



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

N E W S R E L E A S E

February 16, 2005

For Immediate Release

“Protect the Arctic. Save the Planet.” QUEST: North Conference Looks at Climate Change & Kyoto

WINNIPEG—Today is the day the Kyoto Protocol comes into effect in Canada. For some time now, **Sheila Watt-Cloutier**, Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, has been saying that in order to save the planet, we must first protect the Arctic. If climate change in the North is a kind of environmental early warning system, what will happen to the rest of the globe? Has the environment gone too far to be saved? Are we ready to implement the Protocol? Will our actions as a country and as citizens make any difference?

Join educators, activists, researchers, journalists, policy makers, and students on **March 4 & 5** as The University of Winnipeg offers its second OmniTRAX/Broe Quest conference:

QUEST: North

The Circumpolar Reality -Global Citizens Respond

March 4 & 5, 2005 on The University of Winnipeg Campus

Participants can: take in a unique documentary film festival featuring stories of the North and the impact of climate change on our world; be part of round table discussions, plenary sessions, and workshops with people making a difference here and abroad; discuss Canada's response to Kyoto; find out how global warming puts human rights and sovereignty at risk; and, develop actions plans to mitigate the impact of green house gas emissions.

A major focus of **QUEST: North** will be the *Arctic Climate Impact Assessment*. Released in November 2004, the ACIA was prepared by more than 250 scientists from around the world. It provides the strongest evidence yet that “the big melt has begun” and will have an enormous impact on life in all countries with territory extending into the Arctic.

Presented in partnership with CBC in Manitoba, **QUEST: North** features an impressive roster of invited lecturers, bringing together educators, policy makers, scientists, youth, people of Canada's North, and activists. **QUEST: North** will feature high profile guest **Sheila Watt-Cloutier**, whose organization represents the interests internationally of Inuit residents in Canada, Greenland, Alaska, and Chukotka in the Far East of the Federation of Russia. **Ross Gelbspan**, author of *The Heat Is On: the climate crisis, the cover-up, the prescription* and *The Boiling Point*, will also be a keynote speaker at **QUEST: North**. Gelbspan is a retired Pulitzer Prize-winning editor and reporter with *The Philadelphia Bulletin*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Boston Globe*.

The Circumpolar Reality – Global Citizens Respond features a number of other award-winning journalists, activists, policy makers, and researchers, including:

- **Jack Anawack** (*Ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs, Foreign Affairs Canada*)
- **Lloyd Axworthy** (*President, University of Winnipeg & Chair of the MB Climate Change Task Force*)
- **Michael Byers** (*International Law Professor & Academic Director, Liu Institute*)

- **Dennis Cunningham** (*International Institute of Sustainable Development, recently designated the "most effective sustainable development research group in the world"*)
- **Kim Hickes** (*Climate Change Community Challenge Coordinator, North Central Community Futures Development Corporation*)
- **Rob Huebert** (*Assistant Professor, Political Science & Associate Director for the Centre for Military & Strategic Studies, University of Calgary*)
- **Gordon McBean** (*Professor & Research Chair, The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction & Departments of Geography & Political Science, University of Western Ontario*)
- **Mike Ogborn** (*Managing Director, OmniTRAX*)
- **Merrell-Ann Phare** (*Executive Director/Legal Counsel Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER)*)
- **Barry E. Prentice** (*Director of the Transport Institute, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences, University of Manitoba*)
- **Luke Suluk** (*Implementation Coordinator, Nunavut Planning Commission*)
- **Stephen C. Wright** (*Assoc. Professor Psychology, Simon Fraser University & Canada Research Chair in Social Psychology*)

... and many more.

Terry MacLeod, host of Information Radio on CBC Radio One 990, will host the conference kick-off on Friday, March 4 at 7:30 p.m. with an evening of music with Winnipeg's own **KIVA** and throat singers and dialogue with veteran journalist **Ross Gelbspan**. The all-day **QUEST: North** conference on Saturday, March 5, 2005 takes place on The University of Winnipeg campus in downtown Winnipeg.

On Saturday, March 5 at noon, participants will hear a report from students who return from a trip to Churchill today. *South Meets North & Back Again: Student Report on Churchill* features students from the universities of Winnipeg and Manitoba and the University College of the North. **John Webb**, CBC TV Producer/Mentor accompanied the students along with **Danny Blair**, University of Winnipeg PARC-MB Hydro Climate Change Research Professor; **Bill Buhay**, UWinnipeg Assistant Professor of Geography; and, **Chuck Mrena**, UWinnipeg's Centre for Forest Interdisciplinary Research, Climate Change Research Coordinator. In Churchill, the students met people of the North, learned of their customs and traditions, and studied climate and how changes will impact the way of life in the North.

The two-day conference will conclude with a strategy-oriented plenary entitled *Climate Change: Our Responsibility to Act as Global Citizens* moderated by CBC Radio One 990 host **Terry MacLeod**, and featuring **Watt-Cloutier**, **Gelbspan**, UWinnipeg President **Lloyd Axworthy**, and **Gordon McBean**, Professor and Research Chair, The Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction and Departments of Geography & Political Science, University of Western Ontario.

QUEST: North is free*and open to all; however, The University of Winnipeg encourages all conference participants to bring along a canned good for donation to the UWSA FoodBank.

Visit www.quest.uwinnipeg.ca for a complete schedule of events and to register.

The University of Winnipeg OmniTRAX/Broe Quest series is made possible through a \$100,000 donation from the Broe Companies of Denver, Colorado, owners of the Port of Churchill. Under the leadership of CEO Patrick Broe, OmniTRAX has become the largest private operator of short-line railroads in North America, including the line that connects Churchill with Winnipeg. The University of Winnipeg OmniTRAX/Broe Quest series brings together faculty, staff, students, academics, activists, journalists, business people, and interested engaged citizens to dialogue—and take action—on today's pressing issues.

**The only charge, should participants wish to eat lunch at the conference on March 5, is \$2 for lunch.*

For more information, please contact:

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