilities have every right to be full, equal partners in Canadian society.

The Green Party of Canada believes it is time to treat Canadians with disabilities with dignity. We endorse the Basic Income Program proposed by the Caledon Institute, which asserts that, when all factors are taken into account, the program will actually save the government money. We urge the adoption of this income security program for people with disabilities as soon as possible as an interim measure until a full poverty eradication federal-provincial program is established to provide for income security for all Canadians.

Green Party MPs will:

- Work to create a Canada Disabilities Act (CDA) to express Canadians' vision of a more equitable society rather than the current confusion resulting from the multiplicity of acts, standards, policies and programs that prevail.
- Support a national equipment fund to provide equipment such as wheel chairs and accessibility tools to assist persons with disabilities with the tools needed to fully participate in work and community life. (This can be a joint program with provinces – the concern is equal access and common standards.)
- Invest in social housing adapted as necessary to meet particular needs, with both rental and purchase options. This is simply an expansion of our housing program recognizing particular needs.
- Provide federal health transfer payments to provinces and territories directed to rehabilitation for those who have become disabled, e.g. loss of limbs etc.
- Enforce the Employment Equity Act to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal opportunity to long-term employment and advancement. Disabled people are generally the last to find employment and the first to be laid off.
- Urge government to immediately ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Canada is a former Human Rights leader in the global community; the current continued dragging of our political heels is embarrassing. Ratifying this Convention and implementing it will help to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, to which all countries have committed themselves.
- Institute a basic income for people living with disabilities so that none live in poverty by:
- Converting the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) to a refundable credit as a first step in creating a national Basic Income program for working-age adults with disabilities.
- Redesigning the Canada Pension Plan/Disability Benefit (CPP/D) test to incorporate the DTC definition of disability and permit employment, rather than the CPP/D definition that requires a 'severe' disability to be life-long and to be the cause of any incapacity to pursue 'any gainful occupation.' The revised definition allows individuals to work while retaining eligibility for basic income.

4.9.3 Immigration and new Canadians

Canada is a multicultural society with a strong history of welcoming immigrants and celebrating cultural diversity. Canada currently accepts about 300,000 new immigrants annually. Opportunities for new immigrants, however, vary. Studies show that immigrants from some countries do a lot better than others in securing jobs with decent incomes and opportunities for advancement. Access to immigration itself varies, as well. The criteria for granting landed immigrant status to refugees and other immigrants seem at times arbitrary and the process is frustrating and stressful for many. The backlog of files is too long. Over-cautious security officials have in some cases put the civil liberties of new Canadians at risk. Recent reforms to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act have fostered a culture of fear and discrimination. Canadian citizens, like Maher Arar, have had their rights as Canadians discarded by allies who are too willing to break international law to fight a “war on terrorism.” Our immigration policies must be revamped to ensure we stay true to our identity as a just, fair and open country, and to be prepared for new challenges that are predicted to arise with increased numbers of environmental refugees seeking a safe new home in an increasingly perilous world.

Canada’s multicultural diversity is an essential part of our national identity. New Canadians are a source of incredible skills and potential for our country. Immigrants and refugees come to Canada in search of a safer, more fulfilling life for themselves and their families, and to be full participants in Canadian society. We must make sure they are supported in achieving their hopes and ambitions as new Canadians. Our national tradition of welcoming newcomers and embracing social and ethnic differences gives us a unique opportunity to exert a positive influence on the rest of the world. Canada must embrace the energy and creativity of all our cultural communities and ensure genuine equality of opportunity and equal treatment of all Canadian citizens, regardless of their country of origin.

Green Party MPs will:

- Lead a national discussion to define “environmental refugee” and advocate for the inclusion of environmental refugees as a refugee category in Canada and accept an appropriate share of the world’s environmental refugees into Canada.
- Eliminate the valuation of foreign credentials for immigration purposes except in those cases where such credentials are recognized in Canada or a clear and expeditious path to Canadian accreditation is established, and in place establish realistic criteria for immigrants based on existing job opportunities for immigrants to Canada.
- Press professional societies to remove unnecessary barriers hindering the recognition of valid professional credentials of immigrants.
- Ensure professionals being considered for immigration will have the licensing requirements for their professions clearly explained before entry. Landed immigrants with professional qualifications will be supported and given the opportunity to obtain Canadian licenses consistent with public safety.
- Allocate much greater funding for training in official languages (ESL and FSL) for new immigrants, knowing that many new immigrants are not fluent in either official language, through earmarked transfers to the provinces for primary and secondary public school and free night school programs.
- Establish a program to deal with the estimated 200,000 people living in Canada without official status that leads to full landed immigrant status for those who have become contributing members of Canadian society.
- Work with municipalities and provinces to improve the integration of new Canadians into the multicultural fabric of our country.
- Support multicultural communities by assisting cultural organizations to obtain charitable status.

- Seek to have the regulations governing the practices of immigration consultants toughened and enforced and increase penalties in the Criminal Code for those convicted of human smuggling.
- Amend the Anti-Terrorism Act and the Public Safety Act to require that, after a reasonable length of time, formal charges be brought against all those detained.
- Open an investigation into allegations by the United Nations Human Rights Committee of Canadian officials cooperating with foreign agencies known to use torture.
- Ensure the “lost Canadians” quietly being denied citizenship through archaic laws are protected and their citizenship restored. Although some significant progress has been made, some are still “lost.”
- Implement the recommendation made by the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration to immediately allow those who have refused or left military service regarding a war not sanctioned by the United Nations permanent resident status in Canada.
- Oppose legislation imposing jail time retroactively, and targeting people who arrive by ship.
- Oppose the Harper government’s efforts to place barriers on family reunification.

4.9.4 Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans-gendered rights

Canadians believe in freedom from discrimination. This includes people having the right to live their lives without being discriminated against for their race, creed, ethnic background, political beliefs or sexual orientation. A majority of Canadians applaud the fact that Canada was one of the first countries to sanction same-sex marriage. Existing legislation and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms do prohibit discrimination. However, we must be vigilant to ensure these laws are respected in practice and delivery.

In 1996 the Green Party of Canada became the first federal party to officially support the inclusion of same-sex couples in civil marriage, and we are pleased that this issue is now settled. However, much prejudice and discrimination remains, and trans-gendered people are rarely even considered when laws and public policies are created.

Our vision is of a world free from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, a world in which difference is accepted and even celebrated.

Green Party MPs will:

- Amend the Canadian Human Rights Act to explicitly include gender identity and gender expression as protected grounds of discrimination.
- Amend the Criminal Code to include gender identity and gender expression in the hate sentencing and hate propaganda provisions.
- Repeal s.159 of the Criminal Code.
- Support public education to end prejudice and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.
- End the targeting by Canada Customs of LGBT bookstores and other LGBT businesses.
- Ensure Canada advocates internationally for an end to state-sanctioned discrimination and violence against LGBT people.

4.9.5 Aboriginal policy

Green Party of Canada

The glaring exception to everything one loves about Canada can be found in the profound inequality of life on First Nations Reserves and life for off-reserve urban Aboriginal people across Canada. Water that is too hazardous to drink; serious health problems from diabetes to tuberculosis, addiction, and suicide; unacceptably poor housing stock; high unemployment rates – all make a mockery of our progress elsewhere in maintaining our “social safety net.”

Canadians like to forget that white South Africa based apartheid on the Canadian Aboriginal policy. Many non-natives are unaware of the fundamental human rights violations occurring within our midst. Canadian Aboriginal peoples, First Nation, Métis and Inuit, know that the fundamental assumption of colonial powers since the first Europeans arrived in what is now Canada has been a policy of assimilation.

Unbeknownst to most non-native Canadians, and even some First Nations, the ultimate disposition of land claims agreement is the extinguishment of Aboriginal title. This is an inherent right of indigenous people and its extinguishment violates international human rights law. Various human rights committees within the United Nations system have frequently been critical of Canada’s treatment of and laws regarding Aboriginal peoples.

Finally, in November of 2010, after years of stalling, the current government of Canada quietly signed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Their delay was unconscionable and embarrassing. Now action is required.

As government, the Greens will speedily move to implement the UN Declaration. We will also restore the \$5.1 billion commitment and the specifics of the Kelowna Accord. One of the central features of the landmark Kelowna Accord, reached between federal and provincial, territorial and First Nations governments in Canada in November of 2005, is the creation of “baselines.” Baselines are critical to assess the levels of Aboriginal health and well-being.

The issues impacting Aboriginal people in Canada are complex and cannot be assessed without a full sense of the searing violence of generations of occupation and assault upon their traditional cultures and values. No Canadian should be satisfied with the failed policies of the Indian Act, the huge bureaucracy of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the enormous outlays of funding for lawyers and “experts” in the interminable comprehensive claims process.

Something fundamental needs to shift. That shift must begin with dignity for all Aboriginal peoples: respect, an end to policies of assimilation, and strong support for health and education on and off reserve. Health specialists and behavioural experts need to be trained from within communities to provide the proper support for fetal alcohol syndrome children. Work must be intensified to ensure more programs that involve elders mentoring young people. Employment opportunities in resource-based industries on Aboriginal territories will be encouraged. Trap lines will be protected. We will work to sustain the Inuit hunting culture that is under rapid assault due to the impacts of the climate crisis. The Green Party of Canada will ensure that governments and corporations alike respect the 1990 Supreme Court of Canada Sparrow decision upholding aboriginal rights such as fishing and the right of Aboriginal peoples to be consulted about decisions and accommodated in those decisions that impact their resources and their future.

We must work together to ensure no more communities are added to the list of shame in Canada: Oka, Ipperwash, Gustafson Lake, Sutikalh, Sun Peaks, Cheam and Caledonia. Never again.

Our shift in attitude will mean true nation-to-nation dialogue and negotiations. It will mean a just accommodation of Aboriginal peoples’ aspirations and an equitable sharing of Canada’s natural

resources. It will mean full recognition of the cultural, political and economic contributions of First Nations, Inuit, Innu and Métis people to Canada and an end to the prejudice.

Green Party MPs will:

- Honour Canada's fiduciary responsibility and the Aboriginal rights, treaty rights and other rights of Aboriginal peoples, including their inherent rights of self-government.
- In partnership with Aboriginal Peoples, work towards the creation of an Aboriginal Lands and Treaties Tribunal Act to establish an independent body to decide on specific claims, ensure that treaty negotiations are conducted and financed fairly, and ensure that treaty negotiations and claims resolutions do not result in the extinguishment of Aboriginal and treaty rights.
- Immediately implement the lands claims agreements already negotiated and languishing for lack of funding, particularly for First Nations in the territories.
- Review all existing federal policies on self-government, in consultation with Aboriginal representatives, to ensure they are achieving the goals of Aboriginal peoples.
- Ensure that negotiations of treaties and self-government are not based on the extinguishment of Aboriginal title and rights, and on assimilation, but on reconciliation of rights and title, and that negotiations recognize the diversity of traditional self-governance.
- Fully implement the recommendations of the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, thereby embarking on true nation-to-nation negotiations on a full range of outstanding legal issues and land claims.
- Ensure that Canada upholds the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Support the restoration of the \$5.1 billion commitment of the landmark Kelowna Accord reached between federal and provincial, territorial and First Nations governments in Canada in 2005, with the proviso that the ensuing programs do not lead to greater infringement on Aboriginal and treaty rights.
- Ensure that governments and corporations respect the Sparrow decision (recognizing the Aboriginal right to fish) and the Haida decision (the right of Aboriginal peoples to be not just consulted but their concerns accommodated regarding decisions that may impact their resources and their future).
- Negotiate and legislate primary hunting, fishing, trapping and logging rights for Aboriginal peoples on traditional lands, especially lands under federal jurisdiction, subject to standards of sustainable harvesting.
- Respect the Douglas Treaties of southern Vancouver Island.
- Launch and maintain new processes driven by Aboriginal priorities and legal entitlements, to provide for interim measures prior to settlement of treaties, and address governance issues, a just and fair share of lands and resources, legislative inconsistencies, policy inequities, reconciliation and, if in accordance with the wishes of First Nations, the phased-out elimination of the Indian Act.
- Promote Aboriginal culture, language and history as a fundamental source of Canadian identity.
- Support the development of Aboriginal education curricula that are language and culture specific.
- Assist the delivery of health care, education and other services in a way that incorporates traditional practices and recognizes the role of extended families and elders.
- Set up task forces to address the treatment of Aboriginals in the Canadian justice system and to investigate and address the disappearance of Aboriginal women.
- Ensure, through consultation with indigenous organizations representing the concerns of Aboriginal women, that the rights of Inuit, Métis and First Nations women are protected.

4.10 Protecting access to excellence in post-secondary education

Growing tuition fees and student debt are pushing post-secondary education out of reach for many Canadians. Cost is the primary barrier to post-secondary education, both academic and trades-training. While education is a provincial matter, the federal government can provide funding to increase the number of spaces at post-secondary institutions and can offer needs-based scholarships and bursaries to reduce financial barriers for potential students. This can easily be achieved through earmarked transfer payments.

Greens believe that universal access for every qualified individual to affordable post-secondary education and training is a basic right. Greens seek to eliminate financial barriers that currently prevent access. There are significant social returns when the government invests in education; it is the key to equity of opportunity, personal growth and enrichment, informed democratic debate and decision making, social mobility, and the research and development that are essential to deal with climate change and a multitude of other challenges. It is the key to a good economy and a prosperous society.

The global economy is severely affected by crises such as the impact of an aging population and climate change. These challenges put pressure on the standard of living in industrialised nations. Canada can face these crises. To do so, we will need the best-educated, highly-trained and creative workforce possible. Excellence in post-secondary education is pivotal to achieving this, and should be prized as one of our most valuable social policies. The Green Party is committed to innovative and cost-effective improvements to our system of higher learning.

We are transitioning into an information-based society. This transition is necessary for a green economy, which requires research, information, and innovation. What this transition requires is a robust post-secondary education system built around principles of accessibility, affordability, quality, accountability, ease of information sharing, and green innovation.

Green Party MPs will work to ensure that post-secondary education is based on realistic and effective policies and the following principles:

- Quality and excellence.
- Accessibility that is based on equality, merit, and willingness.
- Affordability for individuals.
- Accountability of funds.
- Ease of information sharing.
- Green innovation.

Green Party MPs will also:

- Increase federal transfers to provincial governments, ear-marked and tied to post-secondary education.
- Establish a federal research program aimed at understanding and reducing barriers to post-secondary education in the absence of the 2001 Canadian Millennium Research Program.
- Work with the provinces to support lifelong learning programs aimed at enabling older Canadians to pursue post-secondary education to gain new knowledge and skills.
- Increase funding for a needs-based Canadian National Student Loan and Bursary
- Work to eliminate student debt as a national goal.
- Invest in Early Intervention Programs through partnerships with other governments and through additional funding for Targeted Nonrepayable Assistance, Academic Support,

Mentorship, and Campus Exposure Programs with an emphasis on low-income, first-generation, and Aboriginal students and communities.

- Transition from costly and regressive tax-based credits and RESPs as methods of supporting an affordable post-secondary education system.
- Allow all students eligibility for guaranteed student loans up to their rate of tuition regardless of parental income.
- Decrease the lending rate to that of the prime rate and extend the time period for which student loans must be repaid.
- Extend the payment grace period to two years after graduation in which time loans are interest-free.
- Establish a Student Education Funding Committee, with at least 50% of members having student debt, whose purpose will be to create a student education funding system that better serves the needs of Canadian students.
- Establish an Opportunity Grant under the Canada Student Grants Program for graduate students with high financial need.
- Exempt academic materials from the GST and/or any other federal sales taxes that may be implemented in the future.
- Increase funding to federal research councils by 15% annually for four years.
- Support integrated education and co-operative programs through the restoration and expansion of the federal student summer job program.
- Establish a Pan-Canadian set of comparable data and statistics to measure quality and progress similar to those of the medicare system.
- Invest in undergraduate research fellowships through the federal research councils to support innovation and increase research capacity.
- Earmark provincial transfers for post-secondary education outside of the broad-based Canada Social Transfer fund.
- Ensure that a portion of earmarked provincial transfers is long-term and predictable, provided that provinces remain accountable to quality metrics including increasing tenure track professors as well as a higher ratio of professors to students.
- Ensure that copyright policy allows students to properly conduct and create research in a manner that is consistent with a thriving information commons, fair dealing principles, and moral rights.
- Emphasize funding to the federal research councils for environmental innovation and design, including but not limited to renewable energy, smart growth, environmental restoration, and climate change response strategies.
- Support expanding industry-based job training and apprenticeship programs to address shortages of trained workers in specific industries and workers in need of retraining.

4.11 Striving for justice

4.11.1 True justice; Real security

It is all about our communities. Safe, strong, and vibrant communities are at the heart of the Green Party's vision for the future of Canada – a Canada where we share responsibilities and respect for each other.

We are dedicated to responsible governance that protects our country and our fellow Canadians. This commitment shapes our approach to tackling crime, delivering justice, reducing recidivism, protecting Canada's borders, and combating terrorism.

Green Party of Canada

The Green Party is also a practical party. In all our policies we seek to avoid over-the-top rhetoric and partisanship, and focus upon tackling the important issues. We take this same pragmatic and level-headed approach to the tough issues of criminal justice.

Canada is not in the midst of a crime wave.

In fact, the incidence of violent crime is down. Despite that fact, the Harper government is planning to spend \$9 billion on new prisons. We believe that money could be better spent further reducing crime through better programmes in youth activity and early childhood education.

Still, even with the crime rate going down, we would all like to feel safer on the streets and in our own homes.

We do have problems in the justice system. Many Canadians see a disconnect between the severity of the crime, the length of prison sentences and the availability of parole. Many Canadians support restorative sentencing that promotes a sense of responsibility in the offender and secures amends for the victims of crime. Additionally, many Canadians recognize that offenders are often unaccountable to the community upon their release from prison.

The Green Party will meet these challenges. We will ensure that those who break the law are held responsible and the needs of victims are recognized and accommodated.

Our vision is of a legal system that is effective and fair, connects with communities, is simple and transparent as well as fast and effective - while maintaining Canadians' traditional commitments to justice and the rule of law.

It is also true that the Green Party does politics differently. One of the things this means is that we strive to get at the root of problems in our society and take a more integrated approach to governmental action. For example, it is not uncommon for Green candidates to speak about health care, affordable housing, and education when asked about problems of crime. We are always seeking to get at the root of a problem.

Greens understand that true justice and real security cannot stand alone, out of our social and cultural context. We are committed to addressing underlying causes of crime such as poverty, racism, and inequality while ensuring offenders are dealt with fairly by means of proportionate sanctions. We believe a responsible government will see the big picture and have well-integrated policies that truly prevent crime and truly protect our communities.

The Green Party advocates for practical and integrated measures that will make Canada a safer place for raising families, being active in the community, and being productive in the workplace.

The first defense in reducing crime is to keep young people from becoming criminals. Green Party programs to alleviate poverty, to legalize marijuana, to increase physical fitness and sport, as well as investing in community health, will all pay big dividends in reduced crime.

The test for when a crime crosses that societal line in the sand will be when the perpetrator has been violent. Violent offenders must face more serious consequences, in setting bail, in sentencing and in parole terms. On the other hand, the Green Party has consistently highlighted the high social and financial costs of incarceration, opposed fixed minimum sentences, and supported opportunities for holding offenders accountable outside the prison system.

Green Party MPs will:

- Review the Young Offenders Act to ensure it is not an inducement to youth crime, while retaining its core principle, that youth should not be treated as hardened criminals.
- Revise laws to increase penalties for domestic violence and ensure protection for the victims and survivors of domestic violence.
- Ensure meaningful and appropriate resources are available for communities that wish to use restorative justice and community healing programs in which wrongdoers make reparation to victims and their communities.
- Oppose any attempts to privatize prisons in Canada.
- Dedicate resources to computer crimes specialists combating the online sexual exploitation of children through child pornography and Internet luring. The RCMP must have the necessary resources and tools to tackle this problem on a national scale.
- Focus upon education and meaningful work for offenders while they are incarcerated in order that they might pay at least part of the costs of their crime and housing in jail as well as become better prepared for reintegration into society upon their release.
- Provide guidance for judges making bail determinations to avoid release for violent crimes when there is a risk of re-offending. Those who post bail also need to be held accountable if the accused does not show up in court. Money pledged as bail must be collected.
- Restore merit as the primary criterion for selection of judges through the use of balanced review panels where no one political or ideological viewpoint is dominant.

4.11.2 Reforming the Divorce Act

Many Canadian couples experience a marriage or partnership breakdown. For those who enter the world of court-resolved divorce and child care disputes, years of unhappiness can follow. Increasingly, the non-custodial parent lacks meaningful access to his or her children. Grandparents can also be cut off.

There are no winners in these cases and children are the primary losers.

Upwards of 50% of marriages end in divorce, and an even higher rate of partner relationships suffer breakdowns. While the original intent of “no fault” divorce introduced in 1985 was well-intentioned to make divorce easier and equally available to both genders, a quarter of a century later, virtually every Canadian is now aware of the many shortcomings and the unintended consequences of unilateral divorce through the direct experience of family or close friends.

The family court system has become dysfunctional and arbitrary: Children are typically isolated from one parent as well as grandparents; bankruptcies occur for one parent in 50% of divorces; Child Support can become a thinly disguised form of Spousal Support, false allegations and perjury are not uncommon; court orders for access are routinely ignored or flouted by moving to another jurisdiction; legal costs often consume accumulated assets of separating family units; “deadbeat parents” – some of whom deserve the title but some of whom are sick, unemployed, or below the poverty line -- are subjected to counterproductive loss of licences and loss of passport as well as “debtor’s prison” ; and legal aid is often not available for many family issues- arguably the most fundamental liberty interest of all. Resolution of this issue is made additionally and unfairly complicated by having responsibility split among provincial and federal jurisdictions for various aspects of divorce.

The very social fabric of Canada and its future is being systematically eroded by a broken and unnecessarily intrusive system that has multigenerational consequences.

Green Party of Canada

The Green Party envisions a society where family break-downs avoid the suffering of children, grandparents and former spouses and which does not clog the courts. We will work to re-balance the current family law system, making it less adversarial, and place the on-going maintenance of healthy relationships, wherever possible, at the heart of the system.

The Green Party affirms the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

As in any disruptive life event, the state has an obligation to assist parties through the transition period of marriage dissolution.

The regrettable dissolution of family units should be handled in an economic and expeditious manner with maximum responsibility placed on separating parties with minimum reliance on adversarial legal processes. The role of the state is to facilitate the process.

Greens believe that two principles can operate together. The paramount principle is “the best interests of the child.” To this, we assume that in most circumstances, a second principle, “equal parenting” can be honoured. The best interests of the child are served through maximal ongoing parental involvement with the child, and that the presumption of equal parenting via joint responsibility and decision making is the starting point for judicial deliberations. Aside from joint responsibility and ongoing obligations to the child, separating partners should be free to arrange their own relationships under private law and, following dissolution, should be unencumbered in pursuing their own paths unless otherwise agreed beforehand.

To avoid children being treated like the spoils of war, the Greens believe the Divorce Act must be overhauled. We will launch a consultation with Canadians, with the legal community, family therapists and other experts to seek ways to reduce, and preferably eliminate, the adversarial nature of family law. The Australian family law system provides a model for consideration.

4.11.3 Cracking down on organized and white collar crime

Canada is widely regarded to be soft on organized and white collar crime. We seem to have a two-tiered justice system where people with money can work the system for their own advantage. The challenges involved in tackling economic crime are complex, and require clear leadership from the federal government, and concrete steps that will create tangible results.

Economic crimes are far from victimless. In a real sense, they are a theft of public property and harm all Canadians. Clamping down on these crimes to protect our investments and businesses will ensure that we secure not only the confidence of investors, but also the revenues needed to support our social programs. Tax evasion and fraud drain significant resources from the public purse and cannot be tolerated by a responsible government.

Economic criminal investigations are often quite complex and require highly specialized legal teams and sophisticated information management. Federal prosecutors must be given enough resources to build up the necessary legal teams to conduct effective and timely prosecutions of these commercial fraudsters. It is worth recalling that notorious U.S. gangster Al Capone finally went to jail for tax evasion, and not his links to crimes of violence. Giving our criminal investigators and prosecutors the tools to track down tax fraud and money laundering can help fight organized crime.

Green Party MPs will:

- Press for the creation of a Canadian Securities Crime Unit within the RCMP in order to provide for the public safety of our pension funds and personal retirement savings throughout Canada. If it is to be effective, securities crime policing must be done independently of the securities regulators and the investment industry.
- Allow for greater freedom in the issuing of subpoenas that would require witnesses to give a sworn statement during white collar criminal investigations.
- Amend the laws to provide for stiffer sentencing and greater restitution in white collar crimes. It is important that the sentences fit the severity of the crimes.
- Make sure those who commit crimes that cost the public money through police investigation or embezzlement repay the costs of their misbehaviour as much as possible. Although criminal charges for economic crime is important, simply placing people in jail does not always deliver justice.
- Improve access to "lifestyle" evidence and tax records of those suspected of involvement in organized crime. We need to enhance the tools available for pursuing the proceeds of crime if we are to get tough on economic and gang crimes.
- Provide greater resources for federal prosecutors so they can build up the necessary legal teams to conduct effective and timely prosecutions of white collar criminals.

4.11.4 Anti-terrorism and border security

A fundamental obligation of government is the protection of public safety. The Green Party is wholly committed to ensuring the security of all Canadians, and we will remain vigilant in our opposition to those who would threaten the safety of our communities. However, we agree with the majority of Canadians that true security within a democratic society will be gained from good governance and fair procedures that are administered according to the rule of law.

The Green Party views terrorism as an especially dangerous criminal offence and an aggressive, illegitimate political act. We believe that a responsible government will work diligently to track down and successfully prosecute these criminals as well as prevent terrorist acts by addressing the root causes of the crime. The focus must be peaceful assistance to local and international organizations working to resolve conflict, to protect local culture and sustainable practices, and to engage in the building of strong democratic institutions.

The safety of Canadians depends upon the effectiveness of our counter-terrorism and security laws. The Green Party is committed to ensuring our intelligence and law-enforcement agencies have adequate resources and the political leadership to deal effectively with these criminals.

The Green Party seeks security procedures that provide rigorous standards of procedural fairness and allow meaningful defences for all detainees. A responsible government cannot sacrifice human rights in the name of security or we will actually be opening the door for greater injustice and insecurity. Canada's security policies must be consistent with the values of the democratic society we seek to protect, or else they will undermine those very values.

We also recognize that hundreds of people arrive every year in Canada illegally through the work of criminal organizations. Women and girls are trafficked into Canada and forced into prostitution in our cities. Although steps have been taken in recent years to combat this growing problem, more needs to be done. We must send clear signals that human trafficking will not be tolerated. We must provide sufficient resources to law enforcement agents and ensure we have more success in discovering, arresting and prosecuting those who commit these terrible crimes.

Green Party MPs will:

- Introduce a Comprehensive Security Plan that will provide coordinated direction to the RCMP, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the Canada Border Services Agency, the Coast Guard, and Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. Effective security measures must be coordinated among departments and agencies through integrated enforcement agencies.
- Provide CSIS, RCMP, and the Canada Border Services Agency with sufficient resources to conduct effective operations involving the gathering of intelligence, and the detention and prosecution of those who threaten our security.
- Ensure that individuals held under security certificates are given access to legal assistance and the right to trial within a reasonable period of time. In addition, this detention under security certificates must be subject to prompt and fair review by an independent and impartial court.
- Ensure that all detainees are treated with respect for their human rights and not subjected to any kind of torture, either physical or mental, for any reason.
- Support the strengthening of regulations governing the practices of immigration consultants and provide adequate resources for their enforcement.
- Provide support for the gathering of reliable police data to gain a clear picture of human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of immigrant women in Canada.
- Increase penalties in the Criminal Code for those convicted of human smuggling.
- Enact legislation to allow victims of terrorist acts to pursue compensation through the courts, tracking down the financial assets of the responsible organizations.

4.11.5 Corporate accountability

The growth of multinational enterprises and global supply chains has been accompanied by growing concerns regarding labour standards, environmental protection, and respect for human rights in developing nations. The public is increasingly aware of the social and environmental impacts of business practices, and more and more people are beginning to demand that Canadian corporations act ethically and responsibly in Canada as well as abroad.

Numerous serious and high-profile breaches of corporate ethics have contributed to elevated public mistrust of corporations, and highlighted the need for improved corporate governance, transparency, and accountability. There are growing concerns that voluntary self-regulation is not leading to responsible and sustainable business practices. The Canadian government can create stable and fair standards that will ensure Canadian corporations operate in a responsible manner.

The Green Party understands the need for greater corporate accountability, and decries the lack of legal provisions that would allow for civil actions against the big polluters in Canada. Our businesses need to be both competitive and accountable, and our government needs to create a legal environment that will make this happen. We recognize that Canadians want to feel proud of the corporations that represent them abroad and we will take practical and balanced steps to ensure Canadian corporations are economic as well as ethical leaders around the globe.

Green Party MPs will:

- Adopt the recommendations of the Advisory Report from the National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility. This framework sets out clear standards and reporting obligations for Canadian corporations. It would establish an ombudsman office with the power to investigate and evaluate complaints from affected communities and determine levels of compliance with the established standards.

- Work with the provinces to establish a national Canadian Securities Commission and bring in a federal Securities Act to protect investors from unfair, improper, or fraudulent practices, and foster fair and efficient capital markets as well as confidence in those markets.
- Introduce legislation to hold Canadian corporations that are working overseas to the same environmental and human rights standards as they are in Canada.
- Prevent legal intimidation of ordinary people by limiting the rights of corporations to sue groups and individuals only for actual loss.
- Develop laws similar to the U.S.'s Alien Tort Claims Act that will allow those who are not Canadian to sue Canadian corporations for gross violations of basic human, environmental or labour rights in their own countries.
- Reduce the disclosure requirements for prosecuting corporations. In a complicated stock market fraud or investment scam, disclosure can amount to hundreds of thousands of documents that have to be gathered, sorted, organized, and copied so they can be given over to the defendant and the defendant's lawyers as soon as charges are laid in a case.
- Oppose the takeover of Canada's stock exchanges such as the Toronto Stock Exchange, by corporate entities based outside of Canada.

4.11.6 Access to justice

Canada seems to have a two-tiered justice system. The rising costs and complexities of litigation mean that only the wealthy have easy access to effective legal representation in our courts. Middle-class Canadians are increasingly unable to adequately defend themselves due to the cost and complexity of Canada's judicial processes.

Greens understand, however, that we won't have real justice in Canada until we have justice for all Canadians. This means affordable and accessible courts as well as laws that allow for the protection of our collective rights and the valuable natural resources we all hold in common. A responsible Canadian government can initiate a fresh approach to our justice system and ensure it becomes more fair and equitable.

The Green Party believes we, as a free and democratic society, must increase access to justice for the people of Canada through a range of measures. We also believe a responsible government must support lawyers who offer service to those in genuine need.

Green Party MPs will:

- Increase access to justice for all Canadians notwithstanding their financial situation, by working with the provincial governments to establish a comprehensive National Legal Aid plan that will provide stable, long-term funding.
- Simplify those matters within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Federal Court of Canada or Tax Court (e.g. intellectual property, income tax appeals, CPP and disability claims). Reducing the amount of time spent in court on civil and criminal matters saves taxpayers money and helps ensure cases are not kicked out due to excessive delay.
- Increase the use of alternative dispute resolution processes, such as mediation and collaborative lawyering, in family and civil courts to reduce conflicts in relationship breakdowns.
- Amend the Divorce Act to ensure children are no longer treated like the spoils of war. We will launch a consultation with Canadians, with the legal community, family therapists and other experts to seek ways to reduce, and preferably eliminate, the adversarial nature of family law. The Child Support Guidelines were intended as a step in this direction through standardizing the quantum of child support and not forcing the

parties to prove need and ability to pay in court (see Section 4.11.2 Reforming the Divorce Act).

4.11.7 Gun control and ownership rights

Police associations across Canada assert that the gun registry helps them keep law and order and save lives. Many rural Canadians and First Nations people find the gun registry restrictions onerous and discriminatory. We need to better balance these interests without allowing guns to be prevalent in society.

The Green Party understands that it is time to get tough on gun smuggling across the U.S. border. Thousands of handguns are coming across the border and into our urban centres. We need to work with each of the US border states to press for action against gun smugglers and invest in tougher border measures to halt the movement of illegal firearms.

The risks created by having dangerous weapons in our urban centres are significant. We will introduce balanced and fair measures to ban handguns and semi-automatic firearms. However, the use of guns in our urban centres is typically not the same as the use of guns in our rural communities. We will ensure that law-abiding citizens pursuing legal activities in hunting with long guns are free from unreasonable fees and the threat of criminalization.

The Green Party will keep the long gun registry, but reduce the paperwork and bureaucratic burden for rural use, and for hunters and marksmen with no criminal history.

Green Party MPs will:

- Provide increased support for Integrated Border Enforcement Teams made up of officers from the RCMP, Canada Border Services, U.S. Customs and the U.S. Coast Guard in their gathering of intelligence and arresting of gun smugglers.
- Put strict measures in place for those who attempt to cross the Canada/U.S. border with illegal firearms. Ensure that gun smuggling is prosecuted as a gun crime of the highest order rather than as a customs violation.
- Fulfill Canada's obligation under international agreements (United Nations Firearms Protocol and the Organization of American States Firearms Convention) to mark all imported firearms, as recommended by the Canadian Association of Police Boards and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.
- Ensure that gun crime charges are not dropped to facilitate convictions on lesser charges.
- Work hard to create a registration system that is fair, free, and easy to use. Streamline the gun registry in consultation with First Nations, and with gun sports and hunter organizations. We support the elimination of registration fees for hunting rifles and will ensure law-abiding citizens do not have their firearms confiscated.
- Ban handguns and combat weapons including semi-automatic rifles and assault rifles. Eliminate their use through consultation and a full buy-back program. Consult especially with holders of collections to ensure guns are rendered non-functional to eliminate usefulness to thieves, and with target shooters to establish safe and protected locations where target shooting can be practiced.

4.12 Eliminating poverty

“I AM NOW CONVINCED THAT THE SIMPLEST APPROACH WILL PROVE TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE – THE SOLUTION TO POVERTY IS TO ABOLISH IT DIRECTLY BY A NOW WIDELY DISCUSSED MEASURE: THE GUARANTEED INCOME.”

Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* 1967

The National Council of Welfare has estimated that over 15% of Canadians are living in poverty – about 4.9 million people. In a wealthy country such as Canada, this is unacceptable. Eliminating poverty while supporting healthy communities will pay for itself in reduced health care costs, as poverty is the single largest determinant of ill health. Eliminating poverty will pay for itself in reduced crime rates. Failure to eliminate poverty will cost our society far more than an effective program to make poverty history in Canada.

Of all of Canada’s social problems, child poverty is probably the most shameful. In 1989, the old-line political parties voted unanimously to end child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. Since then, at least in part due to the shortsighted cuts to our social programs, the percentage of children living in poverty has remained unchanged at around 15%, or 1 million children. Child poverty rates are even higher among new Canadians, Aboriginals and single parent households headed by women. Canada now ranks a dismal 26th out of 29 ‘developed’ countries in terms of child poverty rates.

The reasons for persistent poverty are complex. Better food banks cannot bridge the growing disparity between wealthy and poor Canadians. Poverty is a systemic problem that arises from low minimum wages, a precarious job market, a shortage of social housing, reductions in EI benefits and cuts in social programs.

We can eliminate child poverty in Canada. We must start by recommitting to a vision of Canada as a just society built around a progressive, fair and compassionate social safety network. European countries, such as Denmark, Finland and Norway, that have made a similar commitment, have kept child poverty rates below 3.5 %. Unlike the old-line parties, the Green Party believes reducing child poverty is more important than allowing our richest citizens to get richer. The Green Party believes reducing child poverty starts with a stronger commitment to guaranteeing that all families have the ability to provide for their children.

The Green Party of Canada believes it is time to re-visit a major policy initiative – the use of a negative income tax, or Guaranteed Livable Income (GLI) for all. The use of a GLI could eliminate poverty and allow social services to concentrate on problems of mental health and addiction. The essential plan is to provide a regular payments to every Canadian without regard to a needs test. The level of the payment will be regionally set at a level above poverty, but at a bare subsistence level to encourage additional income generation. No surveillance or follow-up is required.

Unlike the current provincial welfare and federal Employment Insurance (EI) schemes, additional income is not “clawed back” at income levels below subsistence. The incentive to illegal, under-the table economies is vastly reduced. Additional income is to be declared until the wage-earner becomes a taxpayer. For higher-income Canadians, the amount of the GLI is merely taxed back in whole.

Through policy coherence, municipally, provincially and federally, significant savings can be realized, while simultaneously reversing the negatives of a shame-based system that perpetuates poverty. To be cost-effective, however, government will require time to negotiate a coherent program with the provinces/territories and other levels of government. Various “poverty-industry” programs of welfare, disability pensions, seniors benefits, unemployment insurance, would all be collapsed within one simple single payment system, administered through taxes.

The Green Party believes it is time to advance bold ideas such as this. Nevertheless, it will take time for study, reflection and support from all three levels of government. We are committed to opening dialogue on the idea, while pursuing short-term measures to make progress in the near term.

Green Party MPs will:

- Remove taxes from the lowest income categories so that no taxes are paid by those below the poverty line (Canada's Low Income Cut-off measure).
- Allow income assistance recipients to keep 100% of the wages they earn up to the Low Income Cut-off level to encourage people to get back into the job market.
- Offer people the mobility they need to find work, shelter and other necessities through free transit passes for those on income assistance.
- Extend maternity/paternity leave for new parents outside of EI to two years and one additional year for parents who pay into EI.
- Increase the Guaranteed Income Supplement for seniors by 25%.
- Top up the income support for single parents on welfare during the time they are attending school or job training programs.
- As a first step towards universal GLI, provide additional income support of \$5000/year to adults currently receiving provincial welfare cheques. Through negotiations with each province, this modest income support payment will not be subject to clawback.
- Support the provision of stable, long-term financial support for persons with disabilities by means of a targeted Guaranteed Livable Income.
- Ensure financial assistance for low-income spouses and relatives who provide end-of-life care at home for patients who would otherwise need to be hospitalized or in institutional long-term care.
- Augment the government's measurement of "progress" (our Gross Domestic Product-GDP) with a Genuine Progress Indicator, such as the Canadian Index of Well-being, that annually measures how well we are doing on quality of life indicators, including eliminating poverty (see Part 1: The Green Economy).
- Develop a comprehensive plan to improve our social safety network so that it eliminates child poverty, modeling this plan on European countries' programs that have the best track records in eliminating child poverty.

4.13 Reforming the Employment Insurance system

In this time of economic hardship, many Canadians are attempting to access Employment Insurance for the first time. After paying into it for years, recently unemployed Canadians are finding it far too difficult to access benefits. Changes were made to reduce the usefulness of the Employment Insurance scheme back in the 1990s. Prior to the changes, 82.9% of those who were unemployed could access benefits. By 1997, this fell to 43.8%, where it held steady through 2004. Workers had to log a longer employment period in order to qualify, and the benefits received also shrank.

Ironically, the current recession is an ideal time to expand and improve the EI benefits. Economists, such as Ian Lee, Director of the Sprott School of Business, have determined that spending on EI is especially effective in stimulating the economy. Those receiving benefits spend nearly every cent received in essential purchases (food, clothing, shelter). Expanding the EI system can be justified as a sensible economic measure, as well as a matter of equity. This is one measure that does not require finding new money. The EI system has a healthy fund built up, yet the majority of unemployed workers are denied its benefits.

Green Party MPs will:

- During this time of need (until the unemployment rate in Canada drops below 6%), provide EI benefits retroactively, without imposing additional premiums, to all those who have lost their jobs since the beginning of November 2008 and who have paid into EI for at least three months, and also urge that EI benefits last for 52 weeks to provide a safety net while waiting for the economy to recover and, if necessary, extend EI benefits beyond 52 weeks if the economic recovery is not sustained.

4.14 Ending homelessness

We have witnessed the disintegration of our social safety net to the point where many Canadians, through no fault of their own, have been forced into unsafe, unhealthy living conditions. Some are on the streets. Others are barely getting by. Homelessness began to escalate during the 1990s with federal government cuts to social housing programs and cuts in income support programs by both the federal and provincial governments. As housing prices increased, even people working for minimum wage were increasingly unable to afford rental housing.

If the people who need help are not properly cared for, this puts a strain on everyone. Basic needs are not being met for a significant number of Canadians, and the gap between the rich and the poor is widening. The Green Party believes that our country has enough resources to care for all residents.

The Green Party believes it is the right of every Canadian to have affordable, safe and secure housing. It enhances people's health, dignity and life opportunities. It is an essential prerequisite to an equitable society. The Green Party supports the delivery of social housing dollars to provincial, territorial and municipal governments through the traditional vehicle of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The funding for social housing needs to be dramatically increased. CMHC programs must be directed to the communities most in need, and fast-tracked to provide homes for people at risk. The housing provided must be designed with energy conservation in mind.

Access to housing should be free from discrimination, including, but not limited to, ethnicity, race, cultural background, language, class, income, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, political or other opinion, ability, health, status or other personal characteristic or circumstance.

Universal housing will alleviate poverty. Universal housing provides a basis for employment, schooling, community services and contacts. The development and delivery of adequate universal housing and emergency accommodation must be a high priority.

Green Party MPs will:

- Advocate the inclusion of a clause in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that specifically states that everyone living in Canada is entitled to safe shelter or affordable housing.
- Urge the government to appoint a Minister for Housing to oversee development and implementation of a National Affordable Housing Plan.
- Require the National Affordable Housing Plan to set an annual rate of building affordable housing so that lack of access to affordable housing is no longer a factor in homelessness by 2019.
- Change the mandate of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to include responsibility, as it once had, for affordable, non-market and co-operative housing.
- Create a National Affordable Housing Program that provides sufficient funds annually through CMHC to community-based agencies across Canada to:
- Ensure that an adequate supply of new subsidized affordable homes is built: 20,000 new and 10,000 rehabilitated affordable units per year for the next ten years using capital grants and changes in tax and mortgage insurance regulations.
- Provide rent supplements or shelter assistance for an additional 40,000 low-income households per year, for ten years.
- Provide credit and loan guarantees to non-profit housing organizations and cooperatives for the building and restoration of quality, energy-efficient housing for seniors, people with special needs, and low-income families.

- Subsidize private developers to include a percentage of affordable housing in their housing projects.
- Change the Income Tax Act to offer tax cuts for affordable housing including incentives to stimulate construction and investment in the building of and maintenance of an ongoing supply of affordable, healthy, energy-efficient, multi-unit rental housing and to include tax credits for gifts of lands, or of land and buildings, to community land trusts to provide affordable housing.
- Dedicate funding to the co-operative housing sector to enable more new affordable housing projects to proceed.

4.15 Fair and respectful Policies for Veterans

The people of Canada have a contract with our service personnel and RCMP. They sign a contract of unlimited liability, meaning we can send them anywhere, anytime, into any circumstance. In the line of duty, they risk life and limb. In return, we promise to care for them and their families in the event that they suffer physical or mental injury in the line of duty. We have abdicated our responsibility to honour our half of the contract.

Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) was set up to distribute benefits and programs to returning soldiers and veterans. As a distribution network, it was tasked with making certain that all veterans in need were taken care of in a timely and effective manner. The benefit of the doubt was always given to the veteran, in the absence of irrefutable proof. This is no longer the case. VAC is now run like a for-profit medical insurance corporation. The policy manuals are specifically tailored to initially deny applications for programs and benefits based on a maze of confusing and contradictory eligibility requirements. VAC will not tell you what programs are available. You must know beforehand what programs are available and whether you qualify. VAC has subdivided veterans into several categories and bases eligibility on where they fall in a specific category, eg: regular forces, RCMP, reservist, trainer, combat, admin, SarTech, technical. Veterans hate this.

The New Veterans Charter (NVC) in 2006 changed how veterans are paid disability and pension funds. The most onerous of these changes is the lump sum payment that was designed to save the government money at the expense of fulfilling our contractual obligations of lifetime care for those injured while in service to our country. All three national parties unanimously passed the NVC and are thus complicit in the blowback that is happening across the country.

"There is only one veteran" is a rallying cry for veterans. The Green Party of Canada affirms that we need to see an end to categorization of veterans according to areas of service. This is a key point of agreement among veteran's organizations.

The SISIP (Service Income Security Insurance Plan) clawback of disability payments is anathema to veterans. It is a sharp slap in the face to many disabled vets who, as servicemen and women were obligated to pay into the plan. No civilian disability plan denies disability payments to employees based on income. (A veteran earning 75% of salary as pension is denied SISIP disability payments.) Disability payments must not be tied to income. Again, veteran's organizations agree that this is particularly distasteful.

The Lump Sum Payment in lieu of lifetime pension for injuries sustained on duty for Canada must be scrapped. While it saves the government tens of millions of dollars annually, it short changes veterans. The lifetime pension for injuries under the Pension Act (which preceded the NVC) must be reinstated. All veterans will support this initiative.

Split VRAB into two separate boards. The 25 member Veterans Review and Appeal Board currently adjudicates both new case files and files under appeal. This means the same people that initially denied claims are reviewing the appeal. Consequently most appeals are automatically denied. There are currently only three members of the Board with military experience and one with medical training. The rest are appointees (most since 2007) comprised of former MPs, MLAs, Parliamentary assistants, and local supporters of the ruling party. VRAB must become two separate panels (Veterans Review Board and Veterans Appeal Board), each comprised of qualified experts in their field.

Green MPs will work to

- End the SISIP clawback.
- End the Lump Sum Payment for injuries and reinstate the Pension Act benefits.
- Completely re-write the VAC policy manuals.
- Re-instate the Benefit Of The Doubt clause.
- Split VRAB into two distinct panels and populate it with qualified experts.
- Revisit the NVC with an eye to a complete re-write. The NVC was enacted as a living document but sits stagnant and out of touch with veterans needs.
- Publicly support the class action suit in the SCoC by veterans to end the SISIP clawback.

4.15 Arts and culture: Beauty and integrity

“ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES ARE AT THE HEART OF COMMUNITIES – THEY MAKE COMMUNITIES MORE ATTRACTIVE PLACES TO LIVE, THEY HELP BRING A COMMUNITY TO LIFE, THEY DEFINE A COMMUNITY’S UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS, THEY ATTRACT TOURISTS AND THEY HELP COMMUNITIES COMPETE ECONOMICALLY AROUND THE WORLD.”

The Canada Council for the Arts

We couldn’t resist. Shouldn’t at least one political party speak in praise of beauty? We live in times of increasing utility and growing ugliness. Strip malls, parking lots, urban littered and graffiti-ed streets do not ennoble us as a people.

It would be a fairly dubious notion that government anywhere could create beauty, but government can create the right conditions to protect and support those who do.

At every level of our society, arts and cultural activities help define our identities and communities. They unlock our individual and collective creativity, and help Canadians share our ideas worldwide. From surreal circus to incisive films, to renowned actors and singers, Canadians are experiencing cultural breakthroughs on the international arts and culture scene. Today, over 600,000 Canadians are employed in the cultural sector.

The Green Party understands that our future, our sense of who we are as a nation, depends on policies that ensure a thriving, diverse and socially responsible cultural community as part of an inclusive Canada. We will continue and increase support for those cultural institutions that are within the Canadian Heritage portfolio: Canada Council for the Arts, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), the National Film Board (NFB), and Telefilm Canada. We will reverse the funding cuts of the Harper government for the exchange of artists and the performance of Canadian arts abroad, as they are a vital aspect of effective diplomacy and artistic expression. We will establish the equivalent of the Japanese National Treasure Program where outstanding individual artists are supported to perfect their crafts.

Green Party MPs will:

- Increase funding to all of Canada's arts and culture organizations including the Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm Canada, orchestras, theatres and publishers. The goal will be to make increases in this sector commensurate with increases in support over the years for other sectors such as transport, energy and health care.
- Provide stable base funding for the CBC so it can continue to provide quality Canadian content television and radio programming in both official languages to all Canadians.
- Ensure that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) reserves more bandwidth for independent and non-profit stations.
- Enact legislation that requires cinemas and video chains to have at least 20% Canadian content.
- Restore and improve arm's length principles in the governance of arts and cultural institutions and agencies under federal jurisdiction. In keeping with such a position, we believe that the heads of Canada's cultural organizations such as the CRTC, Canada Council, CBC and Telefilm Canada should not be appointed by the political party in power but by an arm's length committee made up of competent people representative of the various diverse stakeholders in Canadian society.
- Seek greater support and adequate resources for arts grants programs.
- Seek increased funding incentives for artists and art events to tour Canada's rural regions.
- Provide protection for indigenous intellectual and artistic property rights.
- Increase support for community arts programs and facilities across Canada by establishing stable base funding at a set percentage of the federal budget.
- Equalize federal funding for arts and culture among provinces, territories and municipalities to make it consistent with the provinces and municipalities that have the highest current standards.
- Provide incentives to all provinces and territories to restore and improve arts and culture components in schools and extra-curricular activities not only in urban but also in rural areas.
- Extend income tax relief and incentives to artists (on the very successful models established by Ireland and the city of Berlin). Doing so will:
 - Encourage artists to settle in Canada and build businesses here.
 - Result in other (usually) white collar "clean" industries that follow arts jobs and dollars.
 - Help to provide meaningful jobs to university and college graduates.
 - Enrich schools and their offerings, thereby attracting immigrants to settle in rural areas.
 - Revitalize and discover talent in communities where traditional industries are declining and young people are leaving.
- Follow and implement recommendations of the Canadian Conference of the Arts in order to enable artists to access various social programs including Employment Insurance, Workers' Compensation and the Canada Pension Plan.
- Change the Canada Revenue Act to allow arts and culture workers to benefit from a tax averaging plan that will take into account the fact that lean years often precede and follow a good year when a show is produced, a book is published, or a grant or a prize is won.
- Protect Canada's cultural identity during trade negotiations.
- Restore the government-provided transport service (eliminated by the Harper government) to allow the transport of exhibitions between museums and galleries.
- Protect the copyright for artists so it is not surrendered to museums and galleries in the process of permitting exhibits.

“PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE AND WORK IN VIBRANT COMMUNITIES FILLED WITH CREATIVE PEOPLE AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES. AN ACTIVE ARTS AND CULTURAL LIFE IN A COMMUNITY DRAWS MEMBERS OF THE CREATIVE CLASS TO IT. THUS NOT ONLY FOR QUALITY OF LIFE REASONS BUT ALSO FOR HARD-NOSED ECONOMIC MOTIVES IT IS IMPORTANT TO SUPPORT A VIBRANT ARTS AND CULTURAL LIFE IN COMMUNITIES IN ORDER TO ATTRACT TALENTED PEOPLE AND COMPANIES TO POWER THE ECONOMIES OF THOSE COMMUNITIES.”

Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*

ECONOMIC RATIONALE

- The Green Party of Canada applies full cost accounting to its understanding of economics. We recognize that compared to other sectors receiving government support, the arts and culture sector is under-funded.
- We will pay for improved support for this sector by using the tax and subsidy systems available to government to encourage “clean” industries and discourage polluting industries as follows:
- Given that arts and culture provide great quantifiable benefits to health and education, investments in arts and culture across communities and educational establishments may fall, in part, under investments in health and education.
- Taking into consideration full cost accounting, the Green Party of Canada is able to substantiate that investment in the arts rapidly pays for itself many times over.
- Revenue neutral tax shifting taxes what society does not want, such as pollution, and removes taxes from what society does want, such as employment and creativity. The Green Party of Canada will redistribute funds in a revenue neutral manner, allowing the tax system to favour non-polluting, high-employment, highly creative, knowledge-based economic activities without increasing personal income taxes. For example, the Green Party of Canada will remove the GST from arts and culture products and services while imposing a carbon tax on burning hydrocarbons and releasing their by-products into the atmosphere.
- Resource taxes such as carbon taxes are refunded to taxpayers by reducing income tax. Those with low income who do not pay income tax will be compensated through a formula and mechanism similar to the way the Goods and Services Tax is refunded by quarterly payments.
- The Green Party of Canada will maintain breadth and flexibility in its economic calculations. We are able to think in terms of GDP and quantifiable economics, which can demonstrate that arts and culture not only makes an enormous contribution to the economic activity of this country - but also contributes to the Canadian Index of Well-being (see Part 1: The Green Economy).

PART 5: THE PLANET NEEDS CANADA (AND VICE VERSA)

The Green Party is the only truly global party, with Greens in 70 countries and elected members of parliament in Europe, Latin America, Australia and New Zealand. Together we work to press the nuclear super-powers to meet their obligations for disarmament, to reduce and eliminate the nuclear threat. We work to shift military budgets to peacekeeping and peace-building. We work to ensure the education, health protection and economic autonomy of women and girls around the world to address poverty and over-population.

The United Nations General Assembly vote to deny Canada its traditional rotation on the Security Council should be a wake-up call that we are losing our reputation in the world. The agenda set out in Vision Green would restore Canada to its historic role as respected global citizen.

5.1 Canada's role as global leader in peace-building, poverty alleviation and environmental protection

"TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF OUR TIMES, HUMAN BEINGS WILL HAVE TO DEVELOP A GREATER SENSE OF UNIVERSAL RESPONSIBILITY. EACH OF US MUST LEARN TO WORK NOT JUST FOR HIS, OR HER, OWN SELF, FAMILY OR NATION, BUT FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL MANKIND. UNIVERSAL RESPONSIBILITY IS THE REAL KEY TO HUMAN SURVIVAL. IT IS THE BEST FOUNDATION FOR WORLD PEACE, THE EQUITABLE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES, AND THROUGH CONCERN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, THE PROPER CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT."

Dalai Lama

Canada has strayed dangerously far from our peacemaking roots. Canada's international policy has evolved into what is called a "3-D" model. The D's are diplomacy, development and defence. This integrative approach has achieved only a fraction of its full potential because the bureaucratic structure in Ottawa has not been reformed to prevent the inevitable competition for power and influence between departments. Consequently, the effectiveness of Canada's international activity has been unnecessarily limited.

Inspired political leadership to reverse this trend is missing. In fact, the opposite of such leadership is the norm. We face a dramatic diplomatic deficit internationally, as the core capacity of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT) is increasingly undermined and eroded by the current Harper administration.

The Green Party will re-establish Canada among the global leaders in peace-building, peacekeeping, and international diplomacy. We were proud of Canada's decision to say "no" to joining the U.S. invasion of Iraq. We believe our foreign policy objectives must include multilateral disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and support for United Nations peacekeeping operations.

The Green Party sees international law and its institutions as the roots of international justice and stability. Detainment without access to a fair trial and the use of torture in questioning suspects held in

military or any other detention centers contravenes international human rights treaties and institutions. Respect for international law and international conventions is not only the baseline for moral activity but is, in fact, the foundation of a just and secure world. We must no longer turn a blind eye to incarceration practices that weaken international law and civil society and therefore represent a deeper, long-term security threat.

The Green Party will restore the capacity for superb diplomacy, a traditional Canadian strength. We will increase our overseas development assistance and revamp the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to focus more on developing green economies and on poverty alleviation. We will expand our defence role in UN-led peacekeeping missions and in emergency and disaster relief and equip it accordingly.

Green Party MPs will:

- Re-align our defence spending to increase our capacity and speed in delivering disaster assistance (e.g. through the DART – Disaster Assistance Rapid Response Team) and our contributions to UN peacekeeping forces and missions, and decrease our contributions to NATO war efforts.
- Rebuild the broken linkages among Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT), National Defence and the Canadian Forces (DND/CF), and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), to effectively and efficiently plan, organize, and execute our missions abroad.
- Play a lead role in establishing a standing UN Rapid Response Force with a mandate for peacekeeping and environmental restoration in both international crisis situations and domestic catastrophes like floods, earthquakes, storms and fires.
- Instruct Canadian Embassies and Consulates around the world to develop effective early disaster reconnaissance and assessment capabilities in order to speed up Canadian response times.
- Oppose the use of the United Nations Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine as a military solution to force aid relief on countries that are rejecting it.
- Focus Canada's development aid efforts and economic investment in the specific key areas that:
 1. Foster alternative fuels and energy sources that dramatically reduce the need to import oil and natural gas and further allow the growth of recipient nation independent and/or majority ownership of these sectors and/or businesses as they develop.
 2. Focus on agriculture sectors that provide for food sovereignty through both subsistence farming and domestic commercial farming methods that are in keeping with green environmentally sound and gender equality principles
 3. Increase bilateral trade, where possible, to facilitate the export of value added products from small island economies.
 4. Support and strengthen cooperation with regional organizations to further the goal of regional independence and sovereignty.
- Advance the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and ensure its principles are at the core of Canadian foreign policy.

- Support the transition from a Department of Defence into a Department of Peace and Security.
- Review Canada's membership in military alliances including NATO and NORAD to ensure they are meeting Canada's priorities of diplomacy, development and defence.
- Press urgently for global nuclear disarmament and the conversion of military industries in Canada and worldwide into peaceful and restorative industries.
- Pursue international criminal investigations of existing military detention centers where human rights violations have been reported in Iraq, Cuba, Afghanistan and elsewhere, and strongly advocate for the closure of all military detention centres that exist outside of international law
- Oppose the use of Canada's public institutions for the development of military technology.
- Oppose the development or deployment of space-based weapons on Canadian soil or in Canadian waters.
- Oppose the militarization of space.
- Insist on the adherence to the Geneva Convention by Canada and its allies.
- Advocate that responses to terrorism must be carried out within a framework consistent with international law. Terrorism must be fought with the traditional tools of criminal investigation and prosecution.
- Promote the Earth Charter and seek its endorsement by the Canadian Parliament.
- Propose that Canada fulfill its obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity by providing new and substantial funding for nature conservation in developing countries and by implementing policies aimed at protecting biodiversity throughout the world. (Spur the government of Canada into taking the lead in organizing and arranging financing.)
- Advocate gathering comprehensive collections of crop plants, varieties, and domestic animal breeds of the world able to preserve the genetic diversity required to safeguard the future of the human supply of food, fibre and other biological products. (This genetic heritage will be especially needed for low-input systems of farming suited to a resource-frugal future.)
- Promote the recognition that the preservation of wild nature and the whole community of life, globally, nationally and locally, is of crucial importance, not only for its own sake but also for developing sustainable agriculture and forestry systems in the future.
- Advocate that the Government of Canada encourage all levels of government in Canada to take effective action to protect, preserve and enhance wild nature and the community of life.

“WE MUST BASE OURSELVES IN INTERNATIONAL LAW. IT IS THE ROCK YOU CAN STAND ON WHEN THINGS BECOME CONFUSING.”

Paul Heinbecker, Former Ambassador for Canada to the United Nations
February 17, 2007 address to the Green Party foreign policy forum

5.2 Making poverty history

The current state of planetary health and equity is not encouraging. Despite years of rhetoric and broken promises, despite real progress in development, the number of people living in absolute poverty, defined as living on less than U.S. \$2 a day, is now nearly half of the world's population. Those living on half that now number 1.2 billion people.

Poverty is fatal. An estimated fifty thousand people die from poverty-related causes every day. The situation for children under five is worse. Every three seconds a child in poverty dies.

Canadians have rallied to the call to Make Poverty History. In 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit, Canada re-committed to increasing Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to 0.7% of our gross domestic product (GDP). This commitment reaffirmed a target set by Canada three decades earlier. In 1992, Canadian ODA stood at 0.45% of GDP. In the "program review," deficit-cutting era of the Chrétien Liberals, ODA dropped to 0.25% of GDP in 2000/2001. Subsequently, in 2002, Chrétien set a goal for 8% annual increases in ODA. Yet, when the Harper government came to power, Canada was still below 1992 levels.

Based on 2009 announcements, government aid commitments may be increasing, but transparency is missing. It is clear, however, that under the Harper government, the development priorities have shifted more than usual to strategic priorities even though they were always quietly influenced by non-poverty concerns. Currently, the largest recipient of Canadian ODA is Afghanistan.⁶

More disturbing is the politicization of aid decisions. Organizations with a great track record for effective delivery of poverty reduction strategies have been targeted, and their funding eliminated, by the Harper government. Funds for groups such as Planned Parenthood, MATCH and KAIROS have been cut. Likewise, the Canadian Council for International Co-operation, the over-arching umbrella groups for all Canadian development NGOs, has seen all its federal support cancelled. The forgery of the CIDA documentation created a scandal, but this is more than a "scandal of the week." The pattern of interference cuts into the effectiveness of Canada's aid. Ideologically-based attacks on good organizations, because they advocate for access to abortions, or women's rights, or climate action and social justice, diminish Canada's reputation in the world.

The Green Party believes that those development NGOs in Canada with consistent and evidence-based, effective and reliable programmes deserve respect and fair treatment.

⁶ Canadian International Development Agency. 2009. Canada's Statistical Report on International Assistance Fiscal Year 2006-2007. Gatineau: CIDA, Available: www.acdi-cida.gc.ca Accessed September 2009.

Meanwhile, we will work tirelessly to ensure that Canada meet its commitment to allocate 0.7% of GDP to ODA and meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). By offering far less than one one-hundredth of our GDP, we can help our world meet the most basic of goals: to make poverty history, reduce disease, foster democracy, and support ecologically sustainable economies.

We will ensure our commitments for the provision of HIV/AIDS retroviral drugs for Africa is fulfilled, and that Africa will be a significant focus of our development priorities. This will include support for African plans for adaptation to the increasingly devastating impacts of climate change in Africa.

“I SAID EARLIER THIS YEAR THAT WE ARE ‘SLEEPWALKING TOWARDS DISASTER.’ IN TRUTH, IT IS WORSE THAN THAT – WE ARE ASLEEP AT THE CONTROLS OF A FAST-MOVING AIRCRAFT. UNLESS WE WAKE UP AND TAKE CONTROL, THE OUTCOME IS ALL TOO PREDICTABLE.”

Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General to the United Nations, November 28, 2006

Green Party MPs will:

- Prioritize the restructuring of ODA delivery while making responsible and consistent increases that will achieve the target of 0.7% of GDP within a decade.
- Revamp CIDA to focus more on developing community-based green economies, on poverty alleviation and programs to combat and adapt to climate change, especially strengthening its Partnership Branch for the delivery of ODA.
- Fulfill our commitments for the provision of HIV/AIDS retroviral drugs to Africa.
- Instruct Canadian embassies and consulates around the world to develop effective and rapid disaster reconnaissance and assessment capabilities in order to greatly speed up Canadian response time.
- Oppose using the United Nations R2P (Responsibility to Protect) doctrine after a natural disaster, to force aid relief on governments refusing it, as military rather than diplomatic solution, as counterproductive.
- Restore funding to KAIROS, CCIC, MATCH and Planned Parenthood.

5.3 International Financial Transaction Tax

Globally, support is growing for an international Financial Transaction Tax (FTT). The proposal is strongly supported by France and its President, Nicolas Sarkozy, and has the backing of Germany, Belgium and others. The Harper Government is a leading opponent.

The concept of an international FTT is a very small tax that is placed on all “speculative” financial transactions. The initial proposal, known as the Tobin Tax (in reference to its first advocate, Nobel Laureate James Tobin), was to be a global tax applied only to currency speculation. This concept has since been expanded to include a small tax on hedge funds, derivatives and bonds.

On March 23, 1999 the Canadian House of Commons passed Motion M-239 by a vote of 164 to 83: "That, in the opinion of the House, the government should enact a tax on financial transactions in concert with the international community."

At the time, Finance Minister Paul Martin and most of the governing Liberal party supported the opposition New Democratic Party in favour of the Motion, but it was non-binding and was not acted upon without prior international acceptance.

The economic collapse of 2008 was a result of “casino capitalism,” an international casino where gamblers bet on speculative, unsustainable investments. Durable financial transactions could not compete with the return on investment (ROI) achieved in the casino when the bubble was growing. And as demonstrated in 2008, those bubbles inevitably burst.

When James Tobin described his idea, it was to “cool down the hot money.” So much currency speculation was taking place, thanks to the decision to allow currency to set its own level in the market (it had previously been set by the International Monetary Fund), that the health and stability of whole societies could be up-ended by the currency devaluations caused by billionaire gamblers. One such gambler, George Soros, famously once devalued the British pound. The 1994 peso crisis, the collapse of the so-called Asian Tigers in 1997-98, the currency devaluations of the Thai baht and others throughout Southeast Asia, and the Russian currency crisis in 1999 have all been linked to the impacts of rampant currency speculation.

The 2008 economic meltdown went far beyond the currency speculators and included the trading of sub-prime mortgages, which built up in speculative value far in excess of real assets. The crash that ensued left the billionaires dusting off their trousers. The poor were impacted the most, the middle class was traumatized, and governments bailed out the gamblers, including major financial institutions, using the “too big to fail” argument.

A further concern from the development community is the growing impact of gambling in commodities, which is driving up prices on oil and food.

The proposal is for a tax of 0.05% on all speculative transactions -- or 5 cents on every \$1000 invested. The goal is to create some funds for governments to be prepared if speculation once again creates a disaster. It is also, as Tobin suggested, just enough money to take the edge off of multi-billion dollar transaction, but not deter prudent investment.

The “Robin Hood” element is that these funds should be directed to achieving the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDG) (see Overseas Development Assistance note). We agree with France that the tax should be collected and kept in international funds, with at least 50% directed to achieving MDG goals as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The Green Party believes a FTT will contribute to enhanced global stability while efficiently providing much-needed funds to fight global poverty. The Canadian Parliament passed a non-binding, all-party resolution favoring the similarly designed Tobin Tax in 1999. It is time to act on this declaration of support.

Green MPs will:

- Make the Financial Transaction Tax (FTT) a priority in international relations.

- Negotiate to bring a FTT within the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) as a prerequisite for admission to the World Trade Organization. The focus on the FTT in multilateral negotiations is long overdue.

5.4 Press for the elimination of all nuclear weapons

According to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, and leading Canadian experts like former Ambassador for Disarmament, the Hon. Douglas Roche, the world has quietly entered a second nuclear age. On January 17, 2007, world scientists moved the hands on the “Doomsday Clock” two minutes closer to midnight in light of the dual threats of climate change and the increasing effort to build nuclear weapons. Not since the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki has the world been closer to the threat of nuclear war. Canada has simply not been doing its part to stop the spread of nuclear weapons and to protest when allies violate the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In fact, Canada continues to press for sales of its CANDU nuclear technology around the world, without adequate safeguards. Canada has sold reactors to dictatorships, such as Argentina in the junta era. The Canadian research reactor waste in India allowed that nation to join the nuclear club. Phasing out nuclear energy as an aspect of nuclear military disarmament is essential. The Harper government’s decision to sell nuclear materials to India is in contravention to the terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, concluded at the 2010 G-20 meeting, further eroding limits on nuclear weapons and global respect for the rule of law.

The Green Party of Canada strives for global disarmament, and for the conversion of all military industries in Canada and worldwide into peaceful, sustainable industries. We, at the Green Party, realize that it is difficult for a single country to disarm unilaterally under the threat of another arming state, and that disarmament can be best achieved multilaterally, in harmony and communion universally, and at a global level, notably through the UN.

Green Party MPs will:

- Press for a new Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty at the UN to provide impetus for a renewed commitment among nations to the peaceful dismantling of nuclear arsenals world-wide and a renewed commitment among nations to preventing the dissemination of military-use nuclear technology and materials.
- Declare Canada a nuclear-free zone.
- End subsidies to Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (AECL) for promoting reactor sales abroad, and refuse to finance such “sales” with tax dollars.
- Strengthen the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency to prevent nuclear reactor fuels from finding their way into nuclear weapons.
- Press NATO allies to get out of the nuclear weapons business.
- Move rapidly to multi-lateral negotiations to eliminate all nuclear stockpiles and prevent rebuilding of nuclear arsenals using such UN processes as the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CNTBT), a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, taking U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons off alert status, legally binding guarantees by nuclear weapons states not to attack non-nuclear states, and enhanced verification techniques.

“IN PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, THE GREEN PARTY SHOULD ALSO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPERATIVE OF THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.”

The Hon. Douglas Roche, O.C., February 17, 2007
Addressing the Green Party foreign policy forum

5.5 Reform the United Nations

The United Nations (UN) has grown since its foundation by 50 countries in 1945 to 192 members today: it is the only international organization to which virtually every country belongs. The UN has sent 63 peacekeeping missions into areas of conflict and peacefully resolved at least 175 international disputes. Unfortunately, the UN suffered a “crisis of credibility” in 2003 when the UN Security Council split over the use of force in Iraq to oust Saddam Hussein. The U.S.-led war against Iraq was clearly illegal under international law. At the same time, the UN has proved ineffective in preventing genocide, as in Rwanda.

The Green Party supports the role of the UN in diplomatic intervention and international peacekeeping, including acting with a “responsibility to protect” people in situations where a state is not protecting its own citizens, such as in Darfur. We believe Canada can and must increase its commitment to the UN and that there must be significant UN reform to make the organization more effective, especially within the UN Security Council. The Security Council vetoes must be re-examined in a post-Cold War context. More balance in north-south representation must be achieved within the Security Council.

Green Party MPs will:

- Increase our commitment of resources, especially funds for peacekeeping and adequate training and provisioning of troops, to the United Nations.
- Promote the democratic reform of the UN Security Council to include more balance in north-south representation, and ending the use of vetoes.
- Re-organize other powerful multilateral institutions -- the World Trade Organization (WTO), the IMF and the World Bank -- placing these institutions under the authority of the UN General Assembly, and shift the direction of international trade away from "free trade" to "fair trade" focusing on the global protection of human rights, labour standards, cultural diversity, and ecosystems.
- Move to make the UN Environment Program (UNEP) a funded organization of the UN system from its current status where donations from member nations are voluntary. Expand the UNEP mandate to a supervisory one over all multilateral environmental treaties, much like the WTO supervises all trade agreements within the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).
- Launch a global dialogue on the notion of a bicameral UN, with one house being the General Assembly of nation-state representatives, and a Peoples’ Assembly, as in the European Parliament, with direct election on behalf of the worlds’ peoples.

5.6 Redesign Canada's role in Afghanistan

The overall political and security situation in Afghanistan continues to worsen even as progress on security is made in specific districts. Continued heavy combat involvement from a narrow group of Western nations, and the heavy emphasis by the NATO/U.S command on military tactics and operations, stimulates rather than dampens the insurgency given the history and culture of the region.

The NATO/U.S. reaction to greater insurgent recruitment and fighting further unbalances the mission as ever more resources are channelled to security rather than development. The Taliban benefits from and intends this self-perpetuating cycle of violence, because their strategic time frame is much longer and their month-to-month operational costs substantially lower. Most disturbing, there is less and less real difference between the oppression of women and abuse of power by some powerful factions within the Afghan government and the Taliban they replaced.

Despite this disheartening situation, there is also a very high risk that the immediate removal of all foreign troops would lead to the outbreak of a full-scale civil war and a humanitarian catastrophe. Accordingly, the Green Party believes we need to shift as rapidly as possible away from the current U.S.-led NATO command mission, to a United Nations command effort with more regional representation, more appropriate socio-economic development, and a greater security role for the Afghan National Army. This transformation in the composition/command of the international effort in Afghanistan will improve the probability that, over time, conditions will emerge for a viable political settlement.

Events in neighbouring areas are creating the dangerous risk of a larger regional war. It must be remembered and understood that it was outside influences that gave rise to the Taliban and their eventual triumph in Afghanistan.

The Green Party does not consider NATO to be the appropriate force for security operations against an insurgency in the Afghanistan/Pakistan region. Accordingly, we do not support further Canadian participation in the NATO-led mission to Afghanistan, but neither do we believe that all of our troops should be withdrawn from Afghanistan. We support, as part of our withdrawal from the NATO mission, a continued small Canadian security presence, to further the development of the logistics support functions of the Afghan National Army, in order to accelerate their independent operational capacity.

Crucial to success will be innovative and appropriate development and diplomatic strategies that target deep structural poverty and gain the good will and support of Afghans. That is why we fully support the recommendations put forward by the international Senlis Council to create a legal poppy-growing economy in Southern Afghanistan that would supply low-cost narcotic medicines to developing countries as part of a renewed international aid effort. Together with this support of the Senlis Council recommendation for Poppies for Medicine (P4M) is also the need for increased support of other traditional agricultural products and harvests.

Although it is a slow and long-term process, diplomatic efforts must be increased to improve domestic governance mechanisms and democratic institutions. The Afghan government also needs to be strengthened institutionally and practically so that it no longer succumbs to the corruption of drug lords.

Green Party MPs will:

- Invest in more robust diplomatic efforts focusing on improving domestic governance mechanisms and democratic institutions and protecting the slowly emerging democracy and civil society in Afghanistan. Expand diplomatic and intelligence efforts to identify Taliban strongholds in Pakistan and press the Pakistan government to act in concert with the UN to bring Taliban insurgents to justice.
- Promote the Senlis Council recommendations that Canada take the lead in implementing a comprehensive strategy to break the cycle of illicit poppy growing and violence that has kept Afghanistan in turmoil for decades with a licensing and quota system for growing poppies and selling the products to legal drug firms that produce morphine and codeine for legitimate legal painkilling use. This legal opium market will produce essential medicines to help the millions of people in developing countries (including Afghanistan itself) who are unnecessarily dying in pain because they don't have access to these medicines. Green MPs will also urge Canada to purchase such opiate drugs and distribute them as part of our health and poverty-related ODA programs.
- Focus and strengthen CIDA efforts on poverty alleviation, reconstruction and development programs to supplement opium cultivation in Afghanistan. We will expand economic assistance and technical support for agriculture in the south and east of Afghanistan through access to credit, loans, and grants, for the purpose of developing multi-use farms with the further development of water infrastructure for irrigation and potable water supplies.
- Protect the right of Afghans to maintain the control over and the right to ownership of their resources and infrastructure and oppose privatization of natural resources in Afghanistan as part of reconstruction programs.
- Extend an offer to the Afghan government to provide up to 200 Canadian military logistics and legal experts to assist in accelerating development of the Afghan National Army. Capacity-building will also include training in international human rights law and the Geneva Convention. This will be outside of NATO command, subject to a bilateral agreement between Canada and Afghanistan, and limited to two years. They will be mandated to document human rights violations with a commitment to bring any breaches or war crimes, including rape, to the appropriate military and/or war crimes tribunal.
- Push for a UN-brokered regional peace conference to help bring stability to the region through non-aggression and respectful co-existence, with regard for the semi-autonomous history of the region. Such a conference should be broadly inclusive of all nations and tribal leaders in the large surrounding area.

5.7 Africa

We must work to end the international plundering of Africa's natural resources and turn our attention to supporting the emergence of strong African nations with full respect for their sovereignty. We need support the African Union's leadership role in establishing cooperative peace and security treaties between countries, and reinforce solutions created by Africans for Africans. Now is not the time to abandon the African continent by withdrawing our support .

The Canada Fund for Africa has come to an end. Some programs will continue but the Harper government is very vague as to what our real commitment is to Africa.

At a time when Canadians are being told not to allow Afghanistan to regress into chaos we have the Canadian government withdrawing from Africa. Not only withdrawing financial aid but peacekeeping operations. Africa needs a renewed commitment from Canada both financially and through peacekeeping.

5.8 Stopping the genocide in Darfur

The Darfur crisis in western Sudan has claimed perhaps as many as half a million lives since it began in 2003. More than 2.5 million people have fled the area and are now refugees. The ethnic groups that are the subject of targeted joint attacks by the Sudanese government and Janjaweed, a rebel militia force, face genocide.

In Southern Sudan, more than 98% of voters cast their ballots in favour of independence from Sudan in the January, 2011 referendum. Southern Sudan borders on Darfur. It is feared that the democratic success of the recent referendum has taken world eyes from Darfur. The situation, already deemed by the United Nations 'the world's worst humanitarian crisis', continues to deteriorate.

In August 2006, the UN Security Council approved sending peacekeepers to supplement the African Union (AU) Stabilization Force there already. Sudan strongly objected, deeming the UN personnel 'foreign invaders'. The combined UN-AU group continues to be plagued by serious lack of resources. Canada has provided a limited amount of equipment, and, as of April 2010, 34 Canadians were among the peacekeepers.

We must stop the catastrophe unfolding in Darfur. Climate change and environmental degradation are at the origin of the conflict. The crisis is crying out for global intervention and Canadian statesmanship. The Rwandan genocide must not be repeated through a failure of political will and heart. Canadian Greens believe Canada should assume leadership in rapidly organizing an international emergency initiative to deal decisively and effectively with the situation.

Based on the Green Party's holistic approach to international affairs, we reiterate our consistent pleas for action of past years but now urgently call on Canada to assume leadership by taking an immediate 'whole of government' approach to bring a stop to the fighting and provide humanitarian assistance on an urgent basis.

Green Party MPs will:

- Demand the government of Sudan fully comply with UN Security Council resolutions.
- Press the UN Security Council to apply sanctions against any violation of negotiated ceasefires or attacks on civilians, humanitarian workers or peacekeepers, and interpret and enforce its mandate to the fullest extent possible.
- Provide new, increased financial, political and logistical support to the UN/AU mission in Sudan, to help quickly strengthen its capacity to protect civilians at risk.

- Ensure Canadian diplomatic assistance, as determined by the African Union, to keep all parties negotiating towards a new comprehensive peace agreement that delivers democracy, shared power, shared wealth and stability, while securing adherence to existing agreements.
- Mobilize additional emergency humanitarian aid and support organizations struggling to deliver essentials to those in desperate need both in Darfur and nearby.
- Support women's effective participation in governance and sustained support to building women's capacities and visibility in the political sphere, based on the joint North-South women's agreement, 'Sudanese Women Vision of the Referendum Scenarios'.
- Recognize the larger regional factors of the conflict, and offer diplomatic and development assistance to accelerate further peace-building and cooperation among neighbouring nations and through existing regional organizations.
- Engage and encourage the AU and the Great Lakes Pact signatories to declare and enshrine access to water as a basic human right within their respective agreements and constitutions.
- Refocus long-term aid on efforts to cope with desertification, drought and climate change.
- Recognize the larger collective need for development throughout the region, and the futility of and excessive financial burden of military solutions, and immediately move to accelerate poverty alleviation and development of sustainable communities and strong, sovereign governments on the African continent.

5.9 Address the crisis of global population growth

The world's population has been growing at an exponential rate. Two thousand years ago, when the historical Jesus of Nazareth was born, he was one of an estimated 200 million people on the planet. It took 1,500 years for human numbers on the planet to double to 400 million. In the last fifty years alone, human numbers have more than doubled from 3 billion to almost 7 billion in 2011. The United Nations estimates that, thanks in part to reduced fertility levels, the population will not double again, but should stabilize at 9 billion people by 2050.

The Worldwatch Institute warned us in 1999 as we reached the 6 billion mark, that we were outrunning our water supply. Water tables were already falling on every continent, rivers were being drained dry before reaching the sea, and millions of people were lacking enough to satisfy basic needs. The question of the Earth's carrying capacity is a critical one. We only have one Earth. Exceeding it has dire consequences.

While consumption is a key issue, so is technology. Our ability to split the atom, and exhume fossil fuels from their burial places to burn them at profligate rates, threatens to tip the planet from its life sustaining cycles into catastrophic die-offs of human and non-human life forms.

Issues of migration, trade, equity, militarism and environmental degradation are all important factors in the question of whether there are too many humans. Yet, ideas for curbing population growth have, in the past, been ineffective and unacceptable. Some have violated basic human rights. Forced sterilizations of women are but one example of the worst kind of inhumane population policies.

Fortunately, the solution to population growth is within our grasp. It is well established that when poverty is alleviated and particularly when women and girls are educated, and have access to primary health care and family planning, political autonomy and economic power, fertility rates drop. This has been demonstrated time and time again, in nations around the Earth. One particularly instructive example is Saudi Arabia. It is the only nation where high levels of literacy and health care and economic well-being have not led to declining fertility. Women there lack economic rights and political autonomy. All elements are essential to respect women's human rights and to reduce the dangerous spiral in population numbers as much as possible.

Green Party MPs will:

- Significantly increase Canadian overseas development assistance focused on improving the education, and the social and economic power and status, of women and girls.
- Integrate goals for reduced fertility into the overall efforts to eliminate poverty.
- Ensure that maternal health programmes funded by Canada do not limit access to any form of family planning and primary health care, including access to safe, legal abortions.
- Address the problem of global overpopulation through a foreign policy committed to environmentally sustainable local economies, improving education and health care, and fostering political and economic rights of women as equal participants in society.
- Integrate goals for improved health care and spreading knowledge of birth control methods and efforts that increase the availability of birth control equipment and supplies into the overall efforts to eliminate poverty.
- Provide development aid to assist countries in building up their capacity to support improved public services and provide greater income security for support in old age so that security is not dependent on the number of one's children.
- Recognize that the high level of per capita resource consumption in developed countries makes the impact of their populations much more serious.
- Realize that failure to stabilize and reduce human population within a reasonable time will result in the inevitable reduction of human population by means of high death rates as the Earth's human carrying capacity is not only exceeded but reduced by the consumption of resources and the destruction of biological capital, resulting in poverty, starvation, disease, great human suffering and possibly social disruption.

5.10 Rebuild Canada's traditional diplomatic muscle

The Canadian Foreign Service is suffering from the neglect of successive governments. The Harper government, in particular, has underestimated the importance of a robust diplomatic corps with highly-trained officers.

Canada has traditionally had a fine foreign service. Its officers represent a standard of excellence envied by the world.

Green Party MPs will:

- Restore adequate financial support to the hiring and training of an outstanding Canadian foreign service and embassies, consular services and High Commissions around the world.

5.11 The Israel – Palestine Conflict

The conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians is often viewed as intractable and irresolvable. More than three regional wars and two Intifadas have left deep scars on the bodies and in the minds of the people of this troubled region. Strongly held views and historical claims are well entrenched on both sides, making this a complex and crucial conflict to understand. It is an unfortunate and continued source of tension for many in the Middle East and around the world.

It should be clear that continued support and use of military or insurgency strategies will not bring about an end to the conflict. The cycle of violence, loss of life and desecration of human rights must come to an end.

The Green Party of Canada believes that any effort aimed only at one side in this conflict will not end the violent responses that exacerbate human suffering. Canada's role in the Middle East should be to reduce tensions, find working solutions and uphold international humanitarian law, not to take sides in this chronic conflict. We must work towards a mutually acceptable compromise that will achieve a lasting peace between, and among, the Israelis and Palestinians.

The Green Party supports a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict that addresses the security, economic, and religious concerns of the both sides.

Diplomatic efforts to build constructive relationships between the two communities are required. Continued dialogue will build community support for the negotiated peace agreement, and will ease implementation and ensure that it does not break down from pressures within the Palestinian and Israeli communities.

Green Party MPs will:

- Endorse the recognition of a Palestinian right to statehood within the internationally recognized borders as described in United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, and support a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict that adheres to pre-1967 borders and incorporates an international plan for stimulating economic prosperity in both nations.
- Call on both sides to immediately stop the killing of civilians and adhere to international law.
- Protect as inviolable the right of the State of Israel to exist, in the absence of fear and conflict..
- Encourage the Canadian government to press for a mutually agreed-upon honest broker to engage in bi-literal and multi-lateral peace talks involving Palestinians and Israelis.

- Call on Arab countries to use their influence to broker an agreement between Hamas and the Palestinian National Authority to facilitate the promotion of peace amongst the competing Palestinian interests.
- Call for an end to the collective siege of Gaza so that medical and humanitarian aid can be provided.
- Actively support the efforts of civil society groups working for peace, human rights, and justice in the region.

5.12 Iran

Lost diplomacy, false rhetoric, and internal power struggles in Iran have led to an election crisis, human rights violations and the present impasse. The brutal suppression of the spirit of democracy in early 2011 strengthens our resolve to see justice and democracy prevail.

The Green Party of Canada unequivocally condemns the human rights situation in Iran. This includes torture, arbitrary arrests, gross miscarriages of Iranian justice and, most disturbing, the death of detainees while in custody. We call upon the Canadian government to reach out to moderate clerics and elected members of the Iranian Majlis to speak out and resist these violations. It is impossible to view the recent Iranian internal crisis in isolation. The history of external interference and repeated rejection of offers of dialogue from past moderate leaders, especially the false ‘Axis of Evil’ doctrine, has contributed greatly to a continued threat against real democracy and human rights in Iran. Equally, corruption and false rhetoric employed by some Iranian leaders widens the divide between the government and the Iranian people.

The Green Party recognizes the rich history of the Persian people, their culture, and the desire of Iranian citizens for peace. The highly educated Iranian civil society should be supported through active, cooperative engagement accompanied by public overtures of dialogue with the Iranian government. There can be no long-term stability in the Middle East if Iran is continually isolated. Real change must come from the Iranian people who in turn must receive a clear signal that nations like Canada not only understand this but are prepared to act in a peaceful, cooperative direction. It is imperative that the mistakes in recent decades not be repeated.

The Iranian economy and environment have suffered greatly from neglect and mismanagement and this plays a significant role in the internal struggle between the government and Iranian people as a whole. Iran faces increasing desertification and soil erosion, putting water and agricultural resources under future threat. Suspected corruption and the suspicions held by many Iranians concerning the safety of Iran’s nuclear program amplify this economic and environmental dilemma. The Green Party recognizes and supports the enormous work of Iranian women who lead the Iranian environmental movement.

The Green Party of Canada condemns the development of, and possession of nuclear weapons by any nation. We believe the dependence on oil and nuclear energy contributes far too much to global military conflict. Global security can only be achieved through peace, democracy and real diplomacy.

The Green Party believes that the Canadian government should begin to develop a truly independent foreign policy toward Iran.

Green Party MPs will:

- Actively re-engage Iran in a new diplomacy, fully cognizant of the history of the region and internal politics of Iran.
- Encourage the creation of cooperative programs that offer Iranian civil society members such as lawyers, legislators, judges, civil engineers, environmentalists and other professionals to directly engage with their professional counterparts in Canada.
- Support the Iranian people in their quest to strengthen, through peaceful means, the democratic process within Iran.
- Condemn all human rights violations and judicial trials in which torture or police brutality is used.
- Support the environmental movement in Iran by working with other countries and the Iranian government to develop cooperative projects within Iran to address the increasing environmental degradation threatening the country.
- Call for full Iranian government cooperation with all IAEA inspections and requests concerning Iran's nuclear program.
- Offer any and all diplomatic assistance that facilitates engagement and dialogue between Iran and its regional neighbours to ease tensions and foster the stability and peace desired by citizens of the entire region.

5.13 Maintaining a healthy relationship with our closest neighbour

Canada must never ignore the importance of a healthy relationship with the United States. No matter who is in the White House and no matter how different our national perspectives may be, a close relationship is dictated through geography, history and trade. Canada's level of respect and influence in the world is strangely measured both by how well we work with the United States, as well as by how well we simultaneously hold our course if different from that of the White House. That relationship must be built at many levels: federal government to federal government, as well as federal government to civil society, and other levels of government.

Canada and the United States share much. At the core of our relationship must be a respectful tone, even when we disagree. Together we should be capable of advancing shared democratic ideals, and developing continental strategies for greater peace and security.

Core trading relationships are fundamental to both economies. Protecting those trade relationships depends more on mutual self-interest than on facile agreement.

Green Party MPs will:

- Build and strengthen relations with all levels of U.S. government – municipal, state and federal – and with U.S. civil society.
- Expand networking opportunities for corporate Canada with an emphasis on small business to promote Canadian exports.
- Expand partnerships among cultural institutions, scientific research organizations, universities, and municipalities.

- Expand and promote mutual tourism opportunities, especially for young people, through low-carbon VIA-Amtrak partnerships.
- Promote Canada to U.S. visitors as a “Safe and Friendly Neighbour” to help break down the fear factor that increasingly isolates our U.S. neighbours from the world.
- Develop shared missions to alleviate global poverty and show leadership on environmental goals.
- Launch an adept rapid response to U.S. media myths about Canada. Act within minutes to correct false statements about lax Canadian security, urban myths about any link to 9/11 terrorists and Canadian immigration laws. Stay positive, friendly, but firm.
- Expand public awareness in both nations of our extraordinary good fortune and our ability and moral obligation to help less fortunate globally.

5.14 Africa

We must work to end the international plundering of Africa’s natural resources and turn our attention to supporting the emergence of strong, African nations with full respect for their sovereignty.

We need to follow and support the African Union’s leadership role in establishing cooperative peace and security treaties between countries and reinforce solutions created by Africans for Africans. Now is not the time to abandon or withdraw our support to the African continent.

The Canada Fund for Africa has come to an end. Some programs will continue but the government is very vague as to what our real commitment is to Africa.

At a time when Canadians are being told not to allow Afghanistan to regress into chaos we have the Canadian government withdrawing from Africa. Not only withdrawing financial aid but peacekeeping operations. Africa needs a renewed commitment from Canada both financially and through peacekeeping.

5.15 Latin and South American partnerships

Green Party MPs will:

- Build neutral, independent partnerships with Latin and South American countries that display and reflect Green principles by:
- Actively engaging those countries in creating partnerships in development aid and economic investment that promote our mutual ideals of Fair Trade and promotion of strong civil society, human rights and respect for indigenous peoples and the environment;
- Offering diplomatic assistance in furthering common objectives;
- Promoting and supporting the development of mutual peace and cooperation accords that respect sovereignty between The Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA)-aligned states and other states; and
- Denouncing all outside interference that promotes internal violence and/or the violent overthrow of democratically elected governments in the regions.

5.16 Haiti

At the end of the year 2003, Haiti was a nation struggling to overcome two centuries of brutal dictatorships, and ecological disaster. Haiti had succeeded twice in peacefully transferring power from one democratic government to another. It was denied a third chance due to international interference and a violent coup d'état.

Then, in January of 2010, a catastrophic earthquake hit Haiti, killing over 200,000 people and leaving 1.3 million people homeless. Survivors are still facing water, housing and food shortages and, starting in the fall of 2010, a major cholera epidemic. Haiti needs Canada's help more than ever.

Green Party MPs will:

- Expand emergency and long-term aid to help Haiti recover and rebuild from the 2010 earthquake and subsequent health crises.
- Call for a full, independent inquiry into Canada's role leading up to the collapse of the democratic government of Haiti in February 2004 and its role in supporting a non-elected government guilty of committing human rights abuses.
- Support ecological reforestation projects that address both forest recovery and commercially viable tree crops that holds more monetary value for its crop yield than its value as wood and further continue the development of and/or support for the development of alternative energy sources such as wind and solar that can eventually eliminate the need for wood as cooking fuel while also significantly reducing the need for foreign oil and gas importation.
- Provide funding for the long-term support and expansion of a Haitian Ministry of the Environment including the training of forest rangers and agents with the responsibilities of monitoring and enforcing environmental laws and forest protection against human interference.
- Press for the speedy resolution of land title issues currently preventing the rebuilding of permanent housing and infrastructure. If necessary, move to an international land resolution approach to resolve the impasse quickly.
- Continue to assist the Haitian government with international/bilateral debt reduction and/or debt forgiveness.

5.17 Trade and sovereignty

Robert Frost wrote that good fences make good neighbours. The Green Party supports fair, global trade. We support trade built on the principles of global equity, Canadian sovereignty, human rights, and the environment.

Over the last fifteen years, international free trade agreements have become an important part of Canada's economy. Despite acknowledged benefits, there are some clauses and sections in these agreements that are not balanced. They put foreign and corporate business interests first.

Trade isn't just about the export and import of goods and services. Trade agreements also impact on human rights, labour standards, cultural diversity, environmental laws and even constitutional rights. The North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), for example, limits our government's will to enact new environmental legislation, labour standards and human rights laws because they might be challengeable under NAFTA. Many Canadians and public policy think tanks now admit that NAFTA has not lived up to its promises. Some failures include: promises that the income benefits of NAFTA would be widely shared; promises that NAFTA-led integration would increase productivity; promises that NAFTA would help us escape the resource export trap as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

The Green Party supports fair trade that puts sovereignty, human rights, and the environment first and not trade agreements that put the rights of multi-national corporations first.

We recognize that trade is an important component of a sustainable economy but that it cannot hamper or undermine sovereign efforts to protect and enhance local quality of life and build local economies.

The Green Party is about transforming – shifting mind sets, shifting taxes, shifting emphasis in trade from a failed free trade model to a proven fair trade model, and it is about shifting emphasis from global to local development. We recognize the costs and limitations that fossil fuels will increasingly place on global trade and transportation, and the need for local and community participation to achieve sustainable communities.

Green Party MPs will work in each of the following areas related to trade agreements:

NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (NAFTA):

- Immediately provide the required six months' notice of withdrawal from NAFTA.
- Exempt bulk water transfers.
- Re-negotiate the NAFTA energy provision, recognizing Canada's need for an energy reserve and its own long-term energy security, control over exports to be governed by environmental frameworks, and an emphasis on getting inter-provincial agreements in place first.
- Remove offensive disciplines, such as democratic decision making tribunals, specifically Chapter 11.
- Rewrite a fair trade agreement based on principles that protect human rights, workers' rights, jobs, and community rights, that recognize limits to resources, and ensure that Canada retains its Charter position on limiting property rights, and that uphold environmental protection.

BI-LATERAL TRADE AGREEMENTS:

- Renegotiate bi-lateral trade agreements, and negotiate any new ones, to follow the format set for NAFTA as noted above.

FREE TRADE AGREEMENT OF THE AMERICAS (FTAA):

- Oppose agreements in the style of the June 2009 agreements with Colombia.

- Negotiate fair trade agreements with countries in this hemisphere who have stated they do not want to be part of the FTAA, whose last meeting, in 2003, failed to reach agreement; these countries already form a valuable trading bloc.

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO):

- Propose reform of the WTO, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, placing these institutions under the authority of the UN General Assembly.
- Shift the direction of international trade away from "free trade" to "fair trade" focusing on the global protection of human rights, labour standards, cultural diversity, and ecosystems.

CANADA EUROPEAN UNION TRADE AGREEMENT (CETA)

Oppose any extension of NAFTA-like provisions into a trade deal with Europe.

Demand open and transparent discussions, engaging, not just business leaders, but civil society;

Reject any inclusion of Chapter 11 Investor-State provisions.

TRADE, INVESTMENT AND LABOUR MOBILITY AGREEMENT (TILMA):

- Urge British Columbia and Alberta to pull out of the TILMA and devise agreements to ensure the sovereignty of sub-national governments, energy security, food security for all Canadians while ensuring Charter rights and refraining from embedding the supremacy of property rights into trade agreements.

A NEW GREEN AGREEMENT:

- Negotiate a new multilateral Agreement on Corporate Rights and Responsibilities. The effort from 1995 to 1998 to negotiate a Multilateral Agreement on Investment in the OECD was a failure. This was largely because the proposed text created new rights for corporations and new obligations for governments making it more difficult for them to regulate foreign corporate investors. It was lopsided, failing to create any balanced corporate responsibilities. The Green Party will press for new global negotiations to create a level playing field for multinational corporations and uphold countries' sovereignty. The template will be based on the European Union's (EU) in which no country's environmental and labour laws can fall below the very most rigorous of any EU state. By ensuring that all corporations in the world must adhere to minimum standards to protect children, the environment and labour rights, no company could gain competitive advantage by trampling on these fundamental elements of responsible corporate citizenship.

5.18 A national energy security strategy

Green Party MPs will:

- Work to get the federal government, in consultation and cooperation with the provinces and territories, to develop a Canada-first National Energy Security strategy to regain control over Canada's energy supply to ensure Canada's short-term, long-term, and emergency needs are met first prior to any export.

- Encourage the creation of a Strategic Petroleum Reserve to address short-term petroleum supply shortages and the establishment of an Emergency Preparedness Plan to address other energy crises.
- Promote the creation of a Natural Gas Emergency Preparedness Plan that addresses the orderly steps to take us through a critical natural gas shortage and use this plan to immediately implement measures to reduce our reliance on natural gas for essentials such as home heating and production of electricity. Include plans on how to best use Canada's vast natural gas reserves to bridge to a renewable energy-based economy instead of fueling the expansion of the tar sands.
- Ensure that the strategy includes a means to deal with diminishing oil supplies, insecurity of oil foreign supplies, distribution of western oil to eastern Canada, and the implementation of a rapid transition from oil and other fossil fuel-based energy sources to secure, sustainable Canadian renewable energy sources.

5.19 North American Union (NAU) By Increment

Bi-lateral and Tri-lateral negotiations – between Canada, United States, and Mexico - to "harmonize" national standards and rules are continuing, notwithstanding the reported demise of the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP), proposed in 2005, that was exposed and discredited by an effective grass-roots awareness-raising campaign.

In response to this temporary setback, proponents of a deep continental integration agenda now seek to advance their agenda by increments, and certainly without Parliamentary attention or debate. The latest proposal is for a 'continental security perimeter' involving an integrated border with the United States. The limited information available thus far about this proposal has generated public opposition due to projected threats to Canadian sovereignty and Canadians' privacy. The need for confidentiality in diplomatic negotiations should not result in withholding public information about their results. The Green Party questions both the goals of this agenda and the means being used to further it.

The SPP process and the continental security perimeter plans emerged out of a continental integration agenda that capitalized on American post-9/11 fear about national security. It built on the NAFTA foundation and sought to bring Canada, Mexico and the U.S. much closer to a common market and customs union. Some have described it as a future North American Union (NAU) using a process similar to that which led to the European Union (i.e. full economic integration first). The Green Party opposes this continental integration agenda as detrimental to Canadian national interests.

The proposed North American Union would be profoundly different from the European Union political model. The E.U. requires that the toughest environmental and labour standards of any one nation be the minimum standards for all. The E.U. model includes the direct election to a supra-national parliament. Continental integration as practiced in North America, on the other hand, appears to be primarily designed with the exclusion of civil society input and without the priority to environmental and labour standards. There is also a much greater balance of power between numerous European nation states comprising the E.U. than would exist in a North American Union comprising U.S., Canada and Mexico. As an example, if there were an E.U. version similar to the proposed North American Union then there

would only be three countries – perhaps Germany, Norway and Portugal - analogous to the U.S., Canada and Mexico respectively. It is not hard to imagine which nation would completely control and dominate that relationship. Citizens of Norway/Canada and Portugal/ Mexico would in effect become second-class citizens in their respective continents.

PART 6: GOOD GOVERNMENT

Canadians have become cynical about politicians and government. The Quebec sponsorship scandal and the Harper “In-and-Out” election financing fraud are among scandals and broken promises causing Canadians to lose trust in government. People are also disillusioned with MPs’ allegiance to parties instead of constituents, government inefficiency and wasteful spending, and the failure of government to address critical issues like the climate crisis. On top of this, we have an outdated voting system where the popular vote is not translated into seats, leaving many voters unrepresented. Many citizens, especially youth, are so frustrated that they don’t even bother to vote.

When our government is at its best, it represents all of us and brings us together to accomplish things we cannot accomplish alone. Our parliament should be a model of statesmanship and cooperation, working for the good of all Canadians. It should deal creatively and constructively with issues and spend taxpayers’ money prudently. MPs should be elected through a fair voting system that ensures parties get a share of seats in parliament that is equal to their share of the popular vote. Canadians should be proud of their government and trust that it is acting in their best interests.

6.1 Democratic renewal and proportional representation

Nearly one million Canadians voted for the Green Party in the last federal election without electing a single Green MP. Our electoral system unfairly punishes Conservative voters in cities, Liberal and NDP voters in the west, and Green voters throughout Canada. Our electoral system also elects far more men than women and gives some provinces an unfair share of power, based on their population, compared to others. Ultimately, it does not produce governments that reflect the diversity of people in Canada, nor does it do a good job of accurately reflecting voters’ wishes. Canada is one of the last few parliamentary democracies in the world to still use the antiquated first-past-the-post voting system, and Canadians are ready for positive change.

The Green Party of Canada believes that Canadian democracy would benefit by reducing the financial barriers to running for political office, lowering the voter age to 16 to encourage more youth participation, and changing to a voting system that more fairly translates peoples’ votes into representation in parliament. We also believe that citizens, not politicians, must direct democracy.

Green Party MPs will:

- Establish a Public Inquiry into Democracy, with powers of a Royal Commission, to engage Canadians from coast to coast and address anti-democratic trends within Canada:
 1. The growing and unhealthy power of the Prime Minister’s Office;
 2. The lack of scope for independent action of individual MPs;
 3. The use of prorogation to avoid political embarrassment, in violation of Parliamentary practice and tradition;

4. The abuse by the Senate of its role of “sober, second thought” in voting down bills approved by the House, as in the case in November of 2010 in their defeat without debate of Bill C-311 (the Climate Change Accountability Act);
 5. The inequity of the current voting system with a view to replacing it with a system based on proportional representation
 6. The recommendations of the Public Inquiry will be presented as options to Canadian voters.
- Adhere to fixed election dates permitting political stability and fair elections.
 - Reduce the mandatory \$1,000 candidate deposit to encourage more Canadians to participate in the democratic system.

6.2 Increasing government accountability and ethical conduct

The Conservative government has been the most centralized and secretive government in recent history. It brought in legislation to ostensibly clean up “Liberal corruption.” Remarkably, it has actually made things worse, as it abandoned numerous promises it made while in opposition regarding transparency and accountability. Its ironically named Accountability Act has twelve new blanket exemptions and exclusions preventing certain kinds of government documents from being released, and provides for the possibility that wrongdoing exposed by whistle-blowers could be sealed for up to fifteen years. The Conservative government “reform” has removed the “duty to act honestly” from the code of ethics governing the Cabinet and senior civil service.

The Green Party believes in the decentralization of decision making powers and in open, honest government.

Green Party MPs will:

- Amend the Accountability Act to ensure that all those who monitor government are selected at arm's length from those they monitor, to eliminate the blanket exemptions on public release of government documents and to guarantee transparency and openness for all government activities.
- Update the Access to Information Act to permit greater transparency of government activities.
- Restore Parliamentary Committees as a vehicle for non-partisan, constructive improvement of legislation and require that the improved version of such legislation be the version put to parliament for vote.
- Enact effective whistle-blower protection for public and private sector employees.
- Institute a code of conduct and an independent complaints process to ensure that tax dollars are not used for pre-election partisan purposes.
- Institute mandatory training in ethics for MPs and their staffs, requiring all MPs and staff to take in-house training on the basics of good management and ethics in parliament.

- Reform the appointments system to discourage patronage by establishing an independent agency for ensuring that appointments to government tribunals, boards and senior positions are done through a qualification-based process and are not politically motivated patronage appointments
- Strengthen the mandates of Independent Officers of Parliament, including the Auditor General and the Information Commissioner.
- Implement stand-alone legislation to create an independent Commissioner on the Environment and Sustainable Development, removing the office from that of subservience to the Auditor General.
- Replace the current Ethics Commissioner, who reports privately to the Prime Minister, with an independent Ethics Commission reporting to Parliament and appointed through a merit-based process with strong powers to investigate government officials and lobbyists.
- Provide Parliamentarians with independent regulatory audits through the Auditor General's office on the effectiveness of government regulations in meeting their stated public purposes.
- Make service improvements a higher priority for all agencies and departments, with systematic citizen feedback and a schedule for periodic program review.
- Require the independence of public sector employees who oversee industry, such as those responsible for such areas as fisheries, science and drug licensing, from those industries.
- Require long-term public departmental service plans to report on government program purposes, costs, reforms and performance.
- Strengthen the rules of conduct for lobbying. All lobbyists' contacts with politicians and government bureaucrats both formal and informal must be reported and made public.

6.3 Affirming the right to collective bargaining

The Green Party of Canada affirms the ruling of the Supreme Court of Canada in the B.C. hospitals case. In June 2007, the Supreme Court Justices ruled that the right to collective bargaining is a basic charter right. As such, employers, whether private or public, are obligated to deal with their employees as a collective when seeking to make amendments to wages and working conditions. The Court made it clear that employers may not make such changes unilaterally wherever the employees have chosen union representation.

Green Party MPs will:

- Actively promote and encourage collective bargaining as a human right and a Charter right.

6.4 Making government a leader in ethical purchasing

The federal government buys goods and services based primarily on the lowest price or bid. It does not consider other criteria that are essential to developing a just and sustainable society.

The Green Party believes that the federal government should set an example in its purchasing policies, ensuring that its expenditures support a strong Canadian economy, good labour practices and environmental protection.

Green Party MPs will:

- Require that government purchase Canadian-made products and services wherever possible and, if imports are necessary, procure certified fair-trade goods (produced with responsible labour and environmental practices) wherever possible.
- Require that all government departments and agencies incorporate a “triple bottom line” (social, economic and environmental cost/benefit) analysis in purchasing goods and services and assessing their operations and programs.
- Require that all government departments and agencies meet the highest environmental standards including full recycling, purchase and use of small, energy-efficient vehicles, and energy-efficient and toxic-free buildings with toxic-free grounds maintenance.
- Ensure transparency in purchasing decisions by making that information available for public oversight.

6.5 Allowing charitable societies to advocate for change

Green Party MPs will:

- Promote revising and updating the laws relating to charitable NGOs so that NGOs can participate in advocacy and be able to retain their charitable status and their ability to accept tax deductible donations.

6.6 Supporting the free flow of information

The Internet has become an essential tool in knowledge storage and the free flow of information between citizens. It is playing a critical role in democratizing communications and society as a whole. There are corporations that want to control the content of information on the internet and alter the free flow of information by giving preferential treatment to those who pay extra for faster service.

The Green Party of Canada is committed to the original design principle of the internet - network neutrality: the idea that a maximally useful public information network treats all content, sites, and

platforms equally, thus allowing the network to carry every form of information and support every kind of application.

Green Party MPs will:

- Pass legislation granting the Internet in Canada the status of Common Carrier – prohibiting Internet Service Providers from discriminating due to content while freeing them from liability for content transmitted through their systems.
- Support Canada’s Advanced Research and Innovation Network (CANARIE)
- Increase infrastructure spending to accommodate increased bandwidth use and to improve access to rural and remote Canadians (see Section 1.14 Infrastructure and Communities)
- Review of economic model of how ISPs bill their customers.
- Improve support for small ISPs to improve competition and diversity choice of for consumers.
- Ensure network neutrality by supporting the principles of fair use, consumer information privacy, communications market competition, and rationalization of the statutory damages provision.

6.7 Open Government Data

For all public data where there are no privacy, security or other legal concerns preventing the data from being shared, data will be reviewed by the Privacy Commissioner of Canada via Personal Information Protection and Electronic Document Act (PIPEDA) and made publicly available under the following conditions:

- With the highest level of granularity and detail possible which still maintains the privacy of individual citizens.
- In a timely fashion so that the value of the data is preserved.
- Accessible to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes in a non-proprietary format.
- Machine processable and structured to allow automated processing, without having to mechanically harvest the data before using it.
- Non-discriminatory and available to everyone without having to register or self-identify as being interested in the data.
- With a license that does not encumber the user, and ideally without a license at all.

6.8 Reducing concentration of ownership of the media

During recent years the ownership of the media in Canada has been concentrated into fewer and fewer hands until today Canada has the most concentrated ownership of any country in the ‘free world.’

Green Party MPs will:

- Call for an independent commission to undertake a comprehensive study of the concentration of media ownership in Canada in comparison to other western countries and recommend how to diversify media ownership and strengthen the depth and breadth of news reporting, especially local news, in Canada.

6.9 Ensuring Canadian ownership of vital resources and industries

In recent years more and more of Canada’s major companies and control over natural resources have been bought out by foreign-owned corporations. This is not in the best interests of Canadians.

Green Party MPs will:

- Sponsor and support legislation that restricts foreign ownership in Canada in strategic sectors so that Canadians remain in control of the destiny of Canada, reap the benefits from the exploitation of Canadian resources, and retain the right to determine their use and rate of exploitation.

6.10 Restoring public confidence in the RCMP

The RCMP has been one of the most respected police forces in the world. It has a proud tradition of even-handed law enforcement, but at the senior level it appears something is very wrong in RCMP governance and oversight. The wrongful targeting of Maher Arar and complicity in his torture is certainly its most egregious lapse, but arguably throwing the 2006 election to the Conservatives, through the public announcement via a letter to the NDP finance critic of potential leaks regarding the Liberal income trust decision, is a close second for subverting democracy. . The October 2007 death of Robert Dziekanski due to unwarranted and repeated use of tasers by members of the RCMP in the Vancouver airport has greatly undermined public confidence in the force. Now, we have scandal on scandal – pension fund mismanagement, the muzzling and sidelining of those assigned to investigate, and the stone-walling of the Auditor General.

It is a fundamental principle of a free and democratic state that its police must be exemplary and above reproach

The Green Party supports the RCMP officers across Canada. The Green Party supports a professional Royal Canadian Mounted Police force that not only has the highest conduct standards, but also commands the respect of all Canadians.

Green Party MPs will:

- Pass legislation that establishes an independent body to investigate complaints regarding the conduct of RCMP officers with full judicial inquiry powers and the requirement to report its finding publicly.
- Provide more funding to the RCMP, specifically to give more training to new recruits.
- Ensure RCMP in the line of duty are provided with the best technology in protective equipment and are always supported with adequate back-up in dangerous encounters with violent offenders.
- Create a Board of Management to monitor and advise with respect to the RCMP's organizational, administrative, and financial accountability. This Board would oversee the RCMP's operations in strategic planning and implementation, budget planning and financial management, human resources management, risk management, communications, and organizational performance management.
- Provide guidance to the RCMP in cultivating a promotion system that is based upon performance, skill, and ability. The morale and discipline of the force depend upon clear and transparent guidelines for the personal advancement of officers.
- Work in cooperation with the provinces and territories to establish the RCMP as a truly national police force re-focused upon the enforcement of federal laws.
- Ensure the RCMP has the freedom and independence to conduct investigations into government officials, bureaucrats, and corporate executives without interference from politicians.

6.11 Emergency Preparedness and Public Safety

The catastrophic 9.0 earthquake followed by a 3-metre-high tsunami wave and nuclear melt-downs that hit Japan in March 2011, coupled with catastrophic earthquakes in Haiti in February 2010 and in Christchurch, New Zealand in February of 2011, have put the need for national emergency preparedness at the top of Canadians' minds. Yet in 2010 our federal government cut \$35.8 million over three years from the budget of Public Safety Canada, resulting in cutbacks at Canada's only national Emergency Preparedness College, and reductions in Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) funding for emergency preparedness infrastructure and training. These cuts were imposed on an already-inadequate budget and severely compromise Canada's emergency preparedness.

Canadian municipalities, which are charged with the responsibility of preparing for and responding to emergencies, do not, in the vast majority of cases, have the finances to put their

local emergency plans into practical use. They need the help of the federal government. The 9-11 attacks in the United States and the SARS epidemic prompted the Government of Canada to provide special funds for emergency preparedness for terrorist attacks and pandemics.

The Green Party believes that the high likelihood of emergencies related to seismic events, tsunamis, events related to climate change such as catastrophic storms point to the need for the Government of Canada to fast-track increased funding and support for national emergency preparedness.

Green Party MPs will:

- Work to greatly increase funding through Public Safety Canada and the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) for projects that implement municipal, territorial and provincial emergency preparedness plans, including public education and training programs, local emergency infrastructure such as adequate tsunami warning systems, civil defence sirens and other communication systems, adequate marking of emergency evacuation routes and means to supply essential services such as medical services, energy supplies, food and water.
- Push Public Safety Canada to simplify the application process and expand the eligibility criteria for funding through the JEPP.
- Work to increase funding for emergency preparedness training programs for emergency responders, including the Emergency Preparedness College.
- Work to provide funding to fast-track seismic upgrading of public buildings such as hospitals, schools and fire halls. The program for seismic upgrading should be coupled with the programs for energy retrofitting of public buildings, so as to ensure efficient use of public funds.

6.12 Rebuilding federal/provincial/territorial relations

After the 1982 patriation of the Constitution and the refusal of Quebec to sign the Constitution, after two failed federal accords, two referendums, asymmetrical federalism, a sponsorship scandal, and “nation within a nation” legislation, many Quebecers and Canadians ask the obvious question: “Where do we go from here?”

The Green Party proposes to make Canada a true functioning Confederation in which the provinces and territories are more empowered and financed to meet the needs of their communities. Quebec and the rest of Canada must work together as partners, in the true spirit of confederation, and work to solve their fiscal and cultural imbalances. Federal powers to regulate the highest standards of environment, health and labour standards must be strengthened as funding and implementation moves to more local implementation.

Green Party MPs will:

- Rebalance the funding formula to ensure fairness across regions and provinces.
- Remove the false choice for those provinces eligible for equalization to allow access to funds for health, education and other services provided through equalization, and remove any requirement to abandon rights under the Atlantic Accord.

6.13 Quebec's place in Canada

A key element in our multi-national federation is a commitment to flexibility and the accommodation of differences between provincial governments and between peoples. Asymmetry is an important means of fostering collective political identity and meaningful governmental consent when Canadians have multiple political allegiances. That is, it allows people to be comfortable as both Quebecers and Canadians.

Although Canada is a single country with a common public dialogue and a common set of values and political commitments, the existence of a common country does not require a uniform set of values, cultures, and laws. Canadians come from a great variety of backgrounds and cultures, and have varied political concerns. The Green Party of Canada therefore recognizes that the Quebecers and First Nations people form a number of “nations” within a united Canada. We also believe that different institutional arrangements and styles of governance can ensure fairness and equity for all Canadians.

It is important that Quebecers, just like Canadians in other provinces, have a say over the same kinds of political decisions, but that they are sometimes able to exercise their say in a provincial rather than a federal forum. Federal arrangements that reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity within Canada are able to enhance our diversity and our unity.

The Green Party of Canada is a grassroots party with a global perspective. We are all planetary citizens, but determine our rights and responsibilities based on our local empowerment. As such, the Green Party of Canada respects the rights of Quebecers to determine their own future.

The Green Party proposes to make Canada a true functioning confederation in which the provinces and territories are more empowered and financed to meet the needs of their communities. Quebec and the rest of Canada must work together as partners, in the true spirit of confederation, and work to solve their fiscal and cultural imbalances. Federal powers to regulate high environmental, health, and labour standards must be strengthened while at the same time moving funding and implementation to provincial levels.

Green Party MPs will:

- Ensure Quebec's unique place within Canada is recognized and affirmed in all agreements between various levels of government.
- Respect Quebec's right to opt out of social programs and be fully compensated by the federal government if it provides a reasonably similar program.

- Promote a form of federal-provincial tax-shifting that would gradually reduce the fiscal imbalance.
- Support Quebec's official representation at UNESCO and ensure that if Quebec and the federal representative do not agree upon a matter then Canada would abstain.
- Rebalance the funding formula to ensure fairness across regions and provinces.
- Reconnaîtra la légitimité du peuple québécois d'affirmer sa propre souveraineté pleine et entière s'appuyant sur un vote référendaire portant sur une question précise et une réponse soutenue par la majorité claire et dans la mesure qu'elle obtienne une véritable reconnaissance légale et politique au niveau international.