



Solutions for a Warming World

May 27-28, 2016

Summary of Post-it Notes

The points below are a summary of the comments provided by conference participants in post-it notes from the 2016 Muskoka Summit on the Environment (MSE). Messages have been grouped by theme and some liberties were taken to help make the comments flow more smoothly. We hope that individuals recognize their contribution and that we have not missed or misinterpreted any comments.

This paper is not meant to be comprehensive and many points are only an undeveloped thought or the beginning of an idea or program. The source for the document is you, the Summit participants. If any of these points motivate or energize you to take action within your community we, the Summit organizers, will have been successful in finding some Solutions to our Warming World.

After listening to the six speakers and the panel discussion it is time for each Summit participant to act. Many comments received by participants emphasized the need for Canadian Society to attain a goal of 100% clean energy use within the next decade and that this must be done in a manner that does not disadvantage the poor and under-privileged members of our society. The organizers of the 2016 MSE urge all participants to take bold action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their own lives, setting an example to the wider society to do the same.

Individual Action

Each of us has to move beyond the 2016 MSE to take action in our own homes, places of work and schools. Individual action results in meaningful and powerful collective impact. The time to act is now. We need to take personal responsibility for our own carbon emissions and lead by example. The first action each participant can undertake is to calculate their carbon footprint and establish personal targets to reduce it. There are many websites that will help you calculate your carbon footprint. One site that uses Ontario data is

<http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/>. Once you have calculated your carbon footprint you can reduce it by:

1. Offsetting your transportation emissions using a reputable organization.
2. Turning down the heat and turning up the A/C. Use fans and plant trees to shade the house.
3. Freecycling – giving good used items away.
4. Using a care sharing.
5. Buying no consumer goods for a month.

6. Buying only used.
 7. Carpooling.
 8. Walking more.
 9. Buying green energy, i.e. Bull Frog power.
 10. Support the trend to 'smaller and less'. Buy a smaller car, trade in the high powered boat for something smaller.
 11. Leaving peatlands and wetlands alone.
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Local

At the local level Summit participants need to engage local governments and agencies in the discussion on climate change and local action and mitigation measures required to meet this challenge. In particular, Summit participants can:

Communication

1. Start a Sustainable Muskoka Dialogue designed after the Sustainable Canada Dialogues initiative described by Dr. Catherine Potvin, using existing social media networks.
2. Post images of climate change impacts such as seasonal ice-off variance on social media and share with friends.

Carbon Footprint

1. Encourage District and municipal governments, as well as school boards to calculate their carbon footprint and establish targets to reduce their footprint annually. This might include building retrofits, solar panels, and procurement policies.

Local Government Action

1. Encourage municipalities to develop clear climate change policies and by-laws for land use change, building and transportation. Review existing policies amend those policies that discourage low carbon development.
2. Encourage municipalities and local agencies to be leaders in climate change initiatives, such as by:
 - a. Installing solar panels on roofs of public buildings.
 - b. Developing green roofs on public buildings.
 - c. Using energy efficient vehicles.
 - d. Supporting the location of public and municipal buildings and services in town centres to reduce driving.
 - e. Creating incentives for lifecycle costing and other greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies.
 - f. Incorporating sustainable principles in procurement policies, including working lifecycle costs.
 - g. Addressing climate change in local infrastructure.
3. Encourage municipalities to implement the Muskoka Watershed Council's [Planning for Climate Change in Muskoka](#) report across Muskoka.
4. Support municipal policy that increases concentration of buildings in urban areas and prevents urban sprawl.
5. Strengthen Muskoka's policies on peatland and wetland protection.

Transportation

1. Encourage municipalities and local agencies to minimize fleet size, and encourage car pooling amongst staff from various municipalities going to the same meeting.
2. Encourage municipalities and local agencies to offset transportation and invest in electric cars.
3. Become involved in the [Muskoka Trails Council](#) and encourage municipalities to improve active transportation and transportation infrastructure to reduce car use including through:
 - a. more bike trails and routes,
 - b. safe cycling lanes on roads, and
 - c. bus systems between towns.
4. Encourage local businesses to develop electric charging stations.
5. Encourage local municipalities to implement existing engine idling by-laws.

Student Action

Students have a unique opportunity to engage classmates and develop an environmental ethic early on that will have a lasting impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. With climate change education and activities in schools students will become more aware and take the message home to parents.

Students, with the support of their schools, can:

1. Host a climate change conference for youth.
2. Involve other high school students in citizen science.
3. Get communities involved in school science programs and eco-programs in general.
4. Provide information on how students can get involved in organizations that fight climate change.

Provincial

At the Provincial level much work is already underway in Ontario with the release of the new [Climate Change Action Plan](#). Summit participants need to support this Action Plan and encourage further action where possible. In particular, Summit participants can:

Green Action Investment

1. Encourage the provincial government to create a Green Investment Fund at arm's length from government with a good venture capitalist in charge.
2. Encourage the provincial government to develop a program of loans for green retrofits that are added to mortgage/taxes vs personal loans.
3. Encourage the province to develop financial instruments that encourage shifts to alternative energy heating.

Policy Action

In order to develop comprehensive programs governments require strong policy. Summit participants should support the government in developing policy that addresses climate change. In particular, Summit participants should encourage the provincial government to develop policy that:

- a. Sets an objective of 100% greenhouse gas free emissions by 2025.
- b. Streamlines the approval process to facilitate new low-carbon or carbon-free technology to be developed and widely available.
- c. Clearly defines what now exists in national and provincial policies with respect to carbon pricing.
- d. Makes recommendations to fill gaps and prevent further fragmentation of environmental objectives, policies and initiatives.
- e. Balances the benefit of green energy with the impact on biodiversity and other environmental cost and safety issues.
- f. Funds municipal sustainability initiatives.
- g. Doubles the price of carbon-based fuels.

Building

Construction and buildings are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. Summit participants can:

1. Support a national energy grid that will allow provinces and territories to move toward a 100% low-carbon electric power source.
2. Encourage standards to be incorporated into the Ontario Building Code that will ensure low-carbon building construction.
3. Encourage the province to support a carbon neutral affordable housing program.

Transportation

The disturbance of peatlands will lead to the release of extraordinary amounts of greenhouse gases (methane). Summit participants should encourage the province to only support development options in the north that preserve the ability of peatland to sequester carbon and methane.

Natural Areas

Natural areas sequester carbon. Summit participants should encourage the province to explore the co-benefits for biodiversity from monitoring carbon stores and enhancing sequestration in natural systems at all scales. Part of such a program should be to improve forest management to reduce fuel in the forest as forest fires release large amount of carbon.

National Carbon Tax

Carbon pricing is a necessary component of action on climate change. Summit participants can:

1. Support the Federal Government in developing a national price on carbon.
2. Support implementation programs at the provincial level. Encourage all governments to continue to work together to establish reduction targets and implementation plans to meet them.
3. Encourage the Federal Government to reallocate carbon costs (e.g., taxes) to reduce other non-productive tax burdens (e.g., income tax).

Policy

Summit participants should support the government in developing policy that demonstrates Canada's leadership in climate change matters. As a base principle, governments should be encouraged to preserve our carbon stores in the ground, where they cannot contribute to further greenhouse gas emissions mitigate current and future impacts of climate change and lastly, offset carbon emissions. In particular, Summit participants should encourage the government to develop policy that:

1. Sets an objective of 100% greenhouse gas free emissions by 2025 and phases out oil sands production by 2030.
2. Funds and supports a network for grassroots programs.
3. Offers rebates to Canadians for purchasing Canadian products which reduce transportation emissions.
4. Increases tax motivation for global charitable donations to address climate change action.
5. Provides tax incentives for carbon neutral technology (electric cars, energy shield retrofits on buildings, heating systems).
6. Develops a northern land trust to protect peatlands.

Transportation and Infrastructure

In order to improve transportation efficiency across Canada and reduce the associated greenhouse gas emissions, Summit participants should encourage the federal government to:

1. Develop National Energy Communication & Transportation plans to support sustainable infrastructure and interprovincial and territorial cooperation and integration.
2. Invest in open fiber optic infrastructure to reduce the use of cars for work, school, health care and entertainment, especially in rural Canada.
3. Invest in low cost, accessible trains.

Support for Communities and Workers in Transition

In order to ensure that marginalized populations are not disadvantaged by a move to a carbon free society, Summit participants should encourage the federal government to:

1. Provide support for workers in carbon intensive sectors and communities.
2. Provide retraining and relocation support as society transitions to a new economy.
3. Develop programs to empower the less engaged (youth, minorities).

Building Retrofit

In support of provincial programs that encourage low-carbon construction, Summit participants should encourage the federal government to:

1. Develop home energy improvement incentives.
2. Provide incentives that will lower the cost of solar panels.
3. Develop grants for new home construction when using green/clean technology.

Industry

Industry must also be encouraged to develop new technology, reduce waste and emissions and generally reduce its carbon footprint. As a start, Summit participants should fix, reuse, or repurpose goods to reduce support of planned obsolescence. Summit participants should

support creative entrepreneurs who develop new technology or ideas that will reduce carbon emissions. Some suggestions include:

1. Developing an app that helps people act sustainably.
 2. Develop a new CBC program where 4 Dragons (investors) all Environmental/Economic icons each represents a group of 200 persons willing to float \$500 each maximally ~\$100,000. Canadian inventors would then argue for Env/Econ innovations.
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Global

As Canadians we like to think we are a smaller emitter of carbon compared to other countries. Yet, Canada is amongst the top ten producers of greenhouse gas emissions globally and on a per capita basis, Canadians rank among the top three countries. Although we need to act locally, it is important to understand what we can do on a global scale as well. Summit participants can:

1. Encourage governments to eliminate barriers to climate change action that may exist in trade agreements?
2. Encourage governments to provide support to developing countries to develop their infrastructure in a more sustainable manner.
3. Encourage governments to decouple environmental and economic policy with respect to emissions so long term plans are possible.
4. Protect trees both in Canada and in the tropical rain forests.
5. Support international social media sites that provide good information on climate change.