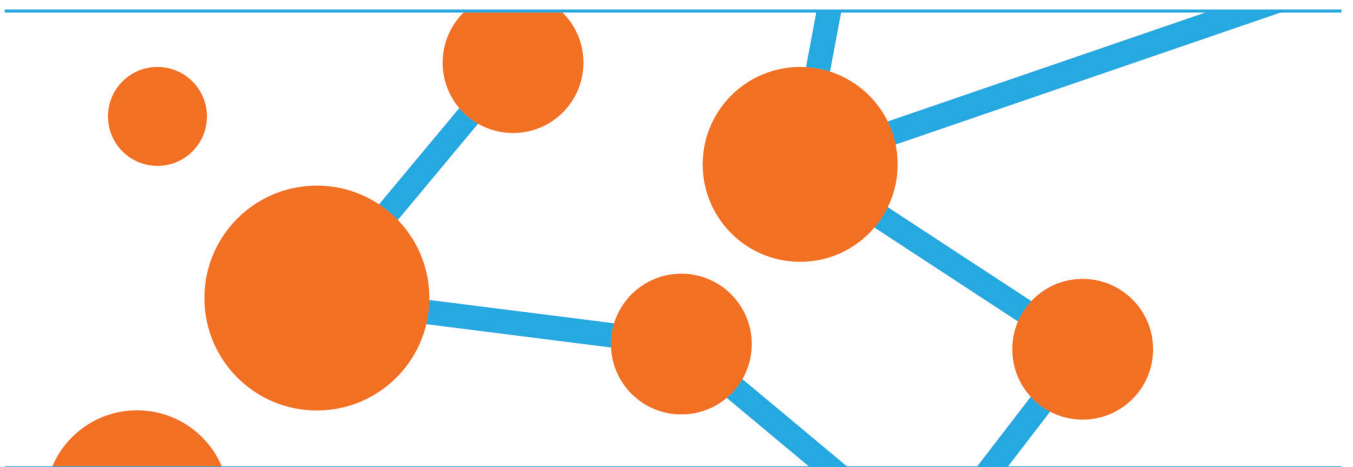


# WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING

A NETWORK HAS BEEN BUILDING



**SUSTAINABILITY COLAB**  
**2014/2015 REPORT**



# AWAKENING A NETWORK OF NETWORKS

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## “Why wouldn’t this work anywhere else?”

That was the question that inspired the ambitious experiment that is Sustainability CoLab three years ago, followed quickly by the question that has kept us focused since: “And what influence could a whole network of target-based sustainability programs have across the country?”

The report you hold in your hands is our first opportunity to begin sharing what we’re finding.

Today, the target-based sustainability program that inspired us to create CoLab – Sustainable Waterloo Region’s *Regional Carbon Initiative* (RCI) – continues to thrive. The RCI brings together a roster of unlikely players that employ 14% of Waterloo Region’s workforce in a shared sustainability journey: learning from each other, connected to a network of support, and reporting back on their results.

Meanwhile, since CoLab’s launch, six other organizations across Ontario have begun to not only adapt this program for their communities, but to innovate on top of what’s been tried already. And while it adds up to 106 businesses in Waterloo, Niagara and Durham Regions that are part of RCI-type programs (with targets that add up to 59,000 tonnes to be reduced), the collective is so much more: it’s a network of networks that are the hub of Ontario’s low-carbon economy, criss-crossing the province.

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**From Niagara to Sudbury to Ottawa, businesses are setting targets that simultaneously reduce their environmental impact, increase their profitability and stimulate the low-carbon economy.**

---

Read on for details on this experiment, and we hope you’ll join us as we work towards a better, more sustainable economy.

On we go,



**Mike Morrice**

Executive Director & Founder,  
Sustainability CoLab



**Matthew Hoffmann**

Board Chair, Sustainability CoLab;  
Professor of Political Science,  
University of Toronto

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# PART ONE: THE COLAB STORY

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## COLAB ORIGINS

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You could say it began with *Ishmael*. Back in 2007, the novel by Daniel Quinn rocked Mike Morrice's worldview while studying business and computer electronics at Wilfrid Laurier. The impact? By graduation in August 2008, Mike had a business plan for a new organization that would support and bring businesses together to reduce their carbon footprint, his research professor - Dr. Barry Colbert - had joined the organization's Board and contributed the first \$10,000 in start-up funding, and a team of dedicated volunteers were keen to bring a vision to life through Sustainable Waterloo Region and its *Regional Carbon Initiative* (RCI).

Four years later, those seeds took root. Having launched with 3 participating organizations and \$200,000 in seed funding in June 2009, in just four more years, the RCI had connected 65 organizations across the region - representing 14% of its total workforce - to collectively set and work towards GHG emissions targets, amounting to 52,000 tonnes. Participants' fees and sponsorship covered the costs of operating the program.

The success in Waterloo Region garnered global interest - from Ukraine to the U.S. to Niagara Region - in what we now refer to as "target-based sustainability programs". In response, Sustainability CoLab was formed. The idea: take what worked in Waterloo Region and see if it could be scaled out to a provincial, national, perhaps even global movement.

That's exactly what CoLab continues to do today, supporting businesses transitioning to a low-carbon economy across Ontario.





# WHAT WE DO

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## WE SUPPORT

local environmental organizations launching and growing target-based sustainability programs for businesses.



## WE COLLABORATE

through a network to share best practices for embedding sustainability into how businesses operate.



## WE CONNECT THE DOTS

across the CoLab Network, building public will, advancing policy, and mobilizing funding for a greener economy.



## OUR MISSION

CoLab fosters results-focused networks that embed sustainability into how businesses operate.



## OUR VISION

CoLab envisions an economy that makes environmental sustainability, human well-being and business success synonymous.

# TARGET-BASED SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS

## Our four Core Approaches

---

While each of our Network Members adapts their program for their local context, all programs follow CoLab's Core Approaches. This means that each is:

### **COMMUNITY-DRIVEN**

Developed and led by an organization operating within the community it serves.

### **BUSINESS-FOCUSED**

Builds a network that engages private and public sector organizations in setting and working to achieve sustainability targets.

### **A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

Generates revenue to cover its operating costs, or is on a trajectory to do so.

### **REQUIRING TARGET-SETTING AND PUBLIC REPORTING**

Engages organizations to set and achieve sustainability targets and publicly report on progress. Setting a target on reducing carbon must be one option for participating organizations to select from.

# IMPACT OF TARGET-BASED SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS

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## INCREASED PROFITABILITY

Attracting top employee talent, saving on energy costs, building positive brand recognition, and innovating to stay ahead of industry and regulatory requirements all contribute to an organization's business case for sustainability.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

By setting and achieving targets, like reductions in carbon emissions, organizations and businesses are taking action to reduce their environmental impact and being held accountable by having to report publicly on actions taken. See how our Network Members are doing this in *Part Two* of this report.

## ADVANCING THE LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

By setting targets, program members are creating demand within the low-carbon economy, working with service providers like energy auditors and solar installers to complete sustainability projects.

A 2014 Carbon Disclosure Project study found:

Companies that mitigate/plan for climate change have an 18% higher return on investment (ROI)

Companies that report on emissions have a 67% higher ROI

Companies that invest in CO<sub>2</sub> reduction have 21% higher dividends<sup>1</sup>

HISTORICAL CASE STUDY:  
*Regional Carbon Initiative* (RCI)  
Waterloo Region, 2013

- 5 companies set GHG targets
- \$70,000 spent locally on energy audits
- \$90,000 spent on +ROI sustainability projects, including solar power & building retrofits
- Total of \$160,000 invested in local products and services

---

**"There is a very clear business case for us. The competition for talent is high and what sets our firm apart is the quality of our people. The majority of our people are under 30, and this younger generation is generally inspired and motivated by ambitious goals around sustainability."**

**Greg McCauley, Managing Partner (Waterloo Region),  
EY, *Regional Carbon Initiative* (RCI) Program Member**

---

<sup>1</sup>Cofino, J. (2014, September 24). Sustainable corporations perform better financially, report finds. Retrieved March 18, 2015, from <http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2014/sep/23/business-companies-profit-cdp-report-climate-change-sustainability>

# COLAB NETWORK MEMBER BENEFITS

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CoLab provides its Network Members with resources, tools and support to launch and grow target-based sustainability programs. Member benefits include:

<p><b>COACHING</b> one-on-one support for program launch and growth</p> <p><b>RESOURCES</b> hundreds of guides, samples and templates so members don't have to reinvent the wheel</p> <p><b>CONNECTIONS</b> high-powered connections to key organizations and influencers in members' communities</p> <p><b>PEER LEARNING</b> building relationships among our members to share innovations and collaborate</p>	<p><b>INCREASED PROFILE</b> spreading the word about our members to funders, businesses, communities, and media</p> <p><b>PROGRAM LAUNCH</b> a tailored roadmap with 10 milestones to guide program launch</p> <p><b>PARTNERSHIPS</b> access to discounted services members can offer locally on pre-negotiated terms</p>
---	---

## TYPES OF COLAB MEMBERS

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<p><b>AFFILIATE MEMBERS</b></p> <p>Organizations that have launched a target-based sustainability program for businesses in their community. With CoLab's support, Affiliate Members continue to grow their programs.</p>	<p><b>EMERGING MEMBERS</b></p> <p>Organizations that are planning to launch a target-based sustainability program for businesses in their community. With CoLab's support, Emerging Members launch their programs.</p>
---	--

# COLAB NETWORK AT A GLANCE

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## AFFILIATE MEMBERS

- 1**  Durham  
SustainAbility
- 2**  NIAGARA  
SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE
- 3**  sustainable  
WATERLOO REGION



---

## EMERGING MEMBERS

- 4**  envirocentre
- 5**  rethink  
green
- 6**  sustainable  
kingston  
DESIGNING OUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE... TOGETHER
- 7**  Windfall  
ecology centre

# COLAB NETWORK MEMBER PROFILES

## AFFILIATE MEMBERS

	Region	Program	Launched in	Members
	Durham	<i>Durham Partners in Project Green</i>	January 2015	15
	Niagara	<i>The Carbon Project</i>	January 2011	23
	Waterloo	<i>Regional Carbon Initiative</i>	June 2009	68

## EMERGING MEMBERS

	Region	Program	Milestone	Expected Launch
	Ottawa	<i>Carbon 613</i>	10	June 2015
	Sudbury	<i>To be named</i>	2	Early 2016
	Kingston	<i>Green Economy Collective</i>	9-10	Late 2015
	York	<i>ClimateWise Business Network</i>	4	Early 2016

The above milestones reference CoLab's 10 milestone program launch process, found online at [sustainabilitycolab.org/programlaunch](http://sustainabilitycolab.org/programlaunch)

To learn more about our Network Members, visit [www.sustainabilitycolab.org/members](http://www.sustainabilitycolab.org/members)

# COLLECTIVE VALUE OF OUR NETWORK

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CoLab is a backbone organization, meaning we spend time bringing out the collective value of the CoLab Network. Here are a few examples of what this looks like:

## NETWORK FUNDRAISING

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We seek funders and sponsors who may not be able to support any one Network Member's program, but do want to support a larger movement towards sustainability, while getting exposure across the province. One example is TD Bank Group - a \$25,000 sponsorship of the CoLab Network allowed each organization to accelerate the progress of their program.

## FUNDS DIRECTED TO NETWORK MEMBERS IN 2014/15: \$109,000

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## ADVANCING POLICY

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We connect the dots between our Network Members' efforts, ensuring policymakers remain aware of their progress when making decisions. One example: we've been in conversations with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change regarding carbon pricing, speaking to the progress that the 106 organizations participating in target-based sustainability programs are making across Ontario.

## INSPIRING COLLABORATION AND CREATIVITY

---

CoLab is creating opportunities to engage Ontarians across all sectors to help build a critical mass. At CoLab Connects 2015, we brought business and organizational leaders together to celebrate progress being made and spark further discussion on how to accelerate Ontario's low-carbon economy.



CoLab's launch event in January 2014 (left); Mike Morrice speaks at a May 2014 EnviroCentre community workshop (centre); CoLab Network Members convene at Sustainable Waterloo Region's Evening of Recognition in April 2015 (Photo: Sustainable Waterloo Region).

# PART TWO: PROGRESS UNDERWAY

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In Ontario, conversations on what needs to happen to move towards a low-carbon economy are accelerating: cap and trade system legislation announcements, climate summits, and various papers like the Ecofiscal Commission's *The Way Forward* have all brought the low-carbon discourse to the forefront.

Paving the way for these conversations are communities, businesses and organizations throughout Ontario already working collaboratively to reduce their carbon impact.

Our Network Members engage with businesses across all sectors and sizes, and their work points to a measurable shift in thinking towards business as usual. The investments in sustainability that are being made through this concerted effort – switching to renewable energy technology, building efficiency retrofits, and sustainable transportation, for example – all contribute to an economy that is largely decoupled from fossil fuels.

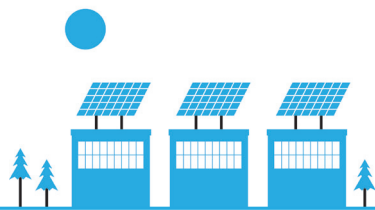
Read on to learn more about what this shift looks like on the ground.



A full house at Sustainable Waterloo Region's Evening of Recognition in 2015. Over 300 attended from local organizations and businesses committed to building sustainability into their bottom line (Photo: Sustainable Waterloo Region).



# IMPACT



Businesses and organizations in our Network Members’ target-based sustainability programs take action to meet the targets they’ve set. Below is an aggregated look at how these programs are reducing environmental impact, increasing profitability, and growing the low-carbon economy.

% of program members that have set targets to reduce GHG

26%

% of program members on track to hit targets

67%

Tonnes of GHG reductions committed to date by program members

59,695

Tonnes of GHG reduced to date by program members

29,028

Equal to taking 6,111 cars off the road



# CASE STUDIES IN THE LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

Here are some examples of progress on the ground from members of the *Regional Carbon Initiative (RCI)* in Waterloo Region and *The Carbon Project* in Niagara Region in 2014. They illustrate how projects undertaken to reduce environmental impact are profitable and result in investments that grow the low-carbon economy.

## QUARTEK GROUP

*The Carbon Project*

Niagara Sustainability Initiative

- GHG reduction target: 40% below 2011 GHG baseline
- Infrastructure: Built and modeled its Quartek Place building with building envelope efficiency and a heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system to better control the internal climate
- Retrofit: Replaced 60% efficient boiler with a 93% efficiency modulating gas boiler
- Behaviour change: Reduced employee travel by approximately 1300 km/month

## NIAGARA COLLEGE

*The Carbon Project*

Niagara Sustainability Initiative

- GHG reduction target: 20% below 2011 baseline
- Retrofit: Installed motion sensors to better control lighting in the main hallways at its Niagara-on-the-Lake campus building
- Estimated annual energy savings: 230,000 kWh/year
- Recognition: Received the Green Business Award at the Niagara Region Environmental Awards

## VERIFORM

*Regional Carbon Initiative*

Sustainable Waterloo Region

- GHG reduction target: 100% below 2008 baseline
- Total emissions reduced to date: 175 tonnes
- \$ invested in first 37 of 90 projects: \$46,000
- Average payback period: 6 months (for first 37 projects)
- 10 yr operational cost savings: \$1.4 Million (for first 37 projects)

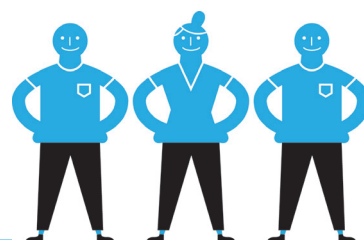
## CONESTOGA MALL

*Regional Carbon Initiative*

Sustainable Waterloo Region

- GHG reduction target: 20% below 2010 baseline
- Total emissions reduced to date: 104 tonnes
- Retrofit: Replacing all interior halogen and high-intensity discharge (HID) lamps with LED lights
- Estimated annual energy savings: 327,707 kWh/year
- Estimated payback period of \$50,000 invested: 2 years

# PARTICIPATION



The strength of the CoLab Network lies in the participation of a wide network of private, non-profit and public sector groups working collectively to set and achieve sustainability targets.

# of members in  
CoLab Network programs (as of April 2015)

106

Annual rate of  
member retention (2014)

91%

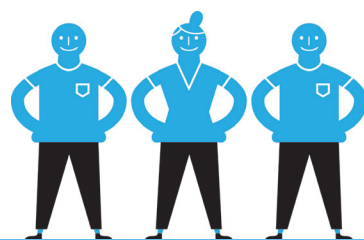
% of workforce employed by participating businesses  
and organizations in Affiliate Member regions (2014)

12%



Niagara Sustainability Initiative's Evening of Recognition in 2014 (left), and community workshop participants in Kingston, 2014.

# PARTICIPATION CONTINUED



## SECTORS REPRESENTED

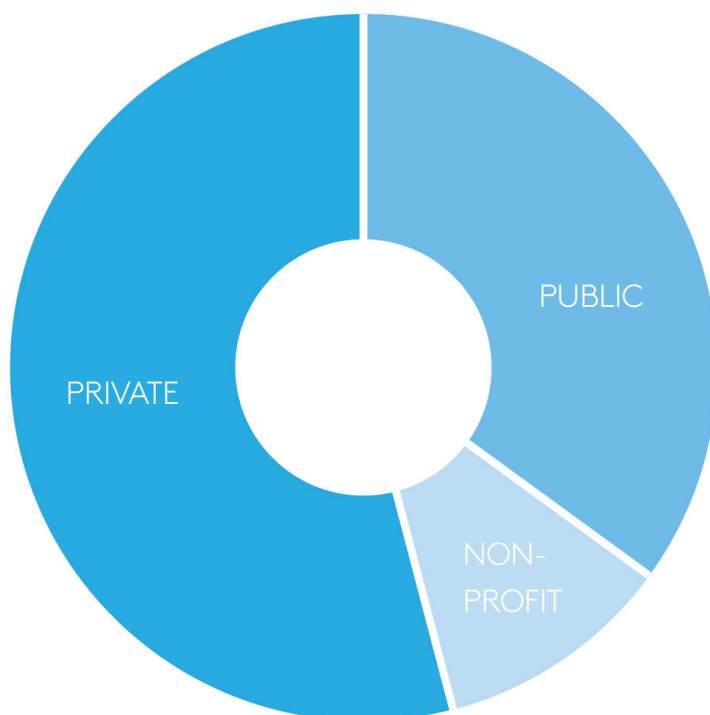
PRIVATE: **54%**

retail: **7%**  
IT: **5%**  
accommodation: **3%**  
manufacturing: **7%**  
financial: **9%**  
construction: **13%**  
marketing: **3%**  
business services: **6%**  
security: **1%**

PUBLIC: **35%**

utilities: **8%**  
government: **11%**  
education: **9%**  
health: **7%**

NON-PROFIT: **11%**



Businesses and organizations in Sudbury in discussion at an April 2015 community workshop, hosted by reThink Green.

# CAPACITY



Each program launched by our Network Members is a social enterprise, giving it a better chance of existing in the long term. Revenue is generated through membership fees, sponsorship, and event fees to cover program costs and build program capacity.

Total revenue generated from Affiliate Members' program membership fees in 2014

# \$236,173

% program expenses covered  
by program revenues

# 81%

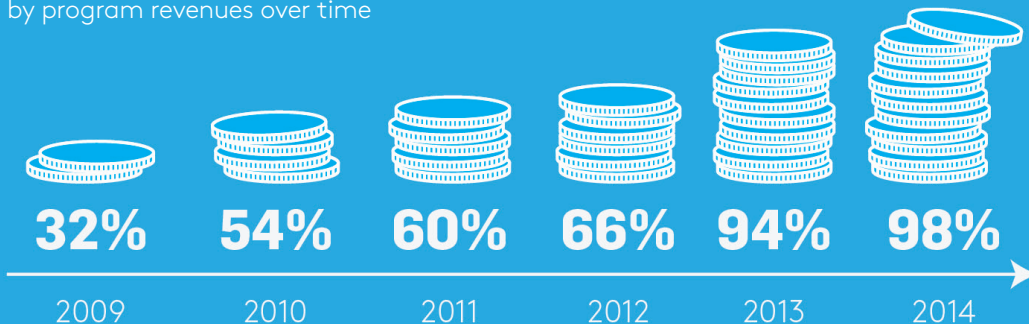
# of volunteers engaged

# 61

Two stylized human figures, one male and one female, standing side-by-side. They are wearing blue shirts and black pants. The male figure is on the left, and the female figure is on the right.

## THE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MODEL

The *Regional Carbon Initiative*: % program expenses covered by program revenues over time



# 2014 FIELD NOTES: STORIES FROM THE COLAB NETWORK

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In the 18 months since CoLab launched, there have been great advances in target-based sustainability programs. In Niagara, program membership has more than doubled. Businesses have joined for conversations in places like Sudbury and York Region. In Waterloo Region, research has begun to expand the scope of the *Regional Carbon Initiative* (RCI) beyond carbon to support holistic sustainability efforts while also welcoming the Waterloo Region District School Board to the RCI, bringing over 100 new facilities into the program.

---

- **Sustainable Waterloo Region:** The RCI launched a new, collaborative facility membership category into their program allowing multi-tenant groups to set and achieve targets together. This helped secure the 27-company Marsland Centre office tower in Uptown Waterloo and the David Johnston Research + Technology Park at the University of Waterloo.
  - **Niagara Sustainability Initiative:** *The Carbon Project* increased its program membership by 150% in 2014 to a total of 23 members, including Fallsview Casino and the Niagara Health System (the largest public sector employer in the region).
  - **Durham Sustain Ability:** In the three months after re-launching their program, *Durham Partners in Project Green*, 15 businesses in the Region joined, including GM Canada and the Regional Municipality of Durham.
  - **EnviroCentre:** Is set to launch their own program in June 2015, *Carbon 613*, and will work to set targets in the largest jurisdiction in the CoLab Network, the National Capital Region of Ottawa.
  - **Sustainable Kingston:** Received \$150,000 in support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), to help launch their program – more than six times the original funding given to Sustainable Waterloo Region's program in 2009.
- 



From Jan 2014 – May 2015, our Emerging Members held a total of 11 community workshops in five regions across the province, engaging over 200 people to help shape community and region-specific target-based sustainability programs.

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In 2014/15 CoLab Network Members received \$587,500 in OTF funding through independent applications.

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# PART THREE: ACCELERATING THE LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

---

The progress across the CoLab Network is shifting the status quo, but we need to scale and speed up to rise to the magnitude of the challenge we face. To do so, we need a vision and a plan. The articles that follow capture a vision, propose what opportunities are in front of us and offer inspirations to help guide the low-carbon economy of the future.

## NETWORK VISION

---

Executive Directors from the CoLab Network discuss how to advance the low-carbon economy from their perspectives leading programs across Ontario.



Katrina Kroeze (KK)  
Niagara Sustainability Initiative



Tova Davidson (TD)  
Sustainable Waterloo Region



Shawna Mutton (SM)  
Durham Sustain Ability

## A VISION FOR THE LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

**All:** The low-carbon economy is one that does not rely on the burning of fossil fuels – and even more broadly – does not negatively impact the environment. It engages a local workforce that actively participates and contributes to an economy that is more environmentally conscious. It's a shift in standards. That's where we come in, ensuring the businesses we deal with are embedding sustainability into their operations.

## HOW DO WE GET THERE?

**KK:** In Niagara Region, continuous education has been part of the success in shifting the mindset of the businesses in our area. We exist to support and build the business case for sustainability and we've had success as a result within our membership.

**TD:** Yes - and in Waterloo Region, there is a big shift among some of the area's largest employers to create more sustainable businesses and business practices, which are not only good for the environment but also good for businesses. Once that understanding is fully embedded, it will drive larger-scale change that may lead to the vision we are all working towards.

**SM:** Absolutely, Tova - as a network, we'll continue to connect the dots. When something works and we have a business within our membership that is excelling - scream it from the rooftops! The more organizations and businesses we have embedding sustainability into their day-to-day practices, the more the naysayers will have to start admitting they need to get onside.

**TD:** When there are success stories all over the province that demonstrate that the low-carbon economy is a strong and resilient economy, our work ripples out and inspires other communities to consider making this change.

# VIEW FROM THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS

---

By Tom Rand

Decoupling economic activity from carbon emissions is the defining challenge of the 21st century, and likely the toughest job humankind has ever attempted. Fossil fuels permeate every corner of our economy, and vested interests continue to defend the status quo. But a clean energy future is not just necessary, it's possible – and the work of CoLab shows it.

What the low-carbon economy actually looks like may still be unclear, but the tools and technologies we need to reveal it definitely are already invented. Next-generation innovation that moves the carbon needle down further and faster is just around the corner. Low-cost, energy efficient manufacturing capacity abounds. The capital required sits in pension funds, corporate balance sheets and money markets the world over. The policy tools to unlock that capital are well known.

The lowest hanging fruit is efficiency. I built Planet Traveller, a low-carbon hotel in downtown Toronto, which uses a fifth of the energy in a comparable building. Furthermore, the energy savings beat the cost of the retrofits. The actions of businesses in this report show the same. It's a classic no-brainer.

Led by a shining solar power sector, clean energy is, for example, no longer an outlier – solar panel prices have dropped four-fifths in price since 2008. New installs around the world surpassed 36 gigawatts in 2013, with 45 times more power expected later this year. Global investment in clean energy has grown to hundreds of billions annually.

At the dawn of the 21st century we stand on the shoulders of giants. We live in an age of unparalleled intellectual wealth, engineering might, innovation, and manufacturing capacity. As hard as it may seem to visualize, solving our climate problem is possible. It has to be possible, for the alternative is unthinkable.



Tom Rand is Managing Partner of ArcTern Ventures, a Senior CleanTech Advisor at the MaRS Discovery District and the best-selling author of *Kick the Fossil Fuel Habit* and *Waking The Frog*.



Aerial view of Waterloo Region from above the Sustainability CoLab offices (Footage by Barn Door Creative)



# INVENTING CANADA'S LOW-CARBON ECONOMY

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by Chris Ragan

Let me start off by telling you what I don't know about Canada's low-carbon economy of the future: I don't know what it will look like.

The truth is, Canada's future economy is not a place we can simply show up to. Rather, it is a thing we must invent, a thing we are already inventing. What I do know is that the decisions we make today, in light of very real and escalating environmental and economic pressures, will determine our future prosperity and that of our children and grandchildren. We may not have a good idea of exactly what their world will involve, but we can certainly plan the best for it. Better yet, we can help influence its sustainability by setting up the right policies, markets, and business conditions today to do so.

The first and most critical realization necessary for grasping that opportunity is the inherent relationship between our environment and our economy. We cannot choose between them; we must choose both – and the CoLab Network is doing just this.

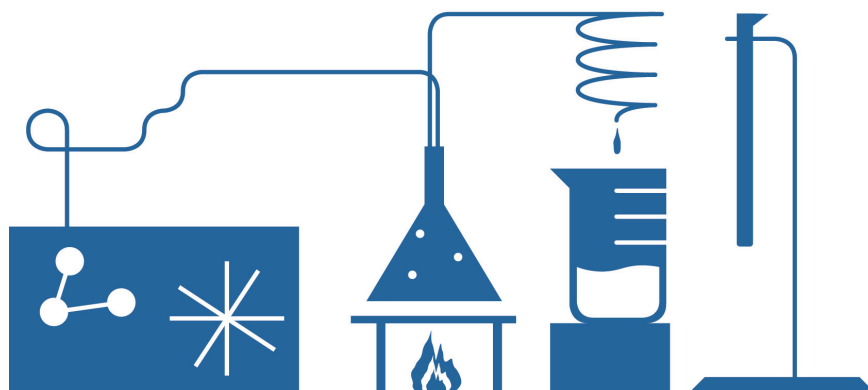
The second point we must remember is to seize the power of our markets, and embrace the opportunity to harness them with the right incentives. Putting a price on greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of pollution sends a mighty signal to households and businesses alike. It not only discourages the behaviour we don't want but it also drives the innovation and the investment we do want, and will yield an economy more efficient in the use of our scarce resources and cleaner in the generation of our energy.

The winners and losers of tomorrow's economy are not pre-determined. They will emerge as a result of their successes in responding to the realities of limited resources and environmental pressures. The people and industries that will seize these opportunities are the ones already looking for them today – and they are spotted through the pages you hold in your hands.



Chris Ragan is Chair of Canada's Ecofiscal Commission ([www.ecofiscal.ca](http://www.ecofiscal.ca)) and an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at McGill University in Montreal.

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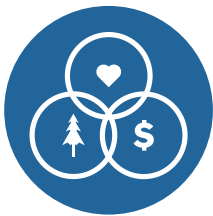


# A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

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Since the launch of CoLab, we've been focused on deep learning throughout this experiment and on how quickly we can integrate what we've learned into our plans for the future. Here are three examples:

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## **HOLISTIC SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING**

Our Network Members are hearing it loud and clear: a strong interest from organizations in their community to report on more than their carbon impact. And while our Core Approaches allow for this, we're now also looking at offering partnerships, a framework and resources to support members in setting targets and reporting more holistically on impacts such as water, waste and procurement.



## **MOVING THE POLICY NEEDLE**

The pace of climate change policy is picking up right across the country, just as the CoLab Network is hitting its stride. As efforts ramp up over the next year to accelerate Canada's low-carbon economy, we'll be communicating through more channels than ever to ensure Canadians and policymakers are aware of the progress underway - one example being the CoLab Network.



## **EXPANDING OUR HORIZONS?**

While we've received interest from communities outside Ontario since before launch, the question for us remains: what is the right pace to scale? In the lead up to accepting applications as part of our next recruitment round this fall, we will again consider if the time is right to share this program more broadly and if so, how to go about it.

# THANKS & RECOGNITION

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## GRANTORS

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