H_2Ontario

A **BLUEPRINT** FOR A COMPREHENSIVE WATER CONSERVATION STRATEGY

An Executive Summary
Revision 2

Carol Maas, P.Eng.
Director of Innovation & Technology
The Polis Project on Ecological Governance
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Water Sustainability Project
POLIS Project on Ecological Governance

WHY A BLUEPRINT, WHY NOW?

The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement, signed by Ontario with nine other Great Lakes jurisdictions, requires each state and province in the basin to establish water conservation goals, objectives and programs. Implementation of the recommended actions in A Blueprint for a Comprehensive Water Conservation and Efficiency Strategy would position Ontario as a regional leader on conservation.

This Blueprint is being released in anticipation of the Province's Water Conservation and Efficiency Strategy. The signatory groups are supportive of the input contained in this Blueprint and will participate in the Province's dialogue regarding water conservation and efficiency as it evolves.

WHY CONSERVE WATER?

Ontarians waste large amounts of water, using on average close to twice the amount used in many European countries including the United Kingdom and Germany. While we are surrounded by four of the largest lakes on the planet, Ontario's water resources are not as abundant as we perceive. Relatively minor changes to the natural cycles and fluctuations of lakes, rivers and groundwater can cause major disruptions to ecosystem function that will impact the human populations that depend on them for drinking water, industrial production, and recreation. Water conservation and efficiency are "no-regrets" strategies that preserve the integrity of local water resources while simultaneously reducing energy needs and infrastructure costs:

- **Green Economy** - Investments in water efficiency as a form of economic stimulus can be quickly deployed to yield Green Jobs in service sectors such as plumbing, landscaping, engineering, construction and design, and in manufacturing sectors involved in supplying everything from rain barrels to dishwashers. Revenues of the world's water-related businesses are predicted to rise from $522 billion in 2007 to nearly $1 trillion by 2020 and with the right encouragement, Ontario's water technology sector is poised to seize this opportunity.
- **Reducing Energy & Costs -** Water efficiency is the most economical source of new water. Conservation programs in major cities across Canada have demonstrated conservation can be implemented at a fraction of the cost of new infrastructure. Energy costs for water pumping and treatment are significant - an estimated $25 million dollars for the Region of Peel in 2006 alone. Recent research suggests water conservation is the next frontier of municipal energy and greenhouse gas emission savings. A province-wide increase in municipal water efficiency of 20% over the next 20 years could power 90% of the homes in the City of Toronto.
- **Protecting the Environment -** Climate change will impact the hydrologic cycle, making our ecosystems, communities, businesses, and farmers vulnerable. Implementing water efficiency measures now can help make ecosystems and communities more resilient to long-term risks and reduce the vulnerability of all sectors to the impacts of a changing climate.

Action now can avoid future detrimental impacts on human, aquatic and other wildlife species dependent on the waters of the Great Lakes. The following table summarizes the priority areas, actions, and necessary actors identified in the Blueprint. A detailed discussion of each of the elements of the Blueprint is included in the full report, available for download at http://www.poliswaterproject.org/policy.

Blueprint Summary Table

	Priority Areas	Action	Who
Provide Leadership, Direction and Accountability	**1. Oversight**	1. Appoint a Chief Water Conservation Officer (CWCO)	MOE[1]
	2. Targets and Plans	2. Implement a Provincial Target of No New Water Supplies	CWCO[2]
		3. Identify Stressed Watersheds & Initiate Development of Watershed-Based Targets	CWCO
		4. Establish Sector (Municipal, Industry, etc.) Targets, Performance Measures, and Plans	CWCO
		5. Implement 'Target 150' as a Goal for Individuals	WCTs[3]
		6. Require Permit Holders to Prepare Plans	MOE
	3. Measuring Progress	7. Annual Reporting	CWCO
Establish A Strong Foundation of Science and Data	**4. Water Budgets & Data**	8. Establish a Database of Water Use	MOE/MNR[4]
		9. Initiate Studies on Ecological Water Needs	MOE/MNR
	5. Benchmarks	10. Identify Sectoral Benchmarks for Water Conservation & Efficiency	WCTs
	6. Best Management Practices	11. Identify Sectoral Best Management Practices for Water Conservation & Efficiency	WCTs

[1] Ministry of the Environment
[2] Chief Water Conservation Officer
[3] Water Conservation Teams (WCTs) include the CWCO, sector representatives (specifically municipal water efficiency stakeholder groups), government including a water conservation representative from each ministry, independent water efficiency experts, First Nations, CA's and/or Source Protection Committee members, public watershed protection groups, and other stakeholders
[4] Ministry of Natural Resources

Create a Culture of Conservation	**7. Financial Incentives**	12. Modify and Expand Existing Rebate and Incentive Programs	MOE/MNR/ MEI[5]/ MRI[6]/ MMAH[7]
		13. Require Conservation for Infrastructure Funding	MOE/MEI
		14. Invest in a Green Infrastructure Fund	MEI
		15. Support Environmental Farm Plans	MOE/ OMAFRA
	8. Social & Technical Capacity	16. Foster Water Efficiency Expertise	MOE
		17. Provide Access to Toolkits and Technical Resources	MOE
		18. Support Innovative Research & Development	MOE/MNR/ MEI/ MRI/MMAH
	9. Market Transformation	19. Mandate Meters	MOE/ MMAH
		20. Move Toward Full-Cost and Volume-Based Pricing	MOE
		21. Increase Water Charges for Water Users	MOE
		22. Establish WaterSense Labeling Program in Ontario	MOE/ Fed Gov't
		23. Require Minimum Water Efficiency Standards	MOE/MEI
	10. Education	24. Launch a Social Marketing Campaign	MOE
		25. Support a Comprehensive Children's Education Program	MOE/ MOEd[8]

[5] Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure
[6] Ministry of Research and Innovation
[7] Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
[8] Ministry of Education

SIGNATORIES

Alliance for Water Efficiency

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ASSOCIATION

CANADIAN INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY
L'INSTITUT CANADIEN DU DROIT ET DE LA POLITIQUE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

Friends of the Earth / Les Ami(e)s de la Terre

CFUW ONTARIO COUNCIL

CWWA ACEPU
Canadian Water and Wastewater Association / canadienne des eaux potables et usées

P.O.W.E.R.
Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENCE

ecojustice
formerly Sierra Legal Defence Fund

SIERRA CLUB ONTARIO

Citizens Environment Alliance

FLOW
FORUM FOR LEADERSHIP ON WATER

Great Lakes United / Union St-Laurent Grands Lacs

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