



Keepers of the Water II

- ROUGH WATERSHED PLAN -

KEY ELEMENTS OF A DRAFT WATERSHED PLAN FOR THE ARCTIC OCEAN DRAINAGE BASIN

LAND AND WATER USE DECISION MAKERS

1. This plan must recognize First Nation and Treaty Right implementation, and government to government relationship between Aboriginal people and governments
2. Environmental groups and local citizens need to support First Nation and Treaty Rights as a means to ensure plan implementation.
3. We must consider the impacts of activities in our watershed on peoples and wildlife beyond our watershed and political jurisdictions
4. Cumulative impact assessments must be done by independent scientists, not self regulating industries
5. Moratorium on large scale developments such as tar sands and Site C dam until sustainable environmental management plan approved by consensus by true multi-stakeholder group (like us!)

WATER RESOURCES, INVENTORY, AND MONITORING

1. Monitoring has to start immediately, even at a small scale
2. Sampling representative of the watershed and the hazards must meet the test of local and traditional knowledge as well as statistical and scientific rigor
3. The flow and water temperature of rivers and tributaries has to be monitored, year round (even in the winter when ecosystems are very sensitive and the industries very active)
4. For every 10 wells drilled, the industry has to install one monitoring well
5. The monitoring information has to be made readily available, in a timely manner



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PRESSURE OF INDUSTRY ON WATERSHEDS

1. Active and meaningful local involvement in decision-making with full recognition of Treaty/Aboriginal rights, responsibilities and interests
 - We need to be involved as local people in enforcing limits on environmentally damaging activities
 - Greater level of coordination and cooperation between all groups and first nations in the watershed
 - Public education regarding existing guidelines and publicly affirming the good practices and guidelines that are in place can give companies incentive to do well
2. Full analysis of situations and options (as it relates to industrial developments in the basin)
 - Use of wind power
 - We need an honest and full analysis of our situation and options in relation to energy needs
 - Conservation of energy
3. Identify and set limits of acceptable impact/development
 - Identify and set limits of acceptable change
4. Implement systems for full-cost accounting for Industrial Development
 - Triple bottom-line
 - A full account of benefit that includes environmental, social and economic impacts
 - We need to be clear in pointing out the true cost of industrial projects and activities
5. Need for Government Direction, adequate and enforceable regulations
 - Regulatory structures need resources for enforcement
 - A willingness to pay more to provide resources for management and enforcement, and an informing of government regarding a willingness to pay for effective accomplishing of environmental objectives
 - We need to hold the government accountable to commitments and promises they have already made
 - We need to pressure or influence government to enforce existing guidelines
 - A tax regime that rewards conservation of energy and other resources
 - Carbon taxes
 - The government needs to be given clear directives that demonstrate financial outcomes of proposed solutions



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SENSITIVITY AND VULNERABILITY OF ECOSYSTEMS

1. People used to be able to drink the water from any lake or river; now they can't trust the health of the water or the fish in many water bodies.
 - For the entire Arctic Drainage Basin the goal must be to be able to drink the water anywhere without harm to health (subject to natural parameters).
 - Government, industry and people must establish standards, make decisions and behave in ways that achieve this goal.
2. The Arctic Basin contains numerous landscapes with unique variability and vulnerability to change (e.g., muskeg and permafrost).
 - Important and sensitive ecosystems unique to the north need special recognition within the development regulatory framework.
3. Communities are seeing changes in fish (not spawning, flesh sticky, infected, deformities), beavers and trees disappearing, etc.
 - Lakes and Rivers are the heart and veins of the Earth.
 - Whatever impacts ecosystems upstream also impacts communities (people, animals and fish) downstream. Fish are especially sensitive and vulnerable.
4. Elders remember the land the way it was; young people think it's always been this way (e.g., Pingos melting)
 - Local knowledge (aboriginal and non-aboriginal) is an important source of information and should be included in watershed planning and monitoring.
 - It is important to take a long-term view in monitoring and recording changes in water systems.



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PUBLIC EDUCATION, AWARENESS, AND INVOLVEMENT

1. Early consultation and awareness of the Plan dispels misunderstanding, is open and transparent to all watershed citizens, groups, governments, business and is specific to community/region
2. One-on-one communication is important and having local/regional person(s) to communicate vision and plan (i.e. Elders to communities/spokesperson to industry/government)
3. Positive message of renewable energy; extinguish fossil fuel reliance as viable alternative for truly democratic energy system
4. Respect equally two streams of knowledge in our awareness/education/involvement (local, traditional, indigenous and science) and bring knowledge forward through experiential learning (hands, head, heart)
5. Youth involvement is essential, needs to be engaged through experiential education/awareness involvement