



Newfoundland and Labrador
New Democratic Party

Chris Hogan
Newfoundland and Labrador Environment Network
P.O. Box 5125, Stn. C
St. John's, NL A1C 5V5

Sept. 20, 2011

Dear Mr. Hogan,

Thank you for your questionnaire on environmental issues of concern to your Network. New Democrats have long called for a better environmental protection regime in this province. For example, since 2005 we have voiced loud opposition to the destruction of water bodies by the mining industry. Industrial and residential development is putting pressure on natural environments as never before, and a stronger government role in protection is essential.

1. What is your party's protected areas target, and when will you achieve it? How will your party accelerate the establishment of protected areas in NL?

- The Natural Areas System Plan continues to be delayed. Our goal is to protect at least 12% of our landmass to meet national standards. We are committed to implementation of a Protected Areas Strategy to preserve areas representing each of the province's 35 eco-regions. We will also enact legislation to protect shorelands from development.

2. Will your party initiate a province-wide land use planning process?

- We have called for a provincial land use plan for many years. We will begin a consultative process towards that end.

3. Will your party commit to full establishment of the Little Grand Lake Ecological Reserve within one year of the 2011 election?

- We will work towards the finalization of all of the designated provisional ecological reserves, including Little Grand Lake.

4. Will your party make an equivalent budget allocation to establish the Eagle River Waterway Provincial Park in Labrador?

- The government committed to establishing the Eagle River Waterway as a provincial park, and that commitment should be honoured, because not to do so would undermine the integrity of the Mealy Mountains National Park.

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5. Will your party take measures to insure that ecosystem-based forestry management becomes a reality throughout the province and that adequate habitat is maintained for all caribou populations?

- We will adopt forest ecosystem management regulations for harvesting and silviculture to maintain biodiversity.

6. Will your party oppose concessions to the mining industry that allow the destruction of freshwater ecosystems?

- We will ban the dumping of mine and industrial waste in natural water bodies and environmentally sensitive areas.

7. If your party forms the next government will it produce and implement a wetlands policy that protects these sensitive areas from development and degradation?

- The provincial land use plan will include protection of wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas.

8. If your party forms the next government how will it set about protecting the ponds, rivers and wetlands that are crucial to the Northeast Avalon's environmental health? Will this include establishment of more protected areas within the region?

- We will ensure that the provincial land use plan, the Northeast Avalon Regional Plan, and the Protected Areas Plan will protect the region's water bodies, wetlands and ecologically sensitive areas.

9. How would your party work to support community-based solutions to food security?

- Our platform includes measures to protect farmland, encourage the expansion agrifoods for local markets, help communities develop local agriculture, protect our fishery with more marine ecosystem research, and establish a seafood marketing council focussed on local markets as well as exports.

10. Will you invest a portion of windfall profits into an environmental trust, to fund conservation, remediation and stewardship in the province?

- Our platform includes a petroleum royalty surcharge to address the windfall nature of oil industry profits. We will direct more funds to the Waste Management Strategy, expand energy efficiency programs and create a new program for non-residential buildings, upgrade the grid to accept locally-produced electricity, and help communities develop green energy.

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11. If your party forms the government how will it respond to the cuts in research and environmental protection being implemented by Environment Canada in this province?

- The cuts to Environment Canada threaten environmental monitoring functions across the country. We will approach the other Atlantic provinces to mount a concerted opposition and examine what else can be done collectively to safeguard these functions.

12. How do you think the school system can teach students to better appreciate the need for sustaining a healthy environment in Newfoundland and Labrador?

- Our platform includes placing more teaching resources in schools. We believe in the importance of education to ensure future sustainability and we are open to ideas for enhancing environmental education.

Sincerely,



Lorraine Michael