



SWITCH encourages citizens to become informed, to join the debate on how to tackle climate change, and to become involved in local organizations, such as SWITCH, that are helping to make the transition to a sustainable energy economy.

Statement on
Stéphane Dion's Green Shift
from
SWITCH, The Sustainable Energy People
July 22, 2008

SWITCH

SWITCH is an association of businesses, researchers, educators, public-sector institutions, professionals, students, and consumers coming together in the areas of wind energy, solar energy, fuel cells, bio-energy, energy conservation, and technical training, to make the Kingston region a centre for sustainable energy innovation, education, adoption, products, and services. SWITCH is a non-profit corporation.

Informed Debate and Education

SWITCH commends the **Green Shift's** revenue neutral carbon tax proposal for the role it has played in promoting informed debate. Educating the public about where greenhouse gas emissions come from, about the costs that these emissions create for governments, individuals, and our environment, and setting a price for these emissions, can increase the adoption of sustainable energy technology and practices. **SWITCH** knows that this sort of public education is, in itself, crucial to its own work in promoting sustainable energy.

SWITCH feels that it is vitally important to note that a shift to sustainable energy sources in the Kingston region has significantly boosted employment and investment in the local economy while enabling our members and other individuals to save money. Reducing taxes on income and replacing them with taxes on fossil carbon emissions is one way the federal government could provide individuals and businesses across Canada an incentive to do the same.

Leveling the Playing Field

SWITCH believes that putting a price on all greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels, as proposed in the **Green Shift** and by some other Parties and jurisdictions, will remove the unfair ability to “pollute for free”. The **Green Shift** can help sustainable energy technologies and practices to compete against fossil fuels on a level playing field.

Financial Incentives and Regulatory Facilitation

SWITCH has experience working with sustainable energy businesses and agrees that the **Green Shift**'s proposed accelerated capital cost allowances for green technologies and enhanced Science Research & Experimental Development tax credits are positive changes. **SWITCH** believes that there should be additional financial supports for sustainable energy applied across the board (all types of sustainable energy, and all types of users). As well, we would point out that there are many regulatory barriers affecting sustainable energy which need to be addressed, such as the lack of standards or the lack of capacity to implement standards.

About Kingston

The Kingston region is a hotbed of activity in sustainable energy. Kingston City Council and Utilities Kingston have played a leading role by implementing conservation programs, strongly supporting local renewable energy generation, setting local greenhouse gas emission reductions goals, and building new municipal buildings to high environmental and energy efficiency standards. The Kingston region is home to major research groups in solar thermal energy, fuel cells, energy efficient public transit, the sustainable bio-economy, and public policy. The region also has wind turbine and solar photovoltaic farms, progressive farmers, rural residents and businesses, and installation capacity and consumer adoption of renewable energy.

Key to the region's success in implementing sustainable energy solutions is the collaboration SWITCH fosters between its members. Below are some examples of our members' recent successes:

- *Canadian Hydro Developers' \$450M, 200MW wind farm on Wolfe Island.*
- *Since 2006, Utilities Kingston' connection of 9 solar, wind, and cogeneration facilities enabling it to source up to 15% of its electricity demand with locally-produced, low-impact energy. It was one of the first to develop a connection agreement for the Ontario Renewable Energy Standard Offer Contract.*
- *Utilities Kingston has pilot program for the rental of solar hot water heaters.*
- *St Lawrence College's creation of the first diploma course in Ontario for those who will install & maintain renewable energy technologies. It has learning and demonstration facilities (Energy House and the Insulation Demonstration Building). It also hosted the World Wind Energy Conference 2008.*
- *Expansion of the Queen's-RMC Fuel Cell Research Centre and the Queen's Solar Calorimetry Lab.*

- *Supportive & active local government – The City of Kingston has set community and corporate greenhouse gas emissions goals. It has built new municipal buildings to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver standards or better.*
- *Completed and planned building renovations at Hotel Dieu Hospital and St. Lawrence College that will save thousands of tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions per year.*
- *Opening of Fifth Town Artisan Cheese Factory, a facility designed to LEED Platinum specifications.*
- *Greenlight Sunstream, based in Kingston, is building five 10MW solar farms*
- *Renewable energy installers, Eco-alternative Energy, Quantum Renewable Energy, and Renewable Energy of Plum Hollow have experienced an explosion of consumer interest.*

For more information on Kingston's burgeoning sustainable energy sector, contact SWITCH

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