

**ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE**

**QUESTION 28-18(3):  
CLIMATE CHANGE AUDIT AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK  
October 18, 2017**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Environment and his leadership role for our climate change efforts. In my statement, I summarized the findings of the audit released yesterday that clearly shows our failures as a government to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Our GHG strategies fail to reduce emissions. We did not provide information to allow others to take action on climate change and we have serious long-standing deficiencies affecting ENR leadership on climate change have not been addressed.

For the Minister, and I would like some specifics if he can because I certainly gave him a heads up before today or the question session today, what lessons have been learned from this audit and how are we applying them to the upcoming Climate Change Strategic Framework? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first thing I want to do is assure the people of the Northwest Territories that the sky is not falling down and we will still continue to have clean climate and we are taking steps to address that. ENR staff have worked very closely with the Office of the Auditor General over the last year. During the time that the Climate Change Strategic Framework was already under development and the input received during the audit is being incorporated and addressed in the address CCSF, the Climate Change Strategic Framework.

The Auditor General's Office can only assess work that is being completed, so they were unable to take into account the work that was already under way by ENR to address leadership, sharing information, reporting on results through the development of the Climate Change Strategic Framework. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks to the Minister for that. I am no Chicken Little, and it is not my leadership that is being questioned by the Auditor General here on climate change. It is this government's.

ENR and Infrastructure undertook joint public engagement on the development of an energy strategy in Climate Change Strategic Framework. That work was done months ago and a draft energy strategy is now out for further public consultation. There has been no public recording on the status of the Climate Change Framework until earlier today.

Why is the Climate Change Strategic Framework lagging so far behind the energy strategy? I would like to get a response from the Minister on that.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The Climate Change Strategic Framework is not significantly lagging behind the energy strategy work. The CCSF, and I will use by its initials, is currently going through an internal approval process. I can inform this House

and people who are listening that we did get Cabinet approval this morning to go to the next stage so that it will be released now to Aboriginal government stakeholders and the public for review and comment.

The energy strategy is currently out for public review, which is a stage that the Climate Change Strategic Framework will be going through approval for. The Climate Change Strategic Framework is also being developed based on the key elements of the Pan Canadian Framework on clean growth and climate change, which was developed over the last couple of years.

Our release for external review was slightly behind the energy strategy, which is correct, so our emission targets within the 2030 Energy Strategy and key elements from the Pan Canadian Framework will be reflected in the Climate Change Strategic Framework as well as recommendations from the Auditor General's Office.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks to the Minister for that, and I look forward to getting the document shortly. The Minister did talk about how GNWT signed onto the Pan Canadian Framework on Climate Change, and that happened in December of last year. That agreement sets a crystal clear target for greenhouse gas reductions of 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. This is a very important target and commitment that we will need to adhere to, otherwise we cannot reasonably expect to get any federal funding assistance.

I would like to get a very clear confirmation from the Minister that this target in the Pan Canadian Framework, the 30 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030, is that going to be explicitly set out in the Climate Change Strategic Framework with a plan of action to achieve that target?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Yes, the overall target for NWT greenhouse gas emissions is a reduction of 30 per cent at the 2005 levels as per the Pan Canadian Framework. We are working with the federal government. They have made opportunities for investment into help us mitigate and adapt to some of the challenges that we are facing, which will in turn help us reach the 30 per cent by 2030.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that very clear commitment. One more question for him, if I may, Mr. Speaker: the audit shows that there is often a flurry of activity around the adoption of a greenhouse gas strategy and then efforts to monitor and report quickly wane. We know that, if we don't get our act together, we may be ineligible for federal program funding. How does the ENR Minister intend to ensure that climate change becomes a real priority for this government with the attention and leadership it clearly requires and as called for by the Auditor General? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I believe there has been a leadership shown by territorial government, past and present, on the work in climate change. We recognize and we are at the front line of climate change so we are feeling the effects a lot quicker than people across the country. In having said that, I think this government has invested a lot of money into some mitigation and adaptation measures. We will continue to work with the

federal government. They have made it known that climate change is also a priority of theirs. They are willing to put some money into the mitigation of the effects of climate change. I think we are in, through all of the good work that has gone on from the departments, I think we have positioned ourselves very good to take advantage of some of the investments that the federal government. We will just continue to push that. Debates like we are having in the House today will also strengthen our case as we go forward to the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.