

## **APENS Position on Climate Change**

### **April 17, 2003**

The Association of Professional Engineers of Nova Scotia (APENS) recognizes the expertise and scientific credibility of members of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The IPCC's Third Assessment Report (TAR), Climate Change 2001 ([www.ipcc.ch/](http://www.ipcc.ch/)) is based on plausible scientific modeling and research. The TAR convincingly states that anthropogenic climate change is already occurring and that projected changes in climate and climate extremes could have major environmental and socio-economic repercussions on a global scale.

Members of APENS have pledged themselves ethically and legally to “regard their duty to public welfare as paramount.” Therefore, with both our Code of Ethics and the evidence presented in the TAR in mind, members of APENS are duty bound to become engaged in the issue of climate change and in dealing with its probable consequences.

APENS supports the Canadian efforts to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions and to implement measures to address climate change. Furthermore, APENS recognizes the power of engineering professionals to move markets toward sustainable development by:

- 1) emphasizing improved energy efficiency and utilization of resources,
- 2) supporting public policies for the development of alternative energy,
- 3) encouraging decision-makers to carefully consider all environmental and health impacts prior to taking actions in response to climate change, and
- 4) developing strategies and new technologies that will reduce the production of Greenhouse Gases.

In keeping with the Precautionary Principle<sup>1</sup> APENS encourages members to become engaged in discussion regarding opportunities for the mitigation of climate change and for impact/adaptation planning in anticipation of further climate change and extreme weather events. APENS encourages its members to include sustainable thinking in their personal and professional activities.

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<sup>1</sup> The most widely cited definition of the Precautionary Principle, and the one that is used in the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA 1999), emerged from the Rio Conference (1992), which states, “Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.”

The precautionary principle, which is essentially used by decision-makers in the management of risk, should not be confused with the element of caution that scientists apply in their assessment of scientific data.