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• (0845)

[English]

The Chair (Ms. Yasmin Ratansi (Don Valley East, Lib.)): Welcome, committee members and Minister.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the subject matter we're studying today is the supplementary estimates, votes 1b and 10b under the Department of the Environment and vote 1b under Parks Canada Agency.

Before we begin, I'd like to advise members that Mr. Hallman has a problem with both his ears. He can lip read, so if he asks you to repeat your question, I will stop your time and then let him continue.

With that, Minister, welcome. I presume you have a statement for 10 minutes.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson (Minister of Environment and Climate Change): Thank you very much, Madam Chair and members of the committee. It's certainly a pleasure to be here for the first time as Minister of Environment and Climate Change to provide an update on our progress on climate action and environmental protection and how it is reflected in the supplementary estimates.

I am joined today by Christine Hogan, the deputy minister for Environment and Climate Change Canada; Ron Hallman, president and chief executive officer of Parks Canada Agency; and David McGovern, the president of the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada.

I would like to start by recognizing that this meeting is taking place on the traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe peoples.

Our world faces a number of very significant environmental challenges, such as climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution of a range of types, but perhaps the most topical issue in the recent days has been plastics pollution. All three are critically important and all three are certainly interrelated. All three are challenges, no doubt, but they all offer opportunities for those countries that move early to address them.

[Translation]

Climate change is the existential threat of our age. The science is clear and overwhelming.

If global emissions continue to rise at their current rate, the world could see at least 3 degrees of warming by 2100.

The implications are very real: a warmer climate will intensify weather extremes, result in sea level rise, and reduce the amount of snow, ice and freshwater.

[English]

In this regard, the climate issue is a science issue. It is not a political issue and, quite honestly, it should not be a partisan issue. The climate crisis calls for effective and clear-eyed policies that will measurably reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions over the decades to come while promoting clean growth.

Going forward, Canadians understand that economic progress will need to take place in the frame of environmental sustainability. No longer can we think of economic opportunities without also considering environmental impacts. This is increasingly understood in all sectors of our economy. For example, leading money managers and investors, like BlackRock, are making sustainability and climate risk key elements of their investment strategies. Resource companies are committing to a net zero target, as did Canadian steel producers just last week. Others, including Microsoft, have adopted even more ambitious targets.

[Translation]

In the 2019 election, Canadians overwhelmingly demonstrated their concern about climate change. Our government committed to two key climate policies—exceeding our 2030 target of 30% below 2005 levels and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

We have made tremendous progress in addressing greenhouse gas emissions since 2015.

[English]

Early in our mandate, we developed the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change, the first real climate plan this country has ever had. It contains more than 50 different measures, from phasing out coal to major investments in public transit and electric vehicle infrastructure to energy efficiency for buildings and industries. We invested over \$3 billion to scale up clean technology, and we put in place a national price on pollution, because there can be no credible plan to fight pollution if polluting is free.

Achieving net zero will require an economic as well as an environmental transformation and the mobilization of significant amounts of private capital. Certainly a key component of any pathway will be a focus on clean technology. Hoping for technology to save us from the hard policy choices that are required to reduce emissions is not a climate plan. However, a thoughtful approach to clean tech must be part of an effective strategy to get to net zero, and in particular to help us decarbonize key sectors of our economy. Clean tech offers enormous economic opportunities for Canada.

[Translation]

We all have a role to play in fighting climate change, and I would point out that, when we work together, we can achieve great things. Take the Montreal protocol for example. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney—a Conservative prime minister—worked with politicians across party lines, the United States, Nordic countries and the United Nations to protect the ozone layer. It was tremendously effective—197 countries signed on and the treaty went down as the most lauded environmental treaty in history.

• (0850)

[English]

Achieving our goals will certainly be challenging and will require leadership from every region of this country.

Now, very briefly, I would like to walk you through our updated estimates that account for changes or developments in particular programs or services. Let us start with Environment and Climate Change Canada.

The 2019-20 supplementary estimates (B) for Environment and Climate Change Canada outline \$134.9 million in adjustments that relate mostly to the implementation of the framework, which included the climate action incentive fund. The fund applies to jurisdictions where the federal carbon pollution pricing system is in effect so we return the fuel charge to Canadians. The new estimates reflect increases of \$9.5 million in voted appropriations and \$109.1 million in statutory funding.

To support cleaner and more efficient travel, we have also allocated an additional \$5.8 million to Natural Resources Canada for a contribution to the City of Brampton for an electric bus trial.

The estimates also reflect \$4.7 million to start federal contributions toward eliminating plastic waste.

[Translation]

Let's now turn to Parks Canada, Madam Chair.

Parks Canada is responsible for protecting our treasured natural legacy for future generations to enjoy, as well as important historic and heritage sites.

Parks Canada Agency's spending has gone up \$3.5 million, including \$2.7 million to commemorate Indian residential school sites in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's call to action 79.

The supplementary estimates also seek approval for a vote transfer of \$12.9 million from the agency's program expenditures to the

agency's new parks account in order to set this money aside and protect it until need for the development of capital infrastructure in the Rouge National Urban Park.

[English]

As for the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, it is requesting two interdepartmental transfers that total \$1.8 million for these supplementary estimates (B).

I am going to stop here, Madam Chair.

I hope this summary provides committee members with the insights they were looking for in the supplementary estimates.

I want to assure the members of this committee and all Canadians of our commitment to fighting climate change and protecting our natural environment. We certainly intend to engage Canadians in discussions around these issues every step of the way.

With that, I am very happy to take your questions.

The Chair: Thank you.

Our first round of questions is from Madam Findlay.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay (South Surrey—White Rock, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Welcome, Minister and officials. Thank you for being here. It's always informative when you spend some time with us in committee, and we appreciate it.

Minister, with respect to the supplementary estimates (B), the sum of votes 15, 20 and 25 on marine safety response, disaster management preparation and implementing a federal carbon offset system totals over \$1.1 million that is left over. Why hasn't that funding been fully expended?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: With respect to the specifics of expending, I will turn to Carol, from the department.

Ms. Carol Najm (Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Services and Finance Branch, Department of the Environment): Thank you.

With respect to votes 15, 20, 25 and 30, those are frozen allotments that came with budget 2019 for expenditures of PSPC, Public Services and Procurement Canada and Shared Services Canada for their support in implementing programs.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Have those programs not commenced? I wonder why they have not been expended.

Ms. Carol Najm: Those are frozen allotments carried forward to the future year. This means they will come into our main estimates for 2020-21.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you.

Minister, the Globe and Mail has reported that the government plans to add plastics to schedule 1 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, which is the list of toxic substances. Plastics, I would suggest, are ubiquitous in Canada because they are affordable and can be used for so many applications.

How do you think declaring plastics as toxic without any further definition that we know of—unless you're going to give it to us today—will impact the production and availability of plastics in Canada? How could this impact the cost of living for Canadians, especially low-income Canadians?

• (0855)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: That's an important question. Plastic pollution in the environment is a problem. We recently went through a scientific report that identified a range of different issues with respect to macroplastics and microplastics, and it is important that we take action to address the plastic issue generally.

There are a number of tools through which that can be done. This was part of a conversation that happened during the 2019 campaign. We committed to a ban on harmful single-use plastics, and the work to identify the items that will be on that list of banned products is under way at the present time.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Do you have a timeline on that?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: We will be looking at putting the costs of collecting and recycling plastics back on producers through extended producer responsibility. As you will know, this is actually in place in British Columbia—the only place in Canada. We will be looking at issues around things like recycled content requirements. That is a strategy we will be coming forward with in the coming months. Certainly the ability to regulate plastics is enabled by CEPA, and that will require a listing under schedule 1.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: With respect to the use of plastics, I think you would agree that some plastics are used to keep food safe. Do you not think there's a risk that without definition this could lead to an overall reduction in food safety?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: That's an important point. The development of a list of those specific items that would be banned will relate to the availability of alternatives and the cost impacts that would be associated with those.

That being said, for those items that will not be on the list of banned products and that will continue to be in use, we need to ensure that we are actually doing better with respect to recycling and using recycled content. People think we do a great job of recycling in Canada, but if you look at the plastic stream, a very low percentage is actually recycled. For those kinds of products, where we need to have them, we need to be better about reusing them.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I agree with you on that. I think it's 87% that ends up in landfill. It's unacceptable that a small percentage actually gets recycled.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Yes.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: One of my concerns is that CEPA, as it is now, is not really designed to deal with broad classifications of products, such as plastics. As plastics do not currently meet what we would normally define as a substance, it seems you are declar-

ing that something is toxic in order to deal with a recycling and litter problem.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.): Madam Chair, I have a point of order.

Is this relevant to the estimates?

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Yes, it is.

The Chair: I think the minister did make a statement about plastics. I will let it go for the time being.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Thank you.

I hope that doesn't detract from my time, Madam Chair.

The Chair: No.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I'm wondering if CEPA is also going to be used to address other critical nutrients, like copper, zinc and that sort of thing.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: As I indicated, the precursor to being able to use CEPA as a tool was the science assessment, which actually demonstrated environmental harm. Certainly the nature of the listing will need to be something that we are thoughtful about in terms of how we do that. We certainly all recognize that we're not going to be eliminating plastics entirely from use in the economy. There are certain types of products that certainly can be banned.

I think Canadians are far ahead of us on this. Many countries are. By the end of this year, China is banning plastic bags. Rwanda and Kenya banned plastic bags years ago.

We need to be thoughtful about how we actually ensure that we do get rid of those things that we can. For those things that we can't, we do a better job of recycling. That will be the strategy we will be bringing forward in the coming months.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We now go to Mr. Baker.

You'll be sharing your time, I understand, with Mr. Scarpaiegia.

Mr. Yvan Baker (Etobicoke Centre, Lib.): That's right.

The Chair: Thank you. I'll give you a three-minute warning.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, Minister, and thank you to all of you for being here today.

Minister, I represent Etobicoke Centre, a community on the outskirts of the city of Toronto. When I speak to my constituents about sitting on this committee, they almost unanimously ask me about the steps we're taking to fight climate change.

In the supplementary estimates you note the need for climate risk assessments by various departments. I wonder if you can tell us more about climate risk assessments, why they're important to Canadians and why they would be important to my constituents in Etobicoke Centre.

• (0900)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Thank you for the question.

As you know very well, climate change is an existential threat from an environmental perspective. It is an existential threat for human health and it's certainly an enormous threat to our economy. Last year, we released "Canada's Changing Climate Report", which highlighted the severity of the problem and the increasing intensity of the problem. It pointed out that Canada is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world. In fact, in the northern part of Canada, it is even faster than that. We are feeling the effects of climate change through the changes to permafrost, flooding, wildfires and deadly heat waves.

Climate assessments are an important tool to allow us to better understand how our infrastructure may be impacted and what we need to do from a climate resilience perspective going forward. Climate mitigation is critically important in order to not make the problem worse. The problem exists and it will get worse irrespective of the mitigation efforts. We need to ensure that we're focused on mitigation. It is very important that Canadians have that kind of information to make the appropriate choices.

Mr. Yvan Baker: We appreciate that.

Minister, climate change is obviously an immense challenge, as you just alluded to, and we know that, as you pointed out, carbon pollution has a cost. Some of the funding we're looking at today includes our government's climate action incentive fund. I'm wondering if you could explain to the folks who are watching at home how the incentive fund helps us fight climate change and how it helps families and businesses in Etobicoke Centre.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I think we all know that putting a price on pollution is the most cost-effective way to cut emissions and to create good jobs. That has certainly been demonstrated in British Columbia, which is where I'm from and which has had a price on pollution since 2008. A family of four in your riding will get \$486 back as a climate action incentive when they file their taxes.

Additionally, we are helping businesses invest in projects, through the incentive fund, that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as installing solar panels or making buildings more efficient. Putting a price on pollution is a practical way to reduce emissions, support clean growth and make life more affordable for families.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Thank you, Minister.

I'll pass my time on to Mr. Scarpaleggia.

The Chair: Mr. Scarpaleggia.

[Translation]

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Baker.

Welcome, Minister.

As you know, any discussion about climate change necessarily leads to a discussion about water resources. At the end of the day, climate change impacts our water resources, whether through flooding or droughts. As you know, during the last election campaign, we committed to creating the Canada Water Agency. It's a pretty innovative idea, and you're responsible for bringing it to life.

Can you share with us your vision for the new agency that is in the works?

Are you envisioning a large-scale organization that will bring together everyone at the federal level responsible for water management and protection?

Otherwise, do you have more modest beginnings in mind, perhaps focusing on a few foundational pieces such as flood prevention and adaptation?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Thank you for your question.

I'd like to start by thanking you for your work on the protection of Canada's freshwater.

As you know, our government committed to keeping Canada's water safe and clean, and creating a Canadian water agency is vital to that objective. I've asked my parliamentary secretary, Mr. Terry Duguid, the member for Winnipeg South, who is responsible for the Canada Water Agency, to lead this important work.

Although the specifics of the agency's role have yet to be determined, we will work closely with parliamentarians, indigenous groups, governments at every level and the public to ensure Canada's water is safe, clean and well managed.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Some would argue that Canada's water legislation needs to be modernized.

Have you had time to consider ways to keep the legislation relevant, so it can serve to better protect our water going forward?

● (0905)

[English]

The Chair: Do you want an answer?

[Translation]

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Yes.

[English]

The Chair: You have 15 seconds, Minister.

[Translation]

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Of course. The conversations about the Canada Water Agency will probably focus on setting priorities and examining possible legislative changes, but that still has to be determined.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you.

We now go to Madam Paupé for six minutes.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Paupé (Repentigny, BQ): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Minister, thank you for your appearance today and your opening statement.

In fact, my question ties in with something you said in your statement. It's about the Trans Mountain expansion project. You said, and I quote:

No longer can we think of economic opportunities without also considering environmental impacts.

I'd like to take you back to June 2019. A provision stipulated that, should costs be revised upwards, the bill would be passed on to users, similar to toll highways. That wasn't retained, however. Trans Mountain rejected the option. The Canada Energy Regulator could have stepped in to prevent taxpayers from being stuck with those costs, but it didn't, so taxpayers are the ones who will be on the hook.

Oil companies will get to use the pipeline at a lower cost than the market value. The pipeline won't bring in any profit. Taxpayers are the ones who will have to pay for it, since pipeline users won't be paying any tolls, so to speak. Those costs weren't exactly laid out clearly in the budget.

Isn't the government underestimating the project costs to keep them under wraps, to some extent, so the public doesn't become outraged? The fact of the matter is that the costs are going to go up and the pipeline is going to become more and more expensive.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Thank you for the question.

I believe the costs associated with the project are the domain of the finance department.

[English]

We took a lot of advice from independent advisers with respect to the structure of the transaction on the Trans Mountain expansion. The intention on the part of the government has always been that it would be transacted back to the private sector once the political risks are lower. That is something we have always intended to do. It will end up being a private sector transaction. We are confident that the Canadian public will recoup the costs and then some.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Let's set the Trans Mountain pipeline aside and turn to fossil fuel subsidies. It appears that there was an agreement with Argentina. The initiative dates back to 2018 and was launched through the G20. Six countries gave themselves 12- to 24-month time limits.

Further to the agreement, where does Canada stand progress-wise?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Our government understands that a clean environment and a strong economy go hand in hand. That's why we've invested heavily in the protection of air, water and natural areas for our children and our children's children. Together with our G20 partners, we committed to phasing out ineffective subsidies for fossil fuels by 2025. Naturally, we are currently engaged in a process to determine what we've done so far and what Argentina has done to reduce fossil fuel subsidies.

• (0910)

Ms. Monique Pauzé: They're supposed to be phased out by 2025, but have any tangible measures been taken? Can you give us an example?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Yes, we've already eliminated some things.

[English]

Mr. Raj Saini (Kitchener Centre, Lib.): I have a point of order.

Is that in the supplementary estimates?

The Chair: No, it isn't.

We do like to stay within what the minister is here for, which is the supplementary estimates.

Your question even about the Trans Mountain pipeline's cost is not.... It's the cleaning costs.

If you stay within that envelope, that's okay.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Forgive me. I wanted to take advantage of our time with the minister to have him answer a question in a way that is also political, since we are in politics, after all.

I'll ask another question, then, but I'm not sure it will be deemed in order, either. It has to do with health and the environment.

Numerous experts around the world are beefing up research on the health impacts of environmental degradation. Since we have to stay on the topic of the estimates, I'd like to know whether any funding has been earmarked to make scientific and medical publications available to the public to help people properly understand the effects of climate change on their health, particularly with regard to endocrine-disrupting substances. As we all know, a significant number of studies have examined the issue.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Yes, the environment department is doing its own research. Outside the department, a report on plastic was completed.

I'm going to ask the deputy minister to answer your question about the research currently under way at the department.

[English]

The Chair: Madam Pauzé, you have 15 seconds.

[Translation]

Do you have another question?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Ms. Hogan, would you care to comment?

Ms. Christine Hogan (Deputy Minister, Department of the Environment): I would just add a few words about the department's scientific program. It's a vast program. We are conducting research into health and the environment, and we are also working closely with Health Canada.

[English]

The Chair: Madam Collins, you have six minutes.

Ms. Laurel Collins (Victoria, NDP): Thank you so much for coming today.

I am going to follow up on a few of Madam Pauzé's questions.

Environment and Climate Change Canada is seeking a total of \$5.92 million to strengthen environmental protection and address concerns raised by indigenous groups regarding the Trans Mountain extension project.

Can you explain which environmental protections will be strengthened and how those were determined?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Sure.

Let me start by saying that there were very significant investments made to address a range of environmental issues well in advance of this particular portion of money. The oceans protection plan, for example, is \$1.5 billion and looks at a whole range of issues around response, around strengthening local capacity and around science.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm sorry to interrupt, but to add to that, to frame it up a little bit, \$150 million was unspent from the oceans protection plan and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. This is a significant amount, especially compared to the \$5.92 million here.

I'm curious about that unspent money as well. Is it being invested back into these kind of environmental protections?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: With respect to the money that you refer to in Fisheries and Oceans, I'd be happy to get you a response. I think that question has been asked in the House of Commons in question period, and the Minister of Fisheries has provided a response, but I'd be certainly happy to provide another one.

With respect to the money for Environment Canada, as you know, additional consultations were done with indigenous communities in the aftermath of the decision of the court of appeal. There was a significant amount of conversation and also of working to accommodate concerns that were raised. A number of initiatives are under way. The initial amount of money is in this year's budget, but it's actually a three-year profile that relates to a whole range of initiatives in terms of strengthening local capacity, for example, of indigenous communities.

Ms. Laurel Collins: We are able to dig into and have some transparency around this \$5.92 million. The only mention of the Trans Mountain pipeline in the estimates is this \$5.9 million. We have recently learned that the construction costs are going to be \$12.6 billion to finish construction. That's with us borrowing and it's in addition to the \$4.5 billion that we already spent to buy the Trans Mountain pipeline, which never came to Parliament. The government hasn't publicly released the Trans Mountain Corporation report that yielded the most recent \$12.6-billion cost estimate so the public can actually understand what it includes and what it does not, and assess future risks.

We know that the Canada Trans Mountain pipeline finance corporation borrowed from another Crown corporation, Export Development Canada, yet we've not seen that corporate plan.

As MPs, don't you think we should have the opportunity to study the financial risks of Trans Mountain? Why is that huge expenditure, which has such significant impacts on the environment and significant impacts on our ability to meet our climate targets, not subject to parliamentary scrutiny? Will the government be making that information available to Canadians?

• (0915)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Let me say a couple of things.

First of all, with respect to the comment that it will imperil our ability to meet our climate target, that's just not true. The upstream emissions associated with the Trans Mountain pipeline were included in the pan-Canadian framework, so all of the upstream emissions are actually included in the plan to achieve our targets for 2030 and eventually to exceed them. That recognizes that we are going through an energy transition, where hydrocarbons are going to continue to be used for a number of decades to come—

Ms. Laurel Collins: Would you mind just focusing, at least for a moment, on the transparency?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I am responding to what you actually said in your question.

The Trans Mountain pipeline is an important part of both an economic and an environmental strategy.

With respect to the costs associated with the construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline, again, I think we're here to talk about the environmental estimates, and that's not in the environmental estimates. However, what I would say to you is that there was a public statement by the Minister of Finance with respect to the costs associated with the pipeline. What he said at that time was that we fully expect to recoup those costs when the pipeline is sold.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Just to be clear, I am asking why this huge expenditure is not in the estimates. Why are we, as members of Parliament, not able to dig into this the way we are able to question you about the \$5.9 million that we're talking about to strengthen environmental protections and address concerns raised by indigenous groups?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Again, I would say to you that I am the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Even if it were in the estimates, it wouldn't be in my estimates.

My understanding is that today we are actually focusing on the estimates for Environment and Climate Change Canada, but what I would say to you is that the Minister of Finance made a statement with respect to that project. We fully expect that those costs will be recouped.

Ms. Laurel Collins: You did mention quite a bit in your statement and just now about meeting or exceeding our targets. We heard from the environment commissioner, who said, "For decades, successive federal governments have failed to reach their targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and the government is not ready to adapt to a changing climate. This must change." This is from our outgoing environment commissioner.

I'm curious whether you agree with that statement, given the estimates that you've tabled today. Is the government not ready to adapt to a changing climate? Do you think that we're on track?

The Chair: Madam Collins, your time is up. Thank you very much.

Mr. Mazier, you have five minutes.

Mr. Dan Mazier (Dauphin—Swan River—Neepawa, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Minister and officials, for coming out this morning.

Minister, in 2017 your predecessor, Ms. McKenna, referred to the Manitoba climate and green plan as one of the best climate plans submitted by a provincial government.

Last week, that plan was resubmitted, and it included a carbon levy and exemptions for farm families.

I have a simple question, Minister. Will this government approve the Manitoba climate and green plan, yes or no?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: What I would say to you is that we have not yet received a formal proposal from the Government of Manitoba. We certainly will assess it when we receive it, but it will be assessed against the federal benchmark, as we have done with proposals from all provinces and territories.

As you know, the federal benchmark with respect to the price on pollution is \$30 per tonne this year, and it increases annually by \$10 per tonne until 2022.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Excuse me, Minister. So, you haven't seen even your predecessor's...and you didn't talk about it at cabinet and you haven't seen the proposal, so you have no idea what that plan was.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I am very aware of the proposal that the premier has made publicly in the press.

What I am saying to you is that we actually wait for provinces and territories to provide us with their proposals in writing, and we assess them against the benchmark. That's what we do with every province and territory, and we will be doing that with Manitoba when it submits it. It will be compared against the benchmark, which is \$30 a tonne at this time and escalates to \$50 over the next couple of years.

• (0920)

Mr. Dan Mazier: Okay.

I don't know if you get the gravity of how important it is to the Province of Manitoba to have this plan approved. There are a lot of struggling farmers out there. They are struggling to pay their bills, and a lot of the struggling on the financial side of it is from the carbon tax that's been imposed on grain drying and space heating.

It's causing a lot of financial stress. It's also causing a lot of mental stress. As a matter of fact, the Manitoba farm and rural stress line is starting to receive increased calls.

I don't know if you see any correlation, Minister, between farmers' accessing mental health services and the impact the imposition of the carbon tax has had on farmers, especially since you have imposed those carbon taxes. I don't know if you see any correlation in that or if you have heard anything about that.

Mr. Raj Saini: Madam Chair, I have a point of order.

Is that relevant to the supplementary estimates?

Mr. Dan Mazier: It's the financial stress that has caused this.

The Chair: Mr. Mazier, stay within the supplementary estimates. Bring relevance through our supplementary estimates. How about that?

I know that a lot of you are new members and we have—

Mr. Dan Mazier: Well, the carbon tax is part of the supplementary estimates.

The Chair: Go to the item and say that you are referring to item number so-and-so. That way we will note it as being relevant. How about that?

Mr. Dan Mazier: There have been requests that the carbon tax be removed from grain drying and from space heating. You claim that Canadians are better off with the carbon tax's having been implemented.

The Chair: Mr. Mazier, that's not in the supplementary estimates.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Carbon tax isn't?

The Chair: No. Have a look at it.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Really?

No, I don't have time to take a look at it.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Dan Mazier: So I can't talk about anything about carbon tax being implemented on the options.

The Chair: The minister is here to get you to approve the supplementary estimates. If there are some line items that you have a problem with—

Mr. Dan Mazier: I have a problem with the carbon tax.

The Chair: It's not on a line item. Choose a line item. I'm just trying to accommodate you as much as I can.

Mr. Dan Mazier: I guess we can't talk about the \$10,000 that has been imposed through the carbon tax due to grain dryers. I can't ask the minister about families being better off by being taxed to death with a carbon tax and making their farm operations inoperable.

Mr. Raj Saini: On a point of order, Chair, nobody is being taxed to death.

The Chair: Okay.

Mr. Mazier, the supplementary estimates have a lot of information if you want to ask the minister specific questions. Madam Collins moved it around and I asked Ms. Pauzé to move it around. You can pick one of the items that maybe has relevance to you.

Mr. Dan Mazier: What about zero emissions?

The Chair: Yes, go ahead, because he mentioned it in his speech. That is relevant.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Okay.

On zero emissions, has your department reviewed any documents with regard to farmers putting carbon back into the life cycle of agriculture?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Thank you. That's actually a very important question. I'm glad you asked that.

There is certainly an opportunity, in my view, to look at agriculture as a potential sink or sequestration opportunity for us as we move forward to 2050. That is something that companies and organizations across the west are looking at in terms of how to actually address this from a stewardship perspective, to actually allow farmers to monetize the value associated with increasing sequestration capacity of soils. I am very interested in that conversation. It is something that the department is working on actively.

Mr. Dan Mazier: When you say "actively", what kind of modelling are you using with that that is accurate?

There are actually lots of numbers out there that prove we're a net benefiter and that agriculture is part of the solution. We haven't seen that yet. We've just seen the increase in carbon taxes. We're paying thousands of dollars in carbon tax.

When are we going to get to the point where we can be part of the solution instead of being part of the problem?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I absolutely agree with you that the farming and agricultural community can be part of the solution. I actually believe there are opportunities to enhance the sequestration capacity and to allow the farming community to monetize the value associated with creating those offsets.

Mr. Dan Mazier: How do we do that, Minister?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: As I say, that is something we are digging into with research institutes and companies like Terramera and others. We're looking at ensuring that you have the appropriate baselines, at the things that will actually drive additional sequestration capacity and at being able to measure that, and ultimately being able to monetize that. That is something that I think is very important.

As I think you are aware, I grew up in Saskatchewan. I worked for the premier of Saskatchewan. I'm intimately familiar with some of the issues around the agricultural sector, and I think this is an enormous opportunity.

• (0925)

Mr. Dan Mazier: I think one of the main messages—

The Chair: You have 45 seconds, so make it a quick question.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Do you think farm families are better off with the carbon tax?

The Chair: Oh, sorry. I thought we were at six-minute rounds. You are done with your time. I was giving you six minutes.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Thanks to the clerk. He brought that to my attention. You don't have time.

Mr. Saini, go ahead for five minutes.

Mr. Raj Saini: Thank you very much, Minister, for coming. Also, thank you to your very capable and highly enlightened officials for coming here this morning and discussing a topic that I think is very important to Canadians.

Right now, as you are aware, we are currently facing a biodiversity crisis around the world due to numerous factors like habitat loss and climate change. I'm glad there have been a number of investments in my riding of Kitchener Centre to help improve biodiversity and wildlife habitat. Funding programs like the 50 Million Tree program, which the federal government rescued last year, is crucial to achieving this goal.

How will projects like this help to improve biodiversity and protect wildlife across Canada?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: The issues around biodiversity are extremely important. People will have seen the World Wildlife Fund report last year which showed that the world has lost 60% of its biodiversity in just the last 40 years.

Keeping our forests healthy is one of the best ways to protect biodiversity and fight climate change, because they provide habitat for a wide range of species, but they also absorb carbon pollution and protect against erosion and therefore help mitigate floods. That is why we invested \$15 million over four years in the 50 Million Tree program that you mentioned. It will benefit communities across Ontario. It builds upon the \$1.3-billion historic investment we made in Canada's nature legacy in budget 2018.

We also have committed to 25% marine and terrestrial protection by 2025 and 30% by 2030. We are very, very focused on trying to stem the biodiversity decline and to ensure that we are improving the condition of our natural environment.

Mr. Raj Saini: The second question I have is about the low-carbon economy fund. As you are aware, it's being used to fund electric bus programs in many municipalities, for example, Brampton. Transit is key to reducing our GHG emissions and meeting our climate targets.

I've seen how successful this program and these investments have been with ION and LRT in Kitchener Centre. I'm glad to see that this investment is continuing in lower-carbon transit.

How will this investment help to spur innovation and move our transit networks towards carbon neutrality, which is the ultimate goal for 2050?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Transportation is critical to being able to move towards net zero. It accounts for almost 25% of Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing pollution from transportation is essential to fighting climate change, but also to supporting healthy communities. Through the low-carbon economy fund, we have invested \$7.6 million towards the largest global deployment to date of battery electric buses and chargers in Brampton, Ontario.

By deploying these kinds of investments, we are helping with the public transit system, improving livability within our urban environments and cutting climate pollution.

Mr. Raj Saini: My final question is about plastics. This is an issue that's of high concern to my constituents in Kitchener Centre, who are really worried about the amount of plastics we're using. One thing they're concerned about is how widespread single-use plastics are and how they're choking our waterways and damaging our environment.

I'm glad to see in the supplementary estimates there's funding to reduce plastic pollution, because we need action, and I think all of our constituents want action on this issue.

How will this funding help achieve the goal of limiting plastic waste in Canada and move us towards a circular economy?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Certainly plastic pollution is an enormous challenge not only in Canada but around the world.

However, in Canada, we have the longest coastline in the world and one-quarter of the world's fresh water, so the emerging implications for Canada are quite significant. We made the commitment to ban harmful single-use plastics, which we intend to do in 2021; to move towards extended producer responsibility, putting the cost of plastics in plastics packaging back on the producers; and to enhance things like the recycling content so that we're closing the loop and moving towards a circular economy.

This is extremely important from an environmental perspective. I would tell you that Canadians are far ahead of their governments on this. Canadians are demanding action on plastics, and we intend to take it.

• (0930)

Mr. Raj Saini: I have one final question.

When we look at what we're doing domestically, how do you think the impact will be internationally? When people make certain decisions, they often look to what Canada is doing.

We can do whatever we want here, but internationally there has to be an impact. How do you think what we're doing here is going to have an international impact?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: I think it will be another model for countries to consider. Certainly some of the European countries have moved on this as well.

I would also say there is enormous opportunity for Canada, in the same way that it has worked on climate issues around leading the Powering Past Coal Alliance and those kinds of things, to work with developing countries in particular, to help to develop solutions, which may be different from the solutions we implement here, that will enable them to address the plastics issue.

Mr. Raj Saini: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Redekopp, you have five minutes.

Mr. Brad Redekopp (Saskatoon West, CPC): Thank you, and welcome everybody.

My first question is about staffing, which I believe is an operating expenditure.

I was digging around in the departmental plans for 2019 and 2020-21, and I found that this fiscal year, you projected 6,648 full-time equivalent staff. The actual number looks like it's coming in at 7,163, which is about 415 more or 6% higher.

What did we get for the extra staff?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: The first thing I would say is that we are all very fortunate as Canadians to have such dedicated staff working for us in these departments, irrespective of partisan affiliation. These public servants are extremely capable folks.

I will turn to my deputy minister to perhaps answer the specific human resources question.

Ms. Christine Hogan: Thank you very much for that question.

As you know, over the course of the last year, there were some increases in the full-time complement at Environment. We also include in our numbers seasonals and students, and all of these things accumulate to demonstrate an employee count of over 7,000.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: When you forecasted this 12 months ago, didn't you anticipate this?

That's a 6% difference. How do you manage the department with changes like that?

Ms. Christine Hogan: These were anticipated changes through the influx of resources that were allocated in budgets 2018 and 2019. We manage our growth accordingly, and against results and commitments that are made in the main estimates.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Let's turn to spending, Minister.

By the way, I was formerly an accountant, so it's coming out, I suppose.

Along the same lines, the original estimates for this fiscal were \$1.828 billion and the current ones with the supplementary (B)s are at \$2.006 billion, so that's \$178 million, a nearly 10% increase. Can you explain the difference?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Between the main estimates and the supplementaries? The process, as you will know as an accountant—although I would say that Parliament operates in a slightly different fashion—is that the main estimates are produced typically before the budget and the supplementaries are used to pick up budgetary items.

It is not abnormal to see increases in the supplementaries. I would say that the increases in these are actually pretty modest.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: I suppose another way to look at it is that the spending from the previous fiscal was very similar to the original estimates.

I realize that the climate action incentive payments increased the budget by about \$110 million, but there is still another \$70 million or so, which is about 4%. Are we getting value for our money in that?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: As I said in the remarks I made earlier, the vast majority, as you have rightly said, is the climate incentive, which is essentially returning funds back to Canadians and to small businesses in a way that ensures we are addressing affordability.

A number of the other pieces of that were articulated in the comments, which were things such as the electric bus trial in Brampton and funding for plastic pollution. I would say that with respect to those items I think Canadians would say, yes, we're getting good value for our money.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: On the climate action incentive, I did some quick math. For \$109 million, \$400 a family, maybe, is a very reasonable number. That's 275,000 families. That's barely Saskatchewan. Where are the rest of the climate action incentive rebates? That doesn't seem like enough.

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: The climate action incentive applies only in jurisdictions where the federal backstop is in place. There are many jurisdictions in this country that have chosen to implement their own price on pollution. That would include British Columbia, Quebec and a range of other provinces. This only relates to those.

The amount of money that is actually returned depends very much on the jurisdiction in which you live. We return all of the money from every jurisdiction back to that jurisdiction. The payments will be higher in Saskatchewan, for example, than they will be in Ontario.

● (0935)

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Maybe there's another way to ask this. Are there climate action incentive returns in other budgets or is it all in your budget?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: With respect to that, maybe I'll ask the CFO, but the focus of the climate action incentive is with Environment Canada.

Ms. Carol Najm: That's correct, Minister.

The amount showing in our estimates is what comes to Environment and Climate Change Canada. We partner with Finance Canada on this program, and the balance of the revenues would be provided through Finance Canada.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Okay. I have a different question.

The last numbers that I've seen for greenhouse gas emissions are for 2017. Are there further numbers that have been published for actual greenhouse gas emissions?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Typically, the projections lag because of the way in which research data is collected, so there are no more updated numbers than what we published a few months ago, but I would say to look at the pan-Canadian framework and the reductions that are baked into the initiatives that will be achieved by 2030.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We will go to Mr. Longfield for five minutes.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Thank you, Madam Chair.

In my riding in Guelph, many individuals and businesses have benefited from the energy savings rebate program through the low-carbon economy fund when they're shopping at local businesses such as Shuh's Appliance Centre in Guelph, a small business that's been family run for a couple of generations and is now able to pass savings through to consumers who are looking for savings on their Energy Star appliances.

Could you share with the committee how this program directly benefits individuals, businesses and municipalities and how it's being used to both stimulate the economy and protect the environment?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Thank you for that important question.

Our government has made a number of important investments in programs that help people and businesses reduce energy use, save money and address climate change, which I think everybody wants to do.

The energy savings rebate program in particular has helped Ontario families and businesses take climate action by making energy-efficient products such as EV chargers, dishwashers and a range of appliances more affordable. I understand that this program has received a lot of interest, and my department is working very expeditiously to process all of the claims we have received.

Through these kinds of investments, our government is helping to incent Ontarians and Canadians to take climate action in an affordable and very much accessible way.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Thank you, Minister.

Also, in the supplementary estimates there's a grant program of \$1,412,300 under the innovative solutions Canada fund. I'm looking at the innovation solutions Canada program playing an important role in our communities by supporting small and medium-sized businesses in developing innovative solutions to challenges across various areas addressing climate change.

You've recently announced that Environment and Climate Change Canada will be supporting the innovation solutions Canada program to address new plastic challenges. This has been mentioned a few times by a few members in more depth in some of the questions, but there's really a concern around plastics. Could you comment on how the collaboration is going to work and how we're going to be working on challenges together to meet our climate change goals?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Sure.

Clean tech certainly is part of the solution to closing the loop on plastics, just as it is in the climate area.

It's certainly an area of interest for me. I was a clean-tech CEO and a senior executive for 15 years before I decided to enter politics.

Boosting clean technology to address plastic pollution is certainly part of our approach to moving to zero waste. We are supporting Canadian innovators and entrepreneurs through an investment of nearly \$19 million in the Canadian plastics innovation challenge, which results in real Canadian-made solutions.

I have a couple of examples. Axipolymer, based in Montreal, will create a recyclable multi-layered film that can be used for food packaging. GreenMantra Technologies, in Brantford, Ontario, will transform polystyrene insulation waste into new insulation.

By improving how we manage plastic waste, we can cut pollution, but we can also create thousands of jobs from new technology solutions that we Canadians are innovating and implementing.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Thanks.

Finally, I'm looking at collaborations.

I was sitting on the agriculture committee. Agriculture is a huge topic for Guelph.

In the estimates we have vote 10b, \$250,000, looking at some collaborations between Environment and Climate Change and Agriculture. I'm looking at the approach we're taking. Sometimes it's a farming issue. Sometimes it's a climate change issue. Many times it's both at the same time. Of particular importance to me is this. Is the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food working with you, through the supplementary estimates, to address climate change and greening growth on the farm and within our communities?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Certainly Canada's ag sector has an important role to play in the fight against climate change. Through initiatives like the Economics and Environmental Policy Research Network, our government is supporting research into policies and programs that accelerate sustainable practices, the adoption of technology and clean innovation in agricultural practices in the agri-food sector.

As you know, through programs like the agricultural greenhouse gases program, we are supporting researchers at the University of Guelph in various projects that will help farmers reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. We are also, as I said before, extremely interested in how we can utilize soils going forward as a carbon sink to help with sequestration and to allow us to take more carbon out of the atmosphere. By working across government and with the agricultural community, we can help to ensure that we are identifying and implementing solutions that will allow the agricultural sector to lead in these important areas.

● (0940)

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: You mentioned that the University of Guelph is also working on riparian zones and planting trees around streams to filter water coming off the fields as well as being a carbon sink through the growth cycle of the trees. Is this an example that we can share with other countries and the provinces and territories?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Absolutely. These issues around the riparian areas are extremely important. I was minister of fisheries and oceans. When you look at some of the data around the increased sediment in the rivers and the streams that is a result of the destruction of some of these riparian areas, that has a direct implication on the productivity of salmon spawning. So absolutely, those are critical issues for us.

The Chair: Thank you.

Madam Pauzé, you have two and a half minutes.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

The Chair: Stay within the estimates so that nobody rises on a point of order.

[Translation]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I'm going to talk about the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. As we all know, numerous recommendations were made during the last Parliament. Is there any money in the estimates for monitoring associated with the public environmental protection mechanism? Should we see funding for that?

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: Yes, of course.

Money has been earmarked for that. We will continue to assure Canadians that we have the resources necessary to examine the various aspects of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. I'd also like to say that we pledged to consider possible amendments and we intend to discuss the legislation with members of Parliament, perhaps in the fall.

Money has been set aside for legislative amendments, which Ms. Hogan, the deputy minister, can tell you more about.

Ms. Christine Hogan: I'll keep my comments brief.

We are talking about the supplementary estimates today, which pertain to resource changes and additions.

[English]

The financing for our operations is not captured in the supplementary estimates, but there is obviously a very significant portion of our departmental resources that go into ensuring the effective implementation of CEPA and all associated programs. It's a major part of the department's efforts.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Pauzé.

[English]

Ms. Collins, you have two and a half minutes.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I will go back to the question that I was asking. The question is about whether we're on track to meet and exceed our commitments to reduce our emissions by 30% by 2030 and whether or not the next report from the next environment commissioner is going to say the same thing, that the government, like the ones before it, is failing to take the urgent and necessary action to meet our targets to adapt to climate change. In other words, it is failing to take the action that needs to be taken in order to ensure a liveable planet, because that's what's at stake right now.

In one of the other responses, you mentioned there are items baked into the pan-Canadian framework on climate change. Do you think the initiatives that are funded here in these estimates, specifically the ones that support additional actions through the pan-Canadian framework, are enough to close that gap and put us back on track to meeting our targets?

• (0945)

Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson: It's a very important question.

When this government was elected in 2015, there was virtually nothing being done with respect to climate change. Through the work on the pan-Canadian framework, which involved the provinces and territories, we identified 227 megatonnes in reductions. Those initiatives, which are in the pan-Canadian framework and on the Internet, get us a good chunk of the way to our target, but they don't get us all the way there.

There remain 77 megatonnes that we need to find to meet, and during the campaign, we promised to exceed that target, and that is part of the work that we are doing right now. Some of the measures that were in our campaign platform around trees, wetlands and building efficiency will help with that gap, but we certainly intend to bring forward a fully detailed plan as to how we will meet and exceed our 2030 targets.

The Chair: You have 30 seconds, Madam Collins.

Ms. Laurel Collins: You talk about that 70-megatonne gap, and you also mentioned in your previous comment to me that you don't think that the Trans Mountain expansion project will impact our ability to meet our climate targets. Given that we are not on track and given that the most recent report from the new environment commissioner says that there's no—

The Chair: Thank you, Madam Collins. You have to be short and swift with your questions.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I will follow up.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Minister, for being here.

The department officials will be staying for the next hour.

I'll suspend the meeting for a few minutes.

• (0946)

(Pause)

• (0952)

The Chair: Welcome, everyone.

We have before us the departmental officials. From the Department of the Environment, we have Mr. Matt Jones, the ADM of the pan-Canadian framework implementation office; John Moffet, ADM of the environmental protection branch; and Carol Najm, assistant deputy minister, corporate services and finance.

From the Impact Assessment Agency, we are joined by Terence Hubbard and Brent Parker.

From Parks Canada, we have Michael Nadler, Darlene Upton and Annie Boyer.

Are there any opening remarks?

Ms. Carol Najm: We do not have opening remarks.

The Chair: Perfect, so that way—

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: No, no, no. That allows the members to ask more questions.

There's a number of new members on the committee. I've already advised them to frame their questions the right way and if it is not in the estimates or in the minister's speech, I will try to curtail them.

With that, Mr. Aitchison, you have six minutes.

Mr. Scott Aitchison (Parry Sound—Muskoka, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you to all of you for being here.

If I had had the opportunity with the minister, I was going to focus on some of his comments related to clean tech and some of the work that's going on all across the industrial sector, not just to capture carbon but also to develop ways to generally reduce carbon output, for example. I do see it as a primary area where we can really make some dramatic improvements in our overall footprint as a nation.

Frankly, I think it's a more effective tool, and it's certainly a little easier on rural Canadians and Canadians who are at the lower end of the income scale in particular. I think often about the many people who live in my riding, which a lot of people think is just a playground for the rich and famous, but the people who live and work there make about 20% less in family income than the median in Ontario. There are people who really struggle day to day and month to month. They're not living lavishly; they're just trying to get to work. I've always struggled with a carbon tax for those folks. I understand that maybe in other places where there are other options, it's not as big an issue.

What I wanted to do though was to drill down into the programs that speak directly to this whole business of clean tech, this thoughtful approach that we're talking about. As I look through the supplementary estimates, I see that grants and contributions are almost \$1 billion in this ministry, \$791 million. A lot of those are contributions to agencies and international groups and that kind of stuff.

I'm wondering if in fact there are.... I guess there must be other ministries that are specifically focusing on incentivizing industry, and assisting industry and new businesses that are creating these alternative energies. How much money is the government, overall, across ministries.... Where can we find out how much we're actually doing to create these new opportunities?

• (0955)

Mr. Matt Jones (Assistant Deputy Minister, Pan-Canadian Framework Implementation Office, Department of the Environment): Yes, it's a fundamental question in terms of how we're going to address the impacts of climate change and specifically emissions, an important piece of the puzzle. One of the four pillars of the PCF is advancing clean technology. A whole collection of programs has emerged to advance clean technologies. It's the full spectrum, from research at Sustainable Development Technology Canada, for example, to an increased emphasis on project demonstration, deployment and ideally export. There are new programs. In terms of where you can find more details, these are in different departments, including ISED and NRCan, but also Export Development Canada and Business Development Bank of Canada under the ISED portfolio.

We also do a synthesis report annually on the implementation of the pan-Canadian framework. It includes federal and provincial and territorial measures over the span of a year. We're about to release the third of those. The other two are online. They go program by program, initiative by initiative.

Related to the estimates here, the low-carbon economy fund that is referenced invests directly with provinces and programs on deploying technologies or directly with industry. There are large and small components of that. There is a small business component and a bigger business component.

Mr. Scott Aitchison: Is there a report somewhere that you can send me that shows me a little more detail on some of those investments?

Mr. Matt Jones: Certainly. We'd be happy to provide the clerk with the link to that or a copy.

Mr. Scott Aitchison: Thank you.

Still on this whole business of contributions and grants and the \$791 million, there are lots of different things here. I wouldn't begin to understand what all of them are.

Just as an example, I look at Nature Conservancy of Canada, which back in 2014-15 got about \$8.8 million and then nothing. Then, of course, grants in support of the natural areas conservation program got money and it continued to grow.

I'm wondering if you can give some specific examples, in maybe just that category, of what specifically that money was for, what kinds of programs were supported, and what measurements were used to determine whether they were successful in terms of achieving targets, specifically in terms of reducing our footprint.

The Chair: Give a 30-second answer, please.

Mr. Niall O'Dea (Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Canadian Wildlife Service, Department of the Environment): Good morning. I'm Niall O'Dea with the Canadian wildlife service.

In response to the question around the natural heritage conservation program, that is actually a successor to the natural areas conservation program, the previous NCC funding. It's a \$100-million program over four years. It now represents a consortium program between the Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited Canada, and Canada's land trust community. That's why the structure of the ex-

penditures has changed. The targets are for them to collectively achieve 200,000 hectares of private lands protection through "willing buyer, willing seller" arrangements over the course of those next four years.

• (1000)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Baker, are you sharing time with Mr. Longfield?

Mr. Yvan Baker: That's correct.

The Chair: Fair enough. Do you want a three-minute warning?

Mr. Yvan Baker: That would be wonderful. Thank you, Chair.

I want to delve a little deeper into something I asked the minister about when he was here.

In the supplementary estimates, we have allocations for the climate action incentive fund, which is funding that flows to people, to everyday folks. It comes from revenues that are collected through the price on pollution. When I speak with my constituents in Etobicoke Centre, sometimes there's a little bit of confusion about how this all works, such as, if they're getting money back, where that is coming from, and how does that actually help us tackle climate change. Perhaps you could explain how we impose a price on pollution, how that money flows, how it comes back to folks and how it's helping to tackle climate change.

Mr. John Moffet (Assistant Deputy Minister, Environmental Protection Branch, Department of the Environment): Maybe I'll start.

First of all, good morning from Burnhamthorpe and Kipling, where I was born.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Wonderful.

Mr. John Moffet: The government committed to return all money raised through the federal carbon price back to the jurisdiction of origin. We do that in two ways.

One is through the CAIF, which represents the funds raised by the carbon price on fuel. Approximately 90% of that money goes directly to households in the form of an annual cheque. The remaining 10% is then provided through programs by my colleague Mr. Jones, and they're focused on supporting small businesses, non-profit organizations, the MUSH sector—municipalities, universities....

Another set of revenue, which we will see but have not yet seen, is compliance payments made by large industry under the large industry component of the carbon price. We have confirmed this money will be returned to the jurisdiction. The government has not yet developed a comprehensive program for that, and we're engaged in discussion with industry about the best way to utilize those funds.

Again, all the money is returned. The programming is focused on reducing emissions. The household return goes directly to the household to use in whatever manner they see fit.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Okay.

The price on pollution is effectively trying to incentivize all of us to pollute less, whether we're consumers or industry, and then we flow the majority of those funds back to citizens.

Mr. John Moffet: The consumer sees a price impact, the price of fuels increases, but their income effect is made whole. The majority of people are made whole. There's no income effect so the basic incentive is use less fuel and you'll have more money because your income hasn't changed.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr. Longfield.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: I'm going to stay on the same line, and maybe get a clarification from Mr. Moffet. It also builds on Mr. Aitchison's comments around low-income Canadians and the impact of the price on pollution on them.

Last weekend I was at a free tax clinic at one of the locations in Guelph, Holy Rosary parish. My parish was hosting a volunteer tax clinic for people who make under \$35,000. The money they receive annually isn't a cheque other than it comes through the CRA, through their tax return. It is important, particularly for low-income Canadians, to do tax returns because where they didn't used to get money back from the government because they weren't paying taxes, now in this case they do get money back because they're participating in the economy.

We've recently announced this incentive and it's gone up again this year. It's going to go up in future years.

Could you comment on how this incentive can help low-income Canadians and our fight against poverty?

The money comes through the CRA and tax returns, so it's important for people to file tax returns because part of this climate action incentive program, which is \$109,147,502 in the supplementary estimates, is flowing to all Canadians, including low-income Canadians.

• (1005)

Mr. John Moffet: It's absolutely important for all households, all individuals, to file returns. While I can't speak to the details, the Canada Revenue Agency has an active outreach program particularly focused on low-income individuals, indigenous people and others who may not traditionally have filed. Considerable outreach is under way, and it's associated, of course, not just with the climate action incentive payments, but also with other kinds of fiscal reimbursements such as the family benefits, GST rebate and so on,

again, which can only be accessed through filing an income tax return.

Mr. Lloyd Longfield: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

Madam Pauzé, you have six minutes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you, Madam Chair.

My first question is for the Environment and Climate Change Canada officials.

The supplementary estimates seek an additional \$4.37 million in grants and contributions.

Can you tell us what that money was used for and how? Can you also provide some examples?

Ms. Carol Najm: Would you mind repeating the amount, please? Where in the supplementary estimates is it?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I don't have the exact line.

Ms. Carol Najm: All right.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: An additional \$4.37 million in grants and contributions was requested.

This brings Environment and Climate Change Canada's total proposed authorities for grants and contributions to \$791 million.

What initiatives is that money being put towards?

[*English*]

Ms. Carol Najm: The money coming through supplementary estimates in Gs and Cs is focused on the TMX and plastics.

The Chair: Just for clarification, Madam Pauzé is asking you about the \$4-million adjustment.

Ms. Carol Najm: Thank you for the question.

The \$4 million in the grants and contributions in the supplementary estimates is mainly for the Trans Mountain pipeline and plastics. Those are the two items in there.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: The interpreter is telling me that they missed the second item. Trans Mountain is one, but what is the other?

Ms. Carol Najm: The plastics reduction program.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Very good. Thank you.

My next question is for the Parks Canada officials.

Expanding protected areas is also very good for the environment. Was any additional funding allocated to expanding protected areas?

Ms. Annie Boyer (Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Resources Management Branch, Parks Canada Agency): Thank you for your question.

In supplementary estimates (B), we earmarked \$12.9 million for a vote transfer to create national parks and develop capital infrastructure for the future.

The idea is to make sure we are able to protect the money to invest in capital infrastructure for the creation of new national parks.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I'd like to come back to the election promise to plant millions of trees.

At Parks Canada, do you know who's going to be in charge of that? Will it be environmental groups? Local groups across the country? They may be willing to work on the initiative.

How are you going to proceed?

• (1010)

[English]

Ms. Darlene Upton (Vice-President, Protected Areas Establishment and Conservation, Parks Canada Agency): Parks Canada is not the lead for that program. However, we're working with our colleagues at NRCan and Environment who play a role. We will be determining what contribution Parks Canada can make in terms of planting.

[Translation]

Mr. John Moffet: The Department of Natural Resources and, primarily, the Canadian Forest Service, will be leading the program.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: In the supplementary estimates, funding has been set aside for youth. Is there a connection with tree planting?

Ms. Carol Najm: The money in the supplementary estimates for youth is through the employment program. It's not tied to the tree-planting initiative.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: I see.

Mr. John Moffet: It's related to science.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: My next question is for the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada officials.

The agency requested a transfer of \$2 million to the Department of the Environment to reduce operating pressures on the department.

Could you tell me what exactly "operating pressures" refers to?

Ms. Carol Najm: I'll answer that, if I may.

[English]

This is about financial pressures within Environment and Climate Change Canada that were experienced as a result of increased costs and public prosecutions and litigation costs, which our main estimates amounts were insufficient to support. We sought additional support from our colleagues in the portfolio and the agency. We are presenting this transfer through the supplementary estimates.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Pauzé, you have 27 seconds left.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: The money had been allocated to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, so what was it meant for originally?

Mr. Terence Hubbard (Vice-President, Operations Sector, Impact Assessment Agency of Canada): It was meant to support our partner in the portfolio.

[English]

The Chair: Okay.

Madam Collins, you have six minutes.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Thank you.

To follow up on Madam Pauzé's question about the grants and contributions, that adjustment, the \$4.3 million, is directly related to the funding to strengthen environmental protections and address the concerns raised by indigenous groups. Is that correct?

Ms. Carol Najm: Yes, that is correct.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Great.

Can you explain the consultation process with indigenous groups that led to these measures? How was indigenous input incorporated into the planned environmental protections? Will any of the funding be going directly to indigenous groups who are best placed to provide stewardship and protect culture and biodiversity through control of their own territory?

Mr. John Moffet: Perhaps I can respond.

This funding is part of a full suite of funding that the government has provided as accommodation measures for indigenous communities directly or indirectly affected by the Trans Mountain pipeline. The decision around the nature of the accommodation measures and the magnitude of the accommodation measures was taken following intensive consultations with all affected indigenous communities along the line of the pipeline and in the Salish Sea. That engagement was coordinated by our colleagues at Natural Resources Canada.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Will the communities that are still in opposition be receiving equal amounts of funding to strengthen environmental protections and address their concerns as the communities that are in support of the Trans Mountain extension?

• (1015)

Mr. John Moffet: I don't think I can say that any one community will receive an equal amount to others, but the program is targeting all affected communities regardless of any position they took during the consultations. It's actually primarily not a program for dispensing money directly to a community to use as it wants. These funds are established under certain programs focused primarily on building capacity to monitor cumulative effects.

Ms. Laurel Collins: The funding won't necessarily go directly to indigenous groups.

Mr. John Moffet: Ultimately, a lot of it will, for capacity building, but some of it will also be dedicated to doing environmental studies on issues identified by indigenous communities.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Chair, how much time do I have?

The Chair: You have about three minutes.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Great. Okay. Maybe I'll change to a new topic quickly.

With the \$454,000 that's being transferred from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to respond to indigenous concerns on the overall health of the Salish Sea, can someone explain the plan for how this money is going to be spent? What was the consultation process with indigenous groups that led to these measures? How was that indigenous input incorporated?

Mr. John Moffet: Again, that's all part of the accommodation measures that were developed under the TMX decision.

I think it's primarily a vagary of the way government budgets are dispensed. Money was allocated to departments early on, and then as the design of the program evolved and different departmental responsibilities became clear as a result of the ongoing engagement with indigenous communities, a decision was made that Environment Canada needed a little more and DFO needed a little less. Again, the decision that led up to that was informed by the ongoing engagement. It wasn't engagement about that half million. It was engagement with the communities in the Salish Sea about what kind of government-supported activities would be appropriate to address their concerns.

Ms. Laurel Collins: I'm representing the riding of Victoria, and my riding and the neighbouring communities on Vancouver Island are all very concerned about the impact of the Trans Mountain pipeline on the Salish Sea. It will mean a sevenfold increase in tanker traffic. We need to know the risks to our coastal communities, to our economy and especially to indigenous rights.

I'm curious about the money that's being transferred. Will this \$400,000 which is specifically marked for the Salish Sea be going directly to indigenous groups? They are the ones who are best placed to steward and protect the biological diversity on their own territories, and they need to have control over them to do so.

Mr. John Moffet: This funding is part of larger program around the Salish Sea. It is a program designed to engage all the indigenous communities in a discussion and planning process to identify the cumulative impact of the issues of concern to them, and then to develop ongoing monitoring activities to enable those communities as well as relevant decision-makers outside those communities to manage those impacts in the best way possible.

The Chair: Thank you.

We now go to the five-minute round.

Mr. Mazier.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Thank you.

I have a question around agriculture and the impact of certain government practices on rural Canada versus urban Canada. There were comments made around the climate action incentive fund as it relates to the pricing of pollution—there you go; I got the two items in there—or the carbon tax, as it's commonly known.

In my riding, there was about \$12 million removed in the name of the carbon tax from agriculture alone. In one broiler barn, a supply management barn, they have baby chickens and they raise them up to so many pounds. It takes fuel. They were charged a 42% in-

crease because of the carbon tax—\$420 on a \$1,000 fuel bill, all in the name of the carbon tax.

Those kinds of disproportionate things are going on every day in agriculture. How do we monitor that? Where do we look in the supplementary estimates (B) to prove that? Where do we look to start building a case so we can show the departments and the people that this is going on? How do we give ourselves the tools to get this turned around? It is removing millions of dollars in the name of the carbon tax, yet it's a detriment to our agriculture production and food production in this country.

● (1020)

Mr. John Moffet: This is an issue of concern and interest to the government. The initial design of the carbon-pricing system explicitly addressed considerations of the agricultural community. The federal pricing system is designed to minimize the impact on the agricultural community.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Where would I look for that?

Mr. John Moffet: I can provide the committee with documents around the design of the federal pricing system as well as documents we developed with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada that describe the impact of the carbon pricing system on various components of the agricultural sector. I'd be happy to share those documents with the committee.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Okay.

The scale is huge. When we talk about consumers getting their money back, there is a blend in that grey area, and rural Canada is getting caught right in the crossfire every day.

When it comes to modelling, what models are we designing? When we say rural Canada is emitting this and urban Canada is emitting that, what models are we using and are they up to date? I know we've been struggling with those models. How are they all based on the climate action incentive fund? The numbers and the models have to be based on something, so how are they being reconciled? Who do we talk to about that?

Mr. Matt Jones: We have a dedicated team in Environment Canada. There are two of relevance, one that does our national GHG inventory and another that does our modelling and projections into the future. I know they'd be happy to describe their models for you and how they operate.

I can tell you that the inventorying of GHG emissions is done according to the guidelines set by the UN body that all countries follow. Our projections of emissions, where they're coming from and so forth, are based on a generally global model similar to those used in the major G7 countries. We'd be happy to provide additional information on how the models operate.

Mr. John Moffet: I'll emphasize that the measurement and modelling address emissions and sequestration. Our reports are designed to account for sequestration, in other words, the amount of carbon, for example, that certain farming and forestry practices take out of the atmosphere.

Mr. Dan Mazier: Which department does the modelling?

Mr. John Moffet: Environment and Climate Change Canada does the modelling. We are supported with some data from other departments, but all of the modelling is done by the department. As my colleague emphasized, the actual modelling approach, particularly for farming impacts and forestry impacts, follows international protocols.

Mr. Dan Mazier: I guess I have a question about other countries in the G7 and Canada. I always get concerned with that.

My riding is the size of Nova Scotia.

The Chair: You know you have no time left, right?

Mr. Dan Mazier: Oh.

The Chair: We're being very nice to you.

Somebody will carry on with that question. Perhaps Mr. Saini will.

Mr. Raj Saini: Thank you very much for staying. We appreciate your being here. I have a couple of questions.

One is about basic research. A lot of times Canadians don't realize that the Government of Canada does research that creates either software or products, and those products or that software are sold or licensed to other private sector interests. How does that framework work?

I know there's a lot of research being done currently in terms of modelling in Environment Canada. How is that used to further our own domestic priorities, and how is that used internationally? Obviously, we have a responsibility to the world.

Can you explain to me how that works?

• (1025)

Mr. Matt Jones: I think I might defer to my colleague Nancy Hamzawi who's the head of our science and technology branch. I'm sure she will be very pleased to tell you about the world-class research that is happening at Environment Canada.

Ms. Nancy Hamzawi (Assistant Deputy Minister, Science and Technology Branch, Department of the Environment): Thank you, Matt, and thank you for the question.

At Environment and Climate Change Canada, we have, within my own branch, the science and technology branch, about 1,500 scientists. That complements scientists who are active in other parts of the department, like the meteorological service of Canada and the Canadian wildlife service that are focused on those particular program areas.

We have networks both domestically and internationally, and we will work with industry, with academic institutions in Canada and also internationally, so you will see us as part of technical working groups, including at the United Nations, where we are working on developing methodologies to be able to ensure that the best avail-

able knowledge in science informs our approaches to modelling in the various disciplines.

Mr. Raj Saini: I'm going to ask you a philosophical question. This is part of my training as a pharmacist.

A lot of the commentary that has been made amongst certain people is that Canada has a very low emission footprint of 1.6%, yet people don't realize that we are one of the highest per capita emitters in the world. We're the 10th highest emitter in the world.

I'm reminded of our history as a country, the moral responsibility we had as a country. In 1921 we invented insulin. At that time we could have been criticized as a small country that did not have that many diabetics, but we felt a moral compunction in the world that, because of our talent—

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: On a point of order, Madam Chair, we were stopped over and over again by colleagues—

Mr. Raj Saini: I'm getting to the point.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: —for irrelevance.

Mr. Raj Saini: I'm getting to the point; I'm building up.

The Chair: He's building up the case.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I'm fascinated to hear how you get this into estimates.

Mr. Raj Saini: This is science. It will be interesting. Just wait and listen.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: I could have given you the same answer.

The Chair: Okay. Bring it to relevance.

Mr. Raj Saini: My point is very simple. We have always been leaders in the world, even though we have a small country and a small footprint. Now we are faced with an existential crisis. What do you think is our role in the world as a country to solve the climate crisis, and what do we—

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: Madam Chair, which line item does that relate to in the supplementaries?

The Chair: That's true. It doesn't. Relevance.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay: It doesn't.

Mr. Raj Saini: We're talking about intellectual property, obviously.

The Chair: It's a philosophical question. There is no line item here that talks about it, but if you want to relate it to a line item like the climate action incentive fund perhaps, then go for it.

Mr. Raj Saini: How is that philosophical question going to relate to the climate action incentive fund?

Mr. John Moffet: Maybe I can respond.

As public servants, we implement decisions made by the government. It's up to elected members, such as you, to make those sorts of decisions.

Many of the programs we implement, ranging from basic science up to regulations and then programs that transfer money to private sector research, development and deployment activities, I think are all related to the government's overall emphasis on addressing climate change, not just as a domestic priority but as a global citizen.

The Chair: You have one minute.

Mr. Raj Saini: I have one minute. Okay.

Here comes a line item question. It's about transfers to other organizations.

We do a lot of work internationally and we also do a lot of work with the United Nations. What work are we doing with the United Nations, and what's our relevance with them?

Mr. John Moffet: I don't think we have anybody from international here, so I'll address the question.

I take it the question was primarily focused on international climate change activities. We have a range of international climate change activities. We are active participants in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is a forum for all countries to come together and basically exhort and create a framework for collective action and individual action. It also does important work on developing rules around such things as tradable emissions permits across countries.

• (1030)

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. John Moffet: I just wanted to emphasize that we also have direct transfer programs to support developing countries, and then we have our domestic R and D, much of which is focused on building Canadian export capacity.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Redekopp, you have five minutes.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: I want to follow on a few things that we've discussed here.

Mr. Mazier, you were talking about modelling and forecasting and all those things and you referred to some of the work that's being done. I'm asking if you could provide to the committee the work product related to the urban and rural work that's been done on the carbon pricing model.

You don't have to answer it now, but could you provide for us the work product related to the modelling and forecasting that you were speaking about, about rural and urban differences, and how you've accommodated that in the carbon pricing model?

Mr. John Moffet: We'll absolutely provide the material the department has developed related primarily to the design and impact of the federal carbon pricing system on the agricultural community.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Madam Pauzé was asking about the grants and contributions of \$4.3 million, and you spoke about what it was generally for. Could you provide us with a list of who it was provided to and the amounts?

Ms. Carol Najm: At this time these are moneys that come into the department in our budget and have not all been fully dispensed.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: What would be an example of some of the organizations these will be paid to, of the ones that have been paid?

Ms. Carol Najm: I would be happy to provide that information. I don't have it with me.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Okay. If you could provide that to the committee, that would be great.

Also, Madam Collins was speaking about the concerns raised by the indigenous groups regarding the Trans Mountain expansion project. We were speaking about accommodation measures and that it was part of a larger program. I have the same question. Who is actually receiving that money? Is there a list we can have to see where this money is actually going?

Mr. John Moffet: Again, those programs are just starting, so very few decisions around disbursements have been made. However, we do have descriptions of the programs, which include descriptions of all of the first nation communities that are participating in the program, and we can provide those descriptions.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: That would be great.

We talked about the operating pressures, which I thought was very interesting terminology. You said that was regarding litigation. Could you speak more about the type of litigation? Who and what are some examples there?

Ms. Carol Najm: The increased cost of litigation is directly related to challenges on carbon pricing, and the public prosecution costs are related to the Volkswagen case.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Part of developing these numbers is the targets that you folks have in the department. I found those on the GC InfoBase website.

I noticed there was a target there on codevelopment of indicators with first nations, Inuit and Métis nations to ensure they are engaged in the implementation of the pan-Canadian framework.

In 2018-19, the targets were to be developed by March 2020. That apparently isn't happening because in the new plan, the new date is "N/A".

I'm wondering if somebody could explain that. Has work been suspended with indigenous people? Where are we regarding that?

Mr. Matt Jones: That's an ongoing process.

The progress has not been as rapid as we had originally anticipated. There has been an engagement process through a number of different programs that are all working with indigenous peoples to ensure that their participation is reflected in the design and implementation of programming. Those indicators are actively being developed by a number of people, but they are not yet complete.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Is there any indication of when that new target will be set?

Mr. Matt Jones: Our hope is that we'll be able to complete that work in the coming fiscal year.

Mr. Brad Redekopp: Okay.

More broadly on targets, there were 56 targets in total for the Environment department. I went through that. I found that 13 had been met, which is about 23%. Are you happy with that result?

These were probably out of the 2018-19 results in the GC InfoBase. Is that reflective of the departmental results that you're getting on indicators?

• (1035)

The Chair: Give a quick 30-second answer please.

Ms. Carol Najm: Yes.

The departmental plan reports annual results. A number of programs that we deliver need a longer period of time in order for us to capture the information on performance. For that reason, the information is not available within the year that the departmental results report is issued. We follow it on a longer term throughout the program life cycle.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Scarpaleggia, you have five minutes.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I have a quick question to begin. Do you have a number that describes how much the department would spend in any given year on programs and activities related to fresh water? Do you have a summary figure, or is it just too difficult to pull together?

Ms. Carol Najm: I know that we do have the information based on our core responsibilities. Water is one of them, but it's not fresh water separately. We would have to get back to you with how we would prepare that.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Would it include oceans?

Ms. Carol Najm: It would include the oceans protection plan.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: I think it would be a useful measure to allow legislators and parliamentarians to get a better grip on this issue in your department. I would also ask the same questions of NRCan and Fisheries, and so on.

I would like to speak about the freshwater action plan. The departmental plan for 2020-21 indicates that funding for the plan will be decreasing in 2022-23. Is that correct?

Ms. Carol Najm: Yes, that's another sunset program.

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Okay. I don't mean to interrupt, but I have limited time.

I'm specifically concerned about the sunset of the funding in budget 2018 for the national hydrological service.

The reason I'm concerned is that, referring to Mr. Redekopp's point, there are only four indicators in the departmental results report of 2018-19 that were not met. Two of these were in relation to water. I will try to find them here.

One of them has to do with the national hydrological service and the satisfaction that the provinces expressed with the service and their interactions with the service.

It says here that in regard to the hydrological service program, the indicator is a percentage of provincial and territorial partners rating their satisfaction with Environment Canada's hydrometric services. The target is 80% and the actual result was 56%.

I am concerned about the fact that funding for the service.... I'm told it is in the process of trying to upgrade its monitoring stations. Is that correct?

Ms. Diane Campbell (Assistant Deputy Minister, Meteorological Service of Canada, Department of the Environment): I'm Diane Campbell, the assistant deputy minister of the meteorological service of Canada.

The funding that was received in the budget that you were referring to was targeted towards three specific themes. One of them was to deal with some serious rust-out in our monitoring equipment. That is midway through the delivery. We have focused on the high-risk stations. We plan to complete that infrastructure renewal by the time the money sunsets.

There were two other elements as well. One was to work more closely with provinces and territories on a number of things, including data-sharing mechanisms, and then to enhance the capability of doing hydrological and weather modelling combined, so prediction.

With respect to the second point you raise on satisfaction, this is part of our ongoing approach in the meteorological service, to always talk to our clients, find out how satisfied they are.

We are definitely acknowledging that the provinces and territories would like to have greater real-time access to data on a number of issues. We have formal mechanisms in place with them where we work with them on a monthly basis to co-deliver the programs but also collect what the needs would be. The way we then work with that data and information is to use that to see the gaps for future programming needs or technological needs or innovation needs in the next cycle of program planning and delivery.

• (1040)

Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia: Will the sunseting of these funds make it harder to upgrade these interactions with the provinces?

Ms. Diane Campbell: We put a specific plan in place when we requested that money. We plan to deliver that but a component of that program also tested the implications of new technologies. It will then give us the pros and cons of introducing new ways of monitoring, and depending on the science results, we would then bring that in to a business case of whether we would implement that more fully after the money has sunsetted.

The Chair: Thank you.

Madam Pauzé, you have two and a half minutes.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you.

My question is for the Parks Canada Agency officials.

The supplementary estimates allocate \$175,000 to the Parks Canada Agency for "innovative approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in government operations". I'd like to hear what those approaches are because I'm always interested in new ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Could you describe some of the approaches for us?

Mr. Michael Nadler (Vice-President, External Relations and Visitor Experience, Parks Canada Agency): Thank you very much for your question.

The Parks Canada Agency is in the midst of setting up a reinvestment program for all of its assets. We are currently fine-tuning the program to make sure we can operate our sites more efficiently in the future and further green our operations. Although nearly all of our operations are affected, it relates primarily to our capital program.

Ms. Monique Pauzé: That's fine, but you didn't provide any specific examples.

When you have some, I'd be interested in hearing about them. When I asked about tree planting, you referred me to Natural Resources Canada, but you are the tree experts. Have you put together a plan setting out the species to be planted? Obviously, there will be mixed vegetation, but what else?

How far along is the work?

[*English*]

Ms. Darlene Upton: That work is beginning now but as I mentioned, Parks Canada is working in collaboration with Environment Canada and Natural Resources Canada to look at developing that plan.

[*Translation*]

Mr. John Moffet: I'd like to add something, if I may.

[*English*]

I think it's important to emphasize that in addition to the expertise of Parks Canada, the Canadian forest service has considerable expertise and they will be leading this exercise.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Thank you.

The Chair: Are you done?

Ms. Monique Pauzé: Yes.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Collins, over to you.

[*English*]

Ms. Laurel Collins: I want to follow up on the questions about the \$2-million transfer, specifically around the investigation into VW. Out of that \$2 million, what were the costs for that litigation?

Ms. Carol Najm: I don't have that information with me.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Could you follow up with a report on the cost breakdown?

Ms. Carol Najm: I will see what is possible because those costs come from public prosecutions. Yes, we can look into it.

Ms. Laurel Collins: And forward it to the committee?

Ms. Carol Najm: Yes.

Ms. Laurel Collins: That would be great.

It's my understanding that there has been no public accounting for the length of the investigation. Do you folks know, especially given the U.S. statement of facts, why it took so long and why we would need to be doing this transfer because of budgetary pressures?

Mr. John Moffet: I don't think we have any information on that. That's an issue that the department doesn't.... As with any department that is involved in prosecution, we provide information and evidence. However, with regard to prosecution decisions and the management of prosecutions, those decisions are all made by the public prosecutor, so those kinds of issues would have to be taken up with them.

Ms. Laurel Collins: My understanding is that it is the enforcement officers who will report to the minister. Is that correct?

Mr. John Moffet: That's correct.

Ms. Laurel Collins: So, they actually would have been undertaking that investigation in the length.

Mr. John Moffet: That's correct.

Ms. Laurel Collins: Is there any way that we could get a follow-up on some kind of public accounting for the length of that investigation and now the impact on our budgetary constraints?

Mr. John Moffet: The money that we were transferring was transferred to the Department of Justice, the public prosecution service—

• (1045)

Ms. Carol Najm: Yes.

Mr. John Moffet: —so that wasn't associated with the length of the investigation.

Ms. Laurel Collins: But it was with the cost of the investigation.

Mr. John Moffet: No.

The Chair: I would like to thank the witnesses for being here. There are a few items that you have promised to send, so the clerk will follow up with you.

With that, the meeting is adjourned.

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