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2001

Term Report of the  
**Yukon Council on the Economy  
and the Environment**  
**(YCEE)**



**April 1999 - December 2000**

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**YUKON COUNCIL ON THE ECONOMY  
AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

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April 2001

Premier Pat Duncan  
Government of the Yukon  
Box 2703  
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

Dear Premier Duncan,

In wrapping up the first year of this new millennium I am happy to report on the progress that Council has made on many fronts during 1999 - 2000. Our efforts to focus on issues relating to Sustainable Development and to advise the Yukon Government on sustainable development issues have been both challenging and rewarding.

Council has spent a good deal of its time in the past year developing Sustainable Progress Indicators that can assist us in measuring the ways in which our community is progressing. This work was completed primarily to assist Council in meeting its statutory obligations to monitor government's implementation of the Yukon Economic Strategy. We are hopeful that this work will start the ball rolling towards widespread use of indicators which truly measure progress in all aspects of our community, including environmental, community and economic progress.

Council also finalized the Community Conference work started in 1999 with the publication and distribution of the final report entitled Focus on the Future – Building Sustainable Communities. This report was mailed out to all 284 participants in what proved to be a highly successful round of community consultations. Overall, the Council was successful in bringing continuity to a number of on-going initiatives as well as launching new initiatives that reflect priorities of the new members.

Following many months where Council functioned with several key vacancies we are now again fully operational. With a full slate of representatives from all of our nominating agencies, Council is looking forward to continuing in its deliberations towards building a sustainable future for the Yukon.

Sincerely,

Richard Buchan  
Chair



***1999 – 2000 Membership of the  
Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment***

- Richard Buchan, Chair
- Daryn Leas, Vice-Chair, Council of Yukon First Nations
- Roger Alfred, Council of Yukon First Nations (appointed Sept. 2000)
- Dave Austin, Yukon Chamber of Mines (resigned March 2000)
- Bill Mann, Yukon Chamber of Mines (appointed Sept. 2000)
- Louise Bouvier, Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council
- John Carroll, Yukon Chamber of Commerce (resigned March 2000)
- James Grattan, Yukon Chamber of Commerce (appointed Nov. 2000)
- Natalie Edelson, Yukon Status of Women's Council
- Ralph Nordling, Member-at-Large
- Louise Ranger, Federation of Labour
- Kathy Watson, Association of Yukon Communities (resigned Sept. 2000)
- Ernie Bourassa, Association of Yukon Communities (appointed Dec. 2000)
- Andy Williams, Yukon Conservation Society

## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

Established in 1989, the Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment was the first legislated roundtable in Canada. Mandated by the *Environment Act*, and representing a wide range of interests in the Yukon, the Council's primary objective is to further the goal of sustainable development in the Yukon.

In addition to our mandated requirement to annually review the Yukon Economic Strategy and the Yukon Conservation Strategy, the Council pursued a number of other initiatives, research projects and stakeholder dialogues this past year in an effort to foster solutions-oriented debate and recommendations. This included developing Sustainable Progress Indicators which attempt to shift the focus from viewing progress as a measure of monetary expenditures towards an account of social, environmental and economic health. Council also completed the Community Conference initiative that encompassed 14 Yukon communities and involved over 300 Yukoners.

YCEE administered a budget of \$140,000 for the fiscal year 1999 - 2000. This included a base budget of \$70,000 with an additional \$70,000 to support the Community Conferences initiatives. As of December 31, 2000, the Council had expended \$15,182.99 of its \$70,000 2000/01 budget.

Over the next year Council will continue to address issues that are important to Yukoners, the Government of the Yukon and to members of the Council. As we enter our second decade we will continue to function as a roundtable group representing a wide range of issues. Our strength continues to be in our inclusive and representative membership.

### ***Recommendations***

- 1. Council recommends widespread acceptance and use of the Sustainable Progress Indicators by the Government of the Yukon.***
- 2. Council recommends that the legislated requirement for review and subsequent revision of the Yukon Conservation Strategy and the Yukon Economic Strategy be reconsidered with the aim of developing a Sustainable Development Strategy based on the Sustainable Progress Indicators model.***
- 3. Council recommends that the mandate for the State of the Environment Report be revisited to consider including the collecting of data required to support use of Sustainable Progress Indicators.***
- 4. Council recommends that the Department of Renewable Resources develop a public communications plan to support the complaints process under the Environment Act and that this be included on the YCEE website.***

## 1999 - 2000 HIGHLIGHTS

### **1. Sustainable Progress Indicators**

Council's most challenging and worthwhile initiative this past year has been the development of Sustainable Progress Indicators. Meeting Council's mandated responsibility to monitor progress on the Yukon Economic Strategy, in a way that reflects Council's focus on sustainable development, has been a challenge. As a means to address this, in the fall of 1999 Council contracted with the Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development to develop sustainable development indicators to measure progress on the Yukon Economic Strategy. The Pembina Institute is a non-profit organization with significant experience doing similar work for a number of jurisdictions. Following several meetings, lengthy and comprehensive stakeholder interviews and many rounds of revisions, Council adopted the Yukon Sustainable Progress Indicators report at our September 2000 meeting.

The use of Sustainable Progress Indicators (SPI) challenges the concept that the amount of money being spent and circulating in our economy, a measure widely known as the Gross Domestic Product, is a useable measure of progress. As an alternative, Council has developed a series of indicators that more accurately measure progress in three distinct areas of our communities: the economy, the environment and the health of our people and our communities. A total of 68 indicators are included in the report and provide for a more refined measure of the progress in these three fronts.

Through preliminary discussions with the Yukon Government it would appear that data is currently being collected by government to support a majority of these indicators. Some changes would be required in the way data is collected to fully implement this framework. The Council will be working with government representatives and agencies over the next year to bring about widespread use of these Sustainable Progress Indicators.

***Council recommends widespread acceptance and use of Sustainable Progress Indicators by the Government of the Yukon.***

## **2. Community Conferences**

The publication and distribution of the report entitled **Focus on the Future** marks the end of this highly consultative and informative initiative that was launched at the direction of the Government Leader in 1998.

The objective of the project was to gain a better understanding of what communities can do for themselves to create small, sustainable economies. The 28 case studies summarized in the report provide convincing testaments that our efforts to better understand how and why people live and work where they do have paid off. The final report gives a comprehensive overview of the ideas and comments offered by over 284 residents in 14 Yukon communities.

Council forwarded a copy of the report along with letters to all participants in this initiative. Copies are also available at all community libraries.

## **3. Revisions to the Yukon Conservation Strategy**

Council invested a significant amount of time in the past year working with the Department of Renewable Resources to assist them in meeting their statutory obligation to revise the Yukon Conservation Strategy (YCS). Council worked closely with the department and their consultants to update the goals included in the Strategy and to include measurable indicators.

Overall, Council has observed the difficulties that the department has experienced in meeting their legislative requirement to amend the YCS revisions over the years. Similarly, Council has questioned the 'value-added' in meeting their own obligations to evaluate government's implementation of the Strategy. This question is particularly relevant in light of the fact that a number of key priorities on the environment front, such as Yukon Protected Areas Strategy, climate change issues and proposed amendments to the *Wildlife Act* have not been included in previous revisions to the Strategy.

Increasingly, the compilation of the Yukon Economic Strategy (YES) and the Yukon Conservation Strategy with a focus on a Sustainable Development Strategy is an idea that Council wishes to promote as an alternative to measuring progress on legislatively-driven documents that do not reflect current priorities.

***Council recommends that the legislated requirement for review and subsequent revision of the Yukon Conservation Strategy and the Yukon Economic Strategy be reconsidered with the aim of developing a Sustainable Development Strategy based on the Sustainable Progress Indicators model.***

#### **4. Review of the State of the Environment Report 1999**

The Council worked in cooperation with the Department of Renewable Resources to assist them in meeting their legislated responsibility of completing the 1999 State of the Environment Report.

In compliance with Section 49 of the *Environment Act*, Council completed a full review of the State of the Environment Report (SOER) with the full report of Council's review being submitted to the Legislative Assembly in the spring.

Overall, YCEE reported that the 1999 SOER met the requirements of the *Environment Act* in that it adequately addressed the purposes and requirements of the *Act*.

At the same time, and consistent with Council's view on the required changes to the Yukon Conservation Strategy and the Yukon Economic Strategy, some changes to the function and use of the State of the Environment Report appear to be warranted.

Council recommends that the mandate for the State of the Environment Report be revisited to consider including the collecting of data required to support use of the Sustainable Progress Indicators.

#### **5. Public Education**

The Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment provided varying levels of support to a number of public lectures, presentations and film festivals hosted to support and sponsor goals related to sustainable development.

*Dr. Fraser Mustard:* YCEE co-sponsored, along with the Learning Disabilities Association of the Yukon, a public talk by Dr. Fraser Mustard on the Link Between a Healthy Population and a Healthy Economy. Dr. Mustard, a respected physician, medical scientist, and Founding President of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research presented a thoughtful and empirically based argument in favor of nurturing and early support for children, particularly when dealing with learning disabilities.

*Maude Barlow:* YCEE provided support to the Yukon Development Education Center's speakers series on Global Issues & Perspectives: Stepping Into A New Era. Maude Barlow, national chairperson of the Council of Canadians gave a lecture to a full house on "Globalization at the Crossroads". Her talk explored the effects of globalization without representation specific to jobs, human rights, social programs, culture and the environment.

The Council provided assistance to organizers of the Circumpolar Women's Conference by way of a financial contribution intended to assist people in need who wished to attend the conference.

YCEE also provided support for the Reel to Reality Film Festival sponsored by the Yukon Development Education Center.

## **6. Website**

Council updated the website to include new members and documents. The address was changed to make it more user-friendly: <http://www.ycee.yk.net>.

## **7. Complaints Under the *Environment Act***

While there were no complaints received under the *Environment Act*, Council has expressed some concern that the public may not be aware of this section of the *Environment Act* that provides for this course of action.

As a means of ensuring improved public communications around this option, Council has asked the Department of Renewable Resources for a public communications plan which outlines how complaints are handled. Once received, this will be posted on the YCEE website.

***Council recommends that the Department of Renewable Resources develop a public communications plan to support complaints under the Environment Act and that this be forwarded to the Council to be added to the YCEE website.***

## **8. Meetings**

Between April 1999 and December 2000, YCEE had the following regular meetings:

- June 10 & 12, 1999
- November 26 & 27, 1999
- March 17 & 18, 2000
- September 8 & 9, 2000
- December 1 & 2, 2000

### **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

For the 1999/2000 fiscal year the Council's base budget was \$70,000. An additional \$70,000 was provided for the completion of the territory-wide community conference initiative "Focus on the Future: Building Sustainable Communities". Of this amount only \$53,508.45 was spent.

#### 1999/2000 Fiscal Year

Funds Available	\$ 140,000.00
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Expenses:

Honoraria – Meetings	\$ 11,900.00
Honoraria – Chair	\$ 10,920.00
Administration/Contracts/Sponsorships	\$ 23,281.07
Meeting Expenses	\$ 3,959.66
Travel – Air/Mileage	\$ 2,945.12
Meals	\$ 1,265.20
Accommodation	\$ 3,761.65
Community Conferences	<u>\$ 53,508.45</u>

Total Expenses	\$111,541.15
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Balance remaining at March 31, 2000	<u>\$ 28,458.85</u>
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#### April 1, 2000 – December 31, 2000

Funds Available	\$ 70,000.00
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Expenses:

Honoraria – Meetings	\$ 6,200.00
Honoraria – Chair	\$ 1,074.00
Printing/Website	\$ 3,800.23
Sponsorship	\$ 100.00
Meeting Expenses	\$ 1,010.50
Travel – Air/Mileage	\$ 1,378.68
Meals/Taxis	\$ 741.58
Accommodation	<u>\$ 878.00</u>

Total Expenses	\$ 15,182.99
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Balance remaining at December 31, 2000	<u>\$ 54,817.01</u>
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## Background and Goals of the YCEE

The Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment was established in November 1989 as the first legislated round table on the economy and the environment to be created in Canada.

The Council was created to advise the Yukon Government and encourage non-governmental organizations, individuals and businesses to adopt practices and approaches that will further the goal of sustainable development in the Yukon.

The *Environment Act* (s. 41) outlines the duties of the Council:

- 41.(1) The purpose of the Council is to encourage sustainable development in the Yukon.
- (2) Without restricting the generality of subsection (1) the Council may
- (a) undertake and encourage public discussion of the economy and the environment and their inter-relationship;
  - (b) review the policies of the Government of the Yukon and evaluate their implementation in relation to the objectives of this *Act*;
  - (c) conduct research on the economy and the environment; and
  - (d) promote public awareness of the importance of sustainable development.

The membership of the Council is, by legislation, drawn from a wide range of interests in the Yukon, including: First Nations, business, industry, labour, environment, municipal government and women. Members are nominated by organizations in these sectors and appointed by Cabinet.

The *Environment Act* also references a number of specific responsibilities for Council to fulfill.

- i. Tabling of an annual report to the Legislative Assembly which details the activities and expenditures of Council;

- ii. A requirement to conduct an annual review of the performance of the Government of the Yukon in the implementation of the Yukon Conservation Strategy and report its findings to the Legislative Assembly;
- iii. Review the triennial Yukon State of the Environment Report and submit a report of its review to the Legislative Assembly; and
- iv. Review, report on, and make recommendations regarding complaints submitted under s. 22 of the *Environment Act*.

The *Economic Development Act* (s. 10 (1)) outlines additional functions for the Council.

- (a) review policy, strategic, legislative, and program initiatives and provide advice about them to the Cabinet;
- (b) monitor progress on the implementation of the Yukon Economic Strategy;
- (c) encourage environmentally sound economic development by industry, government, labour, and aboriginal and non-governmental organizations;
- (d) at the call of the Minister, arrange public symposiums on major economic issues;
- (e) promote public awareness and understanding of the links between the environment and economy, and the importance of integrating economic and environmental policies and sustainable development;
- (f) recommend research on the economy or links between the economy and the environment;
- (g) carry out or supervise projects assigned by the Commissioner in Executive Council;
- (h) review and comment on any reports that address the state of the Yukon economy;

**1999-2000 WORKPLAN  
YUKON COUNCIL ON THE ECONOMY AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

TASK	DETAIL	COST	CRITICAL DEADLINES	OTHER
<b>A. LEGISLATIVE MANDATE TASKS</b>				
1. Yukon Conservation Strategy Annual Review (1998)	Legislated requirement under S.46(1) of <i>Yukon Environment Act</i> .	\$ 1,200.00	March 2000	Working Group Time Printing Costs
2. Yukon Conservation Strategy Revisions	Legislated requirement under S. 45(2) of <i>Yukon Environment Act</i> , which requires revisions to the YCS every 3 years. Any consultation will be done with the Council as a whole.	* Allocated dollars: portion of full Council Meeting.	March 2000	Council agreed to make time during the fall meeting to meet with consultants, as required.
3. Yukon Economic Strategy Review	Working Group finalized Terms of Reference and tender to be let in fall 1999 for estimated completion by Spring 2000.	\$ 5,000.00  \$20,000.00 from Economic Development	Completion  March 31/00	
4. 1999 State of the Environment Report	Council will contract for assistance in its review of the 1999 SOER and drafting of the letter for the Legislature. Logistics and timing issues need to be resolved.	\$ 2,500.00	Winter 2000	Development of SOER is Renewable Resources responsibility. YCEE required to review SOER and submit report to Legislative Assembly.
<b>B. RESEARCH PROJECTS</b>				
a) Community Profiles	YCEE to correspond with HRDC to share information on Community Profiles.			
b) Sustainable Initiatives Project	Acknowledging the request from the Circumpolar Women's Conference and the request from a number of communities during	\$ 7,700.00	Completed	20-25 new "boards" will be developed for use at the Women's Conference along with the 28 already done. All will

TASK	DETAIL	COST	CRITICAL DEADLINES	OTHER
	the "Focus on the Future" Conferences.			be published on the YCEE website.
<b>C. PUBLIC EDUCATION/SPEAKER SERIES</b>				
1. Develop speakers series on globalization		\$ 6,000.00		
2. Sponsor participation in the Circumpolar Women's Conference  - Need to determine logistics		\$ 2,000.00	Completed	
3. Finalize Community Conference's Initiative	Finalize and release Community Conference's report and hold spring conference.	\$ 2,000.00 \$15,000.00	Interim Report Jan 99	Resolve question of Whitehorse Spring 2000 conference.

Yukon Council on the Economy and the Environment

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