

## ECONEWS #205

A monthly newsletter funded by your donations that dreams of a world blessed by the harmony of nature, the pleasures of community, and the joys of personal fulfillment, guided and protected by our active citizenship.

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### CANADA'S FRUSTRATION

What are other people thinking? It's fascinating to peak inside their minds. This summer, the Pembina Institute commissioned a survey of 5,000 global thought leaders in Canada, US and Europe, and asked various questions relating to sustainability. 68% of the 4,300 Canadian thought leaders were government experts or professionals. 20% were academics, and 12% were from the private sector or non-profit world.

So what are these folks thinking? In the Canadian view, the top priorities for decision-makers are climate change (44%), renewable energy (42%) and water issues (25%). On key topics, this is how many of them rate Canada's performance as *poor* or *very poor*:

Efforts re sustainable energy: 84%

Climate change: 77%

Green economy: 75%

Expanding renewable energy: 68%

Protecting natural ecosystems: 51%

Protecting fresh water: 50%

Health impacts of pollution: 49%

Why is Canada doing such a poor job? 69% think it's the absence of federal leadership. And the best clean energy solutions? The results are encouraging, especially how few think nuclear or clean coal are viable solutions:

Increased energy efficiency: 60%  
Sustainable community design: 57%  
Education and communication: 55%  
Renewable energy: 55%  
Nuclear power: 17%  
Clean coal with carbon capture: 7%

It's also good news that 79% think that Canada should have a carbon tax, either alone (27%) or combined with a cap and trade system (40%). Only 3% think neither is needed. On Alberta's oil/tar sands, 50% think new developments should be suspended, scaled back, or halted permanently, but 46% think they are fine as they are or should be accelerated. 64% think that progress on creating a long-term management plan for the tar sands is poor or terrible.

It is encouraging that so many thought leaders in government think this way; if only we had a way to break the political log-jam in Ottawa, which results in our being governed by people who are so backward in their thinking, and don't represent the way most Canadians think. What can we do? Locally, we can shake things up by electing Elizabeth May as Canada's first Green Party MP in the next federal election in Saanich-Gulf Islands. Both Britain and Australia now have Green Party MPs. Canada must be next! To volunteer to help, go to [www.elizabethmay.ca](http://www.elizabethmay.ca).



### NO COAL MINING IN COMOX

If there's one kind of energy we absolutely must stop, it's coal - and this makes the proposal to start a new underground coal mine in the Comox Valley so wrong, immoral, and ecologically unethical. Burning coal is the #1 cause of global warming, which poses the most terrible threat to our children, our civilization and our planet. Mining and burning coal is like pouring oil into a burning house, instead of water - and our children are still inside the house. The project is called the Raven Underground Coal Project, and it is planned inland from Buckley Bay, opposite Denman Island, in the Tsable

Creek watershed. If allowed, it will produce 2.2 million tonnes of coal a year for 20 years, to be burnt in Asia.

The coal is metallurgical coal, used to make steel, but we can make steel without coal, using hydrogen or biogas; the only reason for the project is financial profit. As for jobs, there could be far more new jobs generated in the Comox Valley if the Chamber of Commerce helped develop a program to help would-be entrepreneurs with business start-ups and cooperatives. All that the coalmine will bring locally is pollution, noise, coal trucks, a few lung-threatening jobs, and guilt.

How can we stop it? It's currently entering the federal environmental assessment process, where we can all have our say. We also need to persuade Premier Campbell to announce "No more coal mines in BC", in keeping with the province's commitment to a green economy. See [www.coalwatch.ca](http://www.coalwatch.ca) and Action of the Month (below).

### THE GREEN TRANSITION

Globally, the transition to a green economy is accelerating. Hazel Henderson is a world famous green economist who has created The Green Transition Scoreboard, which tracks investments in the global green economy using a robust and consistent framework. An annual green investment of \$1 trillion every year is needed to ramp up material and energy efficiencies, and reduce the cost of solar, wind, geothermal, water, sustainable land-use and forestry, totaling \$10 trillion by 2020. To put this in perspective, this would be 10% of the total value of global pension funds and institutional portfolio assets.

So how are we doing? In December 2009, the green invested total was \$1.24 trillion; by August it had risen to \$1.65 trillion. That's a 33% rise, which keeps us on track for \$10 trillion of green investments by 2020.

How can you help? By increasing the share of your pension and other funds that are invested in the new green economy. In Victoria, you can get professional advice on how to green your investments from Frank Arnold, The Pinch Group at Raymond James ([www.pinchgroup.ca](http://www.pinchgroup.ca), 250-405-2420) and Stephen Whipp (250-405-3550 [www.stephenwhipp.com](http://www.stephenwhipp.com)). You can find a nation-wide list of green financial advisers here: [www.socialinvestment.ca/Canadadirectory.htm](http://www.socialinvestment.ca/Canadadirectory.htm).

## AGENDA FOR a NEW ECONOMY

On Thursday September 30<sup>th</sup> the visionary author and lecturer Dr. David Korten will be in Victoria speaking on his new book, *Agenda for a New Economy: From Phantom Wealth to Real Wealth*. With the Wall Street economy showing the full extent of its disastrousness, David Korten is showing how we can reclaim the "Main Street" economy for real values, real goods, and real money. His talk is at Victoria City Hall at 5:30pm, hosted by the Cascadia Green Building Council. See [www.davidkorten.org](http://www.davidkorten.org) and his blog at [yesmagazine.org/blogs/david-korten](http://yesmagazine.org/blogs/david-korten).

### FOOD, LOCALLY FOOD!

*Fresh peppers with mustard*

*Food locally food*

*Glazed apples with custard*

The local food revolution is also speeding along, aided by numerous local champions. When the Moss Street Market was founded in 1992 it was the only one in the whole region. Today, there are at least 16 street markets selling locally grown food in Greater Victoria, and more farms producing organic produce than ever before. We're still got a huge way to go, however, and much farmland seems to be growing hay for horses, rather than real food. Carolyn Herriot, author of best-selling book *The Zero Mile Diet - a Year-Round Guide to Growing Organic Food*, is proposing that 10% of all land zoned agricultural should be required to grow food. South of the border, the newly formed Slow Money Alliance has set a goal that by 2020, a million Americans will be investing 1% of their assets in local food systems. We need the same here. See [www.slowmoneyalliance.org](http://www.slowmoneyalliance.org)

More people are also growing their own food, learning skills that their grandparents took for granted. There are numerous courses and workshops to help us learn - see [www.bit.ly/localfoodevents](http://www.bit.ly/localfoodevents). If you want to grow winter vegetables in your garden this fall, there are winter vegetable bedding plants available from Fiona Chambers at Metchosin Farm. See [www.metchosinfarm.com](http://www.metchosinfarm.com).

There are three big food celebrations coming up on three successive Sundays - Feast of Fields in Metchosin on Sunday Sept 19<sup>th</sup>; Eat Here Now in Centennial Square on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>; and The Chef's Survival Challenge - the Quest of the Golden Broccoli at Madrona Farm on Blenkinsop Road on Sunday October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Many volunteers are needed for this epic event, so if you can help, email [info@chefssurvivalchallenge.com](mailto:info@chefssurvivalchallenge.com), and see [www.chefssurvivalchallenge.com](http://www.chefssurvivalchallenge.com).

Finally, Madrona Farm has been protected forever, thanks to the generous donations of 3000 donors! It is now one of BC's special places, owned by The Land Conservancy. The celebration will be part of the Chef's Survival Challenge on October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### THE ZERO MILE DIET

**A Year-Round Guide  
to Growing Organic Food  
by Carolyn Herriot**

*In all good bookshops and online at  
[www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath](http://www.earthfuture.com/gardenpath)*

### THOSE NASTY PESTICIDES

In April 2009, Ontario banned the cosmetic use of pesticides throughout the province. Since then, streams that were sampled in five areas have shown an 80% reduction in their pesticide loading. This is good news for all the streams, the wildlife, and the humans who will no longer be exposed to toxic chemicals for the sake of a few less dandelions. Here in BC, the Liberal government is still sitting on its hands when it comes to action, even though 88% of the respondents to its public consultation called for such a ban. Enough with these toxics! To get involved, and take action, see [www.pesticidefreebc.org](http://www.pesticidefreebc.org)

### GLOBAL ILLEGAL LOGGING

There's good news from Ecuador, where a historic agreement has been reached to save the Yasuni National Park from exploration for oil. An International Trust Fund has been set up to compensate Ecuador for not exploiting its oil resources, but it needs pledges of \$100 million over the next 18 months, to activate it, towards a total of \$3.6 billion. So far, Germany has committed \$50 million, but no-one else.

There's also good news from Indonesia, which has placed a two-year moratorium on all new forest clearing, under a partnership in which Norway will invest \$1 billion to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through forest destruction.

Globally, illegal logging in the world's forests declined by 22% in the past decade, but it's still a huge problem, with 100 million cubic metres of illegal timber being cut down every year, according to a new report from Britain's Chatham House - enough to circle the world ten times with logs laid end to end. Illegal logging has fallen by 50% in Cameroon, 50-75% in the Brazilian Amazon, and 75% in Indonesia, but it still accounts for between 35-72% of logging in the

Brazilian Amazon and 40-61% in Indonesia, which will presumably continue in spite of the new moratorium. China is the world's top importer and re-exporter of illegal wood. In the US it is now illegal to handle illegally harvested timber, and this July, the European Parliament overwhelmingly approved a similar crackdown, voting 644-25 in favour. Does Canada have similar legislation? Not that I've heard of, and there are very dubious auctions of unlabelled imported timber that happen locally.

What can we do ourselves? When buying timber, aim to use recycled timber, or timber that has been certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. If you must buy exotic hardwoods, ask your local timber store where the wood comes from, and for evidence that it has not been imported from China.

### ACTION OF THE MONTH

#### NO COAL MINING IN THE COMOX VALLEY

If we all push together, we can stop the planned coalmine in its tracks. There are three avenues open to us:

1. Write letters to your local paper - they do get noticed.
2. Write to Premier Campbell and BC Minister of Energy Bill Bennett, urging them to place a moratorium on all new coal-mining in BC until full carbon capture and sequestration has been adopted by the nations we export to. Write to [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca) and [EMPR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EMPR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)
3. File a comment in the federal environmental assessment process (deadline Sept 20<sup>th</sup>) asking:

(a) That the Minister refer the environmental assessment of Compliance Coal Corporation's proposed Raven Underground Coal Project to a joint federal/provincial independent expert Review Panel for full public hearings (CEAR reference 10-03-55529).

(b) That before any consideration is given to the project, comprehensive aquifer mapping and modeling of the entire Raven coal tenure be completed and publicly vetted, to understand the hydrology of the affected watersheds (Cowie/Cougar Smith Creek, Tsable River, Wilfred Creek, Hindoo Creek, which all flow into Baynes Sound. Write to [Raven@ceaaa-acee.gc.ca](mailto:Raven@ceaaa-acee.gc.ca), with copies to [env.minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:env.minister@gov.bc.ca) and [info@coalwatch.ca](mailto:info@coalwatch.ca)