



Climate Action Network Canada Réseau action climat Canada

## Press Release

Date: Monday, March 10, 2008

### **Climate Change Report details Dramatic Impacts in Canada -Government must respond with far stronger plan**

(Ottawa) The first comprehensive national study in a decade on where and how climate change will impact Canada provides dramatic evidence of the costs of climate change and the need for urgent action, say representatives of the Climate Action Network Canada- Réseau action climat Canada.

The Natural Resources Canada report entitled, *From Impacts to Adaptation: Canada in a Changing Climate 2007* had seen its expected release date pushed back by several months, but was quietly posted on the government's website late Friday after media stories leaked details obtained from interviews with some of its key authors.

The report presents a region-by-region portrait of the impacts of greenhouse gas pollution on Canadian life and the environment today and over the course of this century.

"This report is yet another wake up call for a government that has not yet produced a meaningful climate change plan or passed any legislation to protect Canadians from global warming," said Graham Saul, Climate Action Network Canada. "Canada is paying the environmental and economic costs of climate change already, and unless the government acts immediately, the future impacts will be catastrophic," he said.

A few of the report's findings:

- Humans run the real risk of triggering processes in this century that will inevitably lead to "potentially cataclysmic surprises" in the next;
- Canadians will experience greater economic and social impacts at the local and regional levels than national or global scale analyses predict;
- Water quality and quantity will decline on a seasonal basis in every region of Canada. Prairie drought will become the norm.
- Drought is responsible for 6 of the 10 most costly events in Canadian history. The national 2001-2002 drought cost about \$5.8 billion and more than 41,000 jobs;
- Excluding drought, short-term costs from nine extreme weather events between 1991 and 2005 totalled over \$10 billion;
- Climate-related impacts will create significant challenges for maintaining biodiversity in Canada's protected areas;
- We have the knowledge necessary to start undertaking adaptation activities in most situations now.
- In Atlantic Canada, adaptation measures include managing development in coastal areas, preventing construction in areas of known vulnerability, and protecting coastlines

"The government has said repeatedly that it respects the science of climate change," said



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Emilie Moorhouse, Sierra Club Canada. "If that's true, then this report leaves the government no choice but to change course and radically strengthen its discredited climate strategy to prevent the worst impacts of global warming."

Every independent analysis of the government's April 2007 "Turning the Corner" report has concluded that its policy measures are too weak to reach its targets. Further, government MPs have spent the last two sessions of the House of Commons environment committee filibustering a private member's bill that would set science-based climate targets for Canada.

"According to the federal Environment Commissioner, Canada still lacks a national strategy to adapt to the impacts of climate change," said John Bennett, ClimateforChange.ca. "This report shows exactly how vulnerable Canada is to the effects of global warming. An adaptation strategy that protects Canada's environment and economy must become a government priority."

"Worrisome as it is, the scenario described in this report is a best-case scenario," said David Coon, Conservation Council of New Brunswick. "If countries like Canada don't replace their business-as-usual policies with a real plan to tackle greenhouse gas pollution aggressively, the consequences could be far more catastrophic than those described in this report."