

# Dion shares vision on environment

**MELANIE HENNESSEY**  
Special to The IFP

Federal Liberal Leader Stephane Dion joined Halton MP Garth Turner in hosting the Halton ecoSummit at Country Heritage Park in Milton recently—an event that drew hundreds of residents from across the region.

Dion kicked things off by painting a picture of the world today and where the environment is heading.

For Dion, the main sign that the planet is in trouble is climate change. So what should be done to change the direction we're headed in?

"You give a carbon budget to the nation," Dion said, explaining his plan would be a way to ensure the "big industry" in Canada decreases its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Dion's proposal calls for a 'hard cap' on GHG emissions for the three largest industrial emitting sectors—electricity generation, upstream oil and gas and energy-intensive industries.

A company that doesn't stay within its carbon budget would have to pay \$20 per excess tonne. The funds would be deposited into a green investment account, which the company could access to initiate green projects once it has cut its emissions.

Those that don't reduce their emissions wouldn't get the money back. Instead, it would be invested in green technologies in the province where the company is located.

"My plan provides a real and effective approach that will result in significant reductions of carbon emissions and will also act as a catalyst for extensive development of green technologies here in Canada," Dion said.

When asked what a carbon budget would mean for the natural gas-fired power plant planned for land near the Halton Hills/Milton border, Dion said he's been told that the facility will already be a very clean one.

"We want to create an incentive for clean solutions," he noted.

Those in attendance at the ecoSummit also had a chance to share their thoughts with Dion.

Former Halton Hills councillor Mike Davis took the opportunity to share his views on public transit—something he deemed to be a "very political issue" in Halton Hills.

"I believe we should be promoting public transit as much as we possibly can," Davis said.

Dion told him that if he comes into power, he would be willing to invest a large part of the government's infrastructure money in transit.

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