

## **What we'd like to see in the next Climate change Action Plan!**

**Wednesday, August 21, 2 p.m., Marysville Place**

**By Annie Guérard**

On August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013, seven NBEN member and associate groups attended a consultation meeting about the provincial Climate Change Action plan for 2013 to 2020.

### **Consultation highlights**

Darwin Curtis, Executive Director of the Climate Change Secretariat, mentioned that about 50% of the reductions in emissions between 2007 and 2012 were caused directly by actions that were part of the previous action plan and 50% by structural changes caused by economic factors (e.i. shutdown of power plants). The greenhouse gas emission reduction goal as set by the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers for 2020 is 10% below the level of 1990. The secretariat recognized the importance of engaging different sectors and stakeholders and seemed keen to have engagement as a part of the action plan. The importance of mainstreaming adaptation was highlighted, which mean that climate change impacts should be considered in day to day decisions in all sectors. The secretariat mentioned that carbon charges for fossil fuels entering the province are viewed as more predictable and a better option by industry over carbon caps, in which industries have to reduce emissions to met targets that are being ratcheted down each year.

Participants from environmental groups each provided a statement and points made included;

- Increased efficiency and conservation are a top priority. Efficiency NB's budget should be increased and not cut.
- Renewable energy should be a focus. Feed-in tariffs are essential to encourage renewable technology in a rural context.
- The province should not be moving towards industrial projects associated with larges emissions.
- Use regulatory approaches to emissions reductions such as carbon caps. The Clean Air Act provides a framework that can be used to support this.
- Carbon charges should be created and the revenue should be put into a climate environmental damages fund for emissions reduction and adaptation activities.
- A transportation strategy, especially for rural areas, that includes both public transportation and innovative approaches for connecting people was targeted as an important element.
- Conservation of biodiversity and natural areas will play a key role both for mitigating the effect of emissions (carbon sinks) and for adaptation. Action priorities are necessary to ensure these are considered across government.
- More effort should be made in promoting innovative practices in the agricultural sector such as enhancing carbon sequestration in soil, reducing chemical fertilizers and harvesting methane.
- Engagement and working collaboratively across different sectors should be a key piece in the next action plan.

Some participants were wondering how the Climate Change Action Plan will be integrated in the Energy Institute's activities.

## **Next steps**

The consultation phase will be over at the end of August and all groups are welcome to send their statement until the end of the month at [climatechange@gnb.ca](mailto:climatechange@gnb.ca) . The final draft of the Climate Change Action plan is expected to be ready before Christmas.

The Climate Change Secretariat was represented by Darwin Curtis, Susan Atkinson and Colette Lemieux. The secretariat first presented the context and goals of the new Climate Change Action plan (Click here to see the presentation).

Attending from the environmental groups were:

Sam Arnold- Sustainability Energy Group  
Gordon Dalzell - Citizens Coalition for Clean Air  
Roberta Clowater- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society  
Margo Sheppard- Nature Trust of New Brunswick  
Greg Lynch- Falls Brook Centre  
Susan Linkletter- Petticodiac Watershed Alliance  
Kim Reeder- St. Croix Estuary Project Inc.,  
Mary Ann Coleman- New Brunswick Environmental Network,  
Annie Guérard- New Brunswick Environmental Network