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Chair

Mr. Harold Albrecht

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•(0845)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC)): I'd like to call the meeting of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development to order. This is meeting number 57. We're meeting today, pursuant to Standing Order 81(4), on the main estimates, 2015-16: vote 1 under Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency; votes 1 and 5 under Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency; votes 1, 5, and 10 under Environment; and votes 1 and 5 under Parks Canada Agency. These were referred to the committee on Tuesday, February 24, 2015.

Appearing this morning, we have Minister Leona Aglukkaq, the Minister of the Environment. She's joined by a number of her colleagues from the department. I'll let her introduce those more appropriately later.

Welcome, Minister. We'll give you 10 minutes for an opening statement, followed by questions from our committee members. Please proceed.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of the Environment): Thank you.

Good morning, everyone. Thanks for having me.

Let me start off by expressing my appreciation to the committee for the invitation to appear once again to discuss the main estimates. I'm joined today by my deputy minister, Michael Martin; the CEO of Parks Canada, Alan Latourelle; and the president of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, Ron Hallman; and Janet King, president of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency.

I'll begin with a brief statement and after that we will answer any questions that you may have. The main estimates before us today identify the initial budget requirements for Environment Canada and my portfolio agencies to carry out their important business for Canadians. The business and how we intend to move forward with these estimates will largely be the focus of my remarks.

First of all, I would like to stress that Environment Canada has one of the largest science programs in the federal government. Our world-class science provides the critical information we need to help ensure a clean, safe, and sustainable environment for Canada.

Secondly, I would like to highlight to the committee that this government recognizes that a healthy environment is supported and maintained by a healthy economy. Our focus has been to protect both the environment and the economy.

The third point that I would like to emphasize is that Canada's environment is a shared responsibility between all levels of government. Collaboration among governments is absolutely essential to progress on any environmental issues. This is why we have been working with the provinces and the territories to develop, implement, and enforce meaningful regulations and policies that protect our environment. That includes regulating two of Canada's largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions—transportation and coal-fired electricity—to address climate change and improve air quality.

As a result of Canada's coal regulations, Canadians can expect to see a cumulative reduction of about 240 megatonnes of greenhouse gas emissions during the first 21 years. This is equal to removing 2.6 million personal vehicles from the roads per year over that period. We have also invested more than \$10 billion in green infrastructure, energy efficiency, clean energy technologies, cleaner fuels, and smarter power grids. We intend to regulate HFCs, which are the most potent and fastest-growing greenhouse gases in the world.

In addition, I recently announced three actions to further reduce Canada's emissions. We intend to develop regulations that are aligned with the United States to reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector, while ensuring Canadian companies remain competitive. We also plan to develop regulations for the production of chemicals and nitrogen fertilizers, which are two of the largest sources of emissions in Canada's manufacturing sector. As well, we intend to build on our existing regulations for coal-fired electricity generation by taking actions to regulate emissions from natural gas-fired electricity generation.

Canada already has one of the cleanest energy mixes in the world, with nearly 80% of our electricity supply emitting no greenhouse gases. These new regulations will strengthen our position as a clean energy leader. Moving forward, we will work together cooperatively with the provinces and the territories, while respecting their jurisdictions.

On the international stage, Canada has already fully delivered on its \$1.2-billion investments in fast-start financing. We also pledged \$300 million to the Green Climate Fund to support the international community's efforts to address climate change. Earlier this month I announced that Canada will reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. This target is fair and ambitious, and it is in line with other major industrialized countries and reflects our national circumstances, including Canada's position as a world leader in clean electricity generation.

I'm also glad to report to the committee that Canada's targets have been positively received internationally as delegates of several countries personally thanked me last week in Berlin for bringing forward such an ambitious target. Additionally, while I was in Berlin, I was able to highlight Canada's leadership during its Arctic Council chairmanship, where we successfully saw the creation of a framework to address black carbon and methane. Building on these results, I invited countries to sign on to this framework to phase out these climate pollutants.

In addition to these actions on climate change, our government introduced the national conservation plan last May. The plan includes \$252 million over a five-year period for a variety of conservation initiatives. Since its launch we have already made substantial progress on stewardship efforts to conserve and restore lands and waters across the country.

• (0850)

Moving forward, budget 2015 includes \$75 million over three years to help conserve Canada's species at risk and their valuable habitat through the implementation of the Species at Risk Act.

To further this progress, this February, I held the first ever meeting of federal-provincial-territorial ministers responsible for conservation, wildlife, and biodiversity. This was a very important meeting and it resulted in a number of constructive decisions, such as establishing a federal-provincial-territorial task force for cooperation to address invasive species in Canada. The federal-provincial-territorial ministers also committed to working more closely on issues related to species at risk, and on initiatives for selected species such as caribou and bats.

These achievements demonstrate our government's ability to bring stakeholders together and engage them in meaningful discussions on issues of national importance.

At the same time Parks Canada has been playing a valuable role in expanding Canada's network of protected areas. Specifically, actions taken last year formally enshrined the Nááts'ihch'oh National Park Reserve and the Ukkusiksalik National Park of Canada in legislation. More recently we passed the legislation to create Rouge National Urban Park.

Since we formed the government, the budget for Parks Canada has increased by over 50%. This historic investment by our government is helping overcome the neglect Parks Canada had received under the previous government.

We're also continuing to improve water quality. We have made significant investments to protect and restore key water bodies, including the Great Lakes, Lake Winnipeg, and Lake Simcoe. We have a long history of working closely with Ontario and the United

States and others to improve Great Lakes water quality, clean up contaminated sites, and restore and protect this important ecosystem.

Over the past five years we have been investing in new marine weather forecasts and bulletins, as well as better intelligence on sea ice conditions and waves, contributing to the safe navigation of Arctic waters. For example, earlier this year I announced an investment of \$134 million that will allow Environment Canada to make upgrades to the monitoring networks and to the weather warnings and forecasts.

Budget 2015 is also investing \$34 million over five years in the meteorological and navigational warning services to support safe marine navigation in the Arctic. Environment Canada will also invest \$24.5 million over the next two years for capital infrastructure projects that will enhance services in the north and the access to wildlife areas.

Turning to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, budget 2015 will provide \$34 million to the agency to conduct consultations related to projects assessed under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

I am also responsible for CanNor, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency. Since its creation in 2009, CanNor has invested over \$208 million in over 950 projects in sectors such as tourism, energy, and the fisheries, helping to strengthen training and skills development, community infrastructure, as well as small and medium enterprises. Right now it is working with over 30 companies. This represents a potential for \$22.2 billion in capital infrastructure, and over 10,000 operating jobs in the north.

Mr. Chair, these are just a few highlights of the work we do, and our accomplishments. As you can see, their contribution is extremely important to Canadians. To continue our good work for Environment Canada the main estimates total is \$961.1 million. Compared with last year's main estimates, this is a planned spending increase of \$28.9 million or 3.1%.

New funding includes \$46.6 million to implement the national conservation plan. The estimates also include \$20.1 million to modernize Canada's weather services monitoring and prediction infrastructure. In addition, this government is also investing \$5.3 million to continue the development and implementation of regulations under the clean air regulatory agenda, which supports Canada's actions to address climate change.

Turning to Parks Canada, the main estimates total \$737.3 million. Compared to last year this is an increase of \$124.8 million. This is due to our record investments through economic action plan 2014 to make improvements to highways, bridges, and dams located in national parks and along historic canals.

●(0855)

Our government is also investing \$2.6 billion to support infrastructure improvements to national historic sites, national parks, and national marine conservation areas across Canada. This historic investment is the largest in the history of Parks Canada and will be reflected in the supplementary estimates.

For the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, its planned expenditure for 2015-16 is \$50.7 million. Compared to last year, this is an increase of approximately \$20 million.

As for CEAA, budget 2015 includes \$34 million over five years to continue consultations with Canadians related to projects assessed under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act and \$135 million over five years for the major projects management office initiative. These funding allocations will be reflected in future estimates.

Mr. Chair, I would like to thank you and the committee for your time today, and I'd be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Minister.

That's a lot of ground to cover in a very short time and you did it perfectly.

Let's move to Mr. Carrie for our first seven minutes.

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I want to thank the minister and her officials for being here. It's a pleasure to have you here.

I wanted to start right into the questions because your department and our government as a whole have taken significant strides toward combatting climate change. I was wondering if you could please provide the committee with some of the domestic actions that have been taken.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you for that question.

Our government is reducing the greenhouse gas emissions through a sector-by-sector regulatory approach. Regulations are now in place for two of this country's largest sources of emissions. The first is the transportation sector and second is the electricity generation sector. Though Canada's electricity systems are already some of the cleanest in the world, we have taken steps to developing an even cleaner electricity supply. In 2012 we published final regulations to reduce emissions from the coal-fired electricity sector. In 2015 we proposed the multi-sector air pollutants regulations to reduce air pollutants from industrial boilers and heaters, cement manufacturing, and stationary engines.

In the same year, we announced that we intend to regulate HFCs, which will enable Canada to reduce and limit potent greenhouse gas emissions. We're also helping Canadians adapt to climate change. Since 2006 the government invested \$235 million in domestic

adaptation initiatives to improve the understanding of climate change and to help Canadians plan for the climate impact.

Thank you.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Thank you very much.

What has our government done in regard to improving energy efficiency and for greener infrastructure?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Our government has invested \$10 billion in green infrastructure, clean energy, energy efficiency, clean energy technologies, cleaner fuels, and smarter grids. Some of the examples of that are the \$950 million invested toward development and demonstrations of clean technology products such as the hybrid power plants, and \$1.4 billion to encourage the generation of electricity from renewable energy sources. More than \$580 million went toward carbon capture and storage research development demonstration initiatives.

●(0900)

Mr. Colin Carrie: Minister, as you know, I'm the MP for Oshawa, and I'm always interested in sharing with Canadians what we're doing for the automotive sector. I was wondering if you could share with the committee some of the actions that we're taking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you.

The greenhouse gas emissions standards for the transportation sector, harmonized with the United States, are in place for new cars and light trucks. In 2014, the final regulations to further limit greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks of model year 2017 and beyond were released. As a result of these regulations, it is projected the average greenhouse gas emissions from 2025 vehicles will be reduced by 50% from those sold in 2008.

With regard to the heavy duty vehicles, in 2014 our government announced it intends to start developing more stringent standards to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and fuel consumption from the post-2018 model year heavy duty vehicles and engines. In September 2014 our government published proposed regulations to align with the United States' tier 3 vehicle emission and fuel standards. The proposed regulations would introduce more stringent standards for cars, light duty trucks, certain heavy duty vehicles, and for the 2017 and later models that would reduce smog-forming air pollutant emissions by up to 80% compared to the current standards. This would also reduce the amount of sulphur in gasolines by nearly 70% beginning in 2017.

Mr. Colin Carrie: That's very good.

Minister, you've mentioned how environment in Canada is a shared jurisdiction, so I was wondering what Environment Canada has done to collaborate with provincial and territorial governments on conservation.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: This year I met with the provincial and territorial ministers in Ottawa to discuss conservation, wildlife, and biodiversity issues. The meeting allowed us to discuss our shared challenges and opportunities regarding biodiversity, species at risk, invasive species, and to renew our commitment to work together on key priority areas.

We committed to collaborating on species-at-risk policy approaches. We will work together on initiatives to protect species, such as caribou and bats, and to conserve and protect their habitats. We also agreed to establish a federal-provincial-territorial task force to support future collaborative efforts to fight against invasive alien species in Canada.

We agreed to meet on an ongoing basis and to foster further cooperation among our jurisdictions. We also had the opportunity to hear the perspectives offered by representatives of aboriginal groups from Canada, conservation-oriented groups, hunting and angling organizations, as well as industry stakeholders.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Back to climate change. Would you be able to provide us with some of the accomplishments that have been made on climate change on the international front?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Canada is working with the international community to develop a fair and effective global agreement on climate change. That includes all major emitters. The establishment of a climate change agreement covering all major emitters has been a long-standing objective for Canada. It has been a key focus of our engagement under the United Nations process.

Earlier this month, I announced that Canada will reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 30% below 2005 levels by 2030. A new global agreement on climate change is expected to be concluded in December 2015 in Paris at COP 21, and will take effect in 2020.

Canada extends its efforts beyond the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change by working with other countries through complementary forums, such as the Arctic Council, the Montreal protocol, and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, to develop practical, collaborative initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and short-lived climate pollutants.

Canada is a co-founder and lead partner in the Climate and Clean Air Coalition. Playing a lead role in the development and implementation of several initiatives such as reducing black carbon emissions from heavy-duty diesel vehicles and engines, as well as mitigating black carbon and methane emissions. Under our chairmanship of the Arctic Council, Canada also advanced the development of a new framework for actions on black carbon and methane to address the short-lived climate pollutants in the Arctic. Canada has also partnered with the United States and Mexico in proposing an amendment to the Montreal protocol to phase out the consumption and production of HFCs.

● (0905)

The Chair: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Mr. Carrie.

Mr. Bevington.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Madam Minister, for joining us here today.

You talked about a number of things like renewable energy and the role the federal government has played in the past in renewable energy and energy efficiency. Most of those programs are no longer in place, yet we're at a point when the investment in renewable energy is very important. We're falling behind other countries in the development of wind and solar.

You talk about black carbon, yet within the north of Canada—Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and Yukon—many of our communities are still heavily reliant on diesel generating facilities, fuel oil for heating. These are all contributors to black carbon.

Can you explain how your government is going to take some action on black carbon and with renewables? Where is the investment going forward that you're proposing for renewable energy?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: First of all, on the black carbon and methane initiatives, Canada played a leadership role in establishing the Climate and Clean Air Coalition, which is now fully established with a number of countries and organizations involved in addressing black carbon and methane. It was important for Canada to take a leadership role in addressing black carbon and methane as it affects the Arctic of Canada.

The majority of the methane and black carbon are produced outside the Arctic, so we took the leadership role in establishing the Climate and Clean Air Coalition that functions to this day. A number of initiatives and projects are being addressed through that process, and Canada has invested to address further reductions in that through the Arctic Council chairmanship.

As you know, during the two years of our chairmanship we addressed those two areas, and at the G-7 forum introduced—

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Could you indicate what money you're putting into this effort?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: —the framework to G-7 ministers to take further actions in addressing black carbon and methane. As I said before, the majority of those are produced outside of Canada's Arctic and it was important to take that leadership role.

On the issue of renewable energy, in my opening remarks I stated that we have put in \$10 billion to support renewable energy. That program will continue under NRCan.

Thank you.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: You mentioned a large investment in carbon capture and storage. What has been the result of that investment?

Mr. Michael Martin (Deputy Minister, Department of the Environment): Mr. Chairman, one of the principal and the largest investments, of about \$250 million, supported the development by SaskPower of the Boundary Dam, which is the world's first commercial carbon capture and storage facility in a coal-fired plant. That is currently operational today.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Industry has turned its back on carbon capture and storage because they don't recognize that it has economic potential right now. We've seen projects in Alberta being shut down. What is the result of the projects that you've invested in, in terms of their economic viability in the long term?

Mr. Michael Martin: The SaskPower project is currently operational. It is true that part of the rationale for public investment in these projects is because the cost of proving these technologies at a commercial scale is quite expensive. But the level of international interest in the launch of the SaskPower project at Boundary Dam, I think, speaks to the importance of the technology globally going forward, and the fact that it is currently operational. The economics over time will improve, I think, as more and more commercial-scale projects are developed worldwide.

• (0910)

Mr. Dennis Bevington: With renewable energy, with solar, wind, we've seen remarkable improvements in the economics of those projects. Can you give us the sense that you have, Madam Minister, about the investment that should take place in northern Canada in these areas, and what effort the federal government has put into investing in renewable energy in northern communities?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you.

Mr. Chair, we have made investments to support renewable energy in the north. I think of Yukon as well as the Northwest Territories. Through the Arctic Council chairmanship we also established the Arctic Economic Council, a signature initiative of our chairmanship that will allow Arctic nations to collaborate in a number of opportunities in developing alternative energy in the north. That is led by a number of aboriginal groups, as well as private industry, to allow Arctic nations to collaborate and to share information on alternative energies to diesel in Canada's Arctic.

I launched that in September and it's now functional. One of the priority initiatives of the Arctic Economic Council is to collaborate in exploring alternative energies that can be produced in the Arctic, that work in the Arctic. I'm looking forward to the outcome of that.

Part of developing this sector in the north is that we have to do research, we have to invest in research that supports alternatives to diesel. That is an issue that is a priority for us. That's why we have put \$10 billion into alternative energy. But research, of course, is required to produce these technologies in the north, and that's what we're committed to doing.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: I'm going to move over to CanNor. Over the last number of years you've had a very difficult audit by the Auditor General. In the beginning, CanNor was set up to be headquartered in Iqaluit. Most of the top staff in that department still reside in this part of the country. You've had difficulty in dealing

with the expenditures for developing the north and putting those dollars forward. You've turned back money in the last number of years.

Can you tell me what has been done to fully staff the Iqaluit office with the directors and all the main personnel for this department?

The Chair: You're well beyond your time, Mr. Bevington, but please proceed, Minister, with a short response.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you for that. I'm going to start and then pass it on to Janet for the details of the operations.

As of April 1 of this year, all 12 recommendations by the Auditor General have been addressed. To respond to the Auditor General's recommendations, they have been completely addressed. CanNor has made improvements to its business process. It has implemented performance measurement strategies and a management control framework for contribution programs. CanNor has also revised delivery of its economic development programs, and it has increased the number of employees in the Iqaluit office by adding nine additional positions over the past year.

In terms of status, I'll pass it on to Janet to respond to that.

Ms. Janet King (President, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency): Thank you, Minister.

I have just a couple of comments on staffing in the Iqaluit office. As the minister mentioned, we've strengthened by nine. That includes staffing the director-general level from the north and having permanently in Iqaluit the director-level staff. We have the senior support people being staffed as well, drawing as much as we can from the labour force in the north. We're also starting to send positions from Ottawa to Iqaluit. I believe that one person is moving in the next couple of weeks from Ottawa up to headquarters. We are progressively strengthening that office.

I would like to note with respect to using the funds that at the close of 2014-15 we had the smallest lapse in our flagship program in the history of SINED. We've been managing those lapses downward as we work very closely with our stakeholders in developing useful projects through the cycle of the fiscal year.

• (0915)

The Chair: Thank you.

We are two minutes over the time on that one. We'll have to make that up somewhere else.

Mr. Sopuck, please.

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): Thanks.

Minister, many developing countries lack the economic resources necessary to invest in new technologies that would help them combat climate change. I was wondering if you could please tell us what Canada is doing to assist developing countries to invest in new green technologies to allow them to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you.

To further demonstrate Canada's commitment towards achieving a new climate agreement, \$300 million in funding pledged to the Green Climate Fund was announced in November 2014. The Green Climate Fund's strong focus on helping the poorest countries with adaptation and promoting private sector investment will play a key role in addressing climate change globally.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, Canada has fully delivered on its commitment and has provided \$1.2 billion in new and additional climate change financing under fast-start financing. Examples of those projects are: in Chile, we supported solar plants for the mining sector; in Indonesia, we have the world's largest geothermal facility; in Mexico and Colombia, there are mitigations on short-lived climate pollutants or on gas facilities, in partnership with the Canadian private sector; in Haiti, we help communities reduce vulnerability to natural disasters through the construction of irrigation corridors to increase agricultural production; and Parks Canada is providing expertise to Colombia, Kenya, and Mexico to help maintain and restore natural parks and other protected areas and inform people about climate change adaptation.

Thank you.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: This question deals with Parks Canada. In light of the 2014 historic discovery of the HMS *Erebus* in Nunavut, what is Parks Canada doing in terms of delivering community benefits to the communities across the north regarding this discovery?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: The Government of Canada is committed to developing and implementing northern economic development and tourism initiatives in the north. The historic discovery of HMS *Erebus* in 2014 would not have been possible without federal-provincial-territorial and private not-for-profit partners as well as some Inuit and their traditional knowledge. We will continue to build on that strong collaboration this year.

Parks Canada will continue to work with Inuit from Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, and other northern communities to provide community benefits and integrate their role of traditional knowledge into science-based activities involved in the 2015 Franklin expedition operations.

The agency is also working in partnership with community representatives, regional Inuit organizations, Kitikmeot Inuit organizations, territorial governments, and the private sector to leverage the 2014 discovery in order to develop and put in place long-term economic benefits and tourism initiatives in the north. Parks Canada will also be working with Inuit to promote the story from their perspective and to showcase Inuit cultural traditions and knowledge on the world stage.

CanNor is also contributing to economic development opportunity initiatives within the region to maximize the potential of this discovery.

Thank you.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I know that water management and the protection of water quality is a top priority of our government. It's certainly a priority for your department.

Can you talk about some of the actions that Environment Canada is taking in dealing with water management and the improvement of water quality across Canada?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Sure.

As I mentioned in my opening remarks, we have made significant commitments to protect and restore the water bodies including the Great Lakes, Lake Winnipeg, Lake Simcoe, southeastern Georgian Bay, and the St. Lawrence River. In 2010 we announced \$8 million per year of funding to go to remediate Great Lakes areas of concern. Work has been completed in five areas of concern, and it is anticipated that all remedial actions in the further five Canadian areas of concern will be completed by 2019.

In 2011, \$16 million was allocated over a period of four years to address toxic and nuisance algae in the Great Lakes, with a particular focus on Lake Erie. Canada's collaboration with the United States also led to an enhanced and renewed Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement in 2012 that included new provisions to address issues such as aquatic invasive species and habitat conservation.

In 2012, \$46.3 million was committed to clean up contaminated sediments in the Hamilton Harbour, \$29 million over five years to continue with the Lake Simcoe and southeastern Georgian Bay clean-up fund, and \$15 million over five years to protect the Great Lakes from the threat of Asian carp.

Last December the Governments of Canada and Ontario renewed their commitment to restore, protect, and conserve the Great Lakes by signing the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health.

Thank you.

● (0920)

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I did some research concerning Lake Simcoe myself. The improvement of water quality there has been truly remarkable. It shows that the actions your department has taken there are really working.

What actions have been taken by your department dealing with waste water treatment in Canada?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Among steps we have taken to tackle one of the largest sources of pollution of Canadian water since 2006, our government committed more than \$2 billion in direct federal funding to waste water infrastructure projects across Canada. As well, since 2005, municipalities have invested more than \$668 million of the gas tax funds for waste water infrastructure.

In 2012 our government put in place waste water system effluent regulations to phase out the release of untreated and undertreated sewage into waterways. This isn't just about improving the quality of our water; it's also about protecting our health, our environment, and our economy.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Sopuck.

Thank you, Minister.

We'll now move to Mr. McKay.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): Thank you, Minister.

You've stated that the 2030 targets will be reduced by 30%. Can you express that in terms of megatonnes?

Mr. Michael Martin: Mr. Chairman, actually I can't do the math off the top of my head, but I'd be happy to provide the numbers to the committee.

Hon. John McKay: Really?

Mr. Michael Martin: I can't do the math off the top of my head. You got me.

Hon. John McKay: No, I have absolute confidence in your ability to do the math off the top of your head, but I find it quite remarkable that you should state a target of 30% by 2030 and not know what that is in megatonnes.

Mr. Michael Martin: Well, if you give me a second, I could probably do the calculation.

Hon. John McKay: As long as it doesn't come off my time, I'm fine with that.

Mr. Michael Martin: Why don't I come back to you with that, Mr. McKay?

Hon. John McKay: Let me just do a little math.

Mr. Michael Martin: It's about 240 million tonnes, I would think.

Hon. John McKay: My guessing is that your expectation would be that it would be down to about 549 million tonnes. Would that be right? Would that be close?

Mr. Michael Martin: Again, I don't have the number in front of me, but that could be in the ballpark.

Hon. John McKay: So we're going from 749 megatonnes to 549 megatonnes. Is that reasonable?

Mr. Michael Martin: I think, as you may know from some of the analysis we've published, one of the challenges in this area is that it's not simply a question of doing a calculation based on where we were in 2005 and then doing the 30% below, which takes you to the target number.

In fact, as we know, there are constantly sources of growth in emissions that represent sort of the business-as-usual case as you referred to.

Hon. John McKay: But how can you then go and make a press release saying we're going to be 30% below 2005 targets by 2030 if there's no basis for the number, or there's a moving number?

Mr. Michael Martin: There is a basis for the number. A good foundation to understand the analytical base is the annual emissions trends report, which describes the measures in place through the

provincial and federal governments. It looks at the drivers of emissions in the Canadian economy, and then, through a modelling exercise with certain assumptions that are made clear in that study, it lays out the trajectory, describes the impact of the measures in place, and then defines the gap.

That is the analytical framework.

• (0925)

Hon. John McKay: Let's just leave it there. Can you undertake to provide the committee the number in megatonnes that the government is projecting for the target of 30% by 2030?

Mr. Michael Martin: Certainly. I'd be happy to do that.

Hon. John McKay: Minister, what is Ontario's contribution to this 2030 goal?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: As I mentioned in my remarks, dealing with the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is a shared responsibility of all provinces and territories. Each jurisdiction has set out its own targets and is involved in its own initiatives.

I have not received the details of the Ontario plans in terms of its initiatives and how those translate to actual greenhouse gas reduction initiatives, but certainly it does have a role. It is a shared responsibility and Ontario is certainly doing its part in that.

Hon. John McKay: If it is a shared responsibility, and I actually agree with you that it is, how can you therefore set targets of 30% by 2030 without Ontario or Quebec—and maybe it's different with Quebec—having committed to the same goal?

Is Ontario expected to contribute its share to the 30% target you've announced, and if so, what is it?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: In terms of what Ontario is doing and how it plans to contribute to these activities, I think that is a question for the Ontario government to address.

Several years back the provinces and the territories had set their own targets. They are undertaking their own initiatives region by region. Those vary across the country depending on the makeup of individual contributions to greenhouse gas emissions in respective jurisdictions.

The federal government is taking a sector-by-sector approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions with the federal levers we have. We have moved on the transportation sector and the coal sector.

Hon. John McKay: Minister, with respect, I get it. I get the sector stuff, but you have not apparently engaged the largest province in the federation in what you describe as a shared jurisdiction in announcing the 2030 targets.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: The targets that we have set for Canada, the 30% reduction of 2005 levels by 2030, is a fair and ambitious target for Canada. The targets are in line with other major industrialized countries and reflect our national circumstances. There is much work to be done to reach the 2030 targets.

Hon. John McKay: Is there any province that has actually agreed to its share of those 2030 targets?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: In terms of our initiatives, Canada has taken a leadership role in addressing the climate—

Hon. John McKay: That wasn't my question. Is there any province that has agreed to its proportionate share of these 2030 targets?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: The environment ministers are meeting in Winnipeg. CCME is meeting this coming month at which time we'll have further discussions in regard to the provincial and territorial contributions related to this area.

Hon. John McKay: That's good to hear, but it does seem to be that you made an announcement of what the target is and have yet to consult with the provinces as to what their contribution might be to that target.

I'll move on, because the chair is going to give me the hook any time now.

The projected emissions increase from the oil and gas sands are something in the order of 102 megatonnes between 2005 and 2030. That seems to be the best data available. What is the state of negotiations with that sector, since you favour a sector-by-sector approach? What is your state of negotiations with that sector given that recently, as of this weekend, Suncor said that they were prepared to negotiate, or to contribute to, or to participate in a pricing of carbon system?

The Chair: You're well beyond your time, Mr. McKay. You were saying about getting the hook, so you've received it.

Minister.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: As part of our sector-by-sector approach, when we announced our targets, we also announced three more areas of regulatory approach that we are taking. We're working with the industry on methane reductions for the oil and gas sector. We're waiting to hear back what the new government of Alberta will be doing in this regard. Again, in terms of moving forward in our sector-by-sector approach in the regulations, we are working with the industry in methane reductions in that sector.

● (0930)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. McKay.

Thank you, Minister.

We'll move to Ms. Leslie for five minutes please.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome all of you.

Madam Minister, it's always nice to have you here.

I want to keep talking about climate change. I was really pleased that you referenced and discussed climate change in your opening statement. I have a different take on the targets, however. I wouldn't find them ambitious because I can't seem to find a plan on how to get there. I would actually call them unrealistic. When I look at your statement to this committee, there was a lot of discussion of past efforts and far in the future efforts. I'm wondering what the actual efforts are for right now.

You referenced coal. The International Institute for Sustainable Development has said that the coal regulations will have a negligible impact on GHGs in the next 15 years. Keep in mind that the target is 15 years from now. Fertilizer, sure that's great. It only makes up 8%

of our greenhouse gas emissions. Methane leaks, okay, I hear you on that, I guess, but there are no regulations for the oil and gas sector. There are no programs for energy efficiency.

That \$10 billion you referenced for renewables, I have the estimates here and I don't see that. I think you're referencing the amount of money spent on renewables in the past and not the amount of money that's going to be spent now.

How will you achieve these targets? In your sector-by-sector approach specifically what is the greenhouse gas reductions that we will see in each sector to get to 30% below 2005 in 15 years?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you for that question.

In terms of the renewable energy initiatives, I mentioned that we have put \$10 billion into renewable energy. That program will continue under NRCan. In terms of the initiatives that were undertaken by the sector-by-sector approach, Canada was a world leader in banning the construction of traditional coal-fired electricity. We took the leadership role in banning that.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Sure, but that's 30 years from now.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: It's still an initiative that reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Canada took leadership in that—

Ms. Megan Leslie: So how's the plan now?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: —in a sector-by-sector approach. We took the approach to make sure that when we move forward in the transportation sector, as an example, we ensure that we don't affect the economy in a negative way. In the transportation sector it's very important to align our regulations with the United States so that we can protect the jobs in Ontario, as an example.

In the area of the oil and gas sector, we're working with the industry in moving forward on methane regulations for the oil and gas sector. We've also been very clear that in areas of integrated industry, we have to integrate with our closest trading partner to ensure that we protect the jobs. We're working in the environment, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, it's also important to protect the jobs in Canada.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Sure, and no one's refuting that. You're the Minister of the Environment and I'm the opposition critic. You say, here is what we're going to do, and I say that I don't see a plan.

Now's your opportunity: what is that plan? We have 15 years. In each sector, how are we going to achieve those greenhouse gas reductions?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: In the sector-by-sector approach, we are moving in three new areas. We're investing in clean technology. I've also said that the provinces and the territories also have a role in their levers of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We all have a collective role to do this. It's in partnership with industry, provinces, and the territories. Our contribution in our sector-by-sector approach is there.

I mentioned that—

Ms. Megan Leslie: Are you able to put numbers to the sectors?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: The sector-by-sector approach is our footprint of greenhouse gas emissions. You have to also remember that Canada has one of the cleanest electricity sectors in the world.

Ms. Megan Leslie: So that's a no.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Based on our footprints, we are taking a sector-by-sector approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We've moved on the two largest emissions in the areas of transportation and coal. Now we're moving in the fertilizer sector, on methane and so on, as I announced a couple of weeks ago.

Ms. Megan Leslie: In my last 30 seconds, I'll move on to weather and environment services for targeted users. I have the main estimates in front of me here, and for 2014-15 we had about \$25 million. This year it's \$15 million. That's a 60% reduction.

What programs will be cut at Environment Canada with regard to weather and environment services for targeted users?

• (0935)

Ms. Carol Najm (Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Financial Officer, Finance Branch, Department of the Environment): The change in meteorological services is with respect to programs for the Arctic that are sunseting. That will be renewed through future supplementary estimates. It's a timing difference between the expenditures to date versus the main estimates number we have to date.

Ms. Megan Leslie: They will be renewed...?

Ms. Carol Najm: They will be going forward for renewal.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Thank you.

The Chair: We'll move now to Mrs. Ambler for five minutes, please.

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Minister and team, for being here today to speak to the environment committee.

Just last week I had the pleasure of helping to announce a Government of Canada initiative partnering with a cement company in my riding as well as a conservation authority with regard to migratory birds on Lake Ontario—the habitat stewardship program for species at risk. I wanted to thank you for making that a priority. I would say that unlike other governments, this government has taken a leadership role in the area of species at risk.

I'm wondering if you could tell us a bit more about that.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you for that.

Our government, as I mentioned, is committed to protecting the rich biodiversity as seen in our launch of the national conservation plan. The 2012 budget allocated \$50 million over two years to protect species at risk in Canada. Economic action plan 2014 announced that the government will continue to support species at risk with \$75 million in investments over three years. Many of the on-the-ground actions, such as the one you just mentioned, are funded through the habitat stewardship program. They are under way throughout different regions of Canada.

Additional funding of over \$5.5 million for the habitat stewardship program is available through the conservation plan. Furthermore, last year I hosted a round table with industry, landowners, environmental organizations, and aboriginal groups to get their feedback on species at risk and how we can work in partnership with

a number of landowners throughout Canada in achieving the objectives of the habitat stewardship program. I also hosted a meeting of provincial and territorial ministers here in Ottawa on how we can better work together in dealing with stewardship initiatives throughout the country when we're dealing with species that see no borders.

Thank you.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Thank you.

Minister, I was wondering if you could also tell us a bit about the federal contaminated sites action plan and the increase of \$3.9 million to remediate and assess contaminated sites that is in the main estimates. My home is located on a formerly contaminated site. It was the old Texaco tank lands in Mississauga. That's where my interest in that line item comes from. Can you explain what these contaminated sites are and what the government has been doing to address them?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you for that question.

Our government is committed to protecting the environment. That's why we're investing \$4.23 billion to clean up federal contaminated sites. As of March, 2014, \$2.1 billion has been spent on the remediation at more than 1,500 sites. We've also assessed more than 10,200 sites, and that has created 11,000 person-year jobs. Budget 2015 renews the government's support for the federal contaminated sites action plan by proposing an additional \$99.6 million over four years. These investments are reducing the risk to human health and improving the environment.

The Chair: Did you want to verify...? Do you have a question?

• (0940)

Mrs. Stella Ambler: You said \$2 million and \$3.9 million, is that right?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: The numbers were—

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Can you repeat the numbers, please, the dollar amounts?

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: The investments.... March, 2014, \$2.1 billion had been spent on remediation of 1,500 sites.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Okay.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: That's the actual figure for cleaning up federal contaminated sites.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Thank you.

On a sort of a semi-related topic, part of the national conservation plan was one of the items this committee studied when I first joined it. Obviously, the urban component is a big part of it, which I appreciate, and it includes the Rouge National Urban Park, Canada's first-ever national urban park. My riding is obviously very close to there. Can you please update this committee on the establishment process for the Rouge National Urban Park and tell us a bit about the benefits to the local communities in the 905 area and to greater southern Ontario?

The Chair: Mrs. Ambler, your time is up.

I'll give the minister a very short time to respond, please.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Since I last appeared before this committee to discuss this particular issue, Parks Canada has committed the long-term stable funding of \$143.7 million over 10 years and \$7.6 million a year thereafter to manage, protect, and operate the park's largest financial investment in the Rouge's history. That investment will allow Parks Canada to protect the Rouge at a higher level than ever before. The Rouge will now have year-round dedicated enforcement officers, a level of protection that the province does not currently provide.

The bill was developed after consulting with at least...the last count anyway, nearly 15,000 Canadians and 150 groups and organizations. The legislation is crafted to go well beyond the existing provincial laws and policies that govern the patchwork of land that makes up the future park.

The Rouge National Urban Park shows our government's strong commitment to conserve Canada's natural spaces and to connect Canadians to nature in their backyards, as highlighted in our government's national conservation plan.

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Ambler. Thank you, Minister.

We have one more question round prior to the minister's departure, then we'll proceed with a very short break. After that we'll continue with the list I have in front of me with five-minute rounds. Mr. Toet, you will be first in the next round.

Mr. Choquette.

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My thanks to the minister and her officials for being here to testify.

I would like to go back to Ms. Ambler's information about contaminated sites. This is an important matter. Canada has a huge number of contaminated sites. Even if we have started to clean them up, there are still far too many. Reports have been produced recently to show the scope of the work that will have to be done in the coming years. But the budget for cleaning up contaminated sites has been reduced. Do I understand that correctly?

[English]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you.

The government invested \$4.23 billion to clean up federal contaminated sites. As of March 2014, \$2.1 billion has been spent on remediation at more than 1,500 sites and on assessments at more than 10,200 sites, creating about 11,000 person-years to do the cleanup.

Budget 2015 renews the government's support for federal contaminated site action plans by proposing an additional \$99.6 million for four years, starting in 2016-17.

Thank you.

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette: Madam Minister, I am going to go back to climate change. You sent a letter to provincial ministers. The provincial ministers were very shocked, certainly in Quebec, to

simply get a letter asking for their targets. They were flabbergasted by your approach, that you called "cooperative". For them, it was not cooperative in nature at all. The targets do not seem to be coordinated with the efforts made by the provinces. It has been shown on a number of occasions that all the effort is coming from the provinces.

In your main estimates, under the heading of climate change and clean air, there is a cut of 26%. Recently, you established the targets for 2030. How do you anticipate reaching your objectives with cuts of that size?

• (0945)

[English]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: I'm going to respond to the first part of the questions and then pass it on to Carol for the details.

In terms of the approach that we're taking with the provinces and territories, I have been working with the provincial environment ministers, as well as territorial environment ministers, in addressing ways of going forward in how we contribute to the reductions of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. I have also stated that they have provincial levers as well. They need to do their part, we need to do our part, and we're committed to doing that. The provinces and territories have their own targets. They establish their own targets and their own initiatives, and that's great because they do need to do their part, and so do we.

The federal initiatives that we have undertaken have been a sector-by-sector approach, and those are our contributions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as well as other investments in clean energy technology and so forth.

We'll continue to work and engage with the provinces and the territories. I'll be meeting with them in Winnipeg in June. I also met with the Quebec minister, as well as B.C.'s, Alberta's, and Ontario's when we were in Lima in December at the conference getting ready for the actual discussions in Paris next year.

With that, I'm going to pass it on to deal with the issues of contaminated sites—

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette: Madam Minister, I was mostly referring to the approach taken. You simply sent a letter asking the provincial ministers to hurry up and send you their targets. That is what they did not appreciate.

[English]

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Actually, that is not true at all. It has been joint, face-to-face meetings of provincial and territorial ministers. I've had meetings with them in Canada. I held the first-ever meeting of ministers on conservation here in Ottawa. We've written letters to get their feedback in terms of where they are within their own targets because it's important to factor in their contributions. They have a role to play, and so does the federal government and the municipal levels.

It's a collaborative approach and it's not just a letter-writing exercise. It's actual face-to-face meetings, which I've had with a number of provincial and territorial ministers, and that will be ongoing.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Minister.

Thank you, Mr. Choquette.

That brings us to the end of the first hour.

Thank you, Minister, for being with us. We look forward to further consultations with the officials.

We'll take a two-minute recess.

- _____ (Pause) _____
-
- (0950)

The Chair: I'd like to call the committee back to order, please.

As we indicated earlier, we will continue with the question list in the same sequence in which I had it prior to the minister leaving us.

In the second hour we have with us from the Department of the Environment, Mr. Michael Martin, deputy minister; Siddika Mithani, associate deputy minister; Carol Najm, assistant deputy minister and chief financial officer of the finance branch. From the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency, I have Mr. Ron Hallman, president; and Helen Cutts, vice-president of policy development. From Parks Canada, I have Mr. Alan Latourelle, chief executive officer; and from Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, Janet King, president.

There will be no opening statements at this point. We will simply continue with questions from committee members, beginning with Mr. Toet, please.

Mr. Lawrence Toet (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is great to have this opportunity to speak to our officials and ask them a few questions.

I want to start with you, Mr. Martin, with regard to the national conservation plan, which this committee did a lot of work on a few years ago. We were very pleased, after great cooperation in the committee across all party lines, to submit our report and also to see that report being very much the strong basis for the national conservation plan.

It's something that I think is near and dear to the hearts of many on this committee. I was hoping you could give us a sense of the status of the implementation of the national conservation plan today.

Mr. Michael Martin: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As you may have seen, the initial round of funding for the various NCP funding programs has been approved, and contribution agreements are in place or are currently being negotiated. Most recently we announced 47 new projects, totalling \$5 million, under the new national wetland conservation fund. The calls for proposals in this fiscal year have been issued and are now undergoing review.

We have put in place a contribution agreement with Earth Rangers, which supports their work to help connect families to nature. We finalized a funding agreement with the Nature Conservancy, which is leading the implementation of the natural areas conservation program. The government has also announced the 10 national wildlife areas where we will be investing additional

resources under the pillar of connecting Canadians, which was the third pillar of that plan.

We're also continuing to promote the NCP and its goals, and to create greater awareness. This, of course, is in the broader context of the full range of ongoing work that we and our partners at Parks Canada and Fisheries and Oceans Canada are doing to preserve and restore Canada's natural areas.

Mr. Lawrence Toet: All right. Thank you.

I also want to turn to Mr. Martin on our participation in global efforts to negotiate a new international climate change agreement. I was hoping you could give us some sense of where we are at in that process, how Canada is participating in that process, and also provide us with some additional information regarding our new targets that had been announced in advance of COP 21, as to where we're at, the status of that, and our role within that, in the context of the international community.

Mr. Michael Martin: Thank you for the question.

The international negotiating process is an ongoing one. As you may recall at Lima, under the Lima plan for action, we laid out the negotiating process that will lead to Paris, which includes a series of negotiating sessions, the first of which post-Lima was held in Geneva in February. At that meeting the draft negotiating text to support the work toward Paris was agreed. Work will continue on that text at three sessions this year: in June, August, and then in October, prior to the negotiations themselves in Paris.

That's important because as you know this is a negotiation process that involves 195 parties. It is an inclusive and transparent process, and achieving consensus is often a challenge. We are making good progress in the substantive negotiations.

A key part of the process was the call issued at Lima for all 195 parties to come forward with their intended nationally determined contributions. To date I think about 39 parties have done so. Many developed countries and one major developing country, Mexico, have come forward. We continue to look to other parties to come forward prior to Paris, well in advance, with their intended nationally determined contributions.

Canada's own INDC was announced on May 15, as the minister mentioned. We provided clarifying information, consistent with that being provided by other countries. It is intended also to help generate momentum in this negotiating process to develop an environmentally effective post-2020 climate change agreement.

- (0955)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Toet.

Ms. Leslie, please.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Latourelle, I have maybe a quick question about Green Cove in Cape Breton, the Never Forgotten memorial. I see on the Parks Canada website that there is an invitation for public comments about this Never Forgotten national memorial project.

I am certainly a friend of Parks Canada, but this project baffles me and I have real concerns about it. It's a privately funded initiative to build this giant monument of Mother Canada, I think, facing out into the ocean right in one of our national parks. I wonder, how the heck did this happen? Was it a private group that approached Parks Canada or did Parks Canada see a need for war monuments? I don't understand how this project is happening.

Mr. Alan Latourelle (Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada): Mr. Chair, in terms of our land base across Canada, we have close to 320,000 square kilometres that we manage, and we get approached across the system in terms of proposals. This is one that we've accepted subject to the environmental assessment. Currently, why it's posted is that as part of the environmental assessment process there is a public consultation and our duty is to ensure that if, at the end, there is a project approved it doesn't impact the ecological integrity of that park.

Ms. Megan Leslie: I recognize the environmental assessment is important and that will be the final determination on whether or not this project goes forward. What happens in the decision-making with Parks Canada when Parks Canada is approached about a monument like this? I'm really wondering how it is that Parks Canada said yes, we really need this monument.

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I think we have to look at the Parks Canada Agency Act and the actual mandate of Parks Canada. Parks Canada has four programs that we're responsible for. We have national parks but we also have national historic sites, so the program of commemoration, conservation, and celebration of Canadian history. We do look at the full breadth of our programs when we make those decisions.

Ms. Megan Leslie: That makes sense to me in terms of your mandate. With this project, in particular, what was it about this project that made Parks Canada say yes?

Mr. Alan Latourelle: I think it's a celebration and a commemoration of young Canadians who have given up their lives for our country.

Ms. Megan Leslie: That's it?

Mr. Alan Latourelle: Yes.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Okay, thank you.

If I have more time later, I'm going to come back to discuss the management plan for Sable Island. I'd love an update on that.

But right now, Mr. Martin, I'd like to ask you about the CCME, the ministers' meetings that are coming up. We had a discussion here not too long ago on a water study where we talked about the fact that the microbeads issue is on the agenda for this meeting; and then of course right now, obviously, climate change and greenhouse gas reductions with the provinces are on this agenda too.

We had some concerns expressed by a provincial minister that not a lot gets accomplished at these meetings because there are so many things to talk about and it's just one day. He expressed reluctance to say that things would get done at this meeting, so I'm just wondering how many items beyond climate change and microbeads are on the agenda. Do you know that?

• (1000)

Mr. Michael Martin: In the CCME process there's a deputies' committee that meets annually to prepare the final agenda. We met about two weeks ago in Toronto, and of course we ask ourselves that question. A minister's time is limited and the priority for this meeting will be on climate change—the work program that will go forward under CCME on climate change—as well as a discussion of how we will be engaging the provinces in the negotiating process towards Paris. That will be the principal focus of discussion.

We did, pursuant to the motion, propose a discussion of microbeads and that was supported. There will be some other routine business updates. For example, there will be an update on the air quality management system, which is a very important CCME process related to air pollution that we are now implementing. We will also provide a couple of other working updates. But, again, this meeting primarily will focus on climate change.

Ms. Megan Leslie: In terms of mandates, I agree with that mandate. Climate change is the most important issue facing us today.

I'd like to come back to follow up on the microbeads piece.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Woodworth, please.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and thank you to everyone who's come here today to provide information to us.

I'd like to ask some questions for Environment Canada, so I'll direct them to Mr. Martin. I'd like to focus on the Great Lakes.

As you may know, my riding is Kitchener Centre. It's smack dab in the middle of southern Ontario and equidistant from the Great Lakes. We are millions of people dependent upon the water in the Great Lakes, so I initiated a study some time ago in this committee on Great Lakes water quality. We learned about the 1972 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the renewals since that time, and the advances that have been made in restoring and protecting Great Lakes water quality and ecosystem health. We had evidence about the 2012 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and how, as the point source pollution has been mastered over these many years, new items such as algae growth, aquatic invasive species, chemicals, and microbeads are now moving to the fore in our examination. I was very pleased to see the Government of Canada is on top of these issues and investigating them.

I did notice in the estimates a decrease in funding of \$1.6 million related to the Great Lakes nutrient initiative. I didn't know if that was a sunset issue that is going to be restored or not, but I'd like to hear about that. I'd also like to hear about what else the government is doing to protect the Great Lakes and how it is working in collaboration with the United States in order to achieve that protection.

Mr. Michael Martin: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

As the minister mentioned in remarks, we have a whole series of initiatives under way related to improving the health of the Great Lakes, including some important intergovernmental agreements in terms of the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and the associated Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health. Under those frameworks we undertake a wide range of scientific activities and targeted programmatic activities designed to continue to improve our understanding, as well as to improve remediation of specific contaminants and enhance our collaborative work with many stakeholders in that regard.

There have been a series of investments and you referenced some of them. Specifically on the Great Lakes nutrient initiative, that program is ongoing. It is in its final year of funding. It will sunset in this year, and therefore, will be examined for renewal in the context of budget 2016.

We're also moving forward in other areas, including one of the most challenging areas of concern, which is Randle Reef, and we continue to work to put in place effective remediation of that site.

I should mention that around this ecosystem and the whole watershed there are other interventions that do have an impact. You mentioned non-point source pollution as being an area of concern and some of our work focuses on that. In fact, some of the work we're doing under the national conservation plan related to wetland restoration will also contribute to the health of the Great Lakes and the habitat on which many species depend.

• (1005)

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Thank you.

I want to say when it comes to the Great Lakes nutrient initiative, unless and until all of the possibilities have been exhausted for research and control of nutrients flowing into the Great Lakes, you'll find some political support at least from this chair to continue and renew that program.

You mentioned the Randle Reef. From our study, I understand that to be the largest contaminated sediment site on the Canadian side of the Great Lakes. We heard in our study those sediments are contaminated with polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons—PAHs, for short—and also heavy metals that were accumulated over as long as 160 years. I wonder if you could give us a bit of an update as to the timetable, the progress, and the investment remaining from the Government of Canada to clean up those contaminated sediments, not only in Randle Reef but elsewhere around the province of Ontario.

The Chair: Okay. We need to have a fairly rapid response. We're well beyond our time. I think you're taking lessons from each other, committee members, on exhausting your entire time with your question and then expecting to get another minute and a half.

Mr. Martin, please, as quickly as you can.

I think Mr. McKay led it off.

Mr. Michael Martin: I'll make two quick points. We did lead the development of a public-private partnership involving the municipality, the province, the company involved, and others to put in place an overall approach on the remediation. We're now tendering that

process in order to proceed with the first phase of the project, and I hope we will be successful in terms of the bids that come in the coming weeks.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Woodworth.

Mr. Carrie, please, for five minutes.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My question would be to Mr. Martin.

A couple of my colleagues mentioned that the federal government seems to be taking that approach on targets—the 30% reduction in 2030—without asking the provinces and territories what their goals are.

Could you please let us know? I believe that the minister wrote the provinces in the fall to ask them for their updates, the status of their current targets, and she wrote them again in the spring. Did you hear back from Ontario on those letters?

Mr. Michael Martin: We undertook an analytical process in order to define and to support decision-making by the government on the post-2020 target. As part of that process, I engaged with my counterparts in the provinces and territories to understand better the measures, the specific measures, that they were implementing or planning to implement under their own climate plans. It was in that regard that the minister also wrote to seek that information.

As I mentioned in my earlier remarks, we have an analytical tool, a modelling tool, that we use—and we publish the results every year—that supports policy-making in this area, and we have a long history of working with the provinces in order to support that. That's important because it also supports us in meeting our reporting obligations to the UNFCCC in terms of our national reporting and the new biennial reports that we produce.

What we learned from that process was that the measures that were captured in our 2014 report and our last biennial report to the United Nations were in fact the measures that were currently in place, but some jurisdictions in the subsequent months did indicate that they were examining new measures or were taking a fresh look at their domestic climate targets. For example, Ontario announced, as you may know, that they will implement a cap and trade system, and I think they have now announced as well a specific 2030 target. The precise regulatory details we have yet to see.

• (1010)

Mr. Colin Carrie: I think our target is fair and ambitious.

Now it was interesting. I was listening to my Liberal colleague talking about the 30% reduction by 2030. We've heard his leader come out with a plan, something like a Health Canada type of plan, where he would force the provinces and territories to meet certain targets without their input. He also supported the NDP bill. They have a bill on the floor, I believe it's Bill C-619, that says that we need to get to an 80% reduction by 2050.

Now my colleague across the way from the NDP said the 30% reduction by 2030, to quote her, was unrealistic.

Ms. Megan Leslie: For you guys....

Mr. Colin Carrie: So 2030, that would be unrealistic. I believe their interim reductions would be 50% by 2025. Knowing the technologies out there today and knowing the base levels that Canadians use just to heat our homes and for basic transportation, do you think those targets would be reasonable or attainable—a 50% reduction by 2025?

Mr. Michael Martin: Well, Mr. Chair, I would rather not get drawn into speculating on possible policy measures. I think, from an analytical standpoint, we know that deep GHG reductions require structural change and it is not in every case that cost-effective technology solutions are available. It is an iterative process, and I think the government, in announcing the 2030 goal, is setting a level of ambition that should serve to help continue to drive progress, both in terms of the articulation of policy measures and also, hopefully, to continue to incent the necessary technological change needed to achieve significant GHG reductions.

Mr. Colin Carrie: I have a quick one to Mr. Latourelle about the Rouge. I want to get your opinion on that. The Ontario government has criticized our movement forward with the creation of the Rouge Urban National Park. I was wondering if you could comment on the level of protection, federal versus provincial, with our new piece of legislation.

Mr. Alan Latourelle: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The new act that we're responsible for and now operating under, the Rouge National Urban Park Act, affords broader and stronger conservation than any legislation we've seen in Ontario up to this point. We're still waiting, from a process perspective, to get comments from Ontario but we have started operating in terms of Transport Canada lands being transferred to us, a significant amount of land, and there is some land that was in the legislation also.

I think the challenge we are facing is that some of the requests that were put forward as part of the process were, I think, beyond the agreement that we signed with Ontario. For example, the vision that was signed onto by both governments in the agreement, they then proposed amendments that went beyond that and they proposed amendments that go well beyond anything we've seen internationally. For example, in obligating the minister to establish a science advisory body. That doesn't exist in law anywhere internationally, that we've seen.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Carrie and Mr. Latourelle.

Mr. McKay, please.

Hon. John McKay: Thank you, Chair.

Mr. Martin, how much money did the Department of the Environment lapse this year?

Mr. Michael Martin: Are you referring to the 2014—

Hon. John McKay: The fiscal year ending March 31.

Mr. Michael Martin: March 31. Perhaps I'll ask our CFO to give you the precise numbers.

Ms. Carol Najm: The fiscal year for 2014-15 hasn't yet closed, but I will give you the numbers for 2013-14.

Environment Canada lapsed \$77 million. That is attributable to \$51.6 million in grants and contributions, mainly because funding that was—

• (1015)

Hon. John McKay: I'm sorry, we've already established what lapsed up to the fiscal year ending March 31, 2014. You're not able to say what lapsed for the fiscal year—

Ms. Carol Najm: The public accounts are not yet complete for 2014-15.

Hon. John McKay: Okay. Well, I suspect you know. Let me just —

A voice: [*Inaudible—Editor*]

Hon. John McKay: Well, that's not fair. Let's put it this way. There isn't a deputy minister who doesn't know what moneys they had to give back to the treasury, but I appreciate that you don't want to put it in the public realm.

When I asked Mr. McLean last time what the lapses were, we agreed that the figure was \$376 million ending 2013-2014. In response to a question I asked, he gave a fairly detailed response. He said that you've lapsed \$376 million over the past four years: \$150 million was carried forward in the years to be ultimately spent by the department, \$170 million was returned to the fiscal framework, and another \$56 million was returned to the fiscal framework.

I'm curious as to what happened with this \$150 million that was carried forward. I don't quite understand how you lapsed something, yet you carried forward simultaneously.

Ms. Carol Najm: As part of the expenditure authority we get, voted by Parliament, we are permitted to carry forward unused funds from one fiscal year to the following.

Hon. John McKay: Does that make it a lapse, or not?

Ms. Carol Najm: It's a lapse that's within the carry-forward amount.

Hon. John McKay: I don't understand that. It's a lapse that's within the carry-forward amount. I don't understand that.

Mr. Michael Martin: It may be a terminology question. "Lapse" is a commonly used term. Departments are permitted—and this is designed to actually incent good financial management—to carry forward a set amount. Amounts that exceed that set amount lapse and are returned to the fiscal framework, and hence, are not available to the department.

Hon. John McKay: For a simple layperson's understanding, you didn't actually lapse \$376 million. You only lapsed, in effect, \$150 million less than \$376 million. Is that a fair...?

Mr. Michael Martin: Yes, of which \$56 million was operating.

Hon. John McKay: Okay, that is an explanation which.... I'll look forward to public accounts to find out what the next number is.

Going back to the issue of... I'm not challenging you on the math but I do look forward to a written response as to what the actual number will be. I'm curious about your level of consultation with the provinces, given that they are in a shared jurisdiction. When you are making up your number for 2030, how do you incorporate the provinces "public commitments" into that number. What does that number total out of the 200 megatonnes that you have to make?

Mr. Michael Martin: I would take you back to the modelling work we do. One of the reasons why I pause on giving you a specific number is that, again, as I mentioned, when you look at the analytical work—and Canada is I think advanced in this area and is consistent with work done in other advanced jurisdictions—you see that we look at the economy as a whole and the drivers of emissions.

For example, if you look at our 2014 study, which we published last year, you will see a chart that tries to describe the business-as-usual growth and then a scenario of taking into account the measures that provincial and federal governments have in place. We describe those measures in the study: what will the effect be in the face of other things that are going on in the economy as a whole?

Generally, economic growth and population growth are the key drivers of emissions growth. Canada has, in the G-7 context, relatively high population growth and—

• (1020)

Hon. John McKay: Sorry, but how do you disaggregate the sector-by-sector approach so that it doesn't fall all over...? My friend Colin Carrie says, "Well, the transportation sector...". That's fine—

The Chair: It's an interesting dialogue, but we're well beyond your time, Mr. McKay.

Hon. John McKay: It's very interesting dialogue. I want to give Mr. Martin an opportunity to respond to the overlap.

The Chair: Okay, but then let him respond and don't interrupt.

Mr. Michael Martin: For every federal regulation we bring forward, we publish an impact assessment, which provides—again, based on our analytical work—a very detailed assessment of not only the emissions reductions that will be achieved by the federal measure but their costs and benefits. That's part of all federal regulation. The specifics on any single regulatory initiative are there.

It's important to look at this in the context of an integrated modelling framework, because there are interaction effects. You can do that measure by measure, but it's very important to look at the interaction. When you do the interaction, it's not always easy to point to a single measure and say, "this accounted for x amount." You have those two points of analysis that I think provide the basis to think it through, but it is vitally important to constantly look at an integrated modelling result when you're looking at emissions projections and the potential impact of any proposed policy measure.

The Chair: Thank you.

Technically, we'd go back to seven-minute rounds. However, I indicated that we were going to continue with five minutes in the interest of allowing more people to get a question in.

You have five minutes, Mr. Sopuck.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Sure.

What per cent of the world's greenhouse gases are emitted by Canada?

Mr. Michael Martin: In our INDC, we quoted the number of 1.6%, which is derived from the World Resources Institute database of global GHG emissions, which is, I think, an acknowledged source for that information.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: In terms of the calculation of our emissions, do we do a net analysis? What I mean by that is, do we count carbon sequestration programs and projects and just the capability of our own environment to sequester carbon?

Mr. Michael Martin: We do. Under our reporting in the United Nations, we publish every year estimates of emissions for all sources and all sinks. The most recent annual report was published in April.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: What are Canada's greenhouse gas emissions in terms of megatonnes? What's the number again?

Mr. Michael Martin: For the 2013...?

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Sure.

Mr. Michael Martin: I believe.... I'll verify. I apologize to the committee. I'm sorry. I should have these facts readily at my fingertips. I think it was about 726 million tonnes, but again, I would like to verify that, because I don't have it in front of me.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: As we know, carbon dioxide is the first chemical in the photosynthetic equation. Obviously, plants, especially trees, photosynthesize. Do we have any idea of how much carbon dioxide is taken up by photosynthesis in Canada?

Mr. Michael Martin: Well, I would have to verify whether the inventory provides that level of detail. It is extremely detailed, though, so we probably would be able to provide you that information based on the published information in the inventory.

There are complex methodologies behind these calculations. Overall, there are a series of specific categories established by the IPCC under which we report whether it's a source or a sink, forestland in various compositions, or agricultural land, and we can make that specific detail available to you.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: In terms of the calculations of our emissions, drilling down on the issue of carbon sinks, do you calculate the work we're doing under the national conservation plan as contributing to the creation or maintenance of carbon sinks?

As a specific example in my own constituency, there was a watershed called Broughton's Creek where Ducks Unlimited did a major study of wetlands and concluded that wetlands were very efficient at sequestering carbon. Under our national conservation plan, we have a significant wetland restoration program. Do you count the carbon sequestration capabilities of wetlands in terms of our national calculation of GHG emissions?

• (1025)

Mr. Michael Martin: We do an estimation of the total impact of wetlands. There are some data challenges in that area, which we're continuing to work on in order to refine those estimates going forward.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I would think though that would be a fairly straightforward calculation simply because we do know what wetlands do in terms of carbon sequestration. Through aerial photography and those kinds of things we can come up with a pretty good number in terms of how many hectares of wetlands we have in this country. One of the things that have always bothered me is that our general conservation programming under the national conservation plan, such as the natural areas conservation plan, the wetlands component that I mentioned, the habitat stewardship program, and of course the largest conservation program in history, the North American waterfowl management plan, are all very important programs that are never brought into the discussion of greenhouse gas emissions. I think that is a major oversight, not by you but by everybody, in that we do know that wetlands, for example, not only sequester carbon but also have multiple benefits for society in terms of biodiversity conservation, water quality enhancement, flood protection, flood control, aquifer recharge, and so on.

I would just like a comment on why those items aren't discussed in the manner that I think they should be.

Mr. Michael Martin: I would agree that there are a whole range of co-benefits that arise from wetland conservation. In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, as I understand it, that's been a challenging area methodologically. Only in recent years has the IPCC developed advice for all parties in terms of how to approach GHG emissions from wetlands. We continue to do that work. We are committed to ensuring that we have the most comprehensive inventories of both sources and sinks of GHG emissions. We have a considerable, constant, and ongoing effort in that area, and I'm quite sure we'll continue to make progress in fully capturing wetlands in the inventory going forward.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Sopuck.

Mr. Choquette, go ahead, please, for five minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to go back to the Species at Risk Act. Chapter 6 of the 2013 report says: For the 146 instances where a recovery strategy was required but not yet in place, we looked to see the extent to which they were overdue. We found that 79% of these strategies were overdue by more than three years.

Has there been an improvement in that 79% of the programs that were overdue by more than three years? That is a huge number. If so, can you send the numbers to the committee?

[English]

Mr. Michael Martin: Thank you for the question.

On December 23, 2014, we published a three-year recovery document posting plan on the species-at-risk public registry. That outlined our plan to complete the overdue recovery documents. Parks Canada Agency has also published the anticipated date for delivering on its one outstanding proposed recovery document.

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette: Fine, Mr. Martin, but has there been an improvement or not?

[English]

Mr. Michael Martin: Yes. In 2014-15 we posted recovery documents for 63 species, the most in any fiscal year to date. Under our plan in the current fiscal year we've committed to post recovery documents for 71 additional species. As of April 7, 2015, we have posted recovery strategies or management plans for 366 species, and 155 remain to be posted by the three departments: 129 by Environment Canada, 24 by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and I think two by the Parks Canada Agency.

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette: Thank you.

I ask the question because there are more and more problems with the Species at Risk Act. There are more and more cases before the Superior Court. I am thinking about the sage grouse, for example. I do not know what has happened, but the legislation has been so badly enforced that some petitions to the House of Commons are asking for the emergency order to be rescinded and a more voluntary approach. There seems to be a lack of consultation with local people.

We also have a problem in Quebec with the striped chorus frog. Once again, the matter is in Superior Court. The Centre québécois du droit de l'environnement has made an application to the Superior Court. It looks like there is a problem with enforcing the Species at Risk Act, with the result that people often have to go the Superior Court.

● (1030)

[English]

Mr. Michael Martin: We are fully committed to implementing the law and doing so in a timely and effective manner. I think one of the challenges in developing recovery documents is that we need to engage stakeholders in great detail, both as we continue to enhance our scientific understanding that supports management actions, but also taking into account the full range of lands, federal, provincial, and private, that are often affected when we have to define critical habitat. It is very important not only to building partnerships to enable the work for that planning part, but it's critically important in implementing management actions.

It does take time. We are continuing to strengthen our investment and our management. As the deputy minister of the Department of Environment, it is a personal priority of mine to ensure that we significantly strengthen the work we're doing in this area, and also the success that we will have to report to this committee and to Parliament.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Mr. Latourelle, your budget has increased \$125 million this year for infrastructure improvements. I'm curious, within Wood Buffalo National Park, are you going to invest something into Highway 5?

Mr. Alan Latourelle: Mr. Chair, the investment that's reflected in the main estimates is the result of the 2014 economic action plan. The focus was on highways, bridges, historic canals, national parks, and national historic sites. In due course the government will announce the specific projects, but I can tell you that we're making significant investments across Parks Canada, and across all our places.

To put it in perspective, also on the 14th, the supplementary estimates (A) were tabled, and there's an additional \$350 million in investment over and above the \$120 million that's reflected here. We will be investing \$470 million.

The Chair: Thank you.

We have about four minutes for Mr. Woodworth. Then we need to do our votes.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I certainly don't mind, having already given my extra minute to Mr. Bevington.

I do have some questions, however, regarding the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. I know that Mr. Hallman is here for that agency. I'll leave it to you, Mr. Hallman and Mr. Martin, as to who will answer my questions.

The first thing I want to ask about is a comment in the estimates that the difference in funding this year from last year is mainly attributable to the sunseting of funds to improve Canada's regulatory framework for major resource projects and aboriginal consultation. I don't know if that is telling me that there are two funds that are sunseting or if that was all about regulatory framework. I would like to put a little meat on that.

Let's start with the regulatory framework. How much is sunseting on that this year? Is the work done or should we expect subsequent estimates, some further funding coming through for that?

Mr. Ron Hallman (President, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency): The agency's total 2015-16 main estimates is \$17.3 million. The decrease that is currently reflected in the main estimates is funding for aboriginal consultation and the agency's portion of the major project management office initiative.

Budget 2015 proposes renewing those funds at the existing levels for a further five years, and if appropriated, will be reflected in future supplementary estimates.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Okay, very good. We might expect that the numbers will change and become more commensurate with previous years if those two items that are sunseting should be renewed. Is that correct?

•(1035)

Mr. Ron Hallman: That is correct, subject to parliamentary approval.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: That's what I was hoping to hear.

In fact, we get so much doom and gloom around this table from certain parties that I've been surprised. I haven't heard any doom and gloom on the Canadian environmental assessment process in the last year or two, actually. I know there were changes to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act in 2012 to allow the Canadian government to better gauge environmental impacts of industrial issues before approving projects. I wonder if you could give us a bit of an assessment, or if you'll excuse the pun, an assessment or update on how those 2012 changes have helped out in the assessment process.

Mr. Ron Hallman: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would note, first, as the president of the agency for the past two years, I'm very proud of the work the agency and the staff in five regions and in headquarters have done to implement the act, by working with provinces, first nations directly, proponents, and expert federal departments.

The new act was a key part of the government's responsible resource development initiative to provide a modern regulatory system for major resource development projects so that Canada's natural resources can be developed in a responsible and timely way for the benefit of all Canadians.

The initiative has four main objectives. First, it's making project reviews more predictable and timely, and CEAA, 2012, provides legislative timelines to that effect. Second, it's reducing duplication of project reviews, and the legislation provides for a substitution of provincial processes where appropriate and where approved by the minister. Third, the RRD provides for strengthening environmental protection, and under the act we do have enforceable conditions now that were not present prior to the new legislation. The other principle is enhancing consultation with aboriginal people. As the crown consultation coordinator for major resource development projects under the agency's purview, we believe we're doing a very good job engaging aboriginal peoples.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: By the way, when I say absence of doom and gloom I think that's a good thing because I know how resourceful some of these folks are at doom and gloom.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Woodworth.

We're going to proceed now to the votes on the main estimates. We have a number of votes that we need to consider.

My first question is: shall vote 1 under CANADIAN NORTHERN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY carry—

Yes, Mr. McKay.

Hon. John McKay: I don't know. Can you vote without a tie on?

The Chair: Sure.

Hon. John McKay: I thought there was a rule about that.

The Chair: I'm sure you'll lend him yours.

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AGENCY
Vote 1—Program expenditures.....\$15,591,619

(Vote 1 agreed to on division)

CANADIAN NORTHERN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Vote 1—Operating expenditures.....\$14,409,590
Vote 5—Contributions.....\$35,001,622

(Votes 1 and 5 agreed to on division)

ENVIRONMENT
Vote 1—Operating expenditures.....\$695,731,283
Vote 5—Capital expenditures.....\$63,297,504
Vote 10—The grants listed in the Estimates and contributions.....\$114,340,903

(Votes 1, 5, and 10 agreed to on division)

PARKS CANADA AGENCY
Vote 1—Program expenditures.....\$571,135,767
Vote 5—Payments to the New Parks and Historic Sites Account.....\$500,000

(Votes 1 and 5 agreed to on division)

The Chair: Shall I report the main estimates 2015-16 to the House?

Thank you, committee members. Thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: That was unanimous on the last one. We get along so well on this committee.

The meeting is adjourned.

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