Climate Action News this week

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World News

Norway to Become Carbon-Neutral 20 years ***early***

Norway, the world's fifth-largest exporter of oil and Western Europe's biggest exporter of natural gas, has reached a climate policy agreement between the government and opposition parties to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030, or 20 years sooner than the date it had previously set for itself. About two-thirds of the reductions will be made nationally.

Official news release:
www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/smk/Press-Center/Press-releases/2008/Broad-agreement-to-boost-national-climat.html?id=496872

News Coverage:
http://euobserver.com/9/25481
www.enn.com/pollution/article/29456

Breakthrough Research shows Worrying Trend for Antarctica's Ice Sheet

Scientists are still not sure how climate change is impacting the Antarctic, but new research released this week confirms that changes to the ice sheet will be dramatic and have serious implications for future sea levels.

Full story:
www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20080114.ANTARCTIC14/TPStory/Environment

National News

Government Announces "Made-in-Canada" Fuel Economy Standard based on Weak US Regulations

Transport Minister Lawrence Cannon took advantage of the 2008 Auto Show in Montreal last Thursday to announce it will set new federal fuel economy regulations for cars and light trucks that are at least as stringent as US federal standards passed in December. Canadians have 60 days to convince the government to take on dominant, stronger California standards or to better them.

News release:
http://news.gc.ca/web/view/en/index.jsp?articleid=372709&categoryid=16

News story:
http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5ixXPzO9zrIV07IMaXpjZbScFgKgg
www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/01/17/transport-cannon.html

Environmental Community Reactions:
Climate Action Network Canada:
www.climateactionnetwork.ca/e/news/2008/car-pollution-2008-01-17.html
Sierra Club of Canada:
www.sierraclub.ca/national/media/item.shtml?x=1455
Equiterre:
www.equiterre.org/organisme/sallePresse/communiques.php#20080117

On the Hill

Remove Nuclear Safety Commission from Natural Resources Canada Oversight, say Environmental Organizations

After this week's controversial firing of Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission Pres. Linda Keen, Greenpeace, CELA and Ecojustice are demanding that CNSC oversight be moved from Natural Resources Canada. Citing serious conflict of interest issues between AECL and CNSC, they put forward Environment Canada as a more suitable health and safety fit for the CNSC.

Press Release
www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/press/press-releases/conflict-of-interest-at-minist

Across Canada

BC Government Announces New Transit Plan

On January 14 British Columbia unveiled a $14-billion public transit plan that could cut 4.7 million tonnes of transportation greenhouse gas pollution by 2020.

News Release:
www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2005-2009/2008OTP0003-000020.htm

News Article:
www.canada.com/victoriatimescolonist/news/story.html?id=21637c69-60b8-4d40-a41b-de3d92572956&k=20042

US Energy Bill Blocks Too-Crude Fuel; Stelmach Makes Clean Case for Tar Sands in Washington

A small clause in the recently passed US Energy Security and Independence Act has caught Alberta by surprise and Premier Stelmach's immediate attention. The section prevents U.S. federal agencies from using fuel made from non-conventional sources unless the life cycle of its GHG emissions is equal or less than conventional petroleum.

News Stories

- www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20080115.woilsands15/BNStory/energy/home
- www.visiondurable.com/article-174573-Trop-polluants-les-sables-bitumineux-boudes-par-le-gouvernement-americain.html
- www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html?id=242318
- www.desmogblog.com/alberta-premiers-mythical-tar-sands-tour-attacked-by-polar-bear-and-a-few-facts

Green Groups Go To Court to Halt Tar Sands Mega-Project

Canadian environmental organizations went to court January 15th to demand a proper environmental assessment of the Kearl tar sands project, a massive operation north of Fort McMurray, Alberta, after a joint federal-provincial panel concluded it would not cause serious environmental damage. "In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, the Kearl project is like putting 800,000 passenger vehicles on the road," said Stephen Hazell of Sierra Club of Canada."

Press release from Ecojustice, Pembina Institute, Sierra Club of Canada, Prairie Acid Rain Coalition, Toxics Watch Society of Alberta:
www.pembina.org/media-release/1575

Ontario to Lift Moratorium on Great Lakes Wind Power

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is set to end a 16-month old moratorium on offshore wind projects put in place following a protest against a project near Leamington, Ontario, in September 2006.

News Article
www.thestar.com/News/Ontario/article/294044

Western Climate Initiative Holds First Public Stakeholder Workshop in Portland, Oregon

Over 450 people participated in a one-day workshop on January 10 to gain more information and give input into WCI Task Force option papers. Comments on the WCI's Option Papers will be accepted until February 1, 2008.
www.westernclimateinitiative.org/WCI_Meetings_Events.cfm

Get Involved

WWF Redefines The Good Life with New Online Community

WWF has launched a new community with a twist. The Good Life is a place to peruse dozens of actions to lighten your carbon impact, to select the ones you want to do now and to challenge your family and friends to see who can rack up the most GHG reductions. Go to www.wwfcanada.org to learn more!

Looking Ahead

- The Council of the Federation is expected to hold its annual Winter Meeting in BC on January 28-29, 2008. Keep an eye on their website for further information:
  www.councilofthefederation.ca/meetings/meetings.html

- 2nd summit of the U.S. Major Economies Meeting on Energy Security and Climate Change will be held in Hawaii on January 30-31, 2008. For more information:
  http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20080116/sc_afp/usclimatewarmingdiplomacy_080116175238

- Hearings for the *Climate Change Accountability Act* (Bill C-377) will continue until February 13th. over the next few weeks. Watch this space:
  http://cmte.parl.gc.ca/cmte/CommitteeHome.aspx?Lang=1&PARLSES=392&JNT=0&SELID=e22_.1&COM=13183&STAC=2224202

- IISD Conference in Ottawa March 3-4 2008, A Way Forward: Canadian and International Perspectives on Post-2012 Climate Policy
  Register now:
  www.iisd.org/climate/kyoto/

- The federal government is expected to release a report on Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) at any time.