

r e v i e w

News from the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

NRTEE Welcomes a New Chair and Three New Members

The National Round Table is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Harvey L. Mead as its new Chair. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien recently named Dr. Mead to the position, along with appointing three new members to the NRTEE: Edwin Aquilina, Marie-Claire Hélie and Qussai Samak.

Dr. Harvey L. Mead has put his passion for environmental issues to work provincially, nationally and internationally over the past four decades. The founding President of the Union québécoise pour la conservation de la nature (UQCN), he has been its President for most of the past twenty years. During the 1980s, Dr. Mead was National Director and Vice-President of the Canadian Nature Federation. He served as Assistant Deputy Minister for Conservation and Sustainable Development in the Quebec Department of Environment in 1990–1991 and as a member of the Quebec and Canadian Round Tables on Environment and Economy, during 1987–1989 and 1994–1997, respectively. Since 1996 he has been President of the Advisory Committee to St. Lawrence Vision 2000.

Dr. Mead's international experience includes work as project officer for an NGO-based project of the UQCN in Honduras from 1992 to 1998 and as a member of the Joint Public Advisory Committee for the Chile Canada

Agreement on Environmental Cooperation. He is the founding President (2000–2001) of the Fonds d'action québécois pour le développement durable, an independent organization endowed with \$45 million by the Quebec

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Prime Minister: NRTEE – A Good Example of Canada's Environmental Agenda

The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien cited the National Round Table and its sustainable development indicators initiative as a good example of the Government's quest for new partnerships to drive Canada's environmental agenda in a speech given to the Business Action for Sustainable Development Forum on September 1, 2002. The forum was part of the World Summit on Sustainable Development that took place in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In the same speech, the Prime Minister also announced the extension of the Sustainable Cities Initiative. Originally an NRTEE initiative, the SCI has earned Canada a growing global reputation as a pre-eminent source of sustainable technology, expertise and products.

“A good example [of new partnerships] is our National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, which we created as an outcome of the Earth Summit. It brings all stakeholders together, in a neutral forum, to forge shared solutions. Right now it is making headway in devising sustainable development indicators. One key reason for the progress that has been achieved through the Round Table has been the commitment of the private sector.”

— Prime Minister Jean Chrétien

NRTEE
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Brochure
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government to fund sustainable development projects.

He has been an environmental advisor to the Canadian chemical industry for the past fifteen years, and he acts as an external verifier for its Responsible Care initiative.

Edwin Aquilina, Special Advisor to the Mayor of Ottawa, is a former senior federal public servant, with extensive policy experience in areas such as economic and regional growth, infrastructure development and urban planning and conservation. Mr. Aquilina obtained a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs and Economics from Carleton College in Minnesota, and he later obtained a Master of Arts in Political Science and Economics from Columbia University in New York City. He also holds a certificate in Military and Strategic Studies from the National Defence College in Kingston, Ontario.

Marie-Claire Hélie, from Outremont, Quebec, is a Vice-President of the Financière Banque Nationale, Inc. She was educated and trained as a pharmacist, and has served as Chief Pharmacist for the Montréal Chinese Hospital. Ms. Hélie

studied at the University of Montréal, where she obtained a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy and where she later obtained her specialized diploma in hospital pharmacy management.

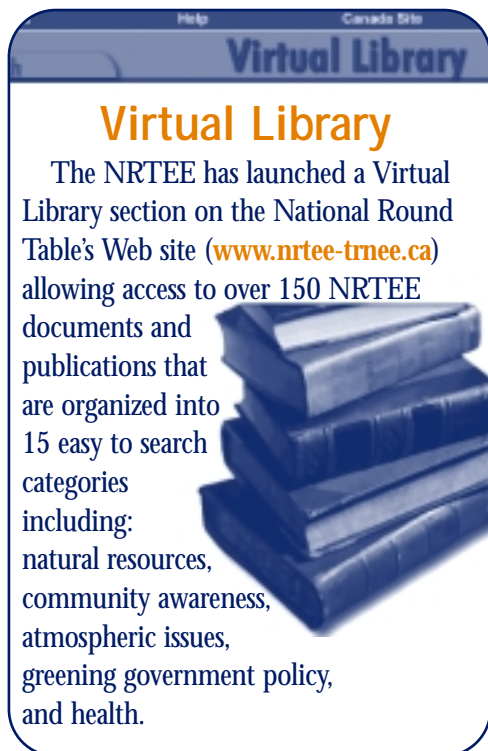
Dr. Qussai Samak, from Laval, Quebec, has been a member of the board of directors of Centre Québécois de valorisation des biotechnologies since 1998 and has served on the Quebec Environment Public Hearings Board since 1994. From 1992 to 1997, he was a professor at the University of Montréal and adjunct professor at the Chemical Engineering Department of McGill University. He advises la Confédération des syndicats nationaux on occupational safety, health and environmental protection. Dr. Samak has a wealth of knowledge and experience in areas such as scientific and technical research, environmental protection and health, and occupational and environmental safety. He obtained a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from Cairo University, a Master of Science in Engineering from McMaster University, and later a PhD in Chemical Engineering from McGill University. ■

Prime Minister, *continued from page 1*

The initiative facilitates business partnerships among firms, NGOs and governments. Currently an Industry Canada initiative, the SCI has a proven track record of success in Poland, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Argentina, Africa, and Chile. "The SCI is a concrete example of the power of partnership, of translating theory into practice."

In another speech given at the WSSD on September 2, 2002, the Prime Minister affirmed the Government's commitment to substantially complete the national park system and create National Marine Conservation Areas over the next few years. The creation of 10 new national parks and five new National Marine Conservation Areas have been announced. This reflects one of the NRTEE's Greening of the Budget recommendations in which the National Round Table urged the federal government to "commit to the funding of the completion of the national parks system and the establishment of representative marine conservation areas."

For more information on the NRTEE's Greening the Budget process and past recommendations, visit www.nrtee-trnee.ca/gbudget-e ■



Virtual Library

The NRTEE has launched a Virtual Library section on the National Round Table's Web site (www.nrtee-trnee.ca) allowing access to over 150 NRTEE documents and publications that are organized into 15 easy to search categories including: natural resources, community awareness, atmospheric issues, greening government policy, and health.



NRTEE to Develop National Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy

“Across Canada, as in most countries, contaminated land lies unused and unproductive. Such sites, known as brownfields, may have the potential for rejuvenation, bringing both health and economic benefits to local communities. Therefore, responding to the Government, the NRTEE has agreed to develop a National Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy in order to ensure that Canada is a global leader in remediation.”

— December 2001 Budget Speech

With those words, the Finance Minister mandated the National Round Table to create a national strategy incorporating federal, provincial, municipal and private sector measures to help bring new life to brownfields in Canada. The strategy will include a series of instruments designed to reduce the major barriers to brownfields redevelopment: legal uncertainty about environmental liability; lack of funding; and perception problems, such as lack of stakeholder awareness. The National Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy will be released in November.

For more information on the strategy, visit www.nrtee-trnee.ca/brownfields ■



More Than 400 Attend the Second ESDI Conference

The Environment and Sustainable Development Indicators (ESDI)

Initiative is on track. That's the message from the National Round Table's second national conference, held in Ottawa in June. More than 400 participants reviewed the Initiative's progress and provided feedback on the proposed draft indicators. The day-long event was a unique opportunity for the NRTEE and conference participants to hear from several panels of experts, stakeholders and other interested parties. The presentations and conference proceedings are available on-line at www.nrtee-trnee.ca/indicators.

Draft indicators presented

Over the past year, more than 50 experts from across the country representing industry, government, academia and NGOs worked in cluster groups to help the ESDI Initiative's Steering Committee identify and select national indicators. These indicators will ultimately provide data on Canada's renewable and non-renewable resources, land and soils, air quality, atmospheric conditions and water resources, as well as Canadians' educational levels.

The focus of the national conference was to announce the seven draft indicators chosen by the Steering Committee:

- **Air-Quality Indicator** — measures exposure to pollution. Poor air quality is clearly linked to health concerns, such as aggravated asthma attacks, increased severity of bronchitis and emphysema, and decreased lung functioning. This national indicator will be weighted by population to reflect the concentration of air-quality problems in more densely populated areas.
- **Surface Water-Quality Index** — measures the extent to which concentrations of water pollutants in surface water exceed the Water Quality Guidelines for Aquatic Life established by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. Possibly weighted by population, this indicator will take into account the fact that water-

quality problems are concentrated in more densely populated areas.

- **Conversion of Dependable Agricultural Land to Urban Use** — measures the permanent loss of high-quality agricultural land to urban uses. Such losses are problematic, since much of Canada's dependable agricultural land is located near its most highly populated areas.



Left to right: panellists Bruce Little, Columnist, The Globe and Mail, John Ganzi, Executive Director, Finance Institute for Global Sustainability, and Paul Muldoon, Executive Director, Canadian Environmental Law Association answering questions from the participants.

- **Total Area of Forest Cover** — measures the extent of Canada's commercial and non-commercial forests. In the long term, the committee will recommend a comprehensive national inventory to better track important qualitative changes in our forests over time.
- **Extent of Wetlands** — measures the geographic area of Canada's wetlands. Wetlands provide habitat, food and protection for many species; in Canada, it is estimated that more than 600 game and non-game species, including one-third of Canada's species at risk, are found in wetland ecosystems. These important natural areas also filter and purify water, replenish and store groundwater, control floods and storm waters, reduce erosion and protect shorelines, store carbon, and support economic activities, such as fishing, farming and recreation for all Canadians.

- **Monetized Stocks of Non-Renewable Resources** — measures the value in monetary terms of the total identified reserves of non-renewable resources (fossil fuels, minerals and metals). The depletion of non-renewable resources is not necessarily a threat to the economy's sustainability, if the income generated by their sale is reinvested in other types of capital, such as through education. Investigations continue, however, into whether this indicator might also include a valuation of the existing supply of non-renewable resources available for recycling.

- **Human Capital – Educational Attainment** — measures the level of education achieved by Canadians. This particular indicator, while not a complete measure, was selected because it is considered one of the best ways to reflect the nation's investment in its human capital, as evidenced in the links between educational attainment and both health and earning power. It also provides an indication of Canada's

ability to participate in the knowledge economy.

In the longer term, the ESDI Initiative also favoured the adoption of a biodiversity index that Environment Canada is developing.

Conference Feedback

Overall, conference participants felt the ESDI Initiative was going well. While some participants expressed support for a longer list of indicators, speakers and presenters strongly preferred a small, select number.

Next Steps

The NRTEE and the ESDI Steering Committee will be refining the draft indicators and incorporating the feedback into the final set. The final report is expected to be released in March 2003. For more information on the ESDI Initiative visit the NRTEE Web site. ■

LEAD Canada – a Stand-Alone NGO

As part of an international network, Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) Canada offers a two-year training program that works to ensure future decision makers understand the challenges of sustainable development and are equipped to meet them.

In the past, the National Round Table has acted as the host institute for LEAD Canada. However, owing to a significant decrease in funding, budgetary constraints and a re-evaluation of opportunities and priorities for the future, the NRTEE ended its relationship with LEAD in December 2001.

LEAD Canada Inc. is now a stand-alone NGO, directed by a committed group of Canadian LEAD Associates and Fellows. For more information on LEAD Canada and LEAD International, visit www.lead.org ■



Toward a Canadian Agenda for Ecological Fiscal Reform: *First Steps*

The NRTEE recently released this report to expand the understanding of how government taxation and expenditures can be redirected to create an integrated set of incentives to support the shift to sustainable development. International experience was examined and three case studies undertaken to illustrate and explore specific challenges for the application of EFR.

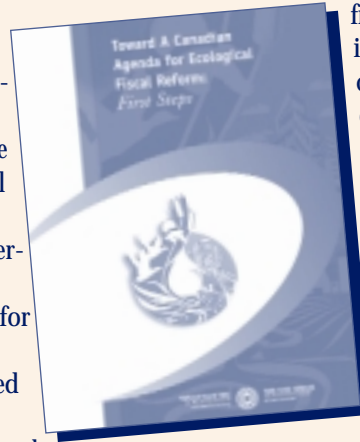
The case studies examined are: agricultural landscapes; cleaner transportation; and, sub-

stances of concern. Lessons learned during these case studies were used to construct a framework for EFR, including guiding principles that can apply to a broader range of sustainable development issues.

This report is available in French and English.

ISBN 1-894737-04-0
\$14.95 plus postage and tax.

To download a free copy of this report, or for purchasing information, visit



www.nrtee-trnee.ca/efr ■

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