



Government  
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### What is a Change Driver?

*A change driver is a force that shapes the public policy environment in such a way that existing policies give an inadequate response. Examples include climate change, ageing, and globalization. In the policy world, a change driver forces us to question and revise our basic assumptions.*

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## Taking Stock and Looking Forward

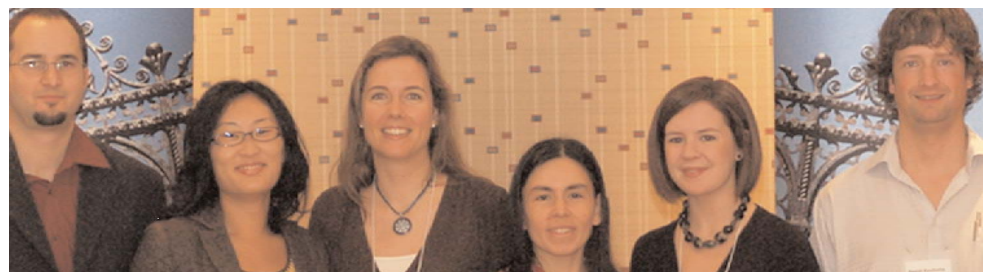
This past October the second conference of the *canada@150* project took place in Vancouver. The *canada@150* project brings together 150 early-career public servants to look at the policy challenges the country is likely to face in 2017 (Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday) and to explore the implications for the Federal Public Service. Participants come from across the country and every department, bringing a broad array of educational and professional backgrounds to the discussion. The project will last for one year (June 2008-June 2009) and is organized around four conferences. What follows is a description of the participants' online collaboration leading up to the second conference and an overview of what proved to be a very productive three-days in Vancouver.

## Working Collaboratively Online

*canada@150* is creating cross-cutting, horizontal networks that unite people, issues, expertise, and departments in new and innovative ways. One of its main tools is a collaborative Web 2.0 site that was set up to allow participants to work with each other between conferences. A significant amount was done between June and October 2008, with participants self-selecting into scanning groups that cut across sectors and departments. Each group was facilitated by an online enabler, and an Assistant Deputy Minister mentor who helped to provide guidance and feedback on the group's activities. The participants followed three major work phases online:

1. scanning broadly for new insights and emerging issues;
2. identifying those drivers that will shape the public policy debate over the next decade; and
3. producing detailed system maps for each change driver that, illustrated the forces that inhibit or reinforce the change driver.

In total, the fifteen scanning groups produced 46 change driver maps, which served as inputs for the Vancouver conference.



Canada 



## The Second Conference: October 22–24, 2008

Facilitated by Alain Rabeau of Intersol, the Vancouver conference provided an opportunity for participants to distill major policy challenges Canada will face in the coming decade from the emerging issues identified in the first phase. The goals of the second *canada@150* conference were fourfold. The first goal was for participants to identify the key policy challenges of the next decade and to set up working groups to study them in the next phase of the project. The second goal was to train and provide experience in the use of innovative tools to support policy analysis. Thirdly, the conference furthered the overarching *canada@150* goal of expanding participant networks with each other and with external experts. Finally, participants were prepared for the collaborative online work they will undertake in the second phase of *canada@150* which takes place from October 2008-February 2009.

## Baseline and Alternate Scenarios

At the Vancouver conference, Dr. Peter Bishop, from the University of Houston, provided an introduction to some foresight tools and an overview of the process for participant scenario work. The first working session examined common assumptions about Canada, Canadians and our place in the world in order to develop a “baseline” scenario. The second working session used scenarios to examine how the change drivers might interact to create new policy challenges for the country. Participants were assigned to scenario groups based on their expertise and interests. Each of the scenario groups was given four change drivers from which to build scenarios.

## The Expected Future

In the first working session each scenario group developed a common, or “baseline” scenario describing the “reference” future, the future that we expect to occur. Using Causal Layered Analysis, a technique developed by Dr. Sohail Inayatullah, the participants investigated the causal, conceptual and cultural assumptions shaping our thinking about the next decade. This first exercise generated a list of assumptions commonly held in the public service about the future of Canada. Each assumption was evaluated as credible, uncertain or out-of-date. Understanding some of the commonly held assumptions about the future helped frame for participants the next stage of their scenario work.

## Identifying New Policy Challenges

The second working session, which occupied the entire second day of the conference, identified 40 new and emerging policy challenges that Canada may face in the coming decade. Participants used a number of tools to explore how change may affect Canada over the next decade, and what kinds of challenges or opportunities these changes would bring. Participants learned techniques to consider a full range of futures that we may confront over the next decade. In groups, they explored different scenarios integrating



a wide range of change drivers. For each scenario, the participants crafted a title, a statement that captured the essence of the scenario, and several headlines that might appear in a news release in their world in 2017. From these, they were able to distill four policy challenges per group that were highly significant for Canada, very novel, and cross-cutting.

## Making Decisions: The Late Night Summit

In a special evening session, one participant from each group volunteered to take part in a consensus-building exercise to determine the final list of policy challenges that was to be presented the next morning for group voting. The participants volunteering for this exercise were authorized by their group to make tough decisions to reduce duplication and ensure that each policy challenge was distinct. The meeting lasted until 10:30 p.m., and the delegates to the summit carried out their responsibility professionally and respectfully. At the end of the evening, the delegates had all agreed on a consensus set of 26 policy challenges, which were to be presented to the whole participant community the following morning. The intensity of the discussions, the importance with which the participants treated the subject and the exemplary professionalism and courtesy the participants showed under fire made this session one of the more exhilarating moments of the conference.



## Keynote Speaker

The conference's keynote speaker, Sebastian Moffatt, President of Sheltair, drew on his experience as team leader for the award-winning 100 year plan for Vancouver and offered some thoughts on long range thinking. Sebastian noted that the paradox of our times is that as the impact of our decisions increase, for instance, in crossing ecological thresholds, our planning horizons shrink. He used an analytical model prepared by The Natural Step to illustrate how "choke points" could emerge that may make life very difficult in the decades ahead. Moffatt offered three principles that help to ground the notion of sustainability: livability, resilience and eco-integrity. He defined resilience as a proactive stance toward risk drawing on ecological theory and systems analysis. It has two objectives: to cope and recover from shocks (maintenance) and to adapt to persistent change (transformation). He also described an interesting methodology using "cause-effect-impact chains" and then "influence diagrams" that explore ways to break chains and avoid undesirable impacts. He noted that "catalytic" policies and projects can help change the societal trajectory by demonstrating and prototyping new approaches.



## Making Decisions: Coming to Consensus

The last day of the conference began with a collaborative voting exercise that involved narrowing down the initial list of 26 policy challenges into a smaller list of fifteen that participants would sign up to work on over the next phase. The participants evaluated each of the presented policy challenges on their significance and their scope. After a few iterations of voting, the final list of fifteen policy challenge areas was agreed upon by participants. The participants then signed up for one of the fifteen groups where they will undertake collaborative online work to prepare policy analysis and options in time for the third conference in Québec City which takes place February 23-24, 2009.

## canada@150 Policy Challenges



How Canada can contribute to bringing together emerging economies and traditional powers to work on key international challenges	Removing barriers to engaging in the knowledge-based economy
Ensuring security while protecting human rights to encourage cohesion	Integrating diverse groups into Canadian society, politics and the economy
Repositioning Canada in the global marketplace	Move towards responsive governance
Federal-Provincial-Municipal distribution of power	Unlocking the potential of marginalized groups
Encourage a shift from raw natural resources to value-added goods and services for competitiveness and sustainability	The urgent need for a holistic approach to health
Reconciling economic growth and environmental protection at the national and global scales	Seizing new opportunities and meeting new challenges in Canada's North
Greening transportation technology, infrastructure, and corridors	Adapting Federal government structures to address complex issues coherently
Preserving cities local space to preserve cities global place	

## Learning from Others: ADM Panel

In the afternoon of day 3, a panel was convened from our population of *canada@150* ADM mentors. These senior public servants contributed their wisdom and experience with policy-making and answered insightful questions from the audience. One recurring theme during this session was how to overcome horizontal silos and create an idea and information-sharing culture. ADMs highlighted the need to take smart risks and noted the importance of personality and leadership in breaking down government silos. The ability to engage effectively with others was seen as a key skill to have since the federal government often doesn't "own" the issues and must work in partnership with a variety of stakeholders. Participants were reminded that they work for the Government of Canada first and foremost,



and their departments second. ADMs stressed the need to be strategic when making policy, noting that stakeholders should be engaged early and policymakers should act with transparency and honesty. ADMs also conveyed the importance of evidence-based policy-making. Finally, the panel discussed some interesting and novel approaches to policy. The participants were encouraged to avoid being an advocate, as that path can lead to being shut out of discussions. Seeing oneself as a member of the policy community, being open to experimentation, being able to communicate complex policy in simple ways, and above all, having patience until the time is right were seen as essential skills for any policy-maker.

## canada@150 ADM Panelists

Ms. Meena Ballantyne	Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Canada
Mr. Neil Bouwer	Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet, Social Development Policy, Privy Council Office
Mr. Phil Jennings	Assistant Deputy Minister, Natural Resources Canada
Mr. Paul Thompson	Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Resources and Social Development
Ms. Cécile Cléroux	Assistant Deputy Minister, Environment Canada

## Organizing the Next Phase of Work

Before closing a very productive three-day conference, participants engaged in a discussion about the best way to continue their policy challenge work in the coming months. The policy challenge work was broken down into three broad phases: scoping, analysis, and policy options. To allow for greater flexibility in Phase 2, participants would be responsible for developing their own work plans and timelines; at the same time, the *canada@150* Secretariat would ensure that there would be support for the groups, through online facilitation, ADM Mentors, and reference documents. Another important component of Phase 2 is the participant-driven peer review/challenge function process, where each policy group will be required to test their ideas with another group, who will then give constructive criticism and offer suggestions for improvement. The peer review component is seen as a way to avoid silos in the *canada@150* process, encouraging participants to use the interactive features of the collaborative website to provide feedback on each others' work. Finally, the newly formed policy challenge groups convened for the first time to begin developing their work plans and exploring their policy challenge.

