

Recommendations

Summary of recommendations from the ECO's 2016 Greenhouse Gas Progress Report

Ontario's Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Chapter 3)

The provincial government should report regularly to Ontarians on the province's entire climate change footprint, not only on Ontario's direct greenhouse gas emissions as calculated pursuant to international guidelines.

The provincial government should give a higher priority to reducing Ontario's methane and black carbon emissions.

Cap and Trade (Chapter 4)

Ontario should be more transparent about which entities are receiving free allowances, and why.

Ontario needs a contingency plan for the possibility that California's cap and trade program may not continue to operate in its present form, and/or may not be reauthorized after 2020.

Ontario should follow the UK example and set legally binding carbon budgets well in advance, within which a cap and trade program would operate.

The government must prioritize the approval of offset protocols to enable the creation of a timely and ample supply of high-quality Ontario offsets.

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account (Chapter 5)

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change should publicly adopt a complete set of evaluation criteria for proposed Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account expenditures and an explicit policy on how it allocates GGRA funds between competing objectives.

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account should only be used to pay for new or expanded initiatives that will directly produce emission reductions on top of those that will be created by existing programs, by the cap and trade program and by initiatives already funded through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account.

The government should keep detailed records of the justification for each Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account expenditure, in a form that can readily be provided to the Legislative Officers. The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change's annual public report on the GGRA should include:

1. A summary of the justification for each initiative funded, including:
 - a. the name and sector of the recipient;
 - b. the amount received;
 - c. any matching funds;
 - d. the anticipated additional GHG reductions;
 - e. how and when it will achieve these reductions; and
 - f. the cost-effectiveness of the reductions, and
 - g. other material health, safety, environmental, social and economic consequences of the initiative
2. Analysis of the total funds spent, by sector;

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3. Analysis of the total GHG reductions and other public benefits achieved, by year and by sector, as a result of the GGRA investment;
 4. Administrative costs funded, by agency/ ministry;
 5. How long term transformative change is being balanced with the need for short term reductions, and
 6. Recommendations for improvements for subsequent years.

The Climate Change Action Plan (Chapter 6)

In developing the green bank, the Ontario government should:

- follow the four OECD principles,
- require the green bank to achieve additional emission reductions in Ontario, and
- ensure accountability and transparency for its financial and emissions reduction results.

The government should do more to discourage, and to make unnecessary, travel by petroleum-fueled vehicles. It should also prioritize funding for projects and transit that support dense, complete communities. Government support for clean tech from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account should have a direct, substantial and transparent connection to additional greenhouse gas reductions.

Government should reduce approval and procurement barriers to the use of low-carbon clean tech innovations within Ontario, especially those that have been developed with public funds.



Subsidizing electricity rates should not be considered an acceptable use of Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account funds.

A Renewable Fuel Standard regulation should include a low-carbon performance standard. It should only incent the production of biofuels that are grown sustainably, without damaging natural ecosystems or biodiversity, and while building up soil carbon.

The government should make public all data necessary to assess the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of its emission reduction programs.