

THE HONOURABLE ROBERT C. MCLEOD

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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Climate Change Strategic Framework

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories made a mandate commitment to develop a territorial climate change strategy that takes into account northern energy demands and the cost of living, while reflecting international and national commitments to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Earlier this month, the GNWT publicly released the 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework, our government's coordinated, comprehensive response to mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Working alongside the 2030 Energy Strategy and NWT Petroleum Resources Strategy, the Climate Change Strategic Framework provides the roadmap that will enable the Northwest Territories to transition to a strong, healthy economy that is less dependent on fossil fuels and that supports our residents in becoming more resilient and adaptive to a changing climate.

Our government recognizes the concerns NWT residents have about the impacts of climate change, along with cost of living. This Framework takes into account our unique Northern energy needs, while aligning with international and national commitments to lowering greenhouse gas emissions, understanding the impacts of climate change on the North, and supporting our communities to become more resilient to those changes.

Mr. Speaker, Canada has committed to a 30 percent reduction in annual greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. The GNWT has been actively working to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions for years and has set a consistent target for the Northwest Territories to ensure we are contributing to the goals outlined in the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. Canada has expressed

support for our plan, affirming that we are indeed doing our part to effectively and proportionately reduce our emissions by 2030.

The GNWT recognizes that we must also ensure our economy remains strong and viable while we take concrete actions to lower our dependence on fossil fuels and promote clean growth. Our government's united approach to addressing our unique Northern needs in regards to energy and climate change will accomplish this.

Mr. Speaker, the Climate Change Strategic Framework provides the GNWT with a long-term, comprehensive and coordinated response to climate change, outlined in three goals:

The first goal is to transition to an economy that is less dependent on fossil fuels, thereby reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. The actions we will take to achieve this are outlined in the 2030 Energy Strategy, which serves as the primary mechanism for reducing our greenhouse gas emissions related to energy supply and consumption. The Framework will focus on tracking and reporting our progress.

The second goal of the Framework is to increase our understanding of climate change impacts in the NWT, whether on the natural environment, residents' health and safety, culture and heritage, or infrastructure. Developing a better understanding of current and future impacts and opportunities will support informed decision-making at all levels.

The third goal is to build resilience and adapt to a changing climate. We need to find ways to adjust to changes that are occurring by adapting our planning and operational activities.

An Action Plan for achieving the Climate Change Strategic Framework's three goals is under development and the public will be engaged on it over the summer.

Once developed, the Action Plan will be implemented over the next five years through partnerships with Indigenous, community and federal governments, along with non-government and industry stakeholders.

As the lead department responsible for climate change, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources will provide strong leadership on related coordination within the

NWT and with other provinces, territories and the federal government to implement the Action Plan.

Mr. Speaker, the GNWT remains committed to addressing the threats climate change poses to the sustainability of our communities and the way of life of our residents.

Though we have already invested millions in adaptation efforts related to climate change, alternative energy projects, energy retrofits, improved transportation infrastructure and improved building standards, the GNWT recognizes that significant adaptation projects and reductions in Green House Gas emissions cannot be realized without substantial federal funding and we will continue to actively pursue funding opportunities as they arise.

I look forward to working with Northerners to establish a lower carbon economy, to increase our knowledge of climate impacts, and to build up our resiliency in the face of a changing climate. We know there is still work to be done and it will take time to achieve, but with a clear plan and by working together, we can support a sustainable future that all benefit from this long-term vision for generations to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.