

Provincial Governments Still Failing on Climate Change Sept 24, 2001

Alberta Government Policies Causing Rapid Emissions Growth

OTTAWA - As federal and provincial Energy and Environment ministers meet today in Winnipeg to discuss climate change, the Pembina Institute is releasing a new report card¹ showing that the governments of Alberta, British Columbia, Québec, Ontario and Saskatchewan are all failing to make an adequate effort to support Canada's commitment under the Kyoto Protocol. Alberta scored a mark of only 31.5% in the Institute's detailed assessment.

"The few minor positive actions taken by the Alberta government are overwhelmed by its support for two extremely negative developments for Alberta's greenhouse gas emissions: rapid expansion of the oil sands, and a massive increase in coal-fired electricity," said Dr. Matthew Bramley, Director, Climate Change at the Pembina Institute and author of the report. "In light of Canada's intention to ratify the Kyoto Protocol in 2002, Alberta needs to take substantive action now to reduce emissions in all areas."

The Pembina Institute's assessment considered 38 different policy initiatives provincial governments could take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in nine separate areas. While provincial governments scored failing marks in most areas, rare passing marks were obtained by Québec's efforts on transportation, and by the progress of Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan in reducing emissions from government operations. Ontario failed in all areas.

Total marks scored were: Alberta-31.5%; British Columbia-39%; Ontario-30.5%; Québec-34.5%; Saskatchewan-26%. Compared to an identical assessment carried out by the Institute one year ago, Québec has made the most significant improvement. British Columbia retains its lead from last year, but the Institute cautioned that its leadership position is seriously threatened by the new government's apparent abandonment of the province's climate change business plan. Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan have made little progress compared to last year.

Under the Kyoto Protocol, Canada is required to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 6% below the 1990 level in the period 2008-2012. Canada's emissions, however, actually increased by 15% between 1990 and 1999, and government projections made in that year indicated that emissions would be 27% above the 1990 level in 2010 if no additional actions were taken to address climate change. Alberta's emissions in 2010 are projected to be between 40 and 65% above the 1990 level in the absence of new policy measures².

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¹ The report can be downloaded at www.pembina.org.

² The 27% and 40% emissions increases were projected in National Climate Change Process Analysis and Modelling Group (1999), *Canada's Emissions Outlook, An Update*. The 65% projection, made in August 2001 by Paul Hunt of Climate Change Central, assumes that all the latest publicly announced oil sands and coal-fired electricity projects go ahead.

