

News Release

Communiqué

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ONTARIO AND QUEBEC PLEDGE TO COOPERATE ON AIR POLLUTION, SMOG AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Ministers of Environment sign an agreement to protect the environment

TORONTO – Ontario Environment Minister Laurel Broten and Claude Béchar, Minister of Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs du Québec today signed a transboundary environmental agreement at the Shared Air Summit 2006. This signing launches a new era of bilateral environmental cooperation as the two provinces pledge to work together to find solutions to air quality and other environmental issues in Eastern Canada.

“Shared Air Summit 2006 is the perfect venue for this important signing,” said Summit co-host Broten. “The Summit’s theme is working together for cleaner air and there is no better way to do so than with a clear mandate and mutual understanding between jurisdictions that care about the health of their citizens and environment.”

The *Agreement between the Gouvernement of Québec and the Government of Ontario concerning Transboundary Environmental Impacts* will establish a formal information exchange and joint cooperation protocol between the provinces on transboundary pollution issues. This includes air pollution, smog and climate change along with water management. This agreement follows the bilateral Protocol for Cooperation signed by the Premiers of Québec and Ontario on June 2, 2006.

“Now more than ever there is a real need for us to take action by entering into agreements with our neighbours to protect our shared environment,” said Minister Béchar. “The Transboundary Environmental Impacts agreement with Ontario shows that our provinces are serious about tackling the threat of air pollution and global warming.”

Building on the successes of last year’s inaugural event, Shared Air Summit 2006 assembled prominent government, environmental, health and corporate leaders in Toronto. The Summit addressed innovative and collaborative solutions to transboundary air pollution and climate change and their impacts on health, communities and the environment in Ontario and throughout North America.

“Ontario is committed to working with our friends and neighbours to develop cooperative solutions to the linked problems of air pollution and global warming,” said Broten. “We know that the province cannot combat a problem that respects no borders on its own, so agreements like this one are our best way to win the battle for cleaner air.”

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