

**Presentation to the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission
in its review of the Wuskwatim Generation and Transmission Projects**

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Speaking Notes:

1. Request:

The Manitoba Clean Environment Commission recommend that the Wuskwatim Generation and Transmission Projects not be approved for licensing.

2. Introduction:

Over 2 billion people, or 1/3 of the world's population, do not have access to electricity. Many of these people live in the world's financially poorest regions, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. (World Bank, 2000)

With the population of these regions expected to grow, "the problems of rural energy are likely to become more pressing than ever". (World Bank, 2000)

Increased dependence upon local biofuels, wood, charcoal, dung, etc. Huge social and ecological cost involved in harvesting these biofuels.

3. Principles of Sustainable Development:

Global Responsibility

Manitobans should think globally when acting locally, recognizing that there is economic, ecological and social interdependence among provinces and nations, and working cooperatively, with Canada and internationally, to integrate economic, environmental, human health and social factors in decision-making while developing comprehensive and equitable solutions to problems. (Manitoba Principles of Sustainable Development, #7)

Recognize there are no political and jurisdictional boundaries to our environment, and that there is ecological interdependence among provinces and nations.

Consider environmental effects that occur outside of Manitoba when planning and deciding on new developments and major modifications to facilities and to methods of operations. (Manitoba Hydro Sustainable Development Principles, #13)

4. Integrity Gap:

Manitoba is prepared to invest \$800 million to provide 200 MW of electricity, initially for export purposes. There is no indication what this electricity will be used for.

- US is the #1 user of energy per capita. (Moore, 2001)
- Canada's energy consumption – 27th worst of 29 OECD countries. (Boyd, 2003)
- Each Manitoban consumes more than 2 1/2 times amount of power than the OECD average. (Energy Probe, 2003)

- Average Canadian uses 8.8 ha of ecologically available land. At 6.1 billion people, there is 1.7 ha of ecologically available land per person—less than 1/5 used by the average Canadian. (Boyd, 2003)

Adding 200 MW simply gives North America more of what it already has, and widens, not lessens the gap between NA and developing countries.

Wide gap between stated Principles of Sustainable Development and proposed actions. Recent book has given a name to this phenomenon, "The Integrity Gap".

"By and large, all levels of Canadian government exhibit a willingness to identify environmental challenges rather than deny their existence or minimize their importance. Once problems are recognized, however, Canadian policies often fail to deliver solutions or even launch efforts to attain those solutions". (Lee and Perl, p. 3)

5. Other Sustainable Development Shortfalls:

Today's decisions are to be balanced with tomorrow's effects. (MB Principle of Sustainable Development, #2(3))

Seventy-seven (77) percent of the total water discharge of the 139 largest river systems in NA, Europe and former USSR have been strongly or moderately impacted by the fragmentation of their river channels by dams and water regulation resulting from reservoir operation, interbasin transfer and irrigation. (Dynesius and Nilsson, 1994)

What are we leaving our children and their children?

6. Solutions:

- Conservation
- Development and improvement of alternative technologies

"Technologies such as solar, wind and small-scale hydro-electric power are often ideal in rural areas and require far more systematic attention by policymakers that they have hitherto received." (World Bank, 2000)

7. The needs of NCN:

- Allow them to invest in existing Manitoba Hydro generating stations.
- Provide training, education and opportunities to allow its members to participate in and receive benefits from conservation measures and alternative technologies.
- Provide training, education and resources to tackle other environmental issues, i.e. contaminated sites remediation
 - 5,000 contaminated sites on federal lands, clean-up cost of over \$2 billion (Auditor-General 2002)
 - 876 contaminated sites in MB (SOE, 1997)

Manitobans should

- (a) *endeavour to repair damage to or degradation of the environment; and*
- (b) *consider the need for rehabilitation and reclamation in future decisions and actions.* (Manitoba Principles of Sustainable Development, #6)

Selected References

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