

Winter 2002

Your quarterly update on happenings at CIELAP!

[What's New](#) | [Events and Happenings](#) | [Staff News](#) | [Interesting Links](#)

Welcome to the Winter edition of the CIELAP newsletter, designed to keep you up to date on the latest CIELAP news and events. The CIELAP newsletter is published quarterly for the CIELAP community.

WHAT'S NEW

[Liquid Assets: Monitoring Water Quality in Ontario](#) | [Sustainable Development in Canada](#) | [Green Power Trade Show](#) | [World Summit on Sustainable Development](#) | [Pollution Watch on the road](#)

1.1 New Release - Liquid Assets: Monitoring Water Quality in Ontario

CIELAP and York University released *Liquid Assets: Water Monitoring in Ontario*, at Queen's Park media studio on Monday December 17, 2001. This research project, over a year in the works, was CIELAP's contribution to Sustainable Toronto - a collaborative initiative of York and Toronto Universities, the City of Toronto and nine non-government organizations, including CIELAP. You can check out Sustainable Toronto website -

www.sustainabletoronto.org - and you can download our new report from [our website](#).

Coming Soon! In January CIELAP will be releasing its Sixth Annual Report on Ontario's Environment. Watch for details on our website.

1.2 CIELAP releases Sustainable Development in Canada: A New Federal Plan

Anne Mitchell and Jennifer McKay traveled to Ottawa in September to meet with federal ministries and departments responsible for implementing Sustainable Development Strategies. CIELAP presented the paper written by Karen Clark and Jennifer McKay entitled *Sustainable Development in Canada: A New Federal Plan*. The paper challenges the federal government to re-focus their approach to sustainable development in light of the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development in South Africa in September 2002. ([Click here for the full text of the paper](#))

There was great interest from all ministries in the SD paper. Our partner accompanied CIELAP

from the Strategy Institute, Anthony Watanabe, accompanied me and spoke to the upcoming [Partnering for Sustainability](#) conference, April 8-9, 2002. We had the opportunity to meet with several different groups in Ottawa, including Health, Finance, Environment, Natural Resources, Canadian International Development Agency, National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, and the International Development Research Council. Since this time, Industry Canada and the NRTEE have committed to sponsoring the conference.

1.3 Green Power Trade Show

This year's Green Power Trade Show was a great success! Over 20 green power businesses, including small inventors of new technologies, government and ENGO's booked a booth for the show, five more than last year. It was also noteworthy because CIELAP was a partner, together with the Sierra Club of Canada and the Toronto Environmental Alliance. The idea of the Trade Show is to take advantage of the gathering created by the Independent Power Producers' Society of Ontario's Annual conference that is always at the end of November and draws a stakeholder crowd. It is the largest and most progressive association of power generators in the province, perhaps the country.

With electricity markets set to open in May of 2002, the Green Power Trade Show was a perfect venue to showcase leadership in green power generation, that is low-environmental impact renewable sources of power, e.g. wind and solar, some hydro and biogas. The purpose of the Show is to introduce green power businesses to civil society. Importantly as well are the many workshops that clearly promote regulatory and market reforms that favor green power development and use. It truly is a win - win.

Workshops this year featured renewable quotas, labeling and certification, net-billing and socially responsible investment in green power. A report from the show will be available shortly for your further information. Planning for the Third Annual Show begins in May so; if there is any interest in helping out for next year, please feel free to contact christine@cielap.org.

1.4 ENGO's prepare for World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2002

CIELAP was invited to attend the Expanding Horizons conference on Thetis Island in B.C. in October 2001 due to our involvement in CIDA's Environment and Development Support Program (ESDP). The main purpose of the conference was to capacity build for organizations involved in this program in order to better manage program delivery. Unfortunately, CIELAP's partner in the ESDP program, Fundacion Ambio, was unable to attend the conference.

The final day of the conference was dedicated to discussion on preparation for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) taking place in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2002. CIELAP had been identified as a leading Canadian NGO in WSSD preparations. This was based on CIELAP's work on "Sustainable Development in Canada: A New Federal Plan" which was released in September 2001. CIELAP had been participating in strategic teleconference calls with One Sky leading up to the conference. The purpose of the teleconference calls was to share information and ideas on how NGOs could best prepare for WSSD.

Jennifer McKay attended Expanding Horizons on behalf of CIELAP. She gave a presentation on the contents of *Sustainable Development in Canada: A New Federal Plan* to the conference delegates on Friday October 26, 2001. The paper was well received, and conference delegates supported CIELAP's call for a cohesive approach to a national sustainable development plan in Canada.

There was extensive discussion at the conference on how ENGOs should prepare for WSSD, given that there are few financial resources available for the preparations.

1.5 CIELAP takes NPRI map and PollutionWatch on the road

CIELAP was invited to attend two meetings this fall to present our work on Canada's Pollution

Release and Transfer Inventory program. In Canada, the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) requires industry to report pollution emissions to air, land, and water to Environment Canada each year. CIELAP has developed a number of products using the NPRI data that are of interest to activists around the world.

In November, Jennifer McKay traveled to Washington D.C. to present CIELAP's Pollution Release and Transfer Report (PRTR) work at a conference entitled Advancing and Defending the Community Right-to-Know, hosted by the Baumann Foundation and the Beldon Fund. U.S. NGOs were interested to know how Canadians are using PRTR information to work towards pollution reduction. The main topic of discussion at the conference, however, was the impacts of the U.S. Patriot Act (anti-terrorism legislation) on the work of environmental groups. Many pieces of information and databases have been removed from the public domain since the passing of this law "in the interest of national security". A complete list of information that has been removed can be found at www.ombwatch.org.

In December, CIELAP was invited to II Encuentro Nacional de Ecologistas (the second national meeting of ecologists) in Mexico City, Mexico. Once again, Jennifer McKay gave a presentation on CIELAP's PRTR program for a group of Mexican NGOs.

One of the key issues under discussion is the development of a mandatory PRTR program in Mexico. To date, Mexico has a voluntary program that encourages industry to report emissions to air, land, and water. The voluntary program has a very low participation rate and is not deemed to be effective by the Mexican ENGOs.

There is currently a bill in Mexico that, if passed, would require the establishment of a mandatory PRTR program in that country. These changes would be contained in Article 109B of the General Ecological Equilibrium and Environmental Protection Law. Companies would be required to report their wastes to the Environment and Natural Resources Secretariat (SEMARNAT) and that body would be required to make this information available to the public. The Environment Commission, with representation from all political parties, unanimously approved the executive's environmental reform package on December 6, 2001. The package that was ratified in the lower chamber included mandating the development of a PRTR program, as well as making this program publicly accessible. Now, the package must pass through Senate to become a law. CIELAP will monitor the bill's progress through communication with our contacts in Mexico. Once a mandatory PRTR program is established in Mexico, CIELAP hopes to work with Mexican ENGOs to produce Citizen's Guides and perhaps a website compatible with Pollution Watch.

EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

2.1 Momentum is building for upcoming Partnering for Sustainability conference!

CIELAP has partnered with the Strategy Institute to produce an exciting program for the [Partnering for Sustainability](#) conference April 8-9, 2002, at the Toronto Convention Center. This innovative event takes on special importance in light of the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) scheduled for September 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Canada, and all other nations, will be required to report to the world community on progress in implementing sustainable development since the Earth Summit in Rio in June 1992.

- Are we ready?
- How much have we progressed since the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)?
- What remains to be done?
- How can we pool our resources to improve our practices and render them more sustainable?

In addition to canvassing answers to these questions, Partnering for Sustainability aims to promote dialogue between the different stakeholders. By showcasing a wide array of successful collaborative projects involving government, industry and NGOs, this unique event provides

an opportunity to move beyond the rhetoric to effect real change. Practical content and tangible, take-away solutions will lead the way to identifying and brokering partnerships for sustainable development. The preliminary conference program, speakers biographies, and registration information can be found on the conference website at www.sustainabilitycanada.com.

2.2 Annual General Meeting: November 2001

CIELAP hosted its 31st Annual General Meeting on November 15 at the Friends House in Toronto. About 65 people attended CIELAP's annual general meeting on November 15. We heard about the accomplishments of the organization over the past year; about the strategic direction being chosen by the organization for the next three years; and about how changes in the way we grow food in Canada could help mitigate climate change and protect biodiversity. [Our annual report can be viewed or downloaded from our website](#)

2.3 Patenting

Lawyers from the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) will represent CIELAP, along with Greenpeace, RAFI and Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) in the oncomouse - patenting of higher life forms - case before the Supreme Court of Canada. CIELAP's interest in this case is the longterm implication on biodiversity and potential health effects should something go wrong.

The faith communities - the Canadian Council of Churches and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada are also intervening on this case as are some of the animal rights groups.

The Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee - CBAC - released an interim report on the patenting of higher life forms in November. There is a comment period until March 31. You can access this interim report on the CBAC website at www.cbac.gc.ca. Send in your views to CBAC on this issue.

STAFF NEWS

Welcome to new volunteers and interns. Good luck to Jennifer!

This fall, CIELAP welcomed a new group of volunteers and interns and will say goodbye to Jennifer McKay in the New Year 2002.

3.1 Interns and Volunteers

Sandra Patano and Steven Ferracane, interns from York University are working on water quality projects associated with Sustainable Toronto.

Angelica Guillarte, a fourth year environmental studies student at U of T, is working with Sandra, Steven, and Christine on the Sustainable Toronto project.

Andrea Bailey, a law student from U of T is helping CIELAP to research and analyze the debate on patenting higher life forms as well as other issues related to biotechnology.

Daria Smeh, a third year Environmental Studies student from U of T will be developing a new information management system for CIELAP.

Ravenna Barker, an environmental studies student from U of T, is working with Andrea on biotechnology research for the next "Citizen's Guide to Biotechnology".

Ingrid Harris, an IT/GIS Analyst is helping CIELAP to do research on the hazardous waste issue.

3.2 Good luck to Jennifer!

After completing her internship with CIELAP, Jennifer McKay will be leaving after Christmas for a new position at Queen's Park. Jennifer will be the new Research Officer at the Legislative Library, specializing in environmental issues. The Library provides research support for MPPs

and legislative committees. While at CIELAP, Jennifer worked as a research assistant for Karen Clark on the sustainable development paper, and was in charge of developing the content for the Partnering for Sustainability conference. Best of luck in your new position, Jennifer!

LINKS OF INTEREST

This section features a selection of Internet sites that do not pertain to CIELAP directly but which we find pretty interesting and thought that you might too. If you know of any interesting sites pertaining to environmental or related issues that you would like to pass on, please e-mail them to us at cielap@cielap.org

Interested in having organic foods delivered to your door? Check out www.springarbourfarm.com

Want to reduce your dependence on the car - you may even wish to give up owning a car - then why not join Auto Share - check them out on their website at www.AutoShare.com

Check out the Partnering for Sustainability website at www.sustainabilitycanada.com.

Children are not just little adults; they are growing and developing, making them more vulnerable to potential environmental dangers including pesticides, chemicals and air pollution. They eat more food, drink more water and breathe more air for their size than adults do and so are at greater health risk. The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE) is an organization of doctors, health professionals, scientists and concerned citizens that are committed to the protection and promotion of human health by addressing issues of local and global environmental degradation. This attractive and easy to use website can be found at children.cape.ca (no www) or through the CAPE website at www.cape.ca.
