

**North American Green Purchasing Initiative (NAGPI)
Conference Call (Teleconference) Minutes**

Wednesday 27 November 2002, 13:00 – 15:00

1. Welcome to participants and roll call (Jean Bilodeau, Chair)

List of participants :

Jean Bilodeau, Chair
Scot Case
Russell Clark
John Polak
Julie Shannon
Robert Kerr
Rahumathulla Marikkar
Loretta Legeault (Environment Canada)
Arthur Weissman
Professor Kun-Mo Lee
Amalia Lelo (replacing Berenice Silva)

CEC :
Chantal Line Carpentier
Jane Barr

Unable to attend:
Israel Nuñez Birrueta
Lou Pagano
Cameron Griffith
Diane Wood
Alicia Culver

2. Approve agenda

Jean Bilodeau mentioned that he had recruited Paul Murray of Ermin Miller to participate in the NAGPI group. He has lots of expertise in lifecycle and cost analysis and a lot of experience with all major furniture manufacturers. Chantal Line Carpentier expressed the wish to talk more about the proposed criteria for admitting other participants before accepting more members. The agenda was approved with the understanding that this would be addressed under item 5: Group structure and process

3. Approve minutes of last meeting (30 October)

Rahumathulla Marikkar provided Jane with the missing information for the minutes and these were approved.

Jean suggested we look at the *Action and Follow up Items* from the last meeting before proceeding with new business and it was agreed to go through this list, provided at the end of the October 30 minutes.

- Web page: Jean is working on developing the web page
- Definition: Scot and Arthur didn't discuss it, but this meeting will give all members a chance for discussion
- The 'good' stories report: Five Winds was not able to reach Alicia to work on a template, as planned, so it is developing its own template, which it will forward to the CEC.

- Preparation for Cancún: Jane prepared a draft timeline, but it hasn't been circulated yet. Jean and Chantal Line will check it over and then it will be distributed to the participants as an attachment with the minutes of this call.
- Sharing of information: Group members are doing what needs to be done.
- Interim report to Alt Reps: This item will be discussed later on.
- Communication strategy: also to be discussed later.

4. Progress reports

- a. **Minutes of 18 September meeting:** translation for posting on the CEC web site:

Chantal Line is still waiting to receive the translated versions (Spanish and French) from the Communications Department. Jean suggested that the next minutes (the conference call of 30 October) also be translated and posted. Chantal Line agreed that the CEC could take care of this and she recommended that the names of the participants and their affiliations also be posted on the CEC web site.

- b. **Interim report to the Alt Reps:** one-pager to be presented at the Alternate Representatives meeting on December 11 and 12 (Chantal Line).

Chantal Line informed the group that there are several chances to report on this initiative to the CEC Council and its representatives: There is an upcoming public meeting on financing and the environment, which includes procurement. Chantal Line has been told that the agenda for the meeting of December 11 and 12 meeting is already quite full but that Victor Shantora, Acting Executive Director, has agreed to include procurement work in the update that he will give to the Alternate Representatives. Chantal Line said that she would not be able to distribute a document to them, but will take the pertinent text from the (Acting) Executive Director's report and will provide this text to the group. Jean will send it to Canada's Alternative Representative, Norine Smith. Jane will remind Chantal Line to send it to whole group for input before Wednesday (December 4th). Chantal Line will also work to include NAGPI and its accomplishments on the agenda of the June Council meeting. This can be supported by letters of support from the three environmental agencies to their Alternative Representative. It could be a good opportunity to present the 'good' stories report and see if there is anything the government wants to do. At that June Council meeting, an important agenda item will be the ten-year review of NAFTA (to take place in 2004) and this project is a good opportunity to congratulate the CEC Council on its good work and should be presented as such.

- c. **Web Site development** (Jean Bilodeau)

Jean will send the group a web site map or plan within the next few days. It has already been discussed with a designer and there are some specific headings suggested, such as: what is NAGPI; what are others doing; hot topics; green procurement; links, etc.

- d. **Communication strategy:** contract with Tom Shillington (Chantal Line Carpentier).

Chantal Line reported that the CEC has contacted Tom Shillington to do a communications strategy and work in collaboration with the CEC communication team. She is confident that he will accept. He would build on what Five Winds is preparing. Given the budget year for contracts, the contract can extend only to the end of February.

Discussion:

There was some discussion about the nature of the communications strategy and the audience it would be aiming at. Scot and Julie requested clarification. Chantal Line mentioned that the idea is to give the governments an opportunity to realize their own good actions in the form of the news of successful procurement actions that are already in place as highlighted by the CEC report. John Polak recalled that items 7 and 12 in the 18 September meeting's list of things to do was the genesis for contracting someone to develop a communication strategy. Jean suggested that it will be difficult to publicize what NAGPI is before the group has decided on its scope, structure and membership. Chantal Line clarified that Tom's contract is to develop a communications strategy, but not to implement it. He will help the NAGPI group by telling us what to do and how to go about our communications strategy, once we know what we are doing and who we are. The language is also necessarily vague for the time being, since the contract needs to be issued by December 2. Jean suggested that Chantal Line draw up a one-page text for the group outlining his tasks.

e. **List Serve** (Robert Kerr)

Robert reported that he has communicated back and forth with Jane and Chantal Line and is pleased to report that he has registered NAGPI.net as the official domain. He is in the process of purchasing it and transferring it will not be a problem. We will only need to make a simple decision as to what the address will be at the front end.

Discussion:

Jean asked if the name as it now stands can it be changed and Chantal Line suggested the new name of Procure@NAGPI.net. There was unanimous agreement. Robert informed the group that there is a yearly \$75.00 fee for the domain name and that this name can also serve as a web site address. There are also tools that could link it to a broader web level. For example, we can create an archive as a record of communication that takes place in the conference calls, which might be useful. Jean inquired if everything could be posted on the site so that we could access the information and know when the next call would be, etc., making Jane's job easier. Robert replied that this would be the next step and if we wished, we could also have chat groups. Obtaining the domain is a great launching factor; we shouldn't be too ambitious right yet. Jean suggested that Robert contact Loretta at Environment Canada. Robert explained that the physical presence of hosting a web site is really immaterial. Once there is a domain name, everyone can participate in the web, the archives etc. Once we are online, it becomes easy. In the meantime, he informed everyone that he will use his list of participants in NAGPI as the basis of information about the group.

f. **Cancún timeline** (Chantal Line, Jane and Jean)

Chantal Line hasn't had a chance to discuss the draft timeline with Jean, so she suggested postponing this item to the next meeting. Jean asked that an addition be made to the timeline by including the date of the meeting, which is 10–14 September 2003. The timeline will be sent to the group as part of the minutes of this meeting.

5. Group structure and process: discuss Scot and Diane's proposed definition (and as amended for agenda adoption, how we include new participants to the group).

Scot Case enquired if everyone received the one-page description and then summarized why it is necessary to define NAGPI. Beginning with the April conference in Philadelphia, people involved in green procurement have been trying to explain the challenge and we have a need to communicate among ourselves what green procurement is all about. At the 18 September meeting, we listed the opportunities for NAGPI. Now, we are trying to define who can be a member of NAGPI, so we tried to come up with criteria that included all present members, but which would place some limits regarding new ones. Scot's text proposes limiting membership to information and service providers: any entity providing information to purchasers so as to make it easier for them to buy environmentally preferable products. A big issue, according to Scot, is 'for profit' companies and whether those who sell products rather than information should be included. What makes this issue challenging is that [the company] Interface has provided valuable perspective for this group that should not be lost, but there is a concern that companies may approach us solely to provide marketing information.

Discussion:

John commented that there are two things to consider: the steering committee (the group as it stands now) and broader membership. Jean, Rahumathulla and Scot introduced the notion that an individual representing a company could be part of the NAGPI group if he participates to share information—about lifecycle analysis, for example—not to sell products. Julie felt that there is a very fine line between an approach that seeks to provide information and one that is aimed at selling. Rahumathulla gave the example of Paul Murray, who represents a company but who would be an excellent addition to the group, and suggested that the members of this core group could approach others to invite them to join. Chantal Line, however, felt that the distinction between inviting someone and being approached by someone to join is not a clear way to approve membership. For example, she was approached by Ocean Blue and was considering its offer. Would it be eligible or not because it approached us rather than us inviting it?

John Polak recalled that at the beginning, we talked about bringing a couple of manufacturers into the meeting and how this issue can only be solved by identifying NAGPI's purpose. At the meeting in Philadelphia, we said that we needed to consider the companies. Jean wondered if we should think about a process by which members of the steering committee could propose a member and justify their nomination.

At Scot's suggestion, discussion opened about the 'challenge' section of the definition. Arthur felt that one aspect of the challenge is the concept of trying to move environmentally preferable purchasing forward. In order to do that, we need to do things

in a forceful and effective way. This group is trying to promote a whole movement, and part of the benefit is to avoid conflicting messages. Scot suggested that members e-mail him specific language and additions and he would flag proposed changes, attributing them to the author to enable future discussions. Robert suggested that the idea of the challenge sounds like a Mission statement and noted that what is not made clear in the message is the distinction between purchasers and sellers. The last part of the Mission statement should mention increased uptake of environmentally preferable purchases. John reflected that, given these comments, it appears that we are going back to an earlier version of the Mission Statement, in which we state who we're trying to serve, and then how to go about it.

Jean suggested that the proposed solution part of the definition be left as is and that the discussion move on to the issue of NAGPI membership. He asked if we need a subset that talks about the steering committee. John felt that if we define the Mission first, then it will become easier to know who the members should be and Scot supported that notion because he found that when writing the definition, he couldn't focus on membership without going back to the Mission.

Rahumathulla added that whatever implementation strategies we suggest to purchasers, it would be better to try them out with a small group and when all the bumps are worked out, then we can draw on new members and increase the group. Initially, and until we mature, we should limit our membership to some degree.

Jean wrapped up the discussion by requesting that Robert, Arthur and Scot work on the definition together. Julie offered to help, too. She felt that we need to have a proposed function of the initiative/group/organization/body, suggesting that Scot ask for thoughts about this. It is impossible to talk about who's in and who's out until we know what we're trying to provide. If it is just about coordinating a program, it is different than providing information to purchasers.

John suggested that we go back to the original document he and Scot had circulated July 30, entitled "North American Green Purchasing Initiative Discussion Paper on Next Steps" which addressed these issues.

It was agreed that this group of people will work on a definition that is more top-down. We need to be careful about creating a group before deciding what we want to deliver. The steering group should remain the membership, as it is now. Scot requested that everyone send their thoughts to him by e-mail, keeping their comments and suggestions within the present headings. He will compile it into a matrix and share it with everyone, then we can have a conference call to decide on the final version.

Jean suggested that Scot initiate the conversation through the list serve procure@nagpi.net, which Robert confirmed will be up and running almost immediately and then we will have a conference call on this specific issue only. No other members will be invited to join the group until this discussion has taken place.

Jean said that he and John will deal with Paul Murray, suggesting that perhaps he can work on the lifecycle issue without being in the group.

- 6. Good stories report:** Five Winds' draft outline for report, format for interviews, and feedback about interviews to date.

Chantal Line asked if all the participants had received the outline proposed by Five Winds, and wondered if the fact that she had received no comments from anyone meant that the outline was acceptable. She also commented that the authors had already started writing. Jean requested that the outline be sent again, by itself, with the request that any comments be sent in by the next day.

Discussion:

There was some discussion about the format for the case studies. Scot found the outline good but questioned the process and format for submitting case studies. He was under the impression that we would all be invited to submit something, written according to a proposed template. He asked if Five Winds had received the EPA web site that could be useful as a template for a best-practices compilation (<http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/ppg/index.htm>). Chantal Line responded that since Five Winds had not been able to reach Alicia, it began to develop its own template. Jane will send Five Winds the EPA web site and Chantal Line will circulate the proposed template for comments. Regarding feedback about the interviews Five Winds has done to date, Rahumathulla said he hadn't been contacted by them yet and Scot commented that the 10 minute interview with him didn't seem to do justice to what he had to say. Chantal Line asked Jane to contact Five Winds (Ralf Nielsen and Jennifer Hall, who are preparing the report) and ask if they can participate in the portion of the next conference call that will deal with their report.

7. Lifecycle Analysis Contact with Dr. Kun-Mo Lee (Rahumathulla) and progress report from John and Rahumathulla

John Polak reported that he had begun work on lifecycle costing and Dr. Kun-Mo Lee has helped with the science behind this. The concept of acquisition has been added. There are three different parts to it: a lifecycle cost data sheet; a lifecycle costing suppliers sheet (set of instructions); and an evaluation guide so purchasers can interpret what they received. People in the purchasing business will give feedback

Rahumathulla mentioned that the intention is to make it user friendly and practical. There will be two different worksheets: one with direct costs, which covers economic costs of environmental aspects (environmental resources and energy utilized). An attached document will be a lifecycle index that will look at most environmental aspects. Flexibility will be integrated because environmental considerations will have tools. The idea is for it to be universally applicable to any product or service. John added that the present value is that there is a comparison element with a built-in formula. It is hoped that it will be relatively automated.

Discussion:

Jean mentioned that he was speaking at a procurement meeting—PWGSC—at which lifecycle analysis was deemed to be difficult. John explained that the direct financial costs worksheet is the first set and then the environment will be treated in an index so that the costs are not indicated in dollar terms. To enable the weighting to be done, there will be a formula for the variables.

Chantal Line asked about the relationship between the index and environmental impact, and Russell's calculator. Julie offered an explanation about the calculator according to

her own knowledge. It was developed as a benefits calculator for 'green' meetings. The idea is to try to quantify the benefits of conducting such meetings so that more EPA meetings can be green. Russell's calculator is a thought piece that includes looking at the integrity of the calculator, what kind of sources there are, and asking if we need to provide links to the sources. It also raises issue of generic versus situation-specific calculators. He basically just laid out some of the issues that need to be tackled. First, there is a need to survey what is already out there. Julie said she understands from Russ that there may be some linkage about what we're doing and to get sense of how and if it can be complemented. Since some of the group members were unable to open the document Russell sent, Julie said she would convert it into a Microsoft word format and resend it.

John mentioned that lifecycle impact assessment interpretation methodologies already exist (Gabi is one of them). They need to be user-friendly and easy to use or they won't be used. Jean underscored the need to make sure everyone gets another copy and commented that this issue should be on the agenda for several meetings to come.

Regarding preparation of the lifecycle analysis workshop that Israel and Rahumathulla were going to begin, Amalia suggested that discussion be left to the next call and Rahumathulla said he will contact Israel next week.

8. Coordination of NAGPI's needs with the EPA EPP Program, to quantify environmental benefits: Russell's 'calculator' (Julie Shannon)

Already discussed and to be further addressed in the next conference call.

9. The Lowell Centre: discussion about Jack and Anne's participation on the Advisory Group

Since the group has agreed to wait until we have criteria set up to accept members, Chantal Line and Jean proposed that a decision about the Lowell Centre's adherence to the group be deferred until that time. The CEC is member of the North American Alliance for Sustainable Consumption.

10. Other business

a. Inventory of green purchasing groups

John brought up the topic of doing an inventory of green purchasing groups, which had been discussed at one of the last meetings. Scot said that he already had an informal list and John suggested that the members could compile all their informal lists. Jean suggested that this list could be one of the items on the web site map, but that it would be useful to start with one list. He asked if Scot could begin the process by accepting additions from other members of the group and requested that Scot and John work together to compile a final list, which can then be put on the web page. Hot links for those groups that give permission to use them could be included. John and Scot agreed to contact each other on Wednesday. Chantal Line suggested that the template or information could go into an appendix to the Five Winds report.

Chantal Line had two additional points:

- b. As another part of the report, Chantal Line hired a lawyer to review procurement policy challenges/opportunities in the NAFTA, FTAA and WTO, at federal, state, and municipal levels, to see where there may be problems. This report will be ready by mid-February.
- c. The CEC is holding a meeting in Mexico on renewable energy (transfer of technology). Chantal Line asked if any of the participants are aware of any transnational companies (Canada/US) that buy/produce renewable energy that could be transferred to Mexico and would be interested in participating in the meeting. Rahumathulla said he knows of a renewable energy group in Alberta, and will send its name to Chantal Line. It is a big wind operator that has just been purchased by TransAlta. John offered that he knows of a Green Power income group with facilities in the US. It is a multi-billion dollar investment fund that bought a wind farm in Wyoming. Jean asked that those who have information for Chantal Line contact her by e-mail.

Robert informed the group that the list serve is up and running and that he had just now received the first e-mail about it.

11. Next meeting:

Although having meetings on a monthly basis was deemed important and feasible, it was agreed that with the Christmas holidays upcoming, holding another conference call during December may be rather too soon for the participants to have accomplished a lot. After consideration by the group, it was agreed to have the next conference call on 7 January at 1:00 pm. The longer period would also give Jean the time to set up the webcasting. He explained that Bell Canada is offering the service free, so it would be more advantageous to use its services than to go with another supplier such as Raindance.

Chantal Line requested that participants be more prompt in replying to Jane's e-mails to confirm their attendance at the next meeting, although it is probable that we will use the list serve to accomplish this task next time, using the icon at NAGPI.com.

2:40 Meeting adjournment

Action or follow-up items drawn from the minutes

1. Jean will check over the timeline to Cancún and then it will be distributed to the participants as an attachment with the minutes of this call. Jean asked that an addition be made to the timeline, by including the date of the meeting, which is 10–14 September 2003.
2. Jean suggested that the next minutes (the conference call of 30 October) also be translated and posted. Chantal Line said the CEC could take care of this and she recommended that the names of the participants and their affiliations also be posted on the CEC web site.
3. Chantal Line will take the pertinent text from the (Acting) Executive Director's report and will provide this text to the group. Jean will send it to Canada's Alternative Representative, Norine Smith. Jane will remind Chantal Line to send it to whole group by Wednesday.

4. Jean will send the group a web site map or plan within the next few days.
5. Chantal Line will draw up a one-page text to outline Tom Shillington's tasks for the group.
6. Robert, Arthur, Scot and Julie will work on the definition together. It was agreed that before the next conference call this group of people work on something that is more top down. Scot requested that everyone send their thoughts to him by e-mail, keeping their comments and suggestions within the present headings. He will compile it into a matrix and share it with everyone, then we can have a conference call to decide on the final version. Jean suggested that Scot initiate the conversation through the list serve procure@nagpi.net. No other members will be invited to join the group until this discussion has taken place.
7. Jane will send the outline of the Five Winds proposed report be sent to all members of the group again, by itself, with the request that any comments be sent in by the next day.
8. Jane will send Five Winds the EPA web site that could serve as a template and Chantal Line will circulate the proposed template that Five Winds is producing, for comments by group members.
9. Jane will contact Five Winds (Ralf Nielsen and Jennifer Hall, who are preparing the report) and ask if they can attend the part of the next conference call that will deal with their report.
10. Julie will convert Russell's 'calculator' think piece into a Microsoft word document and resend it to the group.
11. Rahumathulla will contact Israel next week about the lifecycle analysis workshop that Israel and he are going to begin preparing.
12. Scot and John will work together to compile an inventory of green purchasing groups, which can then be put on the web page, which would include hot links for those groups that give permission. John and Scot agreed to contact each other on Wednesday.
13. Those who have information about transnational companies (Canada/US) that buy/produce renewable energy that could be transferred to Mexico and would be interested in participating in the meeting should contact Chantal Line by e-mail.