



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-01936**

BY: **MR. ERSKINE-SMITH (BEACHES-EAST YORK)**

DATE: **DECEMBER 4, 2017**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE CATHERINE MCKENNA**

Response by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Protection of the environment

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada is currently developing a Food Policy for Canada, a comprehensive, federal, whole-of-government initiative to set a national long-term vision for the economic, social, health and environment goals related to food in Canada. This initiative is led by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) in collaboration with other federal departments, including Environment and Climate Change Canada. The Policy is expected to address four major themes: food security; health and food safety; environment and climate change; and, economic growth. Public consultation was conducted throughout the spring and summer of 2017 through an online survey, a Food Policy Summit, and regional consultation sessions. A "What We Heard" report on the consultation is expected early in 2018, and the Food Policy for Canada will be launched in the first half of 2018.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the agriculture sector account for about 10% of Canada's emissions in 2015. The Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change, Canada's clean growth and climate change plan, includes measures to reduce GHG emissions from the agriculture sector such as enhancing carbon storage in agricultural lands and forests; generating bioenergy and bioproducts, for example generating biogas from agricultural food waste; and advancing GHG efficient management practices in agriculture such as no-tillage farming, precision agriculture and smart fertilization.

In addition, the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year, \$3-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector has identified environmental sustainability and climate change as a priority area. Federal and cost-shared programs and activities in the Canadian Agricultural Partnership will help mitigate agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, protect the environment and adapt to climate change by enhancing sustainable growth, while increasing production.

Emissions from animals are not currently included in any carbon pricing system in Canada. However some jurisdictions cover some of the emissions associated with agricultural production, such as heating fuels. The federal carbon pricing backstop legislation is being designed to limit competitiveness impacts for industries with high levels of emissions and international trade to reduce the risk of carbon leakage. These industries will also have access to emissions trading. There are potential economic opportunities for the agricultural sector as a result of carbon pricing, for example through generation of carbon offset credits.

There are a number of ways to reduce methane emission from the production of livestock. For example, it is possible to select lower-methane producing animals through consideration of genetic characteristics and there is research into methane vaccines and inhibitors in some jurisdictions. High quality feed could also lead to more efficient digestion and reduce emissions. For example, research has shown that mixing seaweed in cattle feed could reduce methane emissions. Together, technological innovations, behavioural changes and sustainable land management practices could increase efficiency and reduce emissions from crop and livestock systems.