



February 20, 2019

Stacey Hassard, Chair  
Standing Committee on Public Accounts  
Box 2703  
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6

Dear Mr. Hassard:

**Re: Status update to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts – February 6, 2019**

Please find below a status update requested by the committee to inform the report being prepared following the public hearing on the *Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Yukon Legislative Assembly – 2017: Climate Change in Yukon*, which was held on February 14, 2018.

#### 1. Differentiating between targets and commitments

Included in the suite of actions to help achieve the objectives in the new climate change, energy and green economy strategy will be targets and commitments. While these actions (which may be referred to as commitments) are still under development, it is anticipated that they will be defined through setting clear milestones and completion dates, and accompanied by anticipated levels of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) reductions, where appropriate.

In addition, targets will be established as a tool to complement the work used to track emissions and report on performance.

#### 2. Timelines for departmental commitments

As one of the partners in the development of the new climate change, energy and green economy strategy, Yukon government is working across its departments to identify departmental commitments. Timelines for these commitments will follow the development of the strategy. A draft of the new climate change, energy and green economy strategy is anticipated for public review in late 2019.

### 3. The framework for the new strategy on climate change

The objectives of the new strategy include supporting clean, secure and sustainable energy, reducing GHG emissions, ensuring Yukon is resilient to the impacts of climate change, and fostering new economic opportunities. It will include actions to help achieve those objectives. While actions are still under development, it is anticipated that they will be supported by clear milestones and completion dates, anticipated levels of greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and reporting systems to enable clear accounting of progress.

Progress to-date on the development of the new strategy:

- In 2017, a total of 31 governments and organizations such as Yukon First Nation, transboundary and municipal governments, as well as the Association of Yukon Communities and the Council of Yukon First Nations, were invited to participate in the development of the strategy. Two face-to-face meetings were held with the partner group, first in February 2018 to launch the project and again in April 2018 to discuss and plan the public engagement.
- In fall 2018, 20 public engagement events on climate change, energy and green economy were held in 12 Yukon communities and Inuvik to gather initial input into priorities and actions important to Yukoners. Approximately 300 people participated in the meetings and 28 of the 31 municipal and Indigenous governments that were invited to partner in the strategy initiative participated in the planning and/or delivery of these events. We received 481 responses to the online survey and the project team met with 22 stakeholder groups including industry associations, businesses, energy organizations, environmental non-government organizations, and others. We anticipate releasing a 'What We Heard' document in late spring.
- We met again with the partner group on February 12 and 13, 2019 to discuss the initial input into the strategy, identify gaps, and to collaboratively identify a process for defining priorities and drafting the strategy.

The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has also undertaken a number of initiatives to reduce GHG emissions and promote climate change adaptation.

- Our Independent Power Production Policy is fully implemented. This allows First Nation governments, communities and entrepreneurs to generate renewable energy and feed new electricity into the electrical grid, to help meet local demands and reduce GHG emissions.

- The Independent Power Production Policy, as well as the Micro-generation Policy, encourages new energy generation to increase Yukon's electricity supply, and assists utilities in meeting the demand for affordable, reliable, flexible and clean electrical energy.
- Our energy efficiency initiatives are making a significant impact. We have collectively saved enough energy to power over 2,400 non-electrically-heated Yukon homes for one year and prevented over 40,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Our energy efficiency initiatives assist Yukoners to collectively meet our climate change commitments, lessen our energy consumption, reduce Yukon's carbon footprint and increase renewable energy solutions. Ultimately, these efforts help sustain and protect Yukon's environment.
- The Forest Management Branch accessed funding through the Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program for establishing long-term monitoring plots in Dawson region. This was in partnership with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Canadian Forest Service. This work contributes to existing plots in southern Yukon. This information is used for vegetation inventory, tree growth, forest health, ecosystem dynamics and possible species migration research. This information will provide forest managers and researchers with data to model and predict forest changes that will guide adaptive measures.
- The Silviculture Strategic Plan was approved in May 2018. The plan sets out priorities for Forest Management Branch to ensure commercially harvested forests are regenerated successfully. The strategic plan sets out goals to develop industry capacity and ensure that the Elijah Smith Forest Renewal Fund is used transparently and effectively. Climate and changing climatic conditions are considered during reforestation activities to help ensure forest regeneration success.

#### 4. Which department is taking the lead

The Government of Yukon is working collaboratively with Yukon First Nations, transboundary Indigenous groups, and Yukon municipalities to develop a new climate change, energy and green economy strategy. On the Yukon government side, this initiative is being co-lead by the departments of Environment, Energy Mines and Resources, and Economic Development.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the department's climate change actions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Moore".

Paul Moore  
Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources