



Environmental Commissioner Warns of Setback in Fight against Climate Change

Toronto, June 5, 2013 – Ontario's Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller says the government's long-term energy policy could wipe out some of the gains that have been made in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Gord Miller today released "*Failing our Future*," his 2013 annual report on the progress made in working towards the GHG reduction targets outlined in the government's Climate Change Action Plan.

In its 2007 Climate Change Action Plan, the Ontario government established three targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases:

- 6% below 1990 levels by 2014 (to approximately 166 megatonnes or Mt)
- 15% below 1990 levels by 2020 (to approximately 150 Mt)
- 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 (to approximately 35 Mt)

"The government is on track to meet 91% of its 2014 target, but I am worried about what comes after 2014," said Miller.

Failing our Future highlights that the Ontario government will only achieve 60% of the reductions necessary to meet its 2020 target for reducing GHG emissions.

"One of the reasons for this shortfall," says Miller, "is the increased reliance on natural gas to generate electricity."

According to the Ontario Power Authority (OPA), natural gas is expected to play an important role in meeting electricity demand in the future, especially when nuclear plants are refurbished in and around 2020/2021.

"This increased use of natural gas could lead to a rise in GHG emissions of between 4 and 16 Mt, depending on factors such as the existing generation capacity and weather," says Miller.

"I think the government should use the recently announced review of its Long-Term Energy Plan to make sure its energy planning is co-ordinated with the GHG reduction targets that are contained in its Climate Change Action Plan."

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The Environmental Commissioner says the Ontario government needs to give renewed attention to the fight against climate change. “There has been little progress to report this year.”

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To download the report, visit www.eco.on.ca.

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*The **Environmental Commissioner of Ontario** is the province’s independent environmental watchdog. Appointed by the Legislative Assembly, the ECO monitors and reports on compliance with the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993, the government’s progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and its actions towards achieving greater energy conservation in Ontario.*

