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PRESS RELEASE:

**Another global crisis brings leaders to Pugwash:
Centre for Local Prosperity issues a call to action on climate change**

Pugwash, Nova Scotia. September 30, 2018. Sixty-one years ago, at the height of the Cold War, Nova Scotia philanthropist and industrialist Cyrus Eaton brought 22 leading scientists from the around the world to the Pugwash Thinkers' Lodge to address the threat of nuclear war.

Inspired by this historic meeting, a smaller but no less dedicated group of leaders met this weekend at the Lodge to address climate change, today's existential threat - as calamitous as any asteroid strike, thermo-nuclear war, or plague. This weekend's meeting was initiated by Eaton's grandchildren, John and Cathy Eaton, and Nova Scotia's Centre for Local Prosperity, led by Robert Cervelli and Gregory Heming.

In 1957, the scientists urged the world's governments to act immediately on nuclear proliferation. They launched a worldwide movement and were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995.

The unusual team of warriors that met in 2018 first recognized that they were on unceded Mi'kmaq territory and that Treaty rights are central to protecting the environment.

In their final statement, the Pugwash Declaration, they identified a list of actions that every citizen, business and government official in Atlantic Canada can take immediately to lessen the impacts and decrease the risks and subsequent harm from global warming. But more poignantly, each invitee provided an uncompromising assessment of the impacts of climate change. They all urge immediate action that is commensurate with the problem.

"It's a silent summer," says Phil Ferraro, an organic farmer and co-director of the Institute for Bioregional Studies in PEI. "After working in Cuba, I recognized the deafening silence in rural Prince Edward Island, not just because of the absence of people but also because of the decline in numbers of insects and songbirds."

"Our nuclear winter is here, and it is climate change," says Amy Larkin, former vice chair of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Climate Change and author of the book, *Environmental Debt*. "The world is on fire. And we are the firefighters."

“In Atlantic Canada – as around the world - we need to step up and care for ailing Mother Earth. Without a healthy planet, we all perish,” says Robert Cervelli.

Given that bleak reality, the meeting focussed on *positive action*.

“We can eat our way out of climate change by turning away from industrial farming,” says Lil MacPherson, co-owner of the Wooden Monkey restaurants in Halifax and Dartmouth.

Josée-Ann Cloutier, who runs a social enterprise in Halifax, says, “We need to awaken to the natural world, so that we remember there is no separation between humans and nature.”

“Municipal planners in rural communities in Atlantic Canada need to put climate change at the top of their list of priorities”, says Betsy Allard, member of the Centre for Local Prosperity board. “And there is so much they can do to protect water, farmland, forests and to create jobs for millennials.”

“Climate change must be at the centre of every single provincial and municipal policy,” says Gregory Heming, municipal councillor in Annapolis County. “All levels of government must work with and not against each other. We are all in this together.”

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The Pugwash Declaration

The Thinkers’ Climate Change Conference agrees that all people have the right to: live in a healthy environment; have access to clean air, water, nutritious food, and green spaces; the right to know about pollutants and contaminants used and released in their local environment; and to participate in decision-making that will affect their environment. Communities should focus on local food and energy production for adaptation and resilience in meeting basic needs.

Further, the Thinkers affirm that to face this ongoing climate crisis all levels of government must:

1. Examine all Environmental Impact Assessments through a climate change lens, accounting for greenhouse gas emissions, atmospheric temperature and sea level rise, changes in ocean currents, acidity and overall ocean health, loss of biodiversity, and more extreme weather events.
2. Take into account *all* environmental costs and consequences of policy and legislation.
3. Address climate change in their budgets, including both mitigation of and adaptation to the potential harm that global warming causes.

The team calls for the following actions.

What individuals in Atlantic Canada can do:

1. Conduct a home energy assessment.
2. Look for ways to save energy.
3. Know who grows their food, learn (and teach children) to garden.
4. Switch to renewable energy.
5. Change transportation choices.
6. Be mindful of what they purchase.
7. Spread the message about climate change whenever they can.

What communities or municipal governments in Atlantic Canada can do:

1. Make climate change the top priority in municipal planning strategies and land-use bylaws.
2. Offer a municipal financing program for energy efficiency and renewable energy.
3. Focus policy on the local economy.
4. Set a community target for energy efficiency and renewable energy.
5. Facilitate community gardening.
6. Redesign transportation networks to encourage walking, bicycling, and public transit.

With the following requests to provincial governments:

1. Make climate change the top priority of provincial government planning and policy-making.
2. Recognize that the rights of nature are no different from human rights, as has been done in other countries.
3. Incentivize farming practices that reverse climate change and promote good land-use stewardship.
4. Implement and fund a transition to ecological and high-value forestry practices; ban clearcutting, whole-tree harvesting and herbicide spraying.
5. Give landowners incentives for practicing ecological forestry and establishing and managing climate forests.
6. Increase renewable energy targets for the province through, in Nova Scotia for example, the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (EGSPA).
7. Remove open-pen fish farms from our coastal waters and inland waterways; support inshore fisheries and land-based aquaculture.

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