

Winter 2001

Your quarterly update on happenings at CIELAP!

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It's been a while since CIELAP produced its last newsletter in October 2000. Over the winter, we've been busy with new projects including the launch of our new website Pollutionwatch.org and the release of an updated 1998 NPRI Poster showing the top polluting facilities across Canada.

Winter 2000 has been a period of transition for CIELAP with the addition of new staff, volunteers and interns and the departure of long-time staff. Through this period, CIELAP has continued to work on and develop new research projects such as the Federal Agenda on Sustainability and Sustainable Toronto.

RECENT RELEASES

CIELAP Releases its 1998 NPRI Poster

On March 20, 2001, CIELAP released a follow-up to its 1996 Canadian Pollutant Releases and Transfers (NPRI) poster. The new poster uses data from the 1998 National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) to depict facilities across Canada with the greatest releases and transfers of carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic pollutants.

Over 3000 posters have been distributed to schools, libraries, universities, government officials, companies, and to individuals across Canada. The 1998 NPRI poster is available in both English and French. If you would like to receive a copy, please contact our administrative officer at 416-923-3529 ext.28 or [visit our website](#).

CIELAP and its Partners Launch PollutionWatch.org

On April 10, 2001, the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy (CIELAP), the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) and the Canadian Environmental Defence Fund (CEDF) launched a new website PollutionWatch.org.

Two years in the making, [PollutionWatch](http://PollutionWatch.org) provides Canadians with environmental information at the click of a button. Simply type in your postal code and get a list of the top polluting facilities in your community and the types of pollutants being released. [PollutionWatch](http://PollutionWatch.org)

integrates data from the 1999 National Pollutant Release Inventory with over 300 databases to provide a detailed environmental report for your province, community and facilities in your area.

PollutionWatch also provides users with easily accessible and easy-to-understand information on chemicals, the potential health risks, and on federal and provincial regulations in Canada. Lastly, you can TAKE ACTION, by faxing a free letter to facilities in your neighbourhood directly from the website.

The launch of PollutionWatch was enormously successful. In addition to the media coverage, over 1.8 million hits were registered on the website for the first day.

Congratulations to the staff of the three organizations who worked so hard on the PollutionWatch project over the past year: Fe de Leon (CELA), Mary McGrath (CEDF - PollutionWatch Outreach Coordinator), and James Yacoumidis (PollutionWatch Website Coordinator).

To access PollutionWatch, go to www.pollutionwatch.org. If you have any questions about PollutionWatch, contact Mary McGrath (CEDF) at pollutionwatch@cedf.net.

CIELAP Writes to the Ministry of the Environment on Safety-Kleen's Incineration proposal

In January 2001, CIELAP made a submission to the Ministry of the Environment concerning an application by Safety Kleen to increase the volumes of waste being incinerated at its facility in Corunna, Ontario. You can access this submission at [skprop.html](#).

NEW AND ONGOING PROJECTS

CIELAP Sets the Federal Agenda

Throughout the fall and winter, CIELAP was working on a report entitled "Canada's Federal Agenda for a Sustainable Future" for the federal government. By spring of 2001, CIELAP's document will show the way government should go to achieve sustainability. The report will review the trends in key areas such as consumption and waste, toxics and pollution, habitat and biodiversity conservation and make recommendations on policy options.

CIELAP Joins Exciting New Research Alliance

In the fall of 2000, CIELAP joined nine other environmental groups, the City of Toronto, the University of Toronto and York University in a joint community/university research project. With the working title "Sustainable Toronto", the project matches up the energy and expertise of university students and faculty with on the ground research needs of environmental groups. Funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, "Sustainable Toronto" is unprecedented and very promising. CIELAP's project focuses on gathering existing data about water resources in the province of Ontario. A web site based resource and a report will be our first product from our Sustainable Toronto partnership, with more to come in the future.

CIELAP Highlights its Right-To-Know Initiatives at NAFEC's Workshop in Mexico City

In March 2001, Anne Mitchell, CIELAP's executive director, participated in a workshop organized by the Commission on Environmental Cooperation on the use of Pollutant Release Inventory data. Anne gave a presentation on the educational tools CIELAP has developed and some of the activities CIELAP is engaged in to enable Canadians to become more aware of the data and how to use it. These tools include the 1998 NPRI poster, the [Citizen's Guide to the NPRI](#) and the recently launched Pollutionwatch.org website.

CIELAP and Biotechnology

During the past two weeks in April, the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee (CBAC)

of which CIELAP's Executive Director is a member, held stakeholder consultations in five Canadian cities on the regulation of genetically modified agricultural products. The results of these consultations will help inform CBAC as it prepares advice for the seven Federal Ministers to which it reports. Unfortunately, a major sector of the Canadian public, many non-government organizations and civil society organizations, decided to abstain from participating. These groups felt that the majority of the folks who make up CBAC are too biased toward the biotechnology industry and that in any case, the Canadian Government sees biotechnology as the growth and job creator of the 21st century and will not do anything to slow down the industry's development. Another concern is that this is a societal issue and it should be parliament that is conducting consultations and not an advisory committee whose advice the government can ignore.

When CBAC next meets in June to evaluate the stakeholder consultation process and determine what advice it is going to give to government, the concerns of those who did not participate will have to be given as much consideration as the concerns of those who did.

CIELAP and the Global Environment

CIELAP's Executive Director spoke to a gathering in April 2001, organized by the Unitarian Church, on the Global Environment. This was part of a month long seminar series on globalization, as the group decided what it could do to address some of the social justice issues which are not being addressed currently through the FTAA discussions.

CIELAP Attends NRTEE's First Stakeholder Workshop on Environment and Sustainable Development Indicators

In March 2000, Karen Clark, CIELAP's Legal Analyst, and Jennifer McKay, traveled to Ottawa to attend the National Round Table on the Environment and Economy's (NRTEE's) First Stakeholder Workshop on Environment and Sustainable Development Indicators Initiative.

At the workshop, the NRTEE presented their proposed framework for a set of national sustainable development indicators. The workshop provided CIELAP with the opportunity to comment on the proposed framework. The workshop also provided important information to be integrated into CIELAP's Canada's Federal Agenda for a Sustainable Future report.

CIELAP to Present at the Strategy Institute's Innovative and Cost-Effective Garbage Management Strategies

In April 2001, James Yacoumidis, CIELAP's Project Officer will be presenting an update on CIELAP's Open for Toxics report. James will highlight hazardous generation and receipt trends from 1994 to 1998 and an update for 1999.

CIELAP Participates in Environment Canada's Consultations on PCB Import and Export Regulations

In early 2001, James Yacoumidis, CIELAP's Project Officer attended an Environment Canada consultation on proposed regulations concerning the import and export of PCBs in Canada. The workshop provided a forum for CIELAP to express its views on the environmental implications of the proposed regulation.

CIELAP to Participate at the People's Summit of the FTAA

CIELAP's Executive Director, Anne Mitchell, student intern, Amanda Montgomery and volunteer, Shelagh Whitley are going to Quebec City, April 17 to participate in the Peoples' Summit of the FTAA. There they will be joined by Roxana Salazar, Executive Director, and Max Valverde, of Fundacion Ambio, partner organization in Costa Rica. Together, CIELAP and Fundacion Ambio will offer a workshop and discussion on why regulation is necessary for genetically engineered agriculture products to ensure that the environment, our health and the planet's biodiversity is protected. Fundacion Ambio and CIELAP will present their work together, based on the paper entitled Biosafety, Consumer Protection and International Trade (see our website at www.cielap.org).

CIELAP and Fundacion Ambio will also participate in the FTAA Symposium, organized by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE).

As well, we will take part in many of the other activities taking place in Quebec. We trust that the protests will be peaceful and that the leaders of the Americas will come to understand that many of us are not against trade but that labour and human rights and the environment have to be protected and that the benefits of trade have to be redistributed to address the abject poverty that many people in all countries of the Americas are experiencing.

We will give you a report on our workshop in our next e-letter.

CIELAP Plans for the Future

At the end of May, CIELAP board and staff will meet together for a day to plan our work for the July 2001 to June 2002. There are many issues needing work and our task will be to figure out what is the value added of our work and what is unique that CIELAP can contribute. The issues are complex and there are no easy, quick fixes. We are in this for the long-term. Perhaps CIELAP can contribute this perspective and help visualize the Canada - and the world - that we would like our children and grandchildren to inherit. We can then work backwards and figure out what we have to do to get there. What does it mean to live sustainably in the 21st century? What can Canada say to the rest of the world when we report on progress in the fall of 2002, ten years after the Earth Summit when the world committed to striving towards sustainable development?

And it is not just CIELAP that is considering these questions. Many other organizations, sectors, corporations, faith groups and governments are trying to identify the best way forward so that we can better live in harmony with each other and with nature in the 21st century.

We'd like to hear from you. If you have ideas for CIELAP, questions or suggestions as to how best CIELAP can contribute to the debate and help us get towards our vision of a world where a safe and healthy environment is enjoyed by us all - let us know. You can email Anne Mitchell, CIELAP's Executive Director at anne@cielap.org; or call at 416-923-3529 extension 24. You can also write to Anne at CIELAP, 517 College Street, Suite 400, Toronto, M6G 4A2.

EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

CIELAP to Sail on the Winds of June

Get out your "sea legs" and join us for an outing on lake Ontario on the 30 metre, three masted schooner, the Challenge. Sail past the wetlands of the Toronto Island and the Leslie Street Spit.

This year the event will be held on Thursday, June 21, 2001 from 6 pm to 10 pm.

You can board the schooner at Queen's Quay.

Tickets for the event are \$100. Call our administrative officer at 416-923-3529 ext. 28 or at info@cielap.org to reserve your seat.

Last year's event was a sell-out so CALL NOW!

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR OUR SPRING SAIL, or more details, please contact our administrative officer at 416-923-3529 ext.28 or at info@cielap.org.

STAFF NEWS

In March 2001, **Mark Winfield**, CIELAP's Research Director left his position at CIELAP to pursue other opportunities. Mark had been at the Environmental Commissioner's office in Ottawa on a one-year secondment since August 2000. As CIELAP's Research Director, Mark spearheaded many of CIELAP's research projects and reports and brought a wealth of

information on environmental issues to the Institute. All of us at CIELAP would like to express our sincerest appreciation to Mark for his contribution to the Institute over the past eight years. We wish him well at his new position with the Pembina Institute.

In April 2001, CIELAP's Administrative Officer **Kumarie Khadoo** will be going on maternity leave. Kumarie is expecting in early June and we wish her all the best. Replacing Kumarie is Anicia Bonilla. Welcome aboard Anicia!

During the winter, CIELAP was fortunate to have two new interns come aboard.

Jennifer McKay, CIELAP's newest intern, recently completed her Masters of Forest Conservation (MFC) at the University of Toronto. Jennifer has been working at CIELAP since February 2001 on a project entitled Canada's Federal Agenda for a Sustainable Future.

Teanne von der Porten, an intern from Niagara College, graduated from York University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Environmental Studies. Over the winter Teanne was conducting legal research for the sixth edition of CIELAP's Ontario Environment and the Common Sense Revolution Report.

CIELAP would like to thank **Amanda Montgomery** for her hard work at CIELAP throughout the fall and winter. Amanda, an intern from Innis College (University of Toronto) worked on CIELAP's biotechnology project with our Costa Rican partner Fundacion Ambio. Good luck in your future endeavours Amanda!

Intern perspectives

Jennifer McKay Discusses the Federal Agenda

Amanda Montgomery Reflects on Her Internship at CIELAP

Teanne von der Porten Discusses Her Experience at CIELAP
