



June 6, 2005

POLICY WATCH

Policy Watch is a selection of articles, research links, and updates designed to keep you informed and engaged about important Canadian and international policy issues. It will also be our platform to communicate new Canada25 policy developments such as chapter policy projects, national policy reports and upcoming projects. Please feel free to send in your thoughts, suggestions and any relevant materials to policywatch@canada25.com.

This issue of Policy Watch provides resources on civic engagement, innovation, and an interesting article on NAFTA policy by a Canada25 member. The feature piece in this issue reviews the government's recently released action plan for climate change.

CANADA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD FOLLOW-UP:

You may recall from last month's Policy Watch that the federal government was on the verge of releasing its International Policy Review. On April 19th the federal government released *A Role of Pride and Influence* [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cip-pic/ips/ips-en.asp]. An umbrella statement, it frames four specific statements on Development, Defence, Diplomacy, and Commerce. Rounding out the foreign policy announcements was the launch of the *Internationally Trained Workers Initiative*, which will, among other things, implement a foreign credit transfer system to recognize credentials earned outside of Canada [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/cs/comm./hrsd/news]. The IRPP [www.irpp.org] has links to articles on many of these issues.

POLICY RESOURCES:

For an interesting commentary on Canadian trade policies, specifically the NAFTA agreement check out this piece from Canada25 member Ali Borhani from Export Wise magazine - http://www.edc.ca/corpinfo/pubs/exportwise/spring05/p17_e.htm

Also, an interesting review of the Canada Corps program and some pertinent facts as to the number and capacity of Canadians abroad - Hubris, Humility and Human Resources: Notes on the Proposed Canada Corps by Ian Smillie - www.ccic.ca/e/docs/002_cda_corps_hubrishumility_final.pdf

Civic Engagement:

On May 17th B.C citizens went to the polls for a provincial election, but also to cast their ballots in a referendum for a new electoral system - **BC-STV**, short for British Columbia Single Transferable Vote. British Columbia elected its first successive majority government in twenty-two years but the electoral reform vote fell short of the 60 percent cut off required for reform implementation. For information and background material visit:

<http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public>

CPRN and Deliberative Dialogue – A Primer. Provides good background information on civic engagement work being done through the CPRN:

<http://www.cprn.com/en/doc.cfm?doc=1238>

Youth Voluntarism and Political Engagement in Canada A Paper by Dr. L.S. Tossutti provides some great insights on the fundamental questions and statistics:

<http://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/papers-2004/Tossutti.pdf>

Civic engagement among young new and Aboriginal Canadians By Gina Bishop:

http://www.opinion-canada.ca/en/articles/article_163.html

Innovation:

Canada25 contributed to the Conference board of Canada's Leaders' Roundtable on Commercialization. This blue ribbon panel includes leaders from government, academia and various industries. Its mandate is to establish an action plan to improve commercialization success in Canada. In this, its first report, the Roundtable outlines a series of "quick hits" to help Canada compete better globally. Find the Quick Hits report at

<http://www.conferenceboard.ca/boardwiseii/Signin.asp>

Some useful websites:

Montreal Economic Institute www.iedm.org

Mapleleafweb <http://www.mapleleafweb.com>

Policy.ca (www.policy.ca)

FEATURE:

Canada's Plan for the Kyoto Protocol

By Jeff Colgan, Canada25 member and author of *The Promise and Peril of International Trade*.

On April 13th, the Government of Canada issued what it calls "the first phase of Project Green," the federal plan to meet Canada's commitments to the Kyoto protocol on climate change. Following on the 2005 budget, the plan describes how the government will spend about \$10 billion through 2012 in climate change-related programs and activities. Upon review, the plan still leaves considerable uncertainty about how or even whether Canada will meet its Kyoto target.

The Kyoto Protocol requires Canada to reduce its annual emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) between 2008 and 2012 to 6 percent less than Canada's 1990 emissions. Since Canada's emissions continue to grow, that is a moving target; the new plan revises the official estimate of the GHG reduction needed, from 240 million metric tons (Mt) to 270 Mt. Even the new target, however, is unlikely to be realistic: as the Project Green document itself admits, Canada's economy has grown by 43 percent between 1990 and 2003, as opposed to the 34 percent forecasted. If GHG emissions continue to increase with the size of the economy, the real gap is likely to be far larger.

As for actual reductions, some firm targets have been set. For instance, the "Large Final Emitters," an industrial group making up nearly 50% of Canada's emissions, have agreed to a 45 Mt reduction in emissions. The auto industry has agreed to improve fuel efficiency in cars, reducing 5 Mt. Unfortunately, these reductions are small in comparison to industry's overall emissions, and over half of the federal plan depends on very loosely defined programs such as the "Climate Fund" and the "Partnership Fund." Further details on these programs are promised at a later date.

The federal government is finally starting to see implementation of the Kyoto Protocol as an

opportunity as well as a challenge. By working aggressively towards GHG reductions, Canada can become a world leader in climate change technology. Seeing the climate change challenge as the future of the global business landscape is crucial for improving Canada's long-term competitiveness.

Still, most informed observers are likely to judge that Canada will not make its Kyoto commitments without massive and unpopular purchases of "carbon credits" from abroad. The full policy statement can be found at:

http://www.climatechange.gc.ca/kyoto_commitments/report_e.pdf

UPCOMING

Next month watch for articles on social policy. Please feel free to send in materials, ideas, or let us know if you'd like to contribute a FEATURE piece for future policy watch issues. All suggestions should be emailed to policywatch@canada25.com.

Designed by [Cameron Finlayson](#)