

What roles should government, industry, civil society and universities play to enable a sustainable energy future?

Elizabeth May

Sierra Club of Canada has the longest history of working on climate change among Canadian environmental groups, with a continuous presence on the issue since 1989.

Our work on the issue of a sustainable energy future has followed the same fundamental principles of all our campaigns:

- Get the facts;

- Educate the public;

- Run an effective media campaign;

- Work in coalition with other sectors (faith, youth, municipalities, trade unions, etc);

SCC has a crack media team, able to respond quickly to developments with news releases and policy analysis. We conduct press conferences and media briefings on a regular basis. When the urgency of the event requires, we have also moved to paid advertisements, including the highly visible full page ad in the Globe and Mail and elsewhere in the lead-up to Kyoto ratification: “

Work in Coalition:

SCC has served as the secretariat for Climate Action Network Canada (CANNET) since 1993. The CANNET network was expanded beyond environmental groups early in the last decade. We worked deliberately to engage the faith community (United Church, Anglican church, KAIROS), trade unions (such as the Canadian Labour Congress), health groups (such as the Lung Society) and others. We also sought out those private sector players pushing for action on climate change. In addition to renewable energy companies and alternative fuel innovations, such as Iogen and its cellulose ethanol, we worked with more conventional industry. At least partially due to our work and advice, large industry associations such as the Mining Association of Canada and the Forest Products Association of Canada developed viable Kyoto plans.

Mobilize the Public to Contact Politicians:

SCC has run a number of letter writing and petition campaigns in the last fifteen years. Our role is to educate the public for the purpose of creating change. Empowering the average citizen to use the tools of democracy effectively is our core mission. SCC runs activist training workshops across Canada, helping thousands of people, both SCC members and not, learn how to write an effective letter to your member of provincial legislator or Member of Parliament.

Highlight Viable Alternatives:

SCC has consistently emphasized energy strategies that meet economic and climate change requirements. We have published many reports dealing with options in ecological fiscal reform, demand side management, renewables and other strategies to meet carbon reduction goals.

Our work has included leadership within the Green Budget Coalition to press for tax shifts and an end to subsidies for nuclear and fossil fuel industries.

Impact:

Thanks to all of our work and that of our partners in coalition and, particularly the role of the municipalities across Canada, we were successful in seeing Kyoto ratified. In the last

year, Prime Minister Paul Martin has maintained a commitment to meet Kyoto targets and took a bold step of offering to host the 11th Conference of the Parties under the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change and First Meeting of the Parties under the Kyoto Protocol. The global climate negotiations will open November 28th and run till December 9th in Montreal.

The role of NGOs is critical for the Montreal conference. CANNET and our international colleagues through CAN International are pressing for a Multiple track, leading to post 2012 targets:

**START SECOND COMMITMENT PERIOD (2013-2017)
NEGOTIATIONS FOR KYOTO PROTOCOL TO CONCLUDE NO
LATER THAN END OF 2008**

**GREENING (DECARBONIZATION) TRACK TO BEGIN ON SAME
TIME FRAME AND UNDER KYOTO PROTOCOL**

**ADAPTATION TRACK SHOULD BE PULLED TOGETHER FROM
DISPARATE ELEMENTS INTO UNIFIED ADAPTATION TRACK
WITHIN CLIMATE REGIME (within UNFCCC)**

DEVELOP TRACK TO STOP TROPICAL DEFORESTATION.

We have an uphill challenge to meet these goals. The position of the Bush Administration in the U.S. is the largest obstacle. Fortunately, the Bush Administration is increasingly isolated even within the U.S. State level, regional and municipal governments have been embracing and meeting Kyoto targets. It is critical to reach to the United States, without being deterred by the Bush administration. The challenge for President of the COP, Environment Minister Stephane Dion will be substantial.