



House of Commons  
CANADA

# **Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development**

---

ENVI • NUMBER 037 • 2nd SESSION • 40th PARLIAMENT

---

**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, November 17, 2009**

—  
**Chair**

**Mr. James Bezan**



## Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

• (1125)

[English]

**The Chair (Mr. James Bezan (Selkirk—Interlake, CPC)):** I call the meeting to order. I apologize that we're running late. We have had some technical difficulties.

We are continuing our study of Bill C-311. We were to have a videoconference with Bill Erasmus, regional chief, Northwest Territories, from the Assembly of First Nations. Unfortunately he hasn't made it to Whitehorse yet.

We will also have a conference call with Joe Tularialik, who is a member of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association. He was also supposed to appear by videoconference, but due to inclement weather he wasn't able to make his flight yesterday, so he's joining us by conference call.

We welcome you to the committee, Mr. Tularialik, and ask that you make your opening presentation. Please keep it under 10 minutes. The committee will listen intently, and then we'll go to our line of questioning. Hopefully Mr. Erasmus will be able to join us later.

With that, Mr. Tularialik, please give us your comments.

**Mr. Joe Tularialik (Member, Kitikmeot Inuit Association):** Thank you.

We had a meeting over in Inuvik on climate change, and somehow I got selected. I'd like to speak as an Inuit member as well as an aboriginal representing the Arctic.

The Nunavut youth who spoke were worried about food security, including the effect of brucellosis on caribou meat and the impact of ice presence on hunts for beluga, ring seals, and caribou. The taste of meat is changing, which indicates a change in nutrition. It is expensive to fly food to the north, and there is a growing inability to access local food.

You have to travel further for school, and families have to balance school with work. One family relocated from Cape Dorset to Fort Ross.

Plants are disappearing due to climate changes in ITEX domes. New invertebrates can be found in waters, and plants are coming early in the season.

There are amounts of multi-year ice. Some locations are free from multi-year ice, which can be both an advantage and a disadvantage. Melting ice is limiting transportation, and unpredictable ice may break under travellers.

There is much more rain in Iqaluit, caribou migrations are different, and narwhales are becoming stranded.

Water has to be driven to houses and the sewage taken away, indicating a loss of access to these resources.

Nutritional parks have closed. The realities and challenges are different.

An arctic indigenous-based conference would be beneficial.

I'm speaking on behalf of Yukon now and the Northwest Territories. There are extreme changes in temperature. This has created an issue for food security as people need to travel further across land to get food—for example, in Old Crow, where there is no access.

New insects and birds are being introduced, like the spruce beetle at Haines Junction. There has been a problem with bears going into towns to escape forest fires, and there is increased siltation in fish spawning beds.

In Whitehorse the snow composition is wetter and heavier.

In Dawson, salmon populations are changing, with a decrease in their run and a change in appearance and taste, possibly indicating a change in their health.

Tourists need to be aware that climate change is happening.

Positive impacts have also resulted, such as an increase in the water table and the well-being of greenhouses. For hunters, bison populations are up, not the native chasing sheep. Additional research must be done that can be accessible to the general public and presented to the community. Study information must be available.

There needs to be an improvement in waste disposal, and action must take place in offices and houses.

Next is the Northwest Territories. There is a lot to be learned about change. Youth must be involved so they can inform friends and family.

Changes in populations have occurred, including a decrease in ducks and songbirds. Animals are migrating to untouched human communities.

There has been an increase in thunderstorms, and more insects have appeared.

Hunted meat is flakier and tastes different. Mammals are smaller, and deer and cougars are moving to the north, with muskox moving to the south.

Trees are changing earlier and are growing above the tree line.

Fish drying is no longer operational. There is a change in the ice breakup and freezing dynamics, which changes how communities prepare for both.

Climate change is leading to health implications, including increasing stomach cancer levels. A prelude to stomach cancer is being found in 70% to 80% of some communities. There have been changes in individual homes and at the community levels. We must raise awareness through youth networking, anti-idling campaigns, lobbying conferences, regulations, and policies.

These are the many things that we spoke about in the conference we had in Inuvik. The youth are trying to make a change and make our voice heard. Aboriginal people are being devastated and hit hard due to climate change.

We have many more.... We have storytelling that happens throughout the years, and within a 20-year span there have been changes. I myself personally have been touched by this. My family goes about 170 to 180 miles north of Talurjuaq to get our beluga. For the past 10 years it has been clear of ice. We were never able to make it through due to multi-year ice. Anyway, there are changes.

We need our voice heard.

If you have any more questions on this, don't hesitate to ask me.

Thank you.

•(1130)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Tularialik.

Our first round of seven minutes will begin with Mr. McGuinty.

**Mr. David McGuinty (Ottawa South, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much, Mr. Tularialik. Can you hear me?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** Yes.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Thank you very much for coming in by telephone; it is very dedicated of you.

Sir, I want to ask you a few questions. I'm asking the same first question to every witness who appears here on Bill C-311. Does your community, the people, or the association have in their possession a plan for climate change for Canada provided to you by the Government of Canada? Do you have a plan for climate change today? Have you seen one? If you do, could you share it with us?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** I don't have it right now. We're still waiting for e-mails from all over the place. I'm just going with what I have right now.

But we do have things in place. We're gathering together at conferences and whatnot. It's very limited right now because it's short notice. It's actually hard to try to keep in contact because we don't have a lot of this funding in place.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Let me just interrupt you, sir, for a second. I'm not asking whether you have a plan. I'm asking whether you have seen a plan from the Conservative government in terms of a climate change plan for Canada. Do you have one? Have you been given a copy of a plan? Have they asked you to comment on their plan? Do

you have anything in your possession that they have produced? Have you seen a plan anywhere from the government?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** No.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Okay. Can I ask you then if you have been engaged by the government? Has your community been meaningfully consulted with respect to the creation of a plan, given the important issues you have raised in your testimony?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** No.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Okay. If you were to provide feedback to a government that was actually creating a plan for the country, what would you want to see included in that plan, from your perspective? I want you to think a little bit about what they now call adaptation support. How much adaptation support would you need from the federal government if there were a plan? If you had seen one, would you be asking for adaptation support so that people living in the Arctic can adapt? What other elements would you like to see addressed?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** We have a very big concern in this area. Specifically on climate change, we would like to hear from the government and people from the south. We would like to be consulted on issues that say, for example, the polar bear population has gone down. We hear that from the south, but in our case, up here in the Arctic, that's not true. We have seen increases instead.

We would like the government and the people from the south to consult the aboriginal people on culture, our cultural knowledge and storytelling, and put that on paper, and include the aboriginal, the northern, the arctic people, the Inuit, in this area. We feel very strongly that we have been left out for a long time. Now it's time for the aboriginal and arctic voices to be heard.

•(1135)

**Mr. David McGuinty:** So then you're calling, sir, for the government, when they talk to you one day about a plan, to try to make sure that traditional ecological knowledge be included in that plan. Is that right?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** Affirmative.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Okay.

Hang on a second.

**The Chair:** Excuse me. We have Bill Erasmus. We're going to be able to bring him in by conference call, but we will have to suspend. To be fair to you, Mr. McGuinty, I'll suspend the meeting and give you four minutes with the other witness after we hear Bill's opening comments.

Mr. Tularialik, could you just stay on the line? We are going to officially suspend the meeting and bring in Mr. Erasmus by conference call. His flight as well was cancelled due to weather, so he's at home, I guess.

If by chance you get lost in the transition as we try to bring Bill into the conference call, our technical support will phone you back and put you on the line. Okay, Joe?

**Mr. Joe Turalialik:** Yes.

**The Chair:** The meeting is now suspended.

•(1135) \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_

•(1140)

**The Chair:** Okay. We'll call the meeting back to order.

Joining us now is Bill Erasmus, who is regional chief of the Northwest Territories for the Assembly of First Nations.

Mr. Erasmus, if you could bring us your opening comments, we would appreciate that, and if you could keep them to under 10 minutes, that would be great.

•(1145)

**Chief Bill Erasmus (Regional Chief, Northwest Territories, Assembly of First Nations):** You can maybe give me a one-minute signal.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for this opportunity.

My name is Chief Bill Erasmus. I'm actually the national chief for the Dene Nation, which comprises 30 communities in the Northwest Territories, one community in Alberta, and one in northern Manitoba.

The Dene are a large linguistic family that is actually in Alaska, the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and northern parts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. We're also in the lower 49, where they call us Apache, Navajo, Hupa, and other tribes. The linguistic family, in the books, is Athabaskan.

Again, it's a pleasure. My comments might not be directly related to the proposed bill, but I think it's relevant to make comments that will have the committee put together their thoughts on how to proceed.

As for my background, I was trained as a political scientist and as an anthropologist. I try to apply that work, along with my upbringing as an indigenous person from this part of the world, to my everyday thinking. I'm still a young man, in my view, but I've seen many changes over the years. I've been a chief since 1987 and have held office continuously since then. I've seen many political leaders come and go, and I've been very cognizant of Canada's position when it comes to issues related to our lands and our environment. In fact, until the end of last week, I held the national portfolio for environment for the Assembly of First Nations. So I was very aware of the issues related to climate change, global warming, and the concerns people have around those issues.

For our people in the north, it's a reality. It's real. Today, for example, it's maybe minus 10 degrees, at the most, in Yellowknife. It's very cloudy. It snowed a bit last night. It's the middle of November. When I was a child, it would be at least minus 30 degrees at this time of year. The ice would be frozen, and that would generally be normal. We didn't get a lot of snow.

We already have snow in Yellowknife, enough snow a year that would keep us for the winter. In other words, we're getting record amounts of snow. In some ways it's good, because in the spring the earth cleanses itself. The problem, and many of you can relate to this, is that the city's snow removal budget is well cut into already. And there are all the other related problems we have in municipalities.

Once you move out of our communities or our reserves or where we reside, it becomes very difficult for our people to maintain their way of living. For example, I know of at least one person who's gone through the ice already. He was lucky to get out. He didn't freeze. His friends got to him. He is one of the trappers, one of the local people who knows a lot about the land. The problem is it's very difficult to judge the ice, the snow. People are having a lot of difficulty.

•(1150)

In terms of the animals, you've probably heard about the caribou. We're having great difficulty because there's a huge decline in caribou right across the north, from Alaska, the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, into Nunavut, into northern Quebec, and so on. Caribou are a very interesting animal. There are different species. The ones closer to you we call woodland caribou. They feed off different food. They're a bigger animal. Some are almost as big as a moose or an elk. But the more northern caribou, which we're just as familiar with, are the barren land caribou. They're smaller and they're very vulnerable. There are also what you call mountain caribou.

These animals are having a very tough time. I'll talk just about this year, for example. We had rain here a week ago, which is very uncharacteristic for this area. We would never see rain after mid-September at the very latest. But now we're getting rain in November. I believe a year ago, or the year before, it rained at the end of December and in January, which is the coldest time of the year. It should be minus 45 or minus 50. If it rains, you'll get a layer of ice after it cools and the animals cannot get underneath the ice to get the food they need to sustain themselves. If this is maintained throughout the winter, in the spring when they have their young they are malnourished. They have their young and they don't survive. They just drop them. So there are fewer calves. That has happened. There's scientific evidence for that.

But the caribou are having difficulty not only because of the climate. Other things are happening. Major developments in the north may be causing problems. For example, Canada's food guide states that we ought to eat caribou and wild game and so on, but if you can't get access to them, it doesn't help us. For example, if there's a diamond mine in the way of getting to these caribou, then there are problems. And if development is happening where the caribou are going to have their little ones, then the caribou are not in the right frame of mind to have their little ones. It's like the problem we had a number of years ago when there was a proposal to have low-level flying up here. It was proven that the low-level flights affect the animals, especially their eardrums.

**The Chair:** Bill, you have about one minute.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Thank you.

The point I'm making is that we have to be very cognizant of what is happening. You can't make decisions in Ottawa without speaking to people like me, and especially to people who are on the land every day. They have to have the opportunity to include their knowledge, especially the opportunity to voice their opinions where we are still landowners. We have never given up our jurisdiction over our area up here. And Canada acts as if the land belongs to it. That's a big problem.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

• (1155)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Erasmus.

Mr. McGuinty, if you can take four minutes or less, it would be great.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you very much, Chief, for joining us under such difficult circumstances. I really appreciate that.

Chief, can I ask you the same question I asked Joe Tularialik? That is, from the Conservative government today, have you been provided with a plan, a full climate change plan for Canada, and if you have, do you have a copy of it close by or can you share it with us?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I have not seen the plan. I don't believe Canada has a full plan. And no, I don't have it beside me.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Okay.

Chief, let me just ask you this first. Have you been consulted? Have your people been consulted at all in recent memory, say in the last 46 or 47 months since the government's arrival? Have you been consulted in a meaningful way about how to proceed on climate change, particularly given the dramatic impacts we're seeing on your land masses, in your communities?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I can speak best for people of the Northwest Territories. I can clearly say that we have not been consulted, but our concern goes beyond consultation. Because we are at the table talking about the issue of who in fact owns the land, we believe our consent is necessary. So it goes beyond consultation.

If you remember the Meech Lake discussions and all of those constitutional matters, issues in the north could not change unless our consent was granted. This issue is no different.

Our opinion has not been asked on the subject.

I will be in Copenhagen at COP 15, as I was last year in Poznan. We will bring up our concerns. We're not very happy with Canada because Canada has a dismal record at that level.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** So, Chief, you'll be going to Copenhagen. The minister is telling Canadians that he has consulted all the provinces and territories. He says he has invited all the premiers. He says that ministers of the environment will be there. You're telling us something different.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I can clearly tell you, because as I said, I've been involved over the years.... I'm not a new player. I also chair NACOSAR, which is the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk, and we have not met with the minister responsible.

We have concerns. In fact, we want to appear before you on other matters, but we certainly haven't been consulted. If he's telling Canadians and the world that he has consulted us, then that's not true.

**Mr. David McGuinty:** Chief, my last question to you is this. At 11:41 a.m. eastern time here, the media is now reporting that Minister Prentice has announced that he will not be bringing greenhouse gas regulations into Canada, pending not only, he says, the United States getting its own legislation in order, but he's now saying that he is not in a position to bring regulations unless there is an international agreement at Copenhagen or until there's an international agreement post-Copenhagen. How do you react to that?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I think it's really consistent with their position. Canada is refusing to take a lead as they ought to. They say they're waiting for someone else to come to agreement before they move. It's the total opposite of Canada's international way of doing things. Canada needs to step up to the plate, be responsible, and work with its indigenous people, who know the land better than anyone else. We're the most vulnerable people. We are the face of climate change. We are the face of global warming up here. If they're going to wait, then certainly they're going to be waiting a long time.

• (1200)

**Mr. David McGuinty:** *Masi-cho*, Chief.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Gentlemen, we're going to move on to our next questioner.

*Monsieur Bigras, vous avez sept minutes.*

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras (Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie, BQ):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Erasmus, can you hear me well?

[*English*]

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Yes, I can, thank you.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** You talked quite eloquently about the impact of climate change on your way of life and about the loss of biodiversity. But I would like to talk about the impact of climate change in the sense of the thawing permafrost around your infrastructures.

We know that the permafrost thawing over time will have an effect on buildings, roads, airports and any number of infrastructures in your territory.

What do you feel are the priorities that the government should consider? We know that major investments in the north will have to be made in the coming years. What special infrastructure help should the government be providing so that you can adapt to climate change?

[*English*]

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Thank you very much for the question, sir.

First of all, we need to come to terms with the fact that global warming and climate change are actually happening. It's man-made. It's not something that nature has created. We have to admit that climate change is a reality, global warming is a reality. I know there are some countries or some governments that are having a tough time even admitting that. So first of all, let's admit that it's happening, it's real, and it's not going to improve unless man does something. And that means every one of us—as individuals, as families, as communities, as regions, as nations, whatever we call ourselves, we all have to do something.

If you want to work on infrastructure and do something about permafrost melting and all the difficulties we see in the north, you have to deal with that reality. It means turning the policies around. It means dealing with the big corporations that are affecting us in northern Alberta. I've mentioned this to your committee before, that we are downstream from Fort McMurray. And we all know what's happening there, but Canada allows it to happen. You are in a position to do something, and if you don't do something, this is going to continue. We can put money into infrastructure and so on, but if you don't deal with those big companies, if you don't say, "Listen you guys, we have to get rid of the emissions, we have to be real with these targets, and we have to quit playing games", then as people, we're not going to survive very long.

In our view, the report that Dr. Suzuki came out with, with the Pembina Institute, hits the mark right on. Canada can still be a leader in the world; they can still have the jobs they want and be a leader internationally.

Mr. Chairman, I think that's the way we need to look at this. If it takes more discussion across the country, then let's do that. Let's plug into these old-timers who have been here...and it's not only our people. Anyone near my age or older sees the differences. We had snow here last week—we call it "heart-attack snow"—that we only get in March when it's melting. We call it heart-attack snow because it sticks to your shovel, and that's when people can't lift the shovel and they keel over. That's incredible. And if we don't do something, it's not going to get any better.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernard Bigras:** I have another question on northern development.

We know that a result of climate change is that you see the ice melting in the north. This has two consequences. First, a new shipping channel, a sea route, will be created in the north. Second, it seems that the melting ice will allow access to huge oil and gas resources in the north.

How do you see northern development in the context of climate change and the access to oil and gas resources that can open up there? Do you think that developing the oil and gas, the hydrocarbons, in the north is a good thing? Since you are a major partner, how do you see northern development?

• (1205)

[English]

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Again, thank you for the question.

The anthropologists tell us we've lived here for at least 30,000 years. The oil and other resources in the ground have been there for a

long time. Our people, to a large extent, knew they were there. We used some of those resources. We understand how other people see them. When people see diamonds, for example, we know they act in a particular way. Since we've had diamonds on the market for the last ten years here in Yellowknife, the black market has also been here. We've had activities here we've never had before. There are only 20,000 people in Yellowknife, and the crime rate here is incredible. We need to step back and look at the big picture. We need to ask the people what they want. We have to quit having these big dreams about having pipelines and having ships going through the Northwest Passage and all of these things that don't make sense to people who were brought up in the north and who are not going to leave. Clearly, what that means is....

There are only 40,000 people here. We are still 51% of the population. We are a majority. It is our homeland. Until we sit down at the same table and talk about what our future is going to look like, and until we all have the same ability to have influence in the world, we're going to have a very difficult time.

For example, I'm chair of the Arctic Athabaskan people from Alaska, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. We're fortunate to be able to sit at the Arctic council table as permanent participants. With the other circumpolar countries we're able to discuss all matters at that table. We don't have a vote, but we're able to bring forward our concerns. We generate a lot of influence. That is part of the north. But when we go to the UN we have no voice whatsoever. Until our nations have a voice at the UN, we're going to have problems. Canada can help us get to that table.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Chief.

I'm going to have to ask you to keep your questions a little more succinct so that everybody gets an equal opportunity to ask their questions. I would appreciate that.

Mr. Tularialik, are you still on the line? Good.

Continuing with our questioning, Ms. Duncan, you have the floor.

**Ms. Linda Duncan (Edmonton—Strathcona, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome to our committee, Mr. Tularialik and Chief Erasmus. We're glad we found you.

Further to questions asked earlier by my colleagues, I have been approaching the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Prentice, for the whole of last year that I've been elected to request that he follow the precedent followed by previous governments, to include first nations and youth in their international delegations to environment conferences.

Chief Erasmus or Mr. Tularialik, could you tell me if you have been contacted by Mr. Prentice's office to be included in his official delegation?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** We've been approached, and I believe we will have someone on delegations. It will either be National Chief Shawn Atleo or most likely me. I understand that youth have also been asked to be a part of Canada's delegation. The problem, though, is if we're on their delegation we generally don't speak at the table, unless some kind of agreement comes forward where Canada feels comfortable with us. Right now, my part of the delegation most likely wouldn't feel comfortable with my speaking on behalf of Canada.

• (1210)

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Mr. Tularialik, have you been contacted about whether your costs will be paid to go as part of the government delegation?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** I don't have all the papers with me right now, but I believe so. The youth have been asked to be at a delegation in that area.

**The Chair:** Mr. Warawa.

**Mr. Mark Warawa (Langley, CPC):** On a point of order, I think we've been very generous in where the discussion is going today, but the focus needs to be on Bill C-311.

I would ask you to share with the committee whether or not we are veering from that topic. I fear that we are.

**The Chair:** So you're raising a point on the rules of relevance?

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Yes.

**The Chair:** We do ask that questions be relevant to the bill and to climate change as regards the impact of Bill C-311. I would ask that questions be along that line.

We won't pay for Mr. Warawa.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Certainly, Mr. Chair. I will make that direct connection immediately.

Mr. Tularialik, I understand you were part of the *Inuvik Declaration on Arctic Climate Change and Global Action* and that you participated in the youth summit on northern climate change this past August. In the declaration, you called upon the government to commit to the Bill C-311 targets of at least 25% below 1990 levels by 2020, at least 80% below 1990 by 2050, and a credible plan to reach those targets.

Do I understand clearly what the declaration is calling for?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** Yes; affirmative.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** So I would understand, then, that this would be the position you would be taking onward and speaking to on behalf of Canadians.

There has been some discussion by my colleagues with you about whether or not either of you, first nations governments or youth in the north, have been engaged in discussions with the federal government on the positions they are taking related to the science-based targets. I wonder if either of you could tell me if you've been contacted by the Canadian government or been given resources to formally establish a system to gather, document, and assess traditional knowledge in establishing Canada's position on the targets we set.

Mr. Erasmus.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I want to answer the question in a way that relates to the bill. I don't mean to pull the committee one way or the other; I'm expressing a view from where I am in the world. Your job is to take that and use it in a way that will help you through this.

Mr. Chairman, in addressing this question, I'll talk a little bit about what happens when you try to get funding and try to get involved. What's happening right now is that our people have found that they have to express themselves, and the best way they can do that is through traditional knowledge, by bringing their elders forward, by reminding people of how we ought to move forward, all based on our own principles and values and so on.

The problem is that the system is not designed to hear our people. It's not designed to accept the science we have. It's not designed to recognize that our people have survived because we're able to adapt, because we're able to look forward, because we sincerely want to work with everyone. The system is based on an individual one, and we have great difficulty with that.

We're able to bring our concerns forward and talk about targets and talk about what the world could be, but it's very difficult. When we voice our concerns, many of our people don't see how the country brings their issues together.

For example, this bill that you're bringing forward connects with a whole lot of other things. It links with economics. It links with language. It links with culture. It links with the very fabric of this country. If everyone is not involved in it, you as parliamentarians are going to be accused of doing something that's against the will of the people. And we will feel this for the next hundred years.

• (1215)

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Here's your chance, Mr. Tularialik, just briefly.

**The Chair:** Mr. Tularialik, do you have anything to add to that?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** Yes. Actually, Mr. Erasmus said that very clearly, about the way the aboriginal and Inuit people, as well as the indigenous people, feel very strongly that we have to be a part of this. We've been affected by this and we've known all about that for many years. Even in my short lifetime—I'm only 31 years old—I've seen a lot of dramatic changes within the last 10 to 15 years. Even the young people notice a lot of strange and different things that have been happening due to climate change.

Yes, I just totally agree with what Chief Erasmus said about consulting aboriginal people.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. Your time has expired.

We're going to continue to move on.

Mr. Warawa, you have the last of the seven-minute rounds.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you to both witnesses, Mr. Tularialik and Mr. Erasmus, for making the effort. It's unfortunate that you weren't able to be with us today due to weather issues, but again, we do all appreciate what you've shared to this point.

I found it very interesting, because climate change is happening. There is consensus, both internationally and within this committee, that climate change is happening. It's very important to hear your perspective of how that is affecting first nations, Inuit, and Métis. I appreciate what you've shared.

Our focus today is on Bill C-311. My question to both of you is.... Do you have a copy of Bill C-311 with you today?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I do not have it with me.

**Mr. Joe Tulurialik:** I actually had it with me this morning and I forgot to put it in my briefcase before I came to this conference.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Okay. Thank you so much.

Have both of you had a chance to read it?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I have not had a chance to read it. I do have an idea of what it entails, and I know my people in the Northwest Territories—at least 25,000 of them—have not read it either.

**Mr. Joe Tulurialik:** I have read a little bit of it. I haven't read the whole thing through. A lot of us who have Bill C-311 haven't read it.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Okay. Thank you for that.

You shared that with climate change things are changing and things are becoming more expensive. Mr. Tulurialik shared that everything needs to be flown in, and that's expensive. You've shared that deer are moving to the north. Chief Erasmus shared that the cost of snow removal is very expensive with heavier, wetter snow.

Are you aware of the impacts, the cost impacts, that Bill C-311 would impose on first nations?

•(1220)

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** If we're not involved, it may cost our lives.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Okay. We've had witnesses—scientists actually—who shared that.... The question I had asked was whether we would be adopting costs similar to Denmark's and Sweden's. I shared that about three weeks ago I was in Copenhagen. When asked if we have to become another Denmark or Sweden, Mr. John Drexhage replied that he thinks that to a large degree, yes, we do.

Would you favour having a 180% sales tax on buying snowmobiles? Would you support that?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I don't mean to speak ahead of our other presenter. This is what I was getting at earlier; I think we need to sit down together, all peoples of this land, including all of the indigenous peoples.

A very interesting thing happened in the U.S. two weeks ago. President Obama invited all of the tribal peoples to meet with him, and they talked about the economy and about the future of America. Apparently, it may not have moved as far as people wanted, but a process is beginning.

Canada, with much fewer people, ought to do the same. If I were the Prime Minister, I would call in the first peoples of this land, with their experts, and talk about how we ought to stimulate the economy, how we ought to approach the world, and how we can get out of this mess we're in. Our people notice—

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** I'm sorry to interrupt, but that's not answering the question.

My question is, are you aware of the cost that Bill C-311 would impose on all Canadians, including first nations, Inuit, Métis? The cost for energy would dramatically increase, and the example the scientists shared was costs imposed on all Canadians similar to those in Denmark and Sweden. Having just come back, I saw dramatically increased costs for energy, and that would affect you. I just was wondering if you were aware of that.

I have just a quick question on consultation. Are you aware of the consultation that the government has ongoing?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Thank you.

The point I was going to make is that costs do not have to rise if we work together to develop the economy. The difficulty right now is you only get a margin of the views out there and then you develop a response. That doesn't work. That most likely might be happening in those other countries, but there are many more resources and much more to work on—

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Mr. Erasmus, I'm sorry, I have only a limited amount of time. Could you answer my question about consultation?

Are you aware of the government's consultations with first nations?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Yes, I'm aware that Canada is making an effort, but it's a dismal one.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Okay, thank you. You are aware that we're consulting.

Are you aware of our greenhouse gas emission reductions that we've published two drafts of in the *Canada Gazette*? Are you familiar with those drafts?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I am familiar with Canada's position. Yes, I am familiar.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Have you read those in the *Canada Gazette*?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I have not read them, but our technical people have summarized them for me.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Are you aware of the recent notice of intent to regulate fuel tailpipe emissions?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I am aware that's an intention of Canada.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Were you aware that we've published a notice of intent to regulate?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I'm not aware of that.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Okay.

How much time do I have left?

**The Chair:** It's really very short, Mr. Warawa.

**Mr. Mark Warawa:** Well, just a quick comment, then.

I want to thank both witnesses for being here, but Bill C-311 is a discussion. Canada has very aggressive targets. Our position is that all the major emitters have to be part of a new international agreement on climate change. That includes the United States and China, India, all the major emitters. Climate change is happening. If we want to take this seriously, we all have to participate, especially the big emitters, and then we can hopefully protect the environment.

So thank you again for coming and being involved with us.

• (1225)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We're now going to go into our five-minute round. We're going to stick to five minutes so that every member does get a chance to ask a question before one o'clock. I'm going to be very stringent here, so I ask both witnesses that if you can keep your response to the questioners very succinct and brief, we'd appreciate that.

With that, Mr. Trudeau, please, would you go first for five minutes?

**Mr. Justin Trudeau (Papineau, Lib.):** Thank you very much.

Hello, Bill. Hello, Joe. It's Justin Trudeau. Thank you very much, both of you, for being here. Thank you for sharing your perspective.

I'm interested in following up on some of Mr. Warawa's comments. The government is regularly bringing forward the concerns around the costs associated with truly ambitious targets, more in line with the science, like a 20% reduction from 1990, or a 25% reduction.

It's interesting to me to hear your perspective, because, as you're only too aware, it's more expensive to live in the north. You are therefore greater emitters, because of energy requirements and such, of greenhouse gases and carbon emissions. So any stringent targets, and ambitious targets, as Mr. Warawa showed in an example in an extreme case, would doubtless require a slightly larger level of sacrifice perhaps from the people in the north than elsewhere. Even given that, you seem to be still in favour of having ambitious targets and holding ourselves to them. Is that a fair assessment?

I'd like to hear from Bill first, but then Joe afterwards.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** It's an economic question, but first of all, it's one where people need to be involved. You can try to visualize what's going to happen and then put a dollar figure to it. But our people up here are not interested in Canada giving us money to survive. We're not into that.

Global warming is real. If you have an increase in temperature in the south, you know the ratio of how much it increases up here. If you get a 2% increase at the equator, it's going to increase from 6% to 8% up here. Everything is escalating much beyond the imagination of anyone. So try to imagine the cost. It's almost ridiculous to us.

First of all, it's not Parliament's choice to decide what's going to happen to the future of Canada. It's not the executive arm or the cabinet's choice either. And it's not a matter for the courts. This is beyond you people in Ottawa. And if you guys don't wake up, we're in trouble.

**Mr. Justin Trudeau:** Thank you, Bill.

Joe, do you have a similar position? Do you see the cost of inaction as being far greater than the cost of action?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** I would like to voice my opinion on that. I do a lot of hunting, like a lot of others up here in the Arctic. We Inuit rely on our country food more than store-bought food. But guess what? It costs \$23 for a quart of oil, and the price of gasoline has gone right through the roof. For me to get all those things to go out on the land, I have to work. And guess what I have to use? I have to use a loader that uses diesel. It puts a big strain on the people up here.

As Bill Erasmus said, we don't want a dollar sign. We're renewable, sustainability people. We live off the land. But we need our voices heard, and you guys need to know what it is like up here. You have to come up here to know how it is. We have people coming from the south going to the stores and saying, "These prices are ridiculous!" We already know that. But what can we do?

People in the House of Commons in Parliament make all kinds of bills and leave us out. It hurts us big time. Yes, we need help economically. Whether we're in the north or in the south, there are people who say that we need more money and more mines. But the people who actually live up here say, "No, we do not need that." There are people who are manipulating their power in this area, telling us we need jobs and mines to help our people. But they are really only representing themselves.

I just want to voice my concern. Yes, everything is very expensive up here. Yes, we need money. But no, you can't put a dollar sign on all of that. We are people who live off the land.

• (1230)

**Mr. Justin Trudeau:** Thank you, gentlemen.

**The Chair:** Mr. Woodworth.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and my thanks to both of our witnesses today. It's an honour to speak with you.

Mr. Warawa already stole a little of my thunder when he was asking about your knowledge of the government's plan. I heard from Chief Erasmus that he is aware of those initiatives. The plan went under the original title of "Turning the Corner".

Mr. Tularialik are you also aware of that plan by the government?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** No, I'm not aware of it.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Chief Erasmus, can you tell me whether the Assembly of First Nations provided the government with any written response to the government's plan on climate change, called "Turning the Corner"?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** You know what? I don't have our technical people with me. I don't know if they did or not. The difficulty is that because of the minority government situation, there are all sorts of things at play, which you probably know better than I do, like the way the budget was presented, for example, with—

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Well, before we get into the budget, I really would like to stick to the issue of climate change and Bill C-311, so if you find that the Assembly of First Nations did in fact provide any kind of written response to the government's climate change plan, could you send it on to our clerk, please?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** I was going to say that we can certainly send it on.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Good.

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** I was just going to comment on navigable waters, which I think is relevant to—

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Well, if I could stop you there for a minute, sir, you understand that I have about three and a half minutes left, so I'd like to stick with the questions, if that's all right with you.

Is that all right, Chief Erasmus?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** No problem. Thank you kindly.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Okay. My next question is regarding Bill C-311. I thought one of the wisest things that we've heard was said by you this morning, Mr. Erasmus, which is that this bill links with economics, it links with culture, and it links with a whole range of issues, and therefore it requires consultation.

I'll start with Chief Erasmus. Were you consulted or was the Assembly of First Nations consulted in relation to the preparation of Bill C-311?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** First of all, I'm not sure what "consultation" means. We're aware that Canada has plans for everyone, and generally in the last few years we've been opposed to what they're trying to do because of the way they do things. So I'm not sure what you mean by "consultation".

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** I'll be more specific. Bill C-311 is actually not a government bill; it's a bill sponsored by an NDP member. What I'm wondering is if anyone, in the course of the preparation of that non-government Bill C-311, which we're here today to study, ever asked for the input of the Assembly of First Nations before today.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I'm sure they did.

•(1235)

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Are you sure?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** But the way our people see anything that comes through those offices, they are government.... You might call it non-government, but—

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Okay. If there was consultation, can you tell me if there was a written response to that inquiry regarding Bill C-311?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I'm not sure, but if there was, we'll certainly get it to you.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** That would be good. Thank you.

Mr. Tularialik, was your association consulted, that is, requested to give input with respect to this NDP Bill C-311?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** I'm not sure on that, so I cannot really comment. I don't want to say anything that I do not know. They're aware of that bill; they have a copy within the Kitikmeot Inuit organization, with the youth. I'm not sure on that.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** All right.

Did either one of your organizations provide any input to the Pembina-Suzuki report that was mentioned earlier by Chief Erasmus?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Did we have input into it? Not that I'm aware of. I knew that a report was coming out, for example. I got the summary of it and we've had discussions about it, but you're going to have to ask Dr. Suzuki or Pembina about that.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** Well, you'd know if you were consulted, I'm sure.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** We'll move right along.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ouellet, would you like to have five minutes?

**Mr. Christian Ouellet (Brome—Missisquoi, BQ):** Yes, I would like that very much. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Erasmus, at the start of your remarks, you said that you were afraid that decisions are being made in Ottawa without your being consulted. You have no cause to be afraid, because the government has been in office for four years and has done nothing about climate change; the only thing that it is prepared to do is talk about it.

This is why we have Bill C-311. We have it because the government is doing nothing. The objectives of the bill are to provide the government and Canadians in general with greenhouse gas reduction targets. It is greenhouse gases, basically, that are causing the changes to your way of life, right?

[*English*]

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Regardless of who presents the bill, this whole discussion has to happen across the country. I think it has to come out of where you have it there—in the committees and Parliament.

I'm going to take two minutes here, Mr. Chairman, if you don't mind.

This is like the war effort. The war effort happened without discussion with Canadians. Now Canada has been sucked into that vacuum and there seems to be to no end to it. The budget has to accommodate it, and that won't change in the near future. That discussion should have happened with Canadians, because it's the children of Canadians who have to go to war.

This issue is at the same level. It has to include all people in the discussion. If it takes two years, then let's take two years. This is not within the realm of one election period. That's the point I was getting at.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Christian Ouellet:** I will come back to that, Mr. Erasmus.

At the moment, when government people say "aggressive" targets, they mean by 2020, we will have reduced emissions by less than 3% from 1990 levels.

Do you think that consultations over such tiny results are worth it?

[English]

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I agree that the results are insignificant. I sincerely believe that Canada is not serious about reducing emissions. I say that because of their actions and from seeing them at the table at the international level.

• (1240)

[Translation]

**Mr. Christian Ouellet:** Now, I would like to talk to you about your way of life. Mr. Warawa, who was asking you questions earlier, always comes back to way of life and says that a bill like Bill C-311 would change Canadians' way of life.

But is it not precisely climate change that is changing your way of life? Would you not have more of a chance to re-establish your way of life with a bill like Bill C-311? Accepting that the taxes on your snowmobile may be higher, the fact remains that, one day, you will no longer be able to get meat to eat and you will have to be fed by the people in the south.

I would like to hear you talk about your way of life.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** Sorry, was the question for me?

[Translation]

**Mr. Christian Ouellet:** At the moment, the government's argument for not wanting Bill C-311 to pass is that it will change Canadians' way of life and make their life more expensive.

On the other hand, it is my impression that, if Bill C-311 is passed, your life will cost you less and you will be able to continue living it in a normal and traditional way, even if the bill really changes your way of life. Otherwise, climate change will continue to affect your current way of life adversely.

[English]

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** On this whole business of setting targets, and so on, it seems that someone wants to decide for us, and no one has the right to decide for us. That's part of the problem.

What I'm clearly trying to say—and what I think our neighbour to the east is also saying—is that we have this huge land mass across the north that no one in the south has the right to talk about. We don't talk about the south. I don't come from the south, so I'm not going to tell you what to do.

Don't tell us what to do in the north. Let's sit down together as equals and decide our future. I don't know about emissions and I don't know about future costs, but I know that someone else is not going to decide for us.

**The Chair:** Mr. Calkins, you have the floor.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins (Wetaskiwin, CPC):** Thank you very much.

I was a little perplexed by the last comments by Chief Erasmus.

If members of Parliament, duly elected across the country, don't have the ability to decide on behalf of Canadians, Mr. Erasmus, who does have the ability to decide?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** The people have the ability to decide. Your responsibility is to get their views. This is supposed to be a

parliamentary democracy. Well, let's make it work like one. We're in trouble if it's not working as a parliamentary democracy.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Well, I think your presence here today, Mr. Erasmus, talking before this committee, indicates clearly that the will of this committee and the will of Parliament is to hear from all Canadians. I think this is the process we're engaging in right now.

I would like to ask you a question in regard to the bill. I think both Mr. Tularialik and Mr. Erasmus have already said that you haven't had the opportunity to read the bill we're discussing before the committee today. It's only 13 clauses long. Could either of you tell the committee what date you were informed you would be appearing or what day you were first approached to appear before this committee to make a representation before this committee? Do you remember what date you were approached?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I was asked to appear last week.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** It was last week.

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** I was asked last week as well. I cannot confirm exactly what date.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** You haven't had a whole lot of time, but the issue remains the same. Is that correct?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Yes.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** Did you have an opportunity to read Bill C-377, which was basically the precursor to this bill from a previous Parliament? Do either of you remember ever reading Bill C-377?

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** No.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** You know what? There are so many bills. And I'm a Bill myself.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I can't remember one from the other.

I remember Bill C-31. That's the one that was to deal with our citizenship.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** That's a different bill altogether and a different issue.

• (1245)

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** That one stays in my mind more than anything.

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** I have a question for you, and I'll just preface it a little bit. I've spent quite a bit of time in Canada's north. I worked at Great Bear Lake, right on the Arctic Circle, when I was a younger man. I was able to take in the vast beauty of Canada's north. It was absolutely fantastic. It seems to me that there is a lot of potential in Canada's north. It certainly is a harsh environment. It's a harsh climate to try to survive in. I remember, at that time, over 20 years ago, the weather being quite inclement. When we would go out on the lake there would still be ice on the lake in the early part of July. And of course we were off the lake by September because the winds would pick up and it was not safe to be out on that lake.

One of the things that has occurred to me is that I would think, because of the harshness of the climate and the difficulties there, that adaptation would be a more important and pressing issue. If you take a look at what's been said by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, even if we were to hold our own levels of greenhouse gas emissions right now, which no economy will be able to do, it would take at least 50 years to see a change in the current trend we're seeing in the change of climate.

Knowing that, knowing that holding our own is still going to take 50 years to turn around, wouldn't it be more important for aboriginal communities and northern communities to put more emphasis on adaptation? I'm just wondering if you think Bill C-311 addresses any of those adaptation measures that would be so important for northern communities.

**Mr. Joe Tulurialik:** That kind of caught me off guard.

It's complicated. I can't really say much on that. Let's go ahead with Mr. Erasmus.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Well, we see a lot of potential in the south, too. They have a big population down there. The difficulty is that the water comes north. As downstream users, when the water comes north, we are affected. It's pretty hard to adapt when the effluent from....

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** In all fairness, we're talking about a bill that deals with gases in the air.

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** That's Fort McMurray, is it not?

**Mr. Blaine Calkins:** No. We're talking about greenhouse gas emissions. That's what Bill C-311 is.

I understand there are issues and concerns with water. The committee is currently engaged in a study on that, and we've been interrupted by this bill in finishing that. I'm not going to deny that it's a serious issue, but I would like to get back to the whole issue of whether folks in the northern communities would not rather see investments that were going to produce concrete results for adaptation, rather than investing millions and millions and billions of dollars in hopes that greenhouse gas reductions will somehow stop climate change.

**The Chair:** I'm going to ask—

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** To me, it doesn't make sense to do—

**The Chair:** Excuse me. Unfortunately Mr. Calkins' time has run out, so if Mr. Tulurialik and Chief Erasmus could give just a very short response to his question, then we'll keep moving along.

Joe, did you want to go first?

**Mr. Joe Tulurialik:** It's kind of hard to comment on that area. I'll talk a little bit about the forest fires. There are forest fires down in the south, and it comes up into the north. Way up in this area we can smell that haze and fire smoke, exactly the same way that there's a lot of pollution going on in the south and it affects us in a way, too. With the look of the clouds, the rain, and the vegetation, you can tell after a rain that it affects us in some way.

**The Chair:** Okay. I'm going to actually have to keep moving along here, to be fair to the other members of the committee.

Mr. Calkins, you asked when was the first time this panel had been invited. That was October 22, when we contacted all the different organizations representing aboriginal people to appear.

We'll keep moving along.

Mr. Scarpaleggia, you have the floor.

• (1250)

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia (Lac-Saint-Louis, Lib.):** Thank you, Chair.

It's nice to see you again, Chief Erasmus. As you know, we met in Edmonton, I think it was, when the committee was on its tour of Alberta in the context of its study on oil sands and water, which hopefully we will approve a final report on shortly, perhaps after this bill has gone through committee.

In terms of what might be needed to reach the 25% reduction target by 2020, would you not think it would be much easier to achieve if we lived in a kind of unitary political state, perhaps like Britain, where we didn't have powerful provinces with very different economic bases, with regional rivalries and jealousies, and so on? Would it not be easier to achieve if we lived in that kind of system, with maybe more of a command-and-control government in Ottawa, if that's at all possible? What's your perspective on the achievability of a 25% reduction within the current political context?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Thank you very much.

Yes, I do remember meeting you, and it was a pleasure meeting before the committee. It seems we never have enough time to have the kind of dialogue we need. We might have to have this dialogue outside the committee chambers.

I think strongly that Canada has a real interesting background and history, the way it has been developed. It's not like the States in many ways, but then it is. Yes, the provinces have authority. Yes, indigenous peoples have authority under section 35. The provinces are under section 92, and the federal government is under section 91. We have these incredible agreements that, on the face of it, look like they could do a lot, but they're not being implemented. For example, Treaty 11 goes 200 miles north of the Beaufort Sea because it's an international instrument with Great Britain, but this country refuses to recognize that and have that as a sovereignty document. The issue of sovereignty up in the Beaufort delta was settled in 1921 between our peoples and England, on behalf of Canada, because Canada didn't have the authority to sign the treaty. So this makeup is incredible.

If we were to sit down and talk about adaptation, talk about the potential this country has, we could go a long way, but there are a select few who want to tell everyone what to do and guide our lives; it doesn't work today and it's not going to work tomorrow.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Chief Erasmus, let's say that we couldn't achieve a 25% reduction by 2020, but that we could achieve something not quite that, but closer to it. Would you be happy with that, or is it a sort of all-or-nothing proposition for you?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I think what we need to talk about is how you get there. To me, it doesn't make sense to be looking for oil if oil is not the future.

**Mr. Francis Scarpaleggia:** Do you think oil will be phased out as an energy source by 2020?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I don't know all of the numbers, but clearly, in this day and age—it's 2010 now.... Do you know what I would do if I were one of you sitting where you sit? I would convince the government to invest so that we wouldn't have to rely on oil or gas. I would tell the oil companies, for example, or the manufacturers of the vehicles, to find a way, to put their major investment into that, so that we wouldn't have to pay the price of oil or gas, and convert those vehicles' motors. That's where I would invest, just for example. And if that were the case, the rest of the world would follow. Canada has to be the lead.

• (1255)

**The Chair:** Thank you. Your five minutes have expired.

We'll continue.

Mr. Watson, you have the floor.

**Mr. Jeff Watson (Essex, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, of course, to our witnesses appearing here today, Chief Erasmus and Mr. Turlialik.

We're here studying Bill C-311 currently, a bill sponsored by a member of the New Democratic Party, and of course this is not the government's climate change plan, though Bill C-311 could have serious effects upon that. Our options as a committee are whether this bill will be passed as is by the committee, whether it will be rejected as is by the committee, or whether there will be changes proposed to the bill. That's the task in front of us. And changes could be based on the input of witnesses.

Having laid that as the foundation to our witnesses, Chief Erasmus, I want to start with you, because I'm a little confused, based on your testimony so far. You said, in response to Mr. Woodworth's question, that you think you may have been consulted by the NDP in the drafting of this bill.

Mr. Turlialik, you said you weren't sure whether the NDP consulted you on this bill, but it's possible that there may have been some consultation. You've also said, on the other side of it, that we need more consultation. So I'm not sure, for purposes of considering Bill C-311, the NDP's bill, whether there has been enough consultation or whether we need more consultation specifically with first peoples. Could you answer that question for me as a starting point?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** The difficulty is that you in Parliament are having many arguments amongst ourselves. You can't agree on what the future ought to be, and the system works in such a way that you can present these different bills, and you're trying to include people in them. Some people are included as they're kicking and fighting,

and other people are eagerly there. What we're saying is that we're not the general public. You're obligated to work with us in a particular way because of section 35 in the Canadian Constitution and because of agreements such as the Nunavut one and agreements such as the provincial governments have.

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** I understand that. I'm sorry to interrupt, but more to the point of the question, this is an NDP bill: do we need more consultation with first peoples on aspects of the bill and the potential effects of the bill? That is the question, because we're at a point in the legislative process when we have to make a decision about this bill and what's in it.

Do we need more input from first peoples with respect to what's in this bill—that's the point of my question—or are you satisfied that there has been enough consultation on it?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** You do need more input, but that shouldn't be used as a tactic to stop the bill.

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** I'm going to take it that we need more consultation with respect to the bill from first peoples.

Mr. Turlialik, do you share the same opinion that more consultation is needed with respect to the specifics of Bill C-311, the NDP's bill on climate change?

**Mr. Joe Turlialik:** Yes, we do need more consultation on it. I can't understand that it can actually really help us up here. The NDP is presenting it. There has to be change in that area.

• (1300)

**Mr. Jeff Watson:** I can appreciate that. I can see already in the discussion that there can be very different regional effects when we discuss what to do about climate change.

I come from the southernmost riding in all of Canada. Of course, the auto industry is king there, so possible effects on the auto industry, for example, do become a major part of the discussion that I bring to the table here as a member of Parliament on behalf of my region. I can see now that issues can be very different with respect to the north, and I can appreciate that.

I am going to have some difficulty in terms of further questions because you both testified to some extent that you've either only read part of the bill or you haven't read the bill, so you may have some difficulty answering questions about the bill. I will pose them again for the record, and if you could answer in a written submission to the committee, we would appreciate that. I'll just leave them for the record for you so that you can provide a written response to the committee.

Specifically, because climate change has impacts with respect to the north, does Bill C-311 address the issue of adaptation in a meaningful fashion? That's question one.

Question two, do you feel that traditional aboriginal knowledge has been appropriately used in developing Bill C-311?

Question three is about industries in the north that affect aboriginal communities. Have they been appropriately consulted in the preparation of Bill C-311?

If you could provide written answers to the committee on those questions, we'd certainly appreciate that.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** The time has expired.

Gentlemen, Mr. Watson asked you to provide written submissions on those questions. If you could forward those, at your convenience, we would appreciate it.

Mr. Braid, you get to finish off with the final question.

**Mr. Peter Braid (Kitchener—Waterloo, CPC):** Thank you.

Thank you very much to both of our witnesses for participating today by teleconference.

I would like to come back to the issue of adaptation that Mr. Calkins introduced in our discussion. I have one question, and this will be our final question this afternoon. Could both of you gentlemen please outline what your respective organizations are doing to facilitate, support, and advance the issue of adaptation in your communities?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I'll answer very succinctly, but in a nice way.

We have been adapting to the south for a long time. We know how you work. We're not sure if you're going to survive with what happens in the future, but we know we will.

Thank you.

**Mr. Joe Tularialik:** I cannot add anything else to what Chief Erasmus said. He said it bang on.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** We are out of time, but we did start late and we had some technical difficulties. I'll let you have your full five-minute round. You do have about three and a half minutes left.

**Mr. Peter Braid:** Perhaps I'll come back to my question. I don't think we heard answers there.

With respect to the notion of adapting to global climate change, could you outline what either one of your organizations is doing in the north to support, facilitate, adopt, and advance climate change adaptation? What initiatives are you taking now to deal with both the current and future impacts of global warming?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** Our elders tell us not to tell other peoples what we're doing because they'll soon take our ways and act as if it belonged to them, like they did with the canoe and the kayak. I can tell you very little on the subject.

**Mr. Peter Braid:** Are you aware if Bill C-311 speaks to the issue of climate change adaptation at all?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I imagine it tries to.

• (1305)

**Mr. Peter Braid:** Do you know how it does that?

**Chief Bill Erasmus:** I told you I know very little about the bill. I haven't actually read it in its depth, and I have a hard time understanding how they tackle all these issues to begin with. So it is not fair for me to comment on it.

**Mr. Peter Braid:** I have a final point with respect to the importance of consultation. I will just clarify that ongoing extensive consultations between the governments and first nations organizations are in fact taking place. Consultations have occurred with Grand Chiefs Kelly, Chamberlain, and Ed John, and discussions with the AFN are ongoing. A meeting with Grand Chief Atleo is imminent.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you. Time has run out on the meeting. Actually, Mr. Tularialik's connection has been terminated already.

Chief Erasmus, I'd like to thank you for your comments and participation in today's study of Bill C-311.

Just before I adjourn, I want to request that anybody who wants to forward amendments on Bill C-311 do so as quickly as possible so we can start doing clause-by-clause on December 1.

Just so everyone knows what the line-up is on Thursday, we are having our international panel. Next week, on Tuesday, we have the international panel, with witnesses from Environment Northeast and from the Pew Center on Global Climate Change. On November 26 we have the panel on the economy. Our final panel is on December 1, and we have an industry panel.

There have been other witnesses who have requested to appear, but time is running short, unless the committee desires to have one more panel on December 3. But right now we do have that for clause-by-clause consideration.

Ms. Duncan.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

I'm advised that the last possible date we could have the minister come before us to speak to the estimates is December 1. It's my understanding that generally he comes to us on estimates, and we would support that. So I think we need to deal with that.

**The Chair:** We can extend an invitation from the committee. The minister will be going to Copenhagen.

**Ms. Linda Duncan:** Not until the 11th.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** May I raise a point of order?

**The Chair:** Mr. Woodworth.

**Mr. Stephen Woodworth:** It seems to me we are now discussing the future schedule of the committee. While I would ordinarily love to do that, I'm late and therefore would request an adjournment.

**The Chair:** Okay. That is a point of order. But for your information, it is within the purview of the committee to study estimates, so what we can do, if the committee wills it, is to send an invitation.

With that, the meeting is adjourned.





**MAIL  POSTE**

Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes

Postage paid

Port payé

**Lettermail**

**Poste-lettre**

**1782711  
Ottawa**

*If undelivered, return COVER ONLY to:*  
Publishing and Depository Services  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5

*En cas de non-livraison,  
retourner cette COUVERTURE SEULEMENT à :*  
Les Éditions et Services de dépôt  
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5

Published under the authority of the Speaker of  
the House of Commons

### **SPEAKER'S PERMISSION**

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Additional copies may be obtained from: Publishing and  
Depository Services  
Public Works and Government Services Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0S5  
Telephone: 613-941-5995 or 1-800-635-7943  
Fax: 613-954-5779 or 1-800-565-7757  
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca  
http://publications.gc.ca

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the  
following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité  
du Président de la Chambre des communes

### **PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT**

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

On peut obtenir des copies supplémentaires en écrivant à : Les  
Éditions et Services de dépôt  
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada  
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0S5  
Téléphone : 613-941-5995 ou 1-800-635-7943  
Télécopieur : 613-954-5779 ou 1-800-565-7757  
publications@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca  
http://publications.gc.ca

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à  
l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>