



Published Plan and Annual Report: Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

Plan for 2016-2017 and results and outcomes of all provincial programs delivered by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in 2015-2016

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Ministry overview

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) protects and improves the quality of the environment and leads Ontario's actions on climate change leading to healthier communities, ecological protection and economic prosperity for present and future generations. The ministry does this by:

- Using best available science and research to develop and deliver policies, legislation, regulations, standards, programs and services.
- Enforcing compliance with environmental laws.
- Working with partner ministries, other governments, Indigenous partners and organizations, industry, stakeholders and the public.
- Monitoring and reporting to track environmental progress.

Ministry Contribution to Priorities and Results

The ministry is instrumental in supporting the government's priority outcome of being a leader on environmental sustainability. We are the lead ministry responsible for co-ordinating the province's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas pollution, address the risks and opportunities associated with climate change, and are working with other jurisdictions through partnerships, agreements and continued collaboration to position Ontario as a leader in the fight against climate change.

Our programs also support the government's priority of a supportive and dynamic business environment (e.g. Modernization of Approvals, Open For Business), modernized infrastructure and transportation networks (e.g. transit environmental assessments), and a healthier population (e.g. asthma).

Ministry Programs and Activities

The ministry protects Ontario's water, land and air by developing and implementing legislation, policies and programs that provide a healthy environment for a strong Ontario. It also works with other ministries, levels of

government and stakeholders to reduce the emissions that lead to climate change, and develop communities and an economy resilient against the effects of a changing climate.

Combating Climate Change and Protecting Ontario's Air

The ministry continues to take action to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, adapt to climate change and protect the air we breathe.

The province announced in April 2015 that it will impose a hard ceiling on greenhouse gas emissions in all sectors of the economy through a cap and trade program. Cap and trade effectively reduces the amount of greenhouse gas pollution in our atmosphere by setting a limit on emissions, rewarding innovative companies, providing certainty for industries, and creating more opportunities for investment in Ontario.

- The cap will be reduced gradually over time to ensure Ontario meets its 2050 target.
- Cap and trade will also help Ontario's clean technology sector position itself to take advantage of the growing worldwide market for advanced clean technology.
- Ontario intends to link its cap and trade system with existing Québec-California carbon markets.
- Ontario posted its draft cap and trade regulatory proposal on the Environmental and Regulatory registries on February 25, 2016 for a 45-day public and stakeholder comment period.

In November 2015, Ontario released its Climate Change Strategy which sets out the government's vision for Ontario to 2050, and outlines the path to a prosperous, climate resilient, low-carbon society where GHG reduction is part of our growth, efficiency and productivity.

Ontario has already begun putting its [Climate Change Strategy](#) into action through investments from the \$325 million Green Investment Fund. Green Investment Fund projects include [more electric vehicle fast-charging stations](#), [energy retrofits for single family homes](#) and [affordable housing](#), [support for Aboriginal communities and energy efficient investments in industry and small- and medium-sized businesses](#). The Green Investment Fund is a \$325 million down payment on the province's cap and trade program to strengthen the economy, create jobs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Ontario laid the foundation to join the biggest carbon market in North America by introducing new legislation on February 24, 2016, that, if passed, would provide a strong foundation for the cap and trade program and ensure that proceeds from the province's cap and trade system are transparently invested into green projects and actions that will reduce greenhouse gas pollution.

Under the proposed *Climate Change Mitigation and Low Carbon Economy Act*, all proceeds from Ontario's cap and trade program would be deposited into a new Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account. This account would only fund projects and initiatives aimed at reducing emissions. The Act, if passed, will enshrine Ontario's 2020, 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets in law, and require the government to prepare a climate change action plan to meet targets with progress reports and reviews of the plan at least every five years.

Ontario will release a Climate Change Action Plan in spring 2016. The Action Plan will include actions to meet Ontario's 2020 greenhouse gas emissions target, while enabling the longer term transition to a highly productive low-carbon economy.

Other climate change initiatives include:

- Being one of the 12 founding subnational signatories to an agreement ("Under 2 MOU") to limit the Earth's warming to below 2 degrees Celsius, which Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scientists say is needed to avoid dangerous climate change.
- Attending the Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris, France in December 2015 to continue building on Ontario's leadership in the fight against climate change.
- At COP21, Manitoba, Ontario and Québec signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation on

climate change. The agreement is based on the 2015 'Concerted Climate Change Actions and Market-Based Mechanisms MOU' between Ontario and Québec.

- Passing legislation in November 2015 to permanently ban coal-fired electricity generation in the province — a first in North America and a significant step in the fight against climate change.
- Hosting more than 300 delegates at the Climate Summit of the Americas in July 2015 — a forum to advance subnational leadership on climate change.
- Announcing a new mid-term target (2030) in May 2015 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 37 per cent below 1990 levels, as part of Ontario's action against climate change. Ontario is the first province in Canada to set a mid-term greenhouse gas pollution reduction target for 2030.
- Expanding the use of more environmentally friendly transportation fuels through measures such as Ontario's Greener Diesel and Ethanol in Gasoline regulations to reduce emissions, improve air quality and address climate change.
- Continuing to implement Ontario's Landfill Gas Capture regulation that requires large landfills to capture and destroy landfill gas generated. Landfill Gas contains methane, which is a potent greenhouse gas.
- Developing a scientific understanding of the effects of climate change in the Hudson Bay Lowlands.
- Implementing Climate Ready: Ontario's Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan — a total of 37 actions across 12 ministries to help Ontario adapt to and minimize the impacts of climate change including:
 - *Passing the Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015* , to protect and improve the capacity of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin to respond to the impacts and causes of climate change.
 - Issuing an updated Provincial Policy Statement that requires consideration of the impacts of a changing climate in infrastructure, electricity generation facilities, transmission and distribution systems, and public service facilities.
 - Undertaking climate change vulnerability assessments on three public buildings and the Union Water Supply System in Leamington to assess potential climate change impacts.
 - Releasing Building Together, Ontario's long term infrastructure plan that requires climate change considerations in asset management plans.
- Introducing a new regulation (*O. Reg. 79/15*) under the *Environmental Protection Act* in May 2015 that allows cement, lime, iron and steel facilities operating in Ontario to apply to the Ministry for approval to use alternative, less carbon-intensive fuels instead of coal and coke. Industry accounted for 28 per cent of GHG emissions in Ontario in 2013.

Improving Ontario's Air:

In March 2016, Ontario released its 2014 Air Quality in Ontario report which shows people of Ontario are breathing cleaner air today than a decade ago.

There were no smog advisories in 2014 and the province's air was rated very good or good for 94 per cent of the year.

On June 24, 2015, Ontario launched the new air quality health index to help people better understand what the quality of the air means to their health just like the UV index keeps them from the harmful effects of too much sun. The new index ranks air quality from 1 to 10 – the lower the number, the lower the risk.

Other initiatives to improve Ontario's air include:

- Operating a network of 39 ambient air monitoring stations across the province to supply the public with real-time air pollutant data.
- Reducing emissions of smog precursors (nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide and volatile organic compounds) and air pollutants in Ontario.
- Reducing vehicle emissions of smog-causing pollutants through Drive Clean. On February 25, 2016, Ontario

announced it would eliminate the \$30 fee that drivers pay for their Drive Clean emissions tests.

- Regulating emissions of air pollutants from industrial facilities.
- Developing an updated air standard for sulphur dioxide.
- Developing and implementing comprehensive technical standards for industrial sectors that are making efforts in meeting air quality standards.
- Implementing air zone management in Ontario as agreed by the Council of Canadian Environment Ministers.
- Working with neighbouring provinces, the federal government, and U.S. government to seek reductions in trans-boundary impacts of U.S. emissions of smog causing pollutants.

Pollinator Health

In January 2016, a draft action plan to improve pollinator health and reduce losses was posted on the Environmental Registry for comment.

On July 1, 2015, new regulatory requirements under the *Pesticides Act* came into effect. These new rules for the sale and use of certain pesticides were designed to protect the health of Ontario's pollinators.

The intent of the regulatory changes is to reduce the number of acres planted with neonicotinoid insecticide treated corn and soybean seeds by 80 percent by 2017.

Protecting Ontario's Water

The ministry is working to make Ontario the North American leader in water protection and innovation and to sustain Ontario's water resources for future generations. We continue to protect our water resources by:

- Providing the province new tools to protect and restore watersheds, beaches, wetlands and coastal areas of the Great Lakes and the waterways that flow into them through the *Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015* which received Royal Assent.
- Holding the inaugural meeting of the Great Lakes Guardians' Council on March 22, 2016.
- Implementing Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy, including:
 - Helping communities protect their corner of the Great Lakes through the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund.
 - Implementing the 8th Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health, 2014 (COA) including developing targets and actions for nutrients.
- Implementing Ontario's commitment to the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement. This includes strengthening protection of the Great Lakes through new water taking rules to manage large water withdrawals and transfers within the Great Lakes basin. Consistent with the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement signed by Ontario, Québec, and the eight Great Lakes states.
- Working with partners in Canada and the United States through the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement to establish nutrient targets and actions.
- On May 29, 2015, Ontario and Québec announced the creation of a joint Ontario-Québec Committee on Water Management to facilitate co-operation, information sharing and to search for common solutions on a wide range of water management issues, including the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, the Ottawa River, Lake Temiskaming and Lake Abitibi.
- Keeping Ontario's drinking water among the best protected and highest quality in the world through our safety net framework – a comprehensive approach to protecting drinking water from source to tap.
- Consulting on updates to the drinking water standards for arsenic, carbon tetrachloride, benzene, and vinyl chloride as well as adopting new standards for chlorate, chlorite, 2-methyl-4-chlorophenoxyacetic acid [MCPA], and haloacetic acids [HAAs].

- Ensuring 22 locally developed source protection plans are implemented and updated as needed to ensure sources of municipal drinking water are protected into the future.
- Informing the public about the quality of Ontario's drinking water through the Chief Drinking Water Inspector's Annual Report and the Minister's Annual Report on Drinking Water. The ministry released 2014-15 drinking water data to the Open Data catalogue.
- Implementing the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.
- Developed a framework for a long-term plan to improve drinking water quality on First Nations reserves.
- Engaging with First Nations and the federal government to determine a path forward on a long-term sustainable plan for drinking water.
- Collaborating with First Nations and the federal government to fund clean drinking water through the Small Communities Fund of the federal Building Canada Program.

Resource Recovery, Waste Reduction and Land Quality

On November 26, 2015, the government introduced Bill 151, the *Waste-Free Ontario Act* that consists of two pieces of proposed legislation, (the *Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act* (RRCEA) and the *Waste Diversion Transition Act*) to transform Ontario's waste diversion system to support a circular economy.

The ministry continues to take action to ensure that Ontario has an effective waste management framework by preparing a draft Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario: Building the Circular Economy, which was also released for public comment on November 26, 2015.

The draft Strategy, which is required through the RRCEA, would act as a roadmap to help Ontario leverage planning, policy and economic tools to reduce waste, improve resource recovery, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the waste sector. If completed, key actions identified in the draft Strategy include:

- Developing policy statements to provide further direction on matters of the provincial interest.
- Establish a non-crown, not-for-profit oversight body to oversee producer responsibility regime.
- Transitioning existing waste diversion programs under the *Waste Diversion Act, 2002* to new producer responsibility regime.
- Designating new materials under the RRCEA producer responsibility regime to increase diversion.
- Conducting a review of the 3R regulations made under the *Environmental Protection Act* to increase diversion in the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional sector.
- Developing an organics action plan to increase organics diversion.
- Both the proposed legislation and draft Strategy were posted on the Environmental Registry for over three months for public comment. The comment period closed February 29, 2016.

Other initiatives to support resource recovery, waste reduction and land quality include:

- Requiring and monitoring the safe management and disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.
- Moving towards a full cost recovery model by phasing in increases to existing user fees, including hazardous waste fees, in line with recommendations from the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services.
- Improving environmental recycling standards to ensure appropriate management of end-of-life vehicles and metal scrap.
- Implementing legislative and regulatory requirements for brownfields to ensure the proper clean-up and redevelopment of brownfield sites.
- Updating the approvals process for brownfields, making changes that streamline the process but continue to ensure that human health and the environment are fully protected.
- Developing an Excess Soil Management Policy Framework which addresses potentially contaminated soil from brownfields and other development sites.

- Collaborating with other ministries to integrate environmental planning direction into land use planning policies such as the Provincial Policy Statement, Growth Plan, Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and Niagara Escarpment Plan.

Open For Business/Modernization of Approvals

The ministry continues to transform its environmental approvals process by:

- Building on its new leading edge, risk-based approvals approach which protects the environment and human health while meeting service standards through process improvements, electronic service delivery and strategic application of resources.
- Evaluating opportunities to extend the new framework to other ministry permit, license and approval programs, while maintaining strong environmental protection.
- Contributing to the government's goal to reduce compliance costs by \$100 million by 2017 via burden reduction initiatives, as required by the *Better Business Climate Act 2014*.
- Continuing to review renewable energy approvals to ensure human health and the environment are protected while Ontario increases renewable energy capacity to create green jobs, reduce greenhouse gas pollution, and improve air quality.

Effective Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement

The ministry's research, monitoring, inspection, investigations and enforcement activities are integral to achieving Ontario's environmental goals. Actions include:

- Conducting monitoring programs to understand the impacts of human activities on our environment.
- Identifying emerging environmental concerns and tracking progress on solving problems.
- Analyzing and testing water, air and soil samples in the ministry's laboratories.
- Establishing baseline data to support the development of a long-term environmental monitoring program in the Far North.
- Undertaking studies on pollinator health and pesticide exposure with The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), and examining science from other organizations.
- Co-ordinating regional baseline environmental monitoring for the Ring of Fire.
- Incorporating the principles of a modern regulator into compliance-based activities, and working with other compliance-based ministries to protect the environment and human health.
- Carrying out inspections, investigations and prosecutions of regulatory programs based on risk using a variety of compliance tools, to protect the environment and human health from regulatory non-compliance, incidents and spills, and to address complaints.
- Inspecting municipal residential drinking water systems on an annual basis, and labs licensed to carry out drinking water testing a minimum of twice a year.
- Conducting risk-based non-hazardous and hazardous waste program inspections and compliance activities to uncover new concerns and address non-compliance issues. Supporting local community environmental projects with funds collected through environmental penalties.
- Working with industry, stakeholders, and the public to ensure compliance with environmental standards.

Reducing Toxics in the Environment

The ministry is taking action to reduce Ontarians' exposure to toxic substances by:

- Requiring regular reporting by facilities on toxic substances and providing information to Ontarians on toxic substances and toxics reduction actions taken by facilities, including by:
 - Releasing Ontario's third annual toxics reduction report. Since our last report, Ontario has taken a range

of progressive steps that are helping reduce substances in our air, land and water. The report demonstrates Ontario's progress in implementing the *Toxics Reduction Act* . It includes updates such as the launch of the Living List process, and provides information on substances used and created by companies in 2013-14.

- Releasing new data about the amount of toxic substances companies have used, created, and discharged in 2013, as well as summaries of plans developed for reducing toxic substances.
- Requiring and supporting Ontario manufacturing and mineral processing facilities to look for opportunities to reduce their use, creation and discharge of toxic substances.
- Considering changes to the prescribed list under the *Toxics Reduction Act* through the launch of the Living List Framework.
- Enforcing the ban on the sale and use of cosmetic pesticides.
- Enabling the development and sale of green alternatives such as biopesticides and lower risk pesticides that have low toxicity to humans, minimal impact to the environment and that act in a non-toxic way in controlling intended pests.

Ministry Administration

Ministry administration enables the ministry to deliver its core business and achieve its vision.

Ministry administration provides management leadership and strategic advice including financial management, controllership, human resource management, legal counsel, communications, audit services, French language services and administrative services in support of all business areas.

It also includes the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry and addressing requests under the *Freedom of Information Act* , both of which enable citizen participation in government decisions, and provides information to the public on environmental initiatives.

Greening Internal Operations

The ministry continues to look for ways to reduce its environmental footprint and encourage its partners, stakeholders and suppliers to adopt environmentally sustainable practices.

The ministry monitors and reduces its carbon footprint by:

- Promoting energy and water conservation and energy efficiency.
- Developing and supporting government-wide greening and sustainability initiatives, including carbon reduction projects.
- Engaging staff at the MOECC and the OPS in greening through environmental events and employee recognition programs.
- Tracking the ministry's greenhouse gas emissions over time.
- Purchasing green electricity (since 2008) and green natural gas (since 2013) dramatically reducing the ministry's carbon footprint. This yielded a reduction of about 4,500 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) in 2013.

Table 1: Ministry Planned Expenditures 2016-17

MOECC Operating	\$342,959,714
MOECC Capital	\$6,195,000
MOECC Total	\$349,154,714
Ontario Clean Water Agency Operating	\$179,084,500

Ontario Clean Water Agency Capital	\$3,115,200
Consolidated Total	\$531,354,414

Highlights of 2015-16 achievements

Combating Climate Change and Protecting Ontario's Air

- Introduced the proposed *Climate Change Mitigation and Low Carbon Economy Act* on February 24, 2016, that, if passed, would ensure that proceeds from the province's cap and trade system are transparently reinvested into green projects and actions that will reduce greenhouse gas pollution.
- Posted a draft cap and trade regulatory proposal on the Environmental and Regulatory registries on February 25, 2016 for a 45-day public and stakeholder comment period.
- The proposed Act also enshrines Ontario's 2020, 2030 and 2050 emission reduction targets in law and requires the government to prepare and implement a climate change action plan to achieve targets with progress reports and a review of the plan at least every 5 years.
- These actions help lay the foundation for future reductions and prosperity, contributing towards the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services recommendation to assign higher priority to programs and activities that invest in the future as opposed to those that serve the current status quo.
- Launched the \$325 million Green Investment Fund to support projects that reduce GHG emissions, including [more electric vehicle fast-charging stations](#), [energy retrofits for single family homes](#) and [affordable housing](#), and [support for Aboriginal communities and energy efficiency investments in industry and small and medium sized businesses](#). The Green Investment Fund is a \$325-million down payment on the province's cap and trade program to strengthen the economy, create jobs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Passed legislation in November 2015, The *Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act*, to permanently ban coal-fired electricity generation in the province - a first in North America. Phasing out coal-fired electricity generation is one of the largest climate change initiatives completed to date in North America.
- Completed province wide public and stakeholders consultations on climate change.
- Released a Climate Change Strategy, which sets out the government's vision for Ontario to 2050, and outlines the path to a prosperous, low-carbon society where GHG reduction is part of our growth, efficiency and productivity.
- A key measure highlighted in the Strategy is integrating climate change mitigation and adaptation considerations into government decision-making and infrastructure planning, consistent with the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services' recommendation to ensure that policy development in the public service is evidence based.
- Participated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in Paris, building new global partnerships to help in the fight against climate change. At COP21, Manitoba, Ontario and Québec signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation on Climate Change. The agreement is based on the Ontario-Québec 2015 Concerted Climate Change Actions and Market-Based Mechanisms [MOU](#) which was signed in September 2015 to facilitate collaboration and implement the provinces' joint intention to link the Québec carbon market to that being developed in Ontario.
- Adopted a new mid-term target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 37 per cent below 1990 levels.
- Hosted the Climate Summit of the Americas in Toronto in July 2015, an event that helped build momentum towards global climate change action.

Pollinator Health

- Posted a draft action plan on the Environmental Registry for comment in January 2016 to improve pollinator health and reduce losses.

- New regulatory requirements under the *Pesticides Act* came into effect on July 1, 2015, for the sale and use of certain pesticides that will protect the health of Ontario's pollinators.
- Initiated a new multi-media monitoring study in 2015 to measure changes in neonicotinoid concentrations in the environment following new regulatory requirements governing the sale and use of neonicotinoid pesticides.
- Developed analytical methods to assess neonicotinoids to protect pollinators.

Protecting Ontario's Water

- Held third biennial Science Forum to share how collaborative monitoring and research are helping to protect and restore Lake Simcoe and its watershed.
- Released 2014 Lake Simcoe Monitoring Report, synthesizing results from multi-agency monitoring of key indicators to support evidence-based decision making adaptive management.
- Released Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy for Lake Simcoe, which identified the state of monitoring, data management and reporting of environmental information on Lake Simcoe and its watershed.
- As per 2014-15 Chief Drinking Water Inspector's Report, 99.79 per cent of the more than 533,000 drinking water test results from municipal residential drinking water systems met Ontario's rigorous, health-based standards.
- Approved all 22 locally developed source protection plans.
- Ontario's *Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015* (GLPA) received Royal Assent on November 3, 2015. The GLPA gives the province new tools to protect and restore watersheds, beaches, wetlands and coastal areas of the Great Lakes and the waterways that flow into them.
- Held Ontario's first meeting of the Great Lakes Guardians' Council in March 2016. The meeting is a forum to improve collaboration and coordination among Ontario's Great Lakes partners, established by the GLPA.
- Released the First Progress Report on Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy in spring 2016.
- Delivered year three of the five year Canada-Ontario Agreement/Great Lakes Strategy work plan, including more than 220 Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs projects that support Ontario's commitments in the Great Lakes Strategy, *Great Lakes Protection Act*, and the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (2014).
- Supported grass roots groups by awarding \$4.5 million in grants to 221 community-based projects since 2012-13 through the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund.

Resource Recovery, Waste Reduction and Land Quality

- Introduced the proposed *Waste-Free Ontario Act* in November 2015 that, if passed, would increase resource recovery and waste reduction in Ontario, create jobs while helping fight climate change.
- Released the draft Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario: Building the Circular Economy in November 2015 for public comment. The draft Strategy would act as a roadmap to help Ontario leverage existing planning, policy and economic tools to reduce waste, improve resource recovery, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the waste sector.

Open For Business/Modernization of Approvals

- Saved businesses an estimated \$33 million since 2011 through a new approach to environmental approvals, which introduced a registry for standard, low risk, well-understood business activities.
- Took the first step in bringing the Hazardous Waste program to full program cost recovery by implementing phase 1 of the Hazardous Waste Fee increase in January 2016.
- Called for applications for the 2016 Ontario Community Environment Fund to award about \$325,000, which will be shared among 19 watersheds across the province where environmental penalties were collected. Funded environmental projects in 10 affected communities through the 2015 Ontario Community Environment Fund.

- Passed the Alternative Low-Carbon Fuels Regulation (*O. Reg 79/15*) in May 2015 under the *Environmental Protection Act* to allow cement, lime, iron and steel facilities operating in Ontario to apply to the ministry for approval to use alternative, less carbon-intensive fuels in place of coal and coke.
- Launched the Living List framework on October 13, 2015 and accepting nominations for changes to the list of prescribed substances under the *Toxics Reduction Act*.

Effective Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement

- Delivered more than 8,800 inspections and compliance activities across the province in 2014-15. The ministry's regional offices conducted over 4,000 proactive and responsive inspections in 2014-15.

Reducing Toxics in the Environment

- Released the first and second Minister's Annual Report on Toxics Reduction in December 2012 and April 2013, and the third annual report in February 2016.
- Launched an online tool on the ministry's website to track and map toxics around the province, toxic reduction actions taken by facilities and to provide information from more than 1,000 facilities about their use, creation and release of toxics.

Greening Internal Operations

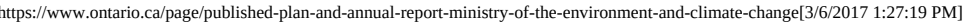
- Continued using green natural gas and green electricity at 135 St. Clair Avenue West and 125 Resources Road. Both buildings meet all their heating, cooling and electrical needs through green energy.

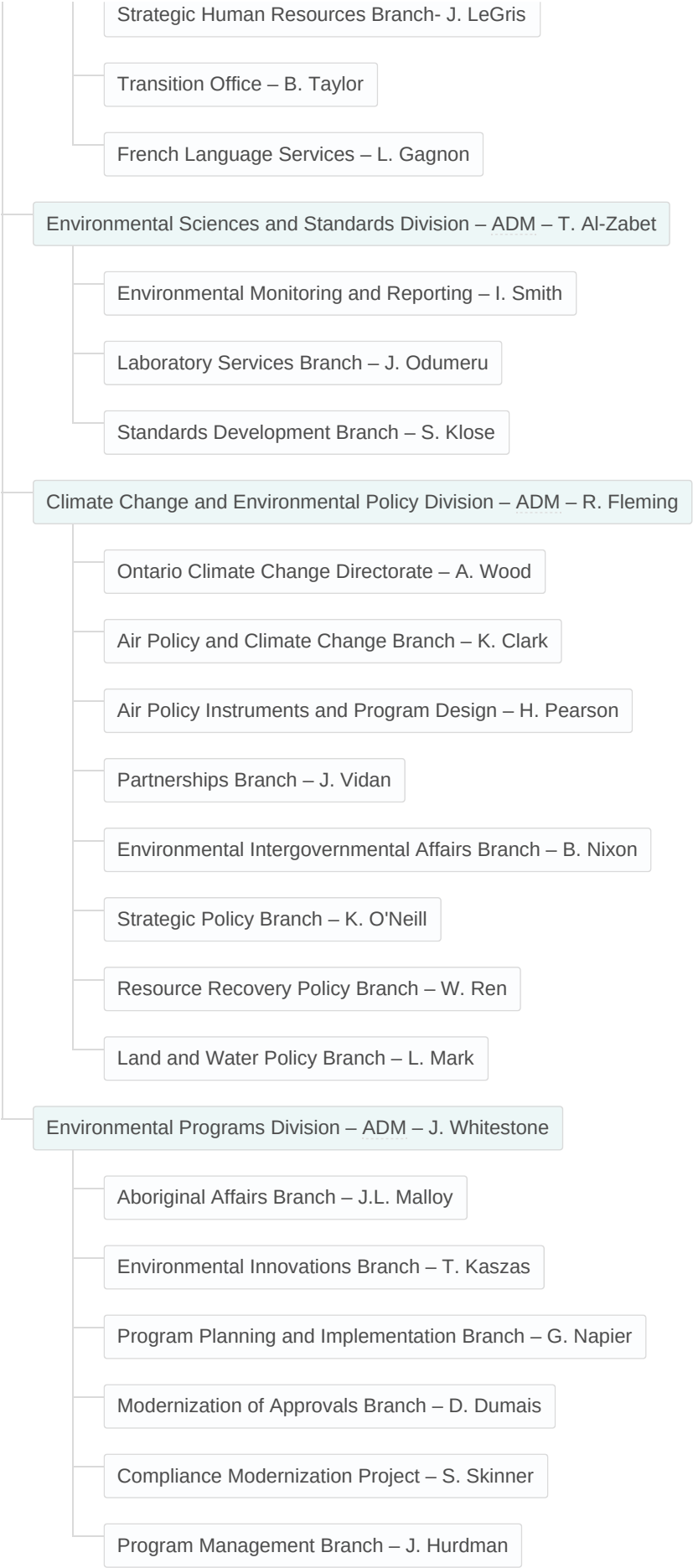
Refer to the Appendix for details of the ministry's achievements in fiscal year 2015-16.

Ministry organization chart

This is a text version of the organizational chart for the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change as of February 2016. The chart shows the following hierarchical structure with the top level assigned to the Minister.







Agencies, boards and committees (ABCs)

Agencies, Boards and Committees	Description	Estimates 2016-17 \$	Interim Actuals 2015-16 \$	Actuals 2014-15 \$
Advisory Council on Drinking Water Quality and Testing Standards	Provide technical and scientific advice and recommendations related to standards for drinking-water quality and testing	\$118,100	\$129,334	\$188,183
Lake Simcoe Science & Coordinating Committees	Co-ordinate implementation of Lake Simcoe Protection Plan; identify & resolve issues; advise re: Lake Simcoe watershed	\$10,000	\$9,876	\$9,323
Ontario Pesticides Advisory Committee	Annually review the <i>Pesticides Act</i> recommend changes/amendments; review related publications and pest control products prior to use in Ontario	\$123,400	\$92,084	\$113,936
Total Agencies, Boards & Committees (ABCs)		\$251,500	\$231,294	\$311,442

Note: Detailed financial information for Ontario Clean Water Agency and Walkerton Clean Water Centre is provided in their Business Plans.

Legislation administered by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

- *Adams Mine Lake Act, 2004*
- *Capital Investment Plan Act, 1993* (Part IV re: Ontario Clean Water Agency only)
- *Clean Water Act, 2006*
- *Consolidated Hearings Act*
- *Environmental Assessment Act*
- *Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993*
- *Environmental Protection Act*
- *Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015*
- *Lake Simcoe Protection Act, 2008*
- *Ministry of the Environment Act*
- *Municipal Water and Sewage Transfer Act, 1997*
- *Nutrient Management Act, 2002* (together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs)
- *Ontario Water Resources Act*
- *Pesticides Act*
- *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*
- *Toxics Reduction Act, 2009*
- *Waste Diversion Act, 2002*
- *Water Opportunities Act, 2010* (except for Part II)

Detailed financial information

Table 2: Combined Operating and Capital Summary by Vote

Votes/Programs	Estimates 2016-17 \$	Change from Estimates 2015-16 \$	%	Estimates 2015-16 \$	Interim Actuals 2015-16 \$	Actuals 2014-15 \$
OPERATING EXPENSE						
Ministry Administration	22,682,500	100	0.0	22,682,400	23,103,298	22,829,149
Environmental Planning and Analysis	70,030,200	18,554,700	36.0	51,475,500	55,291,141	53,091,371
Environmental Science and Information	63,419,800	1,490,500	2.4	61,929,300	67,217,537	65,388,201
Environmental Protection	186,760,900	(3,499,100)	(1.8)	190,260,000	180,419,049	181,351,927
Total Operating Expense to be Voted	342,893,400	16,546,200	5.1	326,347,200	326,031,025	322,660,648
Statutory Appropriations	66,314	300	0.5	66,014	66,014	75,961
Ministry Total Operating Expense	342,959,714	16,546,500	5.1	326,413,214	326,097,039	322,736,609
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Ontario Clean Water Agency	179,084,500	10,303,400	6.1	168,781,100	168,356,367	158,610,105
Total Including Consolidation & Other Adjustments	522,044,214	26,849,900	5.4	495,194,314	494,453,406	481,346,714
CAPITAL EXPENSE						
Environmental Protection	2,623,000	1,015,000	63.1	1,608,000	1,966,315	2,126,579
Total Capital Expense to be Voted	2,623,000	1,015,000	63.1	1,608,000	1,966,315	2,126,579
Statutory Appropriations	3,572,000	157,000	4.6	3,415,000	4,331,900	246,498
Ministry Total Capital Expense	6,195,000	1,172,000	23.3	5,023,000	6,298,215	2,373,077
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Ontario Clean Water Agency	3,115,200	67,300	2.2	3,047,900	2,862,700	2,746,204
Total Including Consolidation & Other Adjustments	9,310,200	1,239,300	15.4	8,070,900	9,160,915	5,119,281
CAPITAL ASSETS						
Environmental Protection						

	4,555,000	(15,000)	(0.3)	4,570,000	1,570,000	6,548,732
Total Capital Assets to be Voted	4,555,000	(15,000)	(0.3)	4,570,000	1,570,000	6,548,732
Ministry Total Capital Assets	4,555,000	(15,000)	(0.3)	4,570,000	1,570,000	6,548,732
Ministry Total Operating and Capital Including Consolidation and Other Adjustments (not including Assets)	531,354,414	28,089,200	5.6	503,265,214	503,614,321	486,465,995

Key Performance Measures and Achievements					
Performance Measures	Target	2012-13 Achievement	2013-14 Status/Achievement	2014-15 Status/Achievement	2015-16 Status/Achievement
Reduction in Ontario-based Sulphur dioxide (SO ₂) emissions that contributes to acid rain.	62% reduction from 1990 levels by 2015	261 kilotonnes emitted in 2011 SO ₂ emission levels are 77% below 1990 levels ¹ .	253 kilotonnes emitted in 2012; SO ₂ emission levels are 78% below 1990 levels ¹ .	268 kilotonnes emitted in 2013; SO ₂ emission levels are 77% below 1990 levels ¹ .	257 kilotonnes emitted in 2014; SO ₂ emission levels are 78% below 1990 levels ¹ (preliminary results).
Reduction in Ontario-based Nitrogen oxide (NO _x) emissions.	45% reduction from 1990 levels by 2015	382 kilotonnes emitted in 2011 NO _x emission levels are 48% below 1990 levels ¹ .	353 kilotonnes emitted in 2012; NO _x emission levels are 52% below 1990 levels ¹ .	333 kilotonnes emitted in 2013; NO _x emission levels are 55% below 1990 levels ¹ .	312 kilotonnes emitted in 2014; NO _x emission levels are 58% below 1990 levels ¹ (preliminary results).
Reduction in Ontario-based Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) emissions.	45% reduction from 1990 levels by 2015	427 kilotonnes emitted in 2011 VOC emission levels are 57% below 1990 levels ¹ .	405 kilotonnes emitted in 2012 VOC emission levels are 59% below 1990 levels ¹ .	358 kilotonnes emitted in 2013 VOC emission levels are 64% below 1990 levels ¹ .	353 kilotonnes emitted in 2014; VOC emission levels are 64% below 1990 levels ¹ (preliminary results).
Electricity sector compliance with O.Reg 397/01. (Emissions Trading)	100% Compliance	100% compliance. In 2012, the reported total NO _x emissions from PEMA facilities in Ontario are 12.0 kt which are 69% below the 39 kt Ozone Annex commitment.	100% compliance. In 2013, the reported total NO _x emissions from PEMA facilities in Ontario are 9.8 kt which are 75% below the 39 kt Ozone Annex commitment.	100% compliance. In 2014, the reported total NO _x emissions from PEMA facilities in Ontario are 3.9 kt which are 90% below the 39 kt Ozone Annex commitment.	No updates as results not available at time for printing
Develop protective air quality standards to	Development of new and updated air standards for 70 substances	The ministry continues to consider 7 remaining high priority substances,	The ministry continues to consider 7 remaining high priority substances, and is	The ministry has reviewed the science underpinning the draft SO ₂ Canadian Ambient	The ministry is updating the air standard for SO ₂ ; is participating on the development of a

reduce industrial toxic emissions.	identified as high priority in 1999.	and is tracking the progress of the federal government's review of the 2 additional substances.	tracking the progress of the federal government's review of the 2 additional substances.	Air Quality Standards, which will inform a proposed update to the Ontario SO ₂ air standards. SO ₂ and the 7 remaining substances remain priorities for regulatory update.	Canadian ambient air quality standard for NO ₂ and is considering the 7 remaining priorities for standards update.
Industry compliance with regulation capping smog-causing emissions (reductions of NO _x and SO ₂ emissions from 30 specified large emitters).	100% Compliance-Facilities report their annual NO _x and (or SO ₂) emissions and retire sufficient allowances/credit by March 31 each year for the previous compliance year.	100% compliance for the 2012 compliance year.	100% compliance for the 2013 compliance year.	100% compliance for the 2014 compliance year.	No updates as results not available at time for printing
Economy-wide Greenhouse Emissions Reductions	6% below 1990 levels by 2014; 15% below 1990 by 2020	2011 GHG forecasted emissions are 4.1% below 1990 levels ²	2012 GHG forecasted emissions are 6.1% below 1990 levels ²	2013 GHG forecasted emissions are 6.2% below 1990 levels ²	No updates as results not available at time for printing
Percentage of treated drinking water tests for E. coli by municipal residential drinking water systems that meet Ontario drinking water quality standards.	>99.0 % annually	99.98%	99.98%	99.99%	99.98% (interim results for the time period of April 1, 2015 to January 31, 2016). The ministry is on target to meet performance measure.
Percentage of municipal residential drinking water and distribution systems that are inspected (planned inspections).	100% annually	100%	100%	100%	90% of municipal residential drinking water and distribution systems completed as of February 1, 2016. The ministry is on target to meet performance measure
Percentage of planned inspections of	100% annually	100%	100%	100%	100% of Round 1 laboratory inspections completed as of

laboratories.					September 23 2015 [Business Rule require Inspections to be completed by September 30] (laboratories have to be inspected twice per fiscal year in accordance with regulatory requirements). 77% [40] of Round 2 laboratory inspections completed as of February 1, 2016. The ministry is on target to meet performance measure
Percentage of source protection priority components completed, including local committees established, terms of reference for source protection plans, watershed assessments, and source protection plans submitted for ministry approval.		2012-13 milestone achieved - 100% of the Source Protection Plans have been submitted to the Minister for review and approval.	86.4% of source protection plans (19 of 22) were reviewed and comments provided to the Source Protection Committees for consideration/revisions. Two plans were approved by the Minister.	100% of source protection plans were reviewed and comments provided to the Source Protection Committees for consideration/revisions.	All 22 source protection plans approved by the minister as of December 3, 2015
Implementation of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan (LSPP).	100% achievements of policy commitments	The 2012 commitments are on track. Many are ongoing multi-year commitments required under the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan. Key achievements: Amended all 15 sewage treatment plant	The 2013 commitments are on track. The ministry has noted encouraging signs of improvement in the long term health of the lake: Phosphorus concentrations in spring are decreasing, signaling progress to	The 2014 commitments are on track. Many are ongoing multi-year commitments required under the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan. Additional improvements in the long term health of the lake have been noted: Spring phosphorus concentrations	Key achievements: MOECC released the first Minister's Five Year Report on Lake Simcoe, including monitoring results and progress towards the LSPP objectives, as well as implementation action in the first

approvals to ensure compliance with phosphorus limits set in the Phosphorus Reduction Strategy. - Established a Lake Simcoe Climate Change Adaptation Community of Practice with partners. - Developed water budgets for three more subwatersheds, and another seven Subwatershed Plans.	reduce algae. - The lake's deep water oxygen levels are improving, contributing to better habitats for cold water fish. Key achievements: - Direct abatement with vegetable wash water processors in the Holland Marsh resulted in a significant reduction in phosphorus. - Since 2010, more than 1,500 stewardship projects supported landowners to improve environmental conditions around the lake. - Hosted the second biennial Science Forum to share how our collaborative monitoring and research activities are helping to protect and restore the lake.**	are decreasing in the lake, and the lake's deep water oxygen levels are increasing. - Observed increase in the natural reproduction of coldwater fish such as lake trout, lake whitefish and cisco. - The proportion of naturally reproduced lake trout and lake whitefish caught by anglers rose from less than 20 per cent in the mid-2000s to more than 50 per cent in the winter of 2014. Key achievements: - Subwatershed Plans have now been developed for 14 subwatersheds in the Lake Simcoe watershed and are being implemented. - Tier 2 Water Budgets have now been completed for all subwatersheds, for a complete groundwater model representation for the entire Basin - Completed a shoreline	five years since the launch of the Plan. - Released 2014 Lake Simcoe Monitoring Report synthesizing results from multi-agency monitoring of key indicators to support evidence-based decision making and adaptive management - Released Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy for Lake Simcoe identifying the state of monitoring, data management and reporting of environmental information on Lake Simcoe and its watershed and making recommendations based on requirements of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan 17 of the 18 Subwatersheds in the Basin now have Subwatershed Plans and the final Plan will be released in 2016 - Held third biennial Science Forum to share how collaborative monitoring and research are helping to protect and restore the lake and its
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			restoration pilot project (with MNRF and Brock Township) at Beaverton North Beach			watershed	
			• Promoted ways to reduce chlorides through road salt management with municipal and private stakeholders			• MNRF released technical definitions and criteria for Key Natural Heritage Features and Key Hydrologic Features to guide municipalities with identification and protection.	
						• Completed a baseline inventory of the Lake Simcoe shoreline to monitor change over time.	
Number or Area (in hectares) of Brownfield sites assessed and demonstrated to meet applicable standards (through filing Records of Site Condition (RSCs) on the Environmental Site Registry since October 2004).	Ongoing	3,701 sites (RSCs filed on the Environmental Site Registry since October 2004).	4,076 sites (RSCs filed on the Environmental Site Registry since October 2004).	4,371 sites (RSCs filed on the Environmental Site Registry since October 2004).	4,620 Sites (RSC filed on the Environmental Site Registry since October 2004)		
Hazardous Waste Program full cost recovery.	100% program cost recovery.	Approximately 50% program cost recovery.	Approximately 50% program cost recovery.	Approximately 50% program cost recovery.	Approximately 60% program cost recovery.	Fee increase regulation approved and implemented. Full cost recovery projected for 2017-18.	

¹ Historical emissions have been revised by Environment and Climate Change Canada. Overall the changes to the previously reported percentage reductions are generally minor and do not change the achievement of the Performance Targets; therefore, for consistency, these previously reported percentages have been left unchanged.

² Based on National Inventory Report 1990-2013, Greenhouse Gas Sources and Sinks in Canada, prepared by Environment Canada. Results revised for all years due to methodological change in 2015 NIR.

* 1990 baseline emission levels were revised and reflected in 2013-14 status and ongoing.

** The Plan and associated actions incorporate an adaptive management approach whereby policies and management evolve and improve over time based on new science and implementation experience.

Appendix: annual report 2015-16

2015-16 achievements

During 2015-16, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change undertook many initiatives and activities to fight climate change and protect Ontario's water, land and air to bring about the ministry's vision: a healthy environment for a strong Ontario.

Combating climate change and protecting Ontario's air

In February 2015, the ministry initiated consultations on a new climate change strategy with the posting of the province's Climate Change Discussion Paper on Ontario's Environment Registry. At that time, the commitment in the Minister's mandate letter related to a new long term climate change strategy for Ontario was restated, as was a commitment to move to a carbon pricing regime.

These consultations continued into the spring of 2015 and saw a total of 1,200 individuals and 200 businesses attend 15 in-person sessions. More than 300 ideas and 31,000 votes were submitted through a new online consultation tool and more than 500 comments on a climate change discussion paper were submitted through Ontario's environmental registry. On Twitter, the #ONclimate hashtag was used 6,900 times.

On May 14, 2015, Ontario announced a new mid-term target (2030) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 37 per cent below 1990 levels, as part of its action against climate change. Ontario is the first province in Canada to set a mid-term greenhouse gas pollution reduction target for 2030.

From July 7-9, 2015, Ontario welcomed over 30 jurisdictions to the Climate Summit of the Americas in Toronto. One of the summit's key achievements was a Climate Action Statement signed by Ontario and 22 other states and regions, signalling growing Pan-American consensus on the urgency of fighting climate change ahead of the United Nations' Conference of the Parties in Paris.

Ontario released its Climate Change Strategy in November 2015. The strategy sets out the government's vision for Ontario to 2050, and outlines the path to a prosperous, low-carbon society where GHG reduction is a fundamental component of growth, efficiency and productivity.

The Strategy highlights five key objectives for transformation, each with a series of measures that will help Ontario achieve the objectives:

1. A prosperous low-carbon economy with world-leading innovation, science and technology.
2. Government collaboration and leadership.
3. A resource-efficient, high-productivity society.
4. Reducing GHG emissions across sectors.
5. Adapting and thriving in a changing climate.

The Strategy will be followed by a five year Action Plan in 2016, which will identify policies and programs to ensure near and long term emissions reductions and increased resiliency to climate impacts to put Ontario on the right path to achieve our longer term objectives.

As a key component of the strategy and action plan, Ontario's proposed cap and trade program, will help Ontario meet its greenhouse gas reduction targets, reward innovative companies and ensure that households and businesses thrive during the transition to a low-carbon economy.

On November 6, 2015, Ontario began consultations on a policy proposal on the key design elements of the future cap and trade program. This proposal was posted to the Environmental Registry on November 16, 2015 for a 30-day public comment period. The Ministry received over 575 responses to the design posting from a broad range of business, industry, environmental organizations, First Nations and the public. Feedback will inform and improve the development of future regulations for the program.

Ontario put its new [Climate Change Strategy](#) into action from December 2015 through March 2016 with investments from the \$325 million Green Investment Fund. Green Investment Fund projects included [more electric vehicle fast-charging stations](#), [energy retrofits for single family homes](#) and [affordable housing](#), and [support for industry and small and medium sized businesses](#). The Green Investment Fund is a \$325 million down payment on the province's cap and trade program to strengthen the economy, create jobs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Ontario also participated as part of Canada's delegation in the United Nations' Conference of the Parties in Paris in December of 2015. Ontario's participation at COP21 provided an opportunity to promote Ontario's leadership in fighting climate change - such as the closure of its coal-fired power plants - and to advocate for the role of provinces, states and cities. At COP21, Ontario, Québec and Manitoba signed a Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Concerted Climate Change Actions and Market-Based Mechanisms. The agreement is based on the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding between Ontario and Québec Concerning Concerted Climate Change Actions and Market-Based Mechanisms.

On December 3, 2015, the Government of Ontario's *Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act, 2015* received royal assent ensuring that coal-burning at standalone generation facilities will never happen again. This Act will help ensure the public health and climate change benefits of ending coal-fired electricity are protected. Phasing out coal-fired electricity generation was the single largest climate change initiative undertaken in North America, reducing greenhouse emissions by up to 30 megatonnes annually – equivalent to taking seven million cars off the road.

To build on the work already underway to fight the effects of climate change, Ontario laid the foundation to join the biggest carbon market in North America by introducing new legislation on February 24, 2016, that, if passed, would provide a strong foundation for the cap and trade program and ensure that proceeds from the province's cap and trade system are transparently invested into green projects and actions that will reduce greenhouse gas pollution. Under the proposed *Climate Change Mitigation and Low Carbon Economy Act*, all proceeds from Ontario's cap and trade program would be deposited into a new Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account. In turn, this account would only fund projects and initiatives aimed at reducing emissions. The proposed Act also enshrines in law Ontario's 2020, 2030 and 2050 greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and requires the government to prepare and implement a climate change action plan to achieve targets with progress reports and a review of the plan at least every five years.

Ontario posted its draft cap and trade regulatory proposal on the Environmental and Regulatory registries on February 25, 2016 for a 45-day public and stakeholder comment period.

Ontario built on existing and developed new partnerships to fight climate change. In November 2014, Ontario and Québec signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Concerted Climate Change Action, while in December 2014, California, Québec and British Columbia committed to collaborate on mid-term greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

Ontario's greener diesel rules continue to fight climate change and improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and smog-causing pollutants in cars, trucks and boats. By 2017, Ontario's greener diesel approach is expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 600,000 tonnes a year – equivalent to

taking 140,000 cars off the road. Similarly, Ontario's Landfill Gas Capture regulation continues to provide emission reductions in the waste sector by requiring all landfills larger than 1.5 million cubic metres to capture and destroy landfill gas, which contains methane (a potent greenhouse gas).

In March 2016, Ontario released its 2014 Air Quality in Ontario report which shows people of Ontario are breathing cleaner air today than a decade ago. The report shows significant decreases in smog-causing pollutants while confirming that Ontario's initiatives, such as eliminating coal-fired power plants, new air standards, Drive Clean and emissions caps on sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides are contributing to improved air quality and helping fight climate change.

For example, there were no smog advisories in 2014 and the province's air was rated very good or good for 94 per cent of the year.

New and updated air standards for 68 contaminants have been introduced in the last decade. Of these, all are now in effect except for nine, which come into effect in July 2016.

On June 24, 2015, the province introduced the new Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) to replace the Air Quality Index (AQI) for air quality messaging. The AQHI is a health-based scale that assesses air pollution and cumulative health impacts. Real-time air quality measurements and air quality forecasts are provided in a way that is easy to understand.

In the summer of 2015, the ministry established two new roadside air monitoring stations in Toronto in partnership with Environment Canada to improve our understanding of traffic related air pollution in highly urbanized settings.

The ministry continued to invest in Ontario-specific climate science to enable us to better understand the implications of climate change in Ontario (e.g., climate modelling, training in the use of climate data).

On April 14, 2015, after receiving and considering 77 comments on a proposed draft regulation, the ministry introduced the Alternative Low-carbon Fuels Regulation (*O. Reg. 79/15*) to make it easier for large industrial facilities — steel mills, lime operations and cement kilns — to use cleaner alternative fuels to replace coal. By reducing coal use, these facilities could reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 5 to 10 per cent while ensuring Ontario's strong air quality standards are met.

Ontario's new on-board diagnostic Drive Clean test more accurately and more quickly identifies emission problems and the repairs needed to fix them. Part of Ontario's efforts to reduce smog and promote healthier communities, Drive Clean keeps approximately 35,000 tonnes of smog-causing pollutants out of the air every year. On February 25, 2016, Ontario announced it would eliminate the \$30 fee that drivers pay for their Drive Clean emissions tests.

Combating climate change and protecting and enhancing air quality requires cooperation and collaboration by many jurisdictions and organizations. Ontario continues to work on implementing a national Air Quality Management System as proposed by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.

Protecting Ontario's water

The province continues to take strong action to protect Ontario's drinking water from source to tap. Ontario's drinking water safety net ensures that the province's water is among the best protected in the world.

Strong legislation, stringent standards, regular and reliable testing, highly trained operators, transparent public reporting and regular inspections all work together to ensure our drinking water and sources are safe.

The 2013-14 Chief Drinking Water Inspector's Annual Report confirmed that Ontario drinking water systems continue to provide high quality drinking water. In 2014-15, 99.79 per cent of the more than 533,000 drinking water test results from municipal residential drinking water systems met Ontario's rigorous, health-based

standards.

On December 18, 2015, the ministry released 2014-15 drinking water data to the Open Data catalogue. The catalogues were refreshed twice with First Quarter and Second Quarter data for 2015-16.

A key safeguard of Ontario's drinking water safety net is the source protection program, which addresses contamination risks to municipal drinking water sources. As of December 3, 2015, all 22 source protection plans have been approved by the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. As of December 31, 2015, 19 of these plans were in effect and local actions were being taken to protect sources of municipal drinking water. The remaining three plans will come into effect July 1, 2016.

The ministry is implementing the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan. The ministry also developed a framework for an Action Plan proposing collaboration between Canada, Ontario and First Nations to improve drinking water on reserves. The ministry continues to work with provincial ministries and agencies, First Nations, and federal departments to define actions to provide safe drinking water, such as enhance operator training and certification opportunities available to First Nations, and advance drinking water projects in Ring of Fire and other communities with long-term advisories. The ministry is moving forward with the federal government to initiate a trilateral process with First Nations on drinking water.

On May 29, 2015, Ontario and Québec announced the creation of a joint Ontario-Québec Committee on Water Management to facilitate co-operation, information sharing and to search for common solutions on a wide range of water management issues, including the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence River, the Ottawa River, Lake Temiskaming and Lake Abitibi.

Great Lakes

The Great Lakes are vitally important to the people of Ontario for our drinking water, quality of life and prosperity, but there is still more work to be done. We need to continue to invest in science and monitoring of our Great Lakes waters to better inform us of threats to the lakes. We will use this science to ensure we are making informed decisions to better protect and improve the quality of the lakes.

On November 3, 2015, Ontario's *Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015* (GLPA) received Royal Assent. The Act gives the province new tools to protect and restore watersheds, beaches, wetlands and coastal areas of the Great Lakes and the waterways that flow into them. The province is also implementing actions in Ontario's 2012 Great Lakes Strategy (which is now enshrined in the GLPA) focused on community engagement, water protection, costal and beach improvements, biodiversity protection, science, climate change adaptation, and innovative economic opportunities. To fulfil the Strategy's triennial reporting commitment, the First Progress Report on Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy was released in spring 2016.

On March 22, 2016, Ontario held the first meeting of the Great Lakes Guardians' Council. Established by the *Great Lakes Protection Act, 2015*, the Great Lakes Guardians' Council is a forum to improve collaboration and coordination among Ontario's Great Lakes partners. The Council's role is to help identify priorities for actions, potential funding measures and partnerships, and share ideas. The Council will bring together Great Lakes leaders including First Nations, Métis, industry, development, tourism, environmental organizations, agriculture, conservation authorities and municipalities, as well as Ontario's Great Lakes Ministers.

The Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund has supported grass roots groups by awarding \$4.5 million in grants to 221 community-based projects since 2012-13. These local projects are helping protect water quality, improve wetlands, beaches and coastal areas, and protecting habitat and species.

Ontario successfully delivered year 3 of the 5 year Canada-Ontario Agreement/Great Lakes Strategy work plan including more than 220 Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs projects that support Ontario's commitments in the Great Lakes Strategy, *Great Lakes Protection Act*, and the Canada- Ontario Agreement on the Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (2014).

Pollinator health

On January 22, 2016, Ontario began public consultation on the Draft Ontario Pollinator Health Action Plan with a 45-day review and comment period. The plan was first announced on November 25, 2014 as part of a Strategy to improve pollinator health which included amendments to the pesticide regulation, beekeeper financial assistance and the action plan.

The action plan aims to protect pollinators by addressing the four main stressors that pollinators face: loss of habitat and nutrition; diseases, pests and genetics; pesticide exposure; and, climate change and weather.

The government will work with strategic partners to promote environmental stewardship and improve pollinator health over the next several years.

On July 1, 2015, new regulatory requirements under the *Pesticides Act* came into effect. These new rules for the sale and use of certain pesticides were designed to protect the health of Ontario's pollinators. The intent of the new regulatory requirement is to reduce the number of acres planted with neonicotinoid insecticide treated corn and soybean seeds by 80 percent by 2017.

In 2015, the ministry initiated a new multi-media monitoring study to measure changes in neonicotinoid concentrations in the environment following new regulatory requirements governing the sale and use of neonicotinoid pesticides. Water quality, soil and benthic invertebrates are being monitored as part of this multi-year study.

Putting environmental penalties to good use

The Ontario Community Environment Fund uses monies collected from environmental penalties to fund projects that help improve the environment. In 2016, the Ontario Community Environment Fund ran a call for applications to award around \$325,000, which will be shared among 19 watersheds across the province where environmental penalties were collected. These include projects to restore riparian areas, education and awareness and research about water quality and environmental restoration, improving waterway habitats, and planting trees.

In 2015, 10 environmental protection projects were awarded in 10 affected communities.

Minister's Award for Environmental Excellence

In 2015-16 Ontario launched the 2015 Minister's Award for Environmental Excellence. This award recognizes outstanding contributions by Ontarians who fight climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality, making communities more resilient and showcasing proven ways to fight climate change. The applications are currently under review and winners are expected to be announced in late March 2016.

Enabling research to continue in the Experimental Lakes Area

Ontario is keeping the Experimental Lakes Area (ELA) in northwestern Ontario open by committing up to \$2 million a year to cover expenses to allow experiments to proceed while ensuring the environment is protected.

Scientists from around the world conduct important research in the ELA to better understand the many threats to fresh water. Earlier research sounded the alarm on acid rain, algae blooms in fresh waters, and other environmental challenges.

Best in Science

Ontario continued to support 7 scientific projects through its Best in Science program, aiding research relevant to Ontario's environmental priorities. Projects range from studying phosphorus management in the Great Lakes, to assessing the impact of pollution exposure on children whose schools have drop-off areas, and to finding a new way to test for viruses that cause waterborne illness.

Resource Recovery

On November 26, 2015, the government introduced *Bill 151*, the *Waste-Free Ontario Act* that consists of two pieces of proposed legislation, (the *Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act* and the *Waste Diversion Transition Act*) to transform Ontario's waste diversion system to support a circular economy. Second reading of the Bill was moved on February 16, 2016. Comments on the proposed act and strategy through the Environmental Registry closed February 29, 2016.

In addition, the government also released a Draft Strategy for a Waste-Free Ontario which would act as a road map for Ontario to set goals, articulate key actions, and identify performance measures to measure progress towards achieving the goals.

Together, the proposed legislation and draft strategy would:

- Foster innovation in product and packaging design and encourage businesses to design long-lasting, reusable and easily recyclable products;
- Require full producer responsibility for the Blue Box program, removing the financial burden on municipal property taxpayers while ensuring all Ontarians continue to benefit from convenient Blue Box collection;
- Eliminate industry funded organizations that set fees that can be passed on to consumers;
- Encourage companies to look for ways to make their recycling processes more economical and stay competitive;
- Boost recycling in the business and institutional sectors, which will reduce waste and lower greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Lead to the development of a plan to reduce the amount of organic materials going into landfills.

The ministry publicly consulted on proposed new environmental standards and other requirements for end-of-life vehicle recycling facilities. The proposed standards would ensure processors remove liquid and hazardous materials such as oil, antifreeze, mercury switches from vehicles and managed them properly.

Management of excess soil

In January 2016, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change completed a review of excess soil management in response to a 2013 Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) application for review.

Based on the results of the review, MOECC, along with supporting ministries, has developed a draft Excess Soil Management Policy Framework to support growth and infrastructure development, to protect Ontario's environment, and to benefit Ontario's economy.

The proposed Excess Soil Policy Management Framework was posted on the Environmental Registry in January 2016. In March 2016, MOECC conducted a stakeholder workshop to build awareness, and receive feedback on actions which are proposed as part of the framework.

Contaminated sites

The cleanup of the abandoned gold mine and industrial complex at the Deloro Mine site in Eastern Ontario is progressing. At the end of 2015-16, over 95% of the hazardous waste to be cleaned up in the industrial and mining area of the site had been excavated and contained. In the Young's Creek area, filtrate management and sediment processing infrastructure was constructed. Contaminated sediment excavation is expected to begin in 2016-17, following completion of the containment cell base. The goal of the cleanup is to isolate and contain historical waste at the abandoned mine site and keep it out of the Moira River.

Reducing toxics in the environment

Under the *Toxics Reduction Act*, companies must track, quantify and report the amount of toxics they use, create and release and prepare plans to identify and assess opportunities for reducing the use and creation of toxics.

The first and second Minister’s Annual Report on Toxics Reduction were released in December 2012 and April 2013, and the third annual report was released in February 2016. Since its last report, Ontario has taken a range of progressive steps that are helping reduce substances in our air, land and water. The report demonstrates Ontario’s progress in implementing the *Toxics Reduction Act*. It includes updates such as the launch of the Living List process, and provides information on substances used and created by companies in 2013-14.

In addition, an online tool was launched to track and map toxics around the province, toxic reduction actions taken by facilities and to provide more information to Ontarians. Information from more than 1,000 facilities about their use, creation and release of toxics was made available on the ministry’s website. In fact, 40 percent of facilities are taking voluntary actions to reduce one or more of the toxic substances they use in their production of goods.

In support of the pollinator health commitments to reduce pesticide use, the ministry and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs worked with the University of Guelph to develop an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Certification course for farmers and growers using neonicotinoid treated corn and soybean seed. This will promote awareness and understanding of green alternatives and lower risk pesticides.

Modernizing environmental approvals

The ministry continues to develop and improve its new environmental approvals program, implementing the electronic Environmental Compliance Approval System (eECAS) to modernize service delivery to clients.

eECAS went into production with a graduated launch in March 2015. The ministry is working with selected clients and consultants to submit Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) applications online and to implement supports to build capacity and increase the uptake of electronic ECAs to ramp up this activity over time to ensure appropriate support.

Working closely with the regulated community, the ministry is evaluating additional activities and sectors for the Environmental Activity and Sector Registry (EASR) process. Public consultations on proposed new regulations for environmental standards and other requirements for EASR regulations for end-of-life vehicle recycling facilities and water taking activities related to construction dewatering and road construction will be completed by April 2016.

As of February 2016, approximately 4,290 registrations through the EASR were filed for six eligible activities/sectors, saving businesses an estimated \$33,227,000.

Effective monitoring, compliance and enforcement

The ministry employs the tools and practices of a modern regulator to ensure compliance program delivery is designed to prevent and mitigate environmental concerns.

Inspection activities included over 8,800 inspections and compliance activities across the province in 2014-15. The ministry’s regional offices conducted over 4,000 proactive and responsive inspections in 2014-15.

Greening Internal Operations

The ministry continues to use green natural gas and green electricity at 135 St. Clair Avenue and 125 Resources Road. Green electricity is produced from low-carbon fuels; green natural gas comes from decaying organic matter in landfills, e.g., orange peels, egg shells or grass clippings. Both buildings meet all their heating, cooling and electrical needs through green energy.

Table 3: Ministry Interim Actual Expenditures 2015-16	
Ministry Interim Actual Expenditures 2015-16	
Operating	\$326.0970M

Capital	\$6.2982M
Staff strength** (as of February 29, 2016):	1956.22
Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change	782.18
Ontario Clean Water Agency	

** Ontario Public Service Full-Time Equivalent positions.

Updated: December 16, 2016
Published: October 6, 2016

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Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change works to protect and sustain the quality of Ontario's air, land, and water. We also coordinate Ontario's actions on climate change in the name of healthier communities, ecological protection and economic prosperity.

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