

**Report: Job Creation and Climate Change Town Hall  
Matt DeCoursey, Member of Parliament for Fredericton**

**Meeting information**

**Date:** May 24, 2016, 7-9 p.m.

**Location:** Centre communautaire Sainte-Anne, Fredericton, NB

**Facilitator:** Vanessa Paesani (21 Inc.)

**Presenter:** Matt DeCoursey, Member of Parliament, Fredericton

**Note Takers:** Jill Pilgrim, Emily Heffernan, David Thibodeau

**Participants:** First Nations, renewable energy entrepreneurs, business leaders, environmental organizations, academics, civic groups, and citizens.

**Recommendations/comments from participants**

**On government policy in general:**

- Policies reflect who we are as a society and must: 1. Fully accept that climate change is real and happening in our communities; 2. Include means to educate the general population about challenges and opportunities of climate change; 3. Ensure tangible action will be taken, and enforced.
- We should be proactive, craft policies that will mitigate the effects of climate change 30-40 years into the future.
- Policies should guide adaptation and mitigation efforts in local communities; ensure we design infrastructure that reflects current and future realities of climate change.
- There should be incentives for people to make choices that align with climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Building codes should be updated to promote energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources, participants suggesting the adoption of a national energy code

**On renewable energy/energy efficiency:**

- Create incentives for renewable energy/energy efficiency retrofits on homes and businesses.
- Create national standards for how homes are heated.
- Make it easier for homeowners to access capital for installing renewable energy technologies.
- Provide incentives for communities to become energy self-sufficient.
- Reduce electricity use through Smart Grid technologies.

**On job creation through climate action:**

- New Brunswick's Bay of Fundy has the highest tides in the world and could be an opportunity to create jobs and produce renewable tidal energy.
- Investments in renewable energy and renewable energy technology produce more jobs than fossil fuel-based resource development.

- Canada and New Brunswick should invest in sustainable energy jobs in solar, tidal, geothermal and wind energy, among other renewable sources.

**On transportation:**

- We should increase and promote the use of electric vehicles.
- Encourage car-pooling through incentives and by reducing the number of parking spots in downtown centres.
- Promote active transportation by offering free bike rental services in downtown centres.
- Enhance public transportation system to include more routes and improve frequency to outlying areas
- Encourage cycling by improving cycling infrastructure (i.e. More bike lanes, wider bike lanes, barrier between bike lanes and roads)

**On education:**

- Ensure Canadians of all ages are being educated about the challenges and opportunities of climate change.

**On a carbon tax:**

- A carbon tax could be used as an incentive to encourage activities that align with climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts.
- Provide a carbon tax credit to people who own land but do not harvest trees.
- Create exemptions for communities without abundant renewable resources which can be used as alternatives to fossil fuels
- Ensure transparency and accountability in where funds from carbon taxes are allocated.

**On food security:**

- Provide incentives for citizens to support local farmers and buy locally.
- Bolster local food processing and distribution in New Brunswick, Atlantic region.
- Solutions must be tailored to New Brunswick communities, i.e., what works in larger urban centres in Canada may not work here.

**On the development of future fossil fuel infrastructure:**

- Participants expressed concern that Canada cannot not invest in further pipeline development while acting on climate change or meeting its Paris Agreement commitments.
- Participants were concerned that proceeding with the proposed Energy East Pipeline would contradict and impede the country's commitment to climate action.

**On Trade Deals:**

- Participants expressed concern that the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) will interfere with local efforts to combat climate change and national sovereignty.

**Misc. notes:**

- Climate change will change the forestry industry, a big industry in New Brunswick.

- Climate action must be swift. Economics have to play a role but can't be the determining factor.
- First tackle 'low-hanging fruit' such as energy efficiency retrofits in homes, businesses and public buildings.
- While the federal government must lead on climate action, must ensure provinces are on board and ready to play their role as well.
- Must protect our freshwater resources. Possible source of revenue, selling clean water to areas impacted by water shortages.
- Our climate action efforts must look seven generations into the future
- Federal government must recognize the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples when considering energy projects, climate action.
- Culture in Canada must change to reflect the reality of climate change, all individuals, businesses and governments must play a role in the solution.