

IESO Engagement

From: D Smith
Sent: June 16, 2021 2:23 PM
To: IESO Engagement
Cc: Peter Tabuns - CO; MP for Toronto-Danforth Julie Dabrusin
Subject: Input on implications of phasing out gas power generation

I am writing to encourage the phasing out of gas power generation in Ontario.

In 2018 the IPCC indicated that the carbon budget to remain within 1.5 C of global warming (with a 66% chance) would be drained by 2030 at the then current rate of GHG emissions. I gather that date has now moved to sometime in 2028.

Since the Paris Climate Accord was signed, Canada is the only G7 country whose GHG emissions have increased. Although our current emissions are only about 2% of the world total, Canada has the distinction of being in the top 10 of cumulative GHG emitters since the beginning of the Industrial age. We are having an impact on many countries who have not contributed nearly as much in GHG - some who are only a number of centimeters of sea level rise before their country vanishes below the water. We want to maintain our standard of living while adding to the risk that other countries will not survive.

Our federal government has indicated a target of reducing GHG emissions by 40 to 45 % by 2030. This is equivalent to a drop of 5% per year from 2022 on. This is about the reduction (per year) that was experienced during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The IEA in it's recently released Path to Net Zero calls for a 35% reduction in natural gas usage world-wide.

It is clear to me that the burning of fossil fuels to power our society are going to be in steep decline. For the sake of my children, my family, the rest of humanity and other species I think we have to improve our chances of remaining below 1.5 C in global warming. With the current 1.1 C increase in warming, southern Canada is already seeing warming double that and northern Canada is seeing triple that.

The pollen season in Toronto started in early March this year and continued until the end of May. I mention this because the rise in pollen has been linked to increases in GHG. I react to pollen. I have had allergy tests but they came out negative. The Allergist indicated to me that everyone has their limit.

We have had a few days of +30C temperatures already this year. I notice that during these days I feel quite irritable and groggy. Environment Canada reported higher levels of Ozone and Fine Particulate Matter on these days. Another link to climate change.

Recently I heard a Biology student talk about the work they were doing capturing and counting insects in Algonquin Park. The first time they took part in this was in 2019 and there were 52 species of insects captured and counted. The second time they took part was in 2020 and there were only about half of both the number of species represented and the counts of species that were represented. Shocking!

So if you are asking me do I want to continue burning Natural Gas (methane) to provide electricity so that we can maintain our lifestyle - my answer is no. If you ask me if we should be using Carbon Capture and Storage to take out the CO2 I have to say that I have read that so far the results of CCS are less than expected and costly. I would prefer not to take that gamble.

We do have other alternatives. I gather that conservation can save us a huge amount of electrical energy demand. I gather that increasing our linkages to hydro in Quebec and Manitoba could make huge differences. I understand that inexpensive solar and windpower are favourable alternatives that we have not maximized. My understanding is that investments in gas powered generations will be short-lived and we will not recover the investments in the physical plant.

I am also going to suggest a Failsafe strategy that is employed regularly in the technology projects that I manage - voluntary reductions followed by mandated reductions followed by shutdown of specific users.

I favour the shutdown of gas power generation and strongly suggest that before any increase is considered that other alternatives be implemented which will be longer lived, less polluting, less expensive and will not increase the risk of loss for other countries and species.

Yours truly,

David Smith

