Climate Canada:  
A CANADIAN LENS ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

THE ROAD TO COP-6 – THE HOME STRETCH

Final Preparations Underway
With just a couple of weeks remaining, final preparations for the Sixth Conference of the Parties (COP-6) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are moving full speed ahead. French Premier Jacques Chirac, the Prime Ministers of India and China, and either U.S. Vice-President Al Gore or President Clinton—depending on the outcome of the presidential elections on November 7—are among the expected participants. There will be delegations from more than 187 countries, representatives of 200 non-governmental organizations, 5,000 journalists and 1,500 volunteers who will gather in The Hague from November 13 to 24. With the total number of participants estimated at 10,000, the organizational tasks at hand are of epic proportions. The Statenhal, a massive 60,000-square-foot hangar-like structure inside the Netherlands Congress Center, will house 17 offices for the country delegations, UN officials, NGOs and journalists. The makeup of the delegations varies from country to country. Industrialized nations are sending dozens of representatives from different ministries, scientists, negotiators and diplomats. In contrast, many developing countries will be represented by just one or two delegates each.

IMAX Film At Opening Ceremony
Jan Pronk, the Dutch Environment Minister, has announced that the COP-6 curtain-raiser will be an IMAX film to be shown on a giant 7,500-square-foot (700-square-metre) screen. The film was completed after five hectic weeks and shot in five different locations: Peru, the U.S., Scotland, Mali and The Netherlands. Said Rien Bout, leader of the initiative at the ministry: “We are trying to convey that it doesn’t matter where you are. People in their daily lives everywhere experience the problems of climate change. It is a global problem affecting developed countries and developing countries alike and so we didn’t want to differentiate between them.” The film has no analysis of the issues. Instead, the images tell the story. The film reportedly tackles the many aspects of climate change head-on and doesn’t shy away from depicting the economic interests at stake. Despite the sobering subject, the IMAX film is not just a sad story. “We have some optimistic moments in the movie because we believe that solutions can be found,” said Bout. “We hope that the poignancy of the film will set the tone for the conference and portray what is at stake in a way that will inspire participants to live by the conference motto and ‘Work It Out.’”

Recent Government Statements and Signals
In the run-up to COP-6, governments have made a number of public statements on climate change. In the United States, Vice President Al Gore recently touted his environmental record and said Texas Governor George W. Bush will not address global warming. Campaigning in Missouri, Gore called global warming “a moral issue,” citing an IPCC report that concludes pollution has “contributed substantially” to the phenomenon. Talking to workers in Kansas City, Gore said Bush was not committed to acting in order to stop the rise in the earth’s temperature. “[Bush] has said that he’s...
not convinced that the pollution is causing it, and that he’s not convinced we should do anything other than just study it—and I disagree with that,” Gore said. Later, at a speech in Davenport, Iowa, Gore referred again to the study, saying it showed global warming was a more severe threat than most scientists previously believed. “Instead of just going up a few degrees in the lifetimes of these kids, unless we act, the average temperature is going to go up 10 or 11 degrees,” Gore said. The Vice-President, author of the 1992 bestseller Earth in the Balance, has long called the environment as one of his pet concerns. However, his credentials as an environmentalist have been sharply challenged by Green Party Leader Ralph Nader, who has said the “best case Al Gore has made for being an environmentalist is that he is not George W. Bush.” Bush responded with a sharp attack on Gore during a speech in Pittsburgh, charging that Gore, if elected, would not provide the leadership necessary for bi-partisan cooperation in Washington.

In the European Union, Germany has announced new measures to ensure it becomes “one of the few industrial nations to fulfill promised cuts” in greenhouse gases, and urged the rest of the world to follow. “We shall make sure Germany maintains its top position on climate protection,” Environment Minister Juergen Trittin has said, forecasting that Germany would meet its pledge of cutting emissions by 2010. Germany has boosted its ecological credentials since the 1998 election victory of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder’s coalition of Social Democrats and Greens. It has begun to shut down its nuclear plants—albeit far more slowly than many Greens want—and has slapped unpopular new levies on polluting fuels in a bid to wean the world’s third-largest economy off its oil dependence. Measures passed by Schroeder’s cabinet yesterday included support for new forms of energy and energy-saving cars, a nationwide building insulation plan and the setting of voluntary targets for businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Part of the cash for the program came from 15 billion marks ($6.6 billion) that Berlin is plowing back into the energy-saving cars, a nationwide building insulation plan and the setting of voluntary targets for businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Part of the cash for the program came from 15 billion marks ($6.6 billion) that Berlin is plowing back into the economy after a windfall from the recent auction of new-generation UMTS mobile telephone licenses. A recent German/Dutch study released forecast that the EU’s CO₂ emissions will increase by seven to eight per cent of 1990 levels by 2010, compared to the eight per cent reduction the EU agreed to in the Kyoto Protocol.

In the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Tony Blair recently announced a £100m boost for green policies and issued a call for greens and business to work together. The new money is made up of a £50m “carbon trust” to encourage cleaner technologies such as wind and solar power, and £50m from the government’s New Opportunities Fund to encourage research in renewable energy. Environment Minister Michael Meacher has also defended the U.K.’s green record, claiming “you can tell that by the climate change program, which we are going to be publishing in a few weeks time, where we are leading the world on the overarching environmental issue.”

The Danish Energy Agency has recently said it was confident that Denmark would meet its tough target to reduce CO₂ emissions. Denmark wants to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 21 per cent between 1990 and the period 2008-2012. It says it slashed its CO₂ emissions by nine per cent between 1990 and 2000. The agency said it was focusing on reducing energy use and making it more efficient. It was also supporting a switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources by not lowering taxes at times when oil prices were low. The government has invested largely in energy efficient combined heat and power (CHP) plants and supported the creation of a market for green energy such as biomass, wind and solar.

Japan’s Environment Agency chief Yoriko Kawaguchi, speaking in Tokyo at the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Japan, played up domestic initiatives, contrasting the nation’s emissions with those of the U.S., the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases. Japan has committed to reducing emissions by six per cent of 1990 emission levels under the Kyoto Protocol. However, greenhouse gas emissions have jumped more than five per cent based on 1990 levels, nearly doubling the amount of emissions Japan must cut to meet its goal. “The implications of attempting to reduce CO₂ emissions are very different for a country like Japan—in which people already commute by public transportation—compared with countries in which people commute one person to a car,” she added. “If you look at the amount of CO₂ emitted per dollar of GDP (gross domestic product), you will see that Japan releases less than half the ratio of the U.S. and lower than that of the U.K.,” she added. Kawaguchi also addressed “sinks,” noting that Japan has proposed sinks be liberally interpreted to account for 3.7 per cent of the nation’s emissions cuts. Kawaguchi emphasized the importance of getting developing countries to take action to fight climate change, but added that it is incumbent upon industrialized countries to move first.

Sources:
- Earth Times: http://www.earthtimes.org/act/environment/cop6organizensc29_00.htm
- Earth Times: http://www.earthtimes.org/act/environmentpreparationssc27_00.htm
- Reuters: http://www.planetark.org/dailynewstory.cfm?newsid=8717
- Reuters: http://www.planetark.org/dailynewstory.cfm?newsid=8601
- BBC: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/uk_politics/newsid_988000/988089.stm
- Reuters: http://www.planetark.org/dailynewstory.cfm?newsid=8721
- Japan Times: http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl?m20001020bs5.htm

**CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE PARTY PLATFORMS**

Despite the approach of COP-6—and possibly of an agreement that will have a significant impact on Canada’s environment and economy—climate change is not figuring prominently in Canada’s federal election campaign. Climate Canada scanned the party platforms for their positions on climate change and energy policy. Here is what we found.

**Climate Canada wants to hear from you!**

Please send your comments, questions and announcements of upcoming events to vkellett@iisd.ca
The Liberal Party
The Liberal Party platform highlights Canada’s Kyoto commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and notes that since 1997, the Liberal government has committed over $1 billion to address climate change. The platform reviews the national strategy and Action Plan recently agreed on with the provinces. The Liberal strategy would include:

- promoting increased energy efficiency in industry and in the transportation system;
- funding the development of new energy technologies, such as fuel cells, and helping farmers to reduce agricultural emissions through improved farming methods;
- increasing Canada’s use of renewable energy, such as electricity from wind and ethanol from biomass; and
- encouraging consumers to buy more energy-efficient products by providing information and setting high product standards.

To address rising fuel prices, the Liberal platform promises to provide fuel tax rebates of up to $250 per household for low-and modest-income families.

The Canadian Alliance
While the Canadian Alliance platform does not mention climate change or the Kyoto Protocol, it promises to “encourage business and industry to develop conservation solutions and… recognize those who deliver improvements in environmentally efficient production.” The Alliance commits to working with the provinces in setting national standards and negotiating international agreements, backed up with “vigorous enforcement and meaningful penalties.”

On other energy issues, the platform promises to cut the GST on top of federal and provincial fuel taxes, and to eliminate the 1.5-cent increase in federal excise tax. The Alliance would also cut the federal excise tax on diesel fuel by 50 per cent.

The New Democratic Party
The NDP platform promises to “renew efforts to achieve short-term reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.” An NDP government would set up a Clean Air Fund to back community-based initiatives, such as tree planting and alternative energy, that create jobs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It would also assist workers displaced by actions taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The platform also advocates reducing taxes on sustainable activities, particularly those that involve a greater investment in labour, and increasing taxes on non-sustainable activities. An NDP government would also create a Green Jobs Fund to provide loan security for the cost of retrofitting residential, commercial and industrial buildings to meet higher standards of energy efficiency and make greater use of energy from alternative sources, resulting in reduced greenhouse gas emissions and lower costs. As part of a national transportation strategy, an NDP government would invest in public transit and commuter rail service in and around Canada’s major urban centres.

The Progressive Conservative Party
The PC Party platform highlights Canada’s “unique position with respect to emissions reduction because of our large land mass, relatively small population, winter climate and our economic reliance on resource-based industries.” Nevertheless, it says, Canada must work towards achieving real reductions and promises that a PC government would “lead by example” in green power procurement; carry out energy-efficient retrofits of federal government buildings from the existing Public Works budget; and introduce preferential tax treatment and incentives to promote renewable energy.

However, while promising “preferential” tax treatment and incentives to favour clean or renewable energy, the PC platform also commits to tax breaks on fossil fuel-energy for one year, after which they would be reviewed. For example the PC platform promises to immediately suspend the 1.5-cents-per-litre surtax on gasoline, reduce the federal excise tax on diesel fuel and remove the GST on home heating fuels.

Bloc Québécois
The platform of the Bloc Québécois says that the government must respect Canada’s Kyoto commitments on greenhouse gas emissions reductions by reducing Canada’s greenhouse gases by six per cent.

The Bloc Québécois advocates a strong pro-environment position for Canada at climate change negotiations, increased federal investment in emissions reductions and a plan for redistributing the target across the provinces that acknowledges the emissions reductions already made in Quebec. To mitigate rising energy prices, the Bloc supports temporarily lowering federal taxes, improving competition legislation and promoting alternative and renewable energy.

CANADIAN CLIMATE PROGRAMS

Merger Creates Partners for Climate Protection (PCP)
The 20% Club of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has merged with the Canadian Cities for Climate Protection Campaign of the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). The new program is called the “Partners for Climate Protection: For a Better Quality of Life” or PCP. The goal of PCP remains to support Canadian municipal governments to prepare and implement local climate action plans. FCM will be the political partner for PCP, assuming responsibility for all formal relations with the Canadian federal government, and the formulation of federal climate policy within Canada with respect to local governments. ICLEI will be the technical partner, assuming direction for projects such as software tools, technical manuals, training materials, reporting protocols, energy management, and monitoring and verification activities.

The priorities of the new program are to:

- **build capacity:** training workshops, inventory and projection software, case studies, toolkits;
- **support champions:** information sharing, research support, presentations;
- **provide up-to-date information:** climate change science, government programs, municipal experiences through the PCP newsletter;

Written by Chad Carpenter and Victoria Kellett, IISD. This newsletter can also be found on IISD's web site at [www.iisd.org/climatechange.htm](http://www.iisd.org/climatechange.htm). To receive e-mail versions of this newsletter, subscribe through the web site or send an e-mail message to (lyris@lists.iisd.ca). Leave subject line blank and write: subscribe climatecanada (your name).

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- ensure access to international municipal experience through ICLEI’s global CCP Campaign;
- create model plans: local action plans, ordinances, bylaws;
- facilitate participation: international negotiations on climate change, up-to-date information on the status of negotiations, national consultations;
- generate feedback: what works, what doesn’t, what it costs, what it saves;
- undertake quantification: surveys of progress, monitoring of the milestones achieved;
- build partnerships: networking and partnerships with supporting organizations such as Green Communities, Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, Natural Resources Canada’s Renewable Energy Deployment Initiative, Fleet Smart and Energy Innovator programs, ICLEI Energy Services and the Climate Action Fund.

The PCP Program will follow the five-milestone process for achieving tangible reductions of local greenhouse gases. Cities of ICLEI and FCM’s efforts are automatically members of PCP and of ICLEI’s international campaign of 260 cities worldwide. That brings PCP participation to 61 communities across Canada, representing 61 per cent of the population in rural and urban centres in almost every province and territory.

On September 14, John Hachey, Honourary Chair of the PCP Program, issued a “Municipal Leaders’ Statement On Climate Change,” which urged municipal governments to take action now through investments in energy-efficient building retrofits, in better processes for distributing and treating water and managing waste, and in community energy systems and renewable energy. The letter also urges municipalities to join the PCP Program by taking a resolution of council. A sample is available on their web site at http://www.fcm.ca/pcp/ResolutionEnglish2.pdf

The letter also notes that the key to ensuring that communities get the help they need to make these investments is ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, the agreement that sets reduction targets for developed nations, signed by 150 governments in 1997. For more information on PCP, contact: Louise Comeau, Federation of Canadian Municipalities PCP Program in Ottawa: phone: (613) 241-5221, ext. 232; fax: (613) 244-1515; e-mail: lcomeau@fcm.ca

Climate Change Solutions: “Inspiration into Action”
Climate Change Solutions at http://www.climatechangesolutions.com/ is an online resource centre of success stories, opportunity areas, tools and resources on how to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Climatechangesolutions.com demonstrates how to reduce emissions in the following sectors: individuals and families; municipalities; industry (with many sub-sectors); public institutions; commercial; and agriculture.

Climatechangesolutions.com is unique in two ways. It is the first resource to provide detailed information on the economic and environmental benefits of GHG success stories across such a broad range of sectors. Secondly, http://www.climatechangesolutions.com provides the tools and resources required to turn inspiration into action.

In each sector you will find:

- Opportunity Areas. These provide context and some understanding of the issues involved in each sector and sub-sections.
- Success Stories. The stories outline how emission reductions were achieved. Each story contains an economic cost-benefit analysis, details of greenhouse gas emission reductions benefits, the additional environmental/social benefits and, finally, the calculations and assumptions.
- Tools. The tools are online and interactive. They are designed to help the user replicate the success story or, at the very least, take some action. The tools include: calculators for GHG emissions; audit forms with calculations; maps of resources across Canada; and pop-up instructions for change.
- Resources. These are brief descriptions of the contacts and organizations that have information on climate change.

Climatechangesolutions.com is a climate change education project of The Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development. For more information contact Pembina: phone: (780) 542-6272; fax: (780) 542-6464; e-mail: piad@pembina.org

Voluntary Challenge and Registry, Inc.
VCR, Inc., at http://www.vcr-mnr.ca/home_e.cfm, has been established to provide the means for promoting, assessing and recognizing the effectiveness of the voluntary approach in addressing climate change. VCR’s mandate is to:

- recruit broad participation from all sectors of the economy;
- record and document participation, action plans, best practices and achievements;
- analyze actions and achievements, and consider their potential to further progress and provide the related support to participants;
- recognize, publicize and promote participants making significant progress towards the national stabilization objectives with the support of the Technical Advisory Committee; and,
- prepare progress and annual reports, and identify issues for consideration in the evolution of VCR Inc.

The program was initially established in 1995 by a multi-stakeholder working group as a key element of Canada’s National Action Program on Climate Change to encourage companies and organizations from all sectors of the economy to accept greater accountability for GHG generation on a voluntary basis. Its purpose is to encourage private and public sector organizations to voluntarily limit their net GHG emissions as a step toward meeting Canada’s climate change objectives. The VCR program was originally established with the intention of being housed within a stand-alone organization and in October 1997, this intention became a reality. It currently draws two-thirds of its operating funds from the private sector and the balance from federal and provincial governments across Canada.

VCR, Inc. is now an independent corporation dedicated to encouraging private and public sector organizations to voluntarily limit their net greenhouse gas emissions, as a step towards meeting Canada’s climate change goals. The Challenge Registry is designed to publicly record the Action Plans and Progress.
Climate Canada

Reports that form the basis for planned GHG emission reduction activities by organizations throughout Canada. Participants can get started with the guidelines page, at http://www.vcr-mvr.ca/vcr-020.cfm, which has information to formulate an Action Plan, with templates available for download. Profiles of other participants can be browsed by company name, province, sector or report type. For information contact VCR, Inc. at 170 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 600, Ottawa, Ontario: phone: (613) 565-5151; fax: (613) 565-5743; e-mail: info@vcr-mvr.ca

CANADIANS IN ACTION

Global Warming Strains Old Sewers, Says Insurance Bureau of Canada

In an Ottawa Citizen article, Mark Yakabuski, a Vice-President of the Insurance Bureau of Canada, said that global warming, and what many believe are its related ice storms, tornadoes and unpredictable heavy rain storms, put a heavy strain on Ottawa’s decaying sewer system. “We can reduce the cost of future natural disasters by ensuring that our municipal infrastructure is adequate to carry the load of most severe weather events,” Yakabuski told Ottawa’s transition board yesterday. He called on the transition board and the new city of Ottawa to upgrade sewers to prepare for climate change. Rather than pay for damages from old sewers, the new city would be better off using that money to build better sewers, he said. Yakabuski, whose organization represents most private and property insurance firms, said global warming is one of the factors insurance firms are noticing in an increase in payouts. He encouraged the new city to have seed money available to take advantage of the recently-signed federal-provincial deal to boost infrastructure spending over the next five years.

For more information see: http://www.ottawacitizen.com/city/001031/4783505.html

Mississauga Shows its Disappointment Over Ontario’s Rejection of a National Strategy to Reduce Greenhouse Gases

In the wake of the Province’s rejection of the National Implementation Strategy on Climate Change, Mississauga’s City Council passed a resolution today once again asking the Province to act on its commitment to reduce greenhouse gases by promoting fuel efficiency, fuel-cell technology, the expansion of public transit and funding of other clean air initiatives. Brenda Sakauye, chair of the Mississauga Air Quality Advisory (MAQA) Committee said the City of Mississauga has also passed several resolutions calling on the federal and provincial governments to take action on air quality issues, specifically, to make greenhouse gas reduction a priority. “She said the MAQA has undertaken a program of many air quality action plans that address climate change and smog as well as a communications strategy to raise awareness, and “you can imagine our disappointment to know that the Ontario government, a major player, did not sign the final version of the National Implementation Strategy on Climate Change - a blueprint which sets out measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the country.” For more information, contact Brenda Sakauye, MAQA at (905) 615-3217 or brenda.sakauye@city.mississauga.on.ca. Also see: http://www.newswire.ca/releases/October2000/25/c6775.html

David Suzuki: Canada Has Done “Nothing” Since Kyoto

In an Ottawa Citizen article on October 30, scientist David Suzuki charged that the Liberal government is damaging Canada’s environment and shaming the country on the international stage by trying to open up loopholes in the Kyoto agreements. “I think Canada’s behaviour ever since Kyoto has been absolutely embarrassing. Humiliating,” Suzuki said. “We’ve done nothing and we want loopholes to keep us from doing anything.” But Environment Minister David Anderson said he’s looking for flexibility, not loopholes, in finding ways to reduce greenhouse gases and stem global warming. “We’re determined to meet our target,” Anderson said. “And if we’re to take Kyoto as a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, you have to say, in our view, all possible sources should be canvassed.” Canada signed the Kyoto agreement in 1997, promising to cut the country’s greenhouse gas emissions to 565 megatonnes per year by 2012—down from 601 megatonnes in 1990. But Canada’s emissions have continued to rise. The country now pumps 682 megatonnes of greenhouse gases into the air every year—mainly carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels in cars, power plants, factories and oil refineries. For more information see the Ottawa Citizen at: http://www.ottawacitizen.com/national/001030/4776782.html

New Suzuki Foundation Report

The David Suzuki Foundation has released a new climate change report for COP-6, “Negotiating the Climate: Canada and the International Politics of Global Warming.” It focuses on climate-related science, the history of international negotiations on climate change, and the underlying issues and context for Canada’s negotiating positions. It offers detailed analysis of the most critical issues on the agenda for The Hague, and a framework for monitoring and evaluating progress from COP-6. An accompanying position paper by The David Suzuki Foundation outlines the potential environmental implications of certain policy choices and offers a series of recommendations for negotiators at COP-6. The report, along with, a position paper and media release, can be found at http://www.davidsuzuki.org/cop6report.htm.

NEWS AND VIEWS

IPCC: Scientists Acknowledge Role of Humans in Climate Change

Greenhouse gases produced mainly by the burning of fossil fuels are altering the atmosphere in ways that affect earth’s climate, and it is likely that they have “contributed substantially to the observed warming over the last 50 years,” the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has concluded. The panel said temperatures could go higher than previously predicted if emissions are not curtailed. This represents a significant shift in tone—from couched to relatively confident—for the panel of hundreds of scientists, which issued two previous assessments of the research into global warming theory, in 1995 and 1990. One of its most striking findings is its conclusion that the upper range of warming over the next 100 years could be even higher than it estimated in 1995, in a worst case raising the average global temperature 11 degrees Fahrenheit from where it was in 1990. By comparison, average temperatures today are only nine degrees Fahrenheit warmer than they were at the end of the last Ice Age. For media coverage
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U.S. Religious Leaders
Open Campaign Against Global Warming
On October 26, 2000, in Miami, religious groups from Florida to Michigan to Oregon announced that, in 16 states, they were organizing campaigns against global warming and other environmental dangers. Religious leaders, forming the Florida Interfaith Campaign on Global Climate Change, kicked off a year-long campaign by signing a declaration that “global warming with associated climate changes is an inescapable spiritual challenge.” Global warming is a religious issue “because climate change threatens all life on earth as God created it,” the groups said.

“Environmentalism starts with the Book of Genesis, it didn’t start with Earth Day,” said Paul Gorman of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, a New York group monitoring the local campaigns on behalf of Catholic, Jewish, Protestant and Christian organizations. The Orlando-based Florida Council of Churches, which includes 18 denominations and almost 4,000 congregations, is among the effort’s sponsors. Climate change results from human activity, such as burning oils and natural gas for energy and destroying forests, the coalition contends. The burden of any changes from global warming would fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable people: the poor, sick and elderly, the groups said. For more information see, the Detroit Free Press at http://www.freep.com/news/statewire/sw22132_20001026.htm

Canadian Port Gains as Ice Diminishes
On November 3, the New York Times reported that while politicians debate the validity of global warming, some shippers are voting with their boats, quietly shifting marine routes to Churchill, Manitoba, Canada’s northernmost industrial harbour. After decades of ignoring the only major port on the Hudson Bay because of ice hazards, shippers are finding that the retreating ice cover is putting Churchill on the map. By docking at this sub-Arctic outpost of 1,100 residents, oceangoing ships benefit from rail links to the prairie heartlands of Canada and the United States, the world’s largest wheat exporting nations. On November 9, when grain chutes are to swivel away from the last grain ship here, 27 ships, nearly double last season’s flotilla of 14, are expected to have been loaded. This year’s shipping season began on July 11, the earliest port opening since international shipping started here in 1931. “If we are going to have global warming, then the only way for Churchill to go is up,” David M. Collenette, Canada’s Minister of Transport, said on a visit here last month to inaugurate $25 million worth of federal investments in the port, largely for dredging and dust control in the towering grain elevators. The Canadian Ice Service has measured ice extent on July 15, the benchmark date for the annual start of shipping in Hudson Bay, for every year since 1971. Although years vary, the trend is that over the last three decades the expanse of Hudson Bay ice on that date has decreased by about one third, according to John Falkingham, chief of the service’s Ice Forecasting unit. For more information see: http://www.nytimes.com/2000/11/03/business/03SHIP.html

U.K. Insurance Premiums Might Skyrocket Due to Global Warming
On October 14, the Guardian reported that insurance companies might be forced to dramatically increase flood insurance premiums or refuse insurance altogether because of global warming, according to a report by the Association of British Insurers (ABI). The ABI is particularly alarmed at the way developers are building on flood plains and then abandoning householders to the risk of flooding. It urged the U.K. government to intervene to prevent this continuing with the three million new homes planned in England. The report says: ‘It is now certain that global warming is occurring. Furthermore, there is a reasonable consensus emerging that we are in for a period of much more extreme weather, resulting in more severe and more frequent floods.” The report warns of sudden extreme events such as thunderstorms, which cause flash floods because the volume of water overwhelms local drains, and sudden intense depressions such as the one that has caused the flooding in Kent and Sussex. The worst-case scenario for the insurers is a slow moving front over the upper Thames which then gradually moves down to London. See also Insurance News Net: http://insurance1newsnet.co.uk/article.asp?qa=6&id=727.

“Carbon Sink” Stories in the News
The October 12 issue of the Christian Science Monitor reported on the Maya Ranch Reserve in Belize, which is funded by several German companies. By protecting existing forests or growing new ones, companies hope to use the trees for pollution credits if a proposed international carbon-trading scheme gets under way later this decade. “We can promote biodiversity and protect against climate change at the same time,” says Thomas Qubeck, Vice-President of the Janus Foundation, the Bern, Switzerland-based nonprofit organization that runs the ranch. Conservationists, who have fought a losing battle to protect the world’s rain forests, hope the forests will be saved for their trees, which absorb carbon dioxide, store the carbon as new plant material and emit oxygen. In the U.S., Trexler & Associates, a Portland, Oregon-based environmental consulting group, has been involved in about $75 million in sales of carbon credits from forestry investments over the last decade, mostly in developing countries. The buyers have been utility companies—including Detroit Edition, Wisconsin Electric Power and British Petroleum—whose directors believe it’s just a matter of time until governments force them to cut back their emissions. They hope that regulators will consider the carbon deals as equivalent to emission reductions and that by acting early, they will pay lower prices before the demand for carbon-credit deals starts to rise. The Cincinnati-based Cinergy Corp. has invested $500,000 to plant trees in Ohio and Indiana in return for potential carbon credits. Pacific Forest has yet to close a deal itself but holds carbon rights donated by owners of 7,000 acres of coastal forests. Almost 400 acres of trees have been planted in Tennessee by a Houston-based energy company that is replanting forests in the Lower Mississippi Valley in anticipation of rules that might allow the company to use the trees for pollution credits. Dynegy Inc., which is the parent company of Illinois Power and has power plants elsewhere, has

U.K. Minister Says Floods are Wake-up Call on Global Warming
Several newspapers in the U.K. reported on a speech by Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott that signaled a massive government investment to cope with extreme weather conditions caused by global warming. He called for an urgent review for dealing with emergencies, stressing that the severe weather had served as “a wake-up call for everyone.” In his first major statement since the recent gales and flooding began, he said that Britain’s infrastructure needed a major overhaul. “While you cannot say any one storm is due to global warming, there is growing evidence that the pattern of weather around the world is increasingly extreme. We must take practical action so that we are prepared for a future where extreme weather events are more frequent. What we need is to take a longer-term look at how we can be better placed to deal with extreme weather events, which we expect to be more frequent in future.”

UPCOMING CANADIAN MEETINGS

UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS
THE KYOTO EFFECT – THE NEW CARBON ECONOMY: This conference is being held in Antwerp, Belgium, November 13-14, 2000. It is being sponsored by Prebon Energy and eFinancial News, and is intended for senior business, industry and government representatives. For more information contact Hugh McGuire, Prebon Consulting Services: e-mail: hmcguire@prebon.com; Internet: http://www.globalcarbonreduction.com

SIXTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE: COP-6 will be held in The Hague, The Netherlands, November 13-24, 2000. For more information contact the UNFCCC Secretariat; phone: +31-228-815-1000; fax: +31-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: http://cop6.unfccc.int/

WORLD CLIMATETECH 2000: This exhibition will be shown November 16-24, 2000, in The Hague, The Netherlands, coinciding with COP-6. It is an exhibition of climate-friendly technologies, related services and environmental programs. For more information contact Adam Smith, Climate Technology Initiative, Paris, France: phone: +33-1-4057-6582; e-mail: Adam.Smith@iea.org; Internet: http://www.climatetech.net/climatetech/index.html

SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL ENERGY FORUM: The Government of Saudi Arabia will host the Seventh International Energy Forum November 17-19, 2000, in Riyadh. For more information contact the Saudi Arabian Mission to the UN: phone: +1-212-697-4830; e-mail: saudiarabia@un.int

THIRD ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES: This conference will be held December 3-6, 2000, in Hong Kong. For more information contact APCSEET 2000 Secretariat, Department of Chemical Engineering, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Clearwater Bay, Kowloon, Hong Kong: phone: +852-2358-7134; fax: +852-2358-0054; Internet: http://www.ust.hk/apc2000

VILLAGE POWER 2000: This event will be held December 4-7, 2000, at the World Bank in Washington, DC. Workshops will be held on December 4, and a conference will be held December 5-7. For more information visit http://www.villagepower2000.com/

12TH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL: MOP-12 is scheduled to take place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, December 11-15, 2000. The 32nd Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund will be held prior to this, December 4-8, also in Ouagadougou. For more information contact the Ozone Secretariat: phone: +254-2-62-1234; fax: +254-2-62-3601; Internet: http://www.unep.org/ozone/meet2000.htm

EIGHTH SESSION OF WORKING GROUP I OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE: This meeting will take place January 17-20, 2001, in Shanghai, China. For more information contact N. Sundaramaram, Secretary to the IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland: phone: +41-22-730-8208; fax: +41-22-730-8025; Internet: http://www.ipcc.ch

SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SOLAR ENERGY AND APPLIED PHOTOCHEMISTRY: This meeting will be held April 3-8, 2001, in Cairo, Egypt. Lectures and workshops will help scientists to communicate and share experiences on solar energy issues. For more information contact: Sabry Abdel-Motaleb, Photoenergy Center, Faculty of Science, Ain Shams University, Abbassia, Cairo, Egypt: fax: (202) 244-7683; e-mail: solar@photoenergy.org; Internet: http://www.photoenergy.org/solar2001.html

UNFCCC COP-7: This meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place from October 29 to November 9, 2001, in Marrakech, Morocco. For more information contact Isabelle Colineau, UNFCCC, Bonn, Germany: phone: +49-228-815-1425; fax: +49-228-815-1999; Internet: http://www.unfccc.int