

**Update On NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework**

Mr. Speaker, climate change is an issue of serious concern for this government and the people of the Northwest Territories. Our government has made a commitment in its mandate to develop a territorial climate change strategic framework.

I am pleased to provide Members with an update on the development of this framework, intended to guide our efforts on climate change from 2018 to 2030.

Since my last Minister's Statement on this topic in March, the Department has been working hard to develop a draft NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework.

In April, a very successful three days of climate change education took place in Yellowknife called "Earth to Sky". The event was a collaborative effort between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Government of the Northwest Territories. NASA scientists and Environment and Natural Resources staff delivered courses and presentations related to data-gathering, impacts, and the importance of traditional knowledge to support research on climate change.

Further, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Department of Infrastructure coordinated six joint regional engagement workshops on energy and climate change issues and undertook a public survey.

Workshops were held in Inuvik, Norman Wells, Fort Smith, Yellowknife, Fort Simpson and Hay River. All workshops were well attended and the feedback received has been very positive.

Mr. Speaker, at these workshops we heard that NWT residents want better planning, community funding, and communication around climate change, renewable energy systems, and energy efficiency.

Residents raised concerns about a carbon tax and the cost of living. There was acceptance of a carbon pricing scheme if some revenues are allocated to improving energy efficiency in communities.

Residents expressed support for increased research and monitoring, and traditional knowledge was highlighted as an important tool in understanding and adapting to climate change.

A Joint Engagement Report has been posted on the Environment and Natural Resources website which summarizes what we heard. Summaries of the workshop and written submissions gathered during the engagement period are also posted online.

Mr. Speaker, traditional knowledge has played an important part in the development of the Climate Change Strategic Framework, and monitoring is an important component.

The draft NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework rests on three pillars: knowledge, resilience and adaptation; and emissions mitigation. The Department is working closely with the Department of Infrastructure to ensure the NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework and the NWT Energy Strategy are aligned.

The draft Framework identifies three goals towards which the NWT must make significant progress by 2030. These goals are:

- transition to a strong, healthy economy that is less reliant on fossil fuel use;
- improve knowledge of the climate change impacts occurring in the NWT; and
- build resilience and adapt to a changing climate.

Proposed priorities and actions for each goal are detailed in the draft Framework.

Mr. Speaker, the draft NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework is now going through internal reviews and is expected to be released in late October for public review and comment. We will also be engaging with the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment on the Strategic Framework. Tabling of the final NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework in the Legislative Assembly is planned for February 2018.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government is expected to announce several new funding programs as part of the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change.

As federal funding programs for climate change becomes available, there will be significant opportunities for our government to work together with the federal government, Aboriginal and community governments, industry and other stakeholders to take numerous actions on climate change.

In particular, these actions need to focus on adaptation to ensure our communities are healthy and resilient in the face of serious impacts of climate change.

We continue to look forward to working in partnership to protect our communities, our residents and our economy by increasing our resilience to, and mitigating, the effects of climate change.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.