

POLICY SUMMARY

The Green Party of Manitoba, 1998 - 2006

The full text of all policies, including background and explanatory material, may be found in the Policy Book, available on the GPM website, www.greenparty.mb.ca or by request (in electronic form).

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5. Health
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V. POLICIES FROM 2001 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Policy 1 - Controlled Substances

Greens do not encourage the use of controlled substances. We believe it is ultimately the choice of individuals to use such substances.

Greens believe that marijuana should be legalized and treated as a controlled substance like tobacco and alcohol.

Taxes raised from the sale of these substances will, in part, fund education and rehabilitative/health services to prevent and treat substance abuse.

The federal government should decriminalize possession and use of hard drugs such as cocaine and heroin. Abuse of these drugs should be treated as a health issue. Distribution and sale of hard drugs should, however, remain a criminal offence.

The Greens will also consider the social and economic conditions underlying substance abuse in developing public policy.

Policy 2 – Restorative Justice (originally titled “Crime”)

Greens support a move away from retribution-based justice towards restorative justice both within provincial and federal jurisdictions. This includes increased rehabilitative options, community service sentencing (for non-violent crime) and reform of the penitentiary system. Victim impact statements and restitution options should be weighed in sentencing. A Green approach to crime would not simply address its symptoms, but focus on causes.

Policy 3 - Same-Sex Rights

Greens support the extension of all legal rights enjoyed by heterosexual couples to same sex couples, including the right to legally marry and adopt children.

Policy 4 - Radioactive Waste Storage

Greens oppose the importation and storage of high-level radioactive waste created outside of Manitoba and brought into the Province.

Policy 5 - Health

Greens believe that all Manitobans have a right to equal access to health care services. Greens advocate a health care program, which emphasizes both the prevention of illness and personal responsibility for well being.

Critical to health promotion in our society is ceasing to add pollutants to the environment. To ensure health dollars are used wisely, Greens advocate evidence-based initiatives. Greens support full funding for abortion services. We promote less invasive family planning programs reducing the need to seek such medical interventions. Manitoba Greens support a more inclusive health care program, which would take steps to permit the subsidization of alternative treatments and therapies.

Policy 6 - Gambling

Greens recognize that small-scale gambling with limited pots can be a source of entertainment.

We conclude, however, that large-scale and addictive gambling operations are unhealthy for individuals, families, and communities. Large gambling operations should not be used to raise government revenue.

Casinos: The Greens call for an immediate freeze on development of new casinos. Existing casinos will be phased out over a ten-year period.

VLTs: A Green government would ban video lottery terminals.

Economic Development: Several First Nation communities have put forward proposals for building casinos as a form of economic development. The Greens propose that 50% of the annual revenue from existing casinos be distributed to these communities as grants. The grants would be used to develop alternative economic projects that are sustainable.

VI. POLICIES FROM 2002 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. Environmental Protection

To protect our province's environment and smaller farms, the Manitoba Greens support:

- a) restoring the right of citizens to sue hog barns for causing excessive odours;
- b) requirement of licensing and strict regulation of large-scale intensive livestock operations, including hog barns;
- c) application of strict pollution standards appropriate to Manitoba's climate and geography to intensive livestock operations, including hog barns;
- d) legislation prohibiting non-Manitoban corporate farmers from owning farmland in the province;
- e) minimum standards for the humane treatment of farm animals; and
- f) ending government subsidies to transnational corporate slaughterhouses.

2. Labour

The Manitoba Greens support extending minimum employment, labour, safety and workers' compensation protections to farm employees.

3. Basic Income

The Manitoba Greens support a Basic Income program for Manitoba. If possible this should be done with the financial help and participation of the federal government, but is not dependent on its participation.

This program would replace all social assistance programs currently administered by the provincial government. Special consideration would be given to those people in need of extra income, for example, people with disabilities.

4. Conservation

Under the present system, economic growth is supported by unlimited consumption of both renewable and non-renewable resources. However, on a finite world there is no an infinite supply of natural resources.

The Green Party recognises limits to growth. Limits to growth are likely to be imposed primarily by resource depletion and the ever-increasing costs of pollution. Furthermore, land is also in limited supply. An expanding world population demands expanding food supplies. Irresponsible land use planning, degradation of land through human activity and changes in land quality and availability due to climate change mean that land must be managed in such a way as to ensure sustainable human development and safeguard biodiversity.

Conservation of land and natural resource will be very important in order to protect the natural environment from pollution and degradation. The Green Party believes that technologies which promote reuse and recycling of materials and products should be given priority over the production of goods from newly generated resources. We believe our towns and cities should be structured in such a way as to maximize resource conservation.

VII. POLICIES FROM 2003 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Policy 1 - Thirty-two Hour Work Week

The Manitoba Greens advocate that Manitoba change its standard hours of work from 40 to 32 hours a week.

Policy 2 – Provincial Parks and Sensitive Areas

Provincial Parks and sensitive areas including the Manigotagan River watershed and the East Shore Wilderness be kept pristine, protected, and free of industry.

- *[Note: this policy was amended/added to by the 2nd policy resolution of 2004]*

VIII. POLICIES FROM 2004 POLICY CONVENTION

1. Hemp

Hemp should be treated as any other agricultural product, without being subjected to special licenses or to special inspections.

2. Provincial Parks and Manitoba's East Shore Wilderness

RESOLVED:

- 1) Provincial parks should be kept pristine, protected, and free of industry; and
- 2) A comprehensive conservation plan should be developed for MB's East Shore Wilderness Area in full consultation with the area's First Nations communities, preserving First Nations' livelihood; this plan must include large contiguous tracts of land preserved free of industrial development.

3. Education Philosophy

Greens support and educational policy ensuring that:

- 1) children are equipped with the learning skills that will enable them to lead lives in which they can thrive, not just survive
- 2) education programmes provide a model of living, working, playing, and learning that accustoms everyone from childhood on to participate in a society that is sustainable, peaceful, and appropriately meets diverse needs
- 3) opportunities be available for lifelong learning
- 4) the full potential of all students is recognized and the motivations and strengths of both learners and teachers built upon.

4. Environmental Education

The Manitoba Greens would provide funding for environmental educators to every school in Manitoba. Duties for the position would include designing and implementing environmental education programmes.

5. Living Wage

RESOLVED:

- 1) the minimum wage once again become a living wage; and
- 2) the living wage be tied to a basic economic indicator.

6. Democratic reform

- 1) Manitoba Greens support proportional representation and support holding a referendum to change the current electoral system.

7. Fixed Election Dates:

The length of the governing party's term be fixed at four years unless the government falls in a non-confidence vote.

8. Family Day

The Manitoba Greens would legislate the third Monday in February as a statutory holiday.

9. Deposit Return System for Glass Food Containers

The Manitoba Greens would mandate that a deposit-return system for all glass food and beverage containers be implemented in Manitoba

10. Ecological Sanitation

OVERVIEW: Sewering and wastewater systems are inherently capital-, and energy-intensive; they cause endless problems including public health and ecosystem deterioration and they produce no useful product. Ecological sanitation systems exist that cause none of sewerage and wastewater systems' problems but rather correct them, whose infrastructures cost far less, and in addition, produce a useful agricultural end product.

RESOLVED:

Moving toward ecological sanitation requires:

- 1 Implementing the six essentials of a sewer avoidance plan, and
- 2 Implementing low-cost, on-site, excreta recycling technologies giving primacy to dry, composting toilets.

11. Family Planning

Manitoba Greens support full public funding for abortion services. A woman has the right to receive an abortion in the health care facility of her choice – from a small clinic to a large hospital – without financial or other penalty. A woman should not have to travel outside of her region for an abortion. That means every regional health authority should be legally required to offer abortion services within its geographical boundaries.

We promote less invasive family planning programs including education reducing the need to seek such medical interventions. Conception planning should be fully publicly funded under Medicare and pharmacare. The provincial government should require all Manitoba pharmacies to sell contraception and abortion products such as the 'morningafter pill' and the 'abortion pill'.

IX. POLICIES FROM 2005 POLICY CONVENTION

1. Values

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba adopt the following Values/Principles; they are consistent with those of the Green Party of Canada, but are not identical:

A) *Ecological Wisdom:* Human beings are a part of nature not separate from it. Whatever we do to the web of life, we do to ourselves

B) *Integrity of the Earth's Ecosystem:* Integrity refers to wholeness, to completeness, to the ability to function fully. The standard is Nature's sun-energized ecosystems in their undamaged state. The evolutionary creativity and continued productivity of Earth and its regional ecosystems require the continuance of their key structures and ecological processes. Pollution of air, sediments and water, along with exploitive extraction of inorganic and organic constituents, weaken ecosystem integrity.

C) *Grassroots democracy:* People must be able to participate in the political, economic and environmental decisions that affect them.

D) *Social Justice:* Individual, families and communities have access to the resources of the society. All have the right to a natural and social environment supportive of human dignity, bodily health and spiritual wellbeing.

E) *Diversity:* We honour the diversity of life on our planet. An ecocentric worldview values Earth's diversity in all its forms, the non-human, as well as the human. Cultural, biological, social and economic diversity are central to healthy, functioning communities.

F) *Community-based Economics:* Rather than people being subservient to the economy, the economy should provide for human needs within the natural limits of the earth. Local self-reliance to the greatest practical extent is the best way to achieve this goal. The economy shall promote the equitable distribution of wealth within and among nations.

G) *Decentralization:* The people most affected by a problem must have the authority to solve it. Distant administrations cannot be responsive. Power must be returned to local communities. We support a restructuring of social, political and economic institutions to a democratic, less bureaucratic system. We support social simplification.

H) *Nonviolence:* The GPM seeks to promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence and peace. We encourage and support mutual understanding, solidarity and cooperation among all peoples and within and among nations.

I) *Equity:* Equality and fairness need to replace domination and control. Full and equal participation by all Manitobans is needed in the decision-making processes of society.

J) *Responsibility:* Global sustainability and international justice can only be achieved when responsibility is shared at all levels of society. We are all called to take responsibility for ourselves, our families, our communities and our planet.

2. Ten Principles For Sustainable Societies

RESOLVED: that this 2005 policy convention of the Green Party of Manitoba adopt the International Forum on Globalization's *Ten Principles for Sustainable Societies*² as one aid to its own efforts to achieve the same.

3. Ecological Principles

* Fritjof Capra's SIX PRINCIPLES OF ECOLOGY (BELOW):

NETWORKS

We, like all life on Earth, are members of an ecological community interconnected and interdependent in a vast and intricate network of relationships—systems forming the web of life. In common with all life, we derive our essential properties and, in fact, our very existence from these systemic relationships.

NESTED SYSTEMS

Throughout nature exist multi-level structures of systems nesting within systems. Each system forms both an integrated whole of patterns and processes within its boundary and, simultaneously, forms part of a larger whole.

CYCLES

The interactions among members of an ecological community involve the exchange of energy and materials in continual cycles. These cycles in a community form part of a fabric of increasingly larger energy and materials cycles in a watershed, ecosystem and Earth's ecosphere.

FLOWS

1 Each organism is an open system; that is it has a need to feed on a continual flow of energy and materials to stay alive. The constant flow of solar energy sustains life and drives all ecological cycles.

DEVELOPMENT

Life unfolds at the individual level as manifested in its development and learning and it unfolds as evolution at the species level. This unfolding involves the interplay of creativity and mutual adaptation leading to the co-evolution of an organism with its ecosystem.

DYNAMIC BALANCE

1 All of nature's cycles involve feedback loops that result in an ecological community organizing and regulating itself by maintaining a state of dynamic balance that is characterized by continual fluctuations of energy and materials.

4. Policy Structure

RESOLVED:

a) The Green Party of Manitoba use a biologically based policy structure and b) For one year the policy structure be based on the anthropologist Edward T. Hall's functional description of society using a biological base, and that this structure be reassessed at the 2006 policy convention.

5. The Electoral System of Manitoba

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba (GPM) adopt a policy of electoral reform consisting of (1) the formation of a Citizens' Assembly and (2) the promotion of the Single Transferable Vote as the Manitoba Greens' preferred system.

RESOLVED: that the Manitoba Greens adopt a policy calling for the formation of a Citizens' Assembly on electoral reform.

RESOLVED: that the GPM adopt a policy of multi-member Single Transferable Voting (STV) for Winnipeg and Brandon, with single-member Alternative Voting (AV) for rural constituencies; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the method for counting ballots be similar to the one used in the Republic of Ireland that is listed below; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the issue of *societal proportionality* comprises a part of any and all planks or policies of the GPM dealing with electoral reform or change.

6. Factory farms

RESOLVED: by this 2005 policy convention of the Green Party of Manitoba that moving toward a sustainable agriculture requires that as a first step to their being phased out, intensive farms be reduced in size and made to comply with strict and rigorously enforced regulations that protect human and ecosystem health and safeguard the comfort and well-being of the animals; and be it further

RESOLVED: that proposals to open or enlarge a factory farm must be subject to the approval of both the community and the neighbourhood directly affected.

7. Fuel Efficient Transportation

RESOLVED that:

- 1) All Provincial government vehicle purchases be fuel-efficient ones such as gas/electric hybrid cars, and
- 2) All individual car purchasers be provided with incentives, such as rebates, to buy fuel-efficient cars such as hybrids, and
- 3) Implement an eco-tax on less fuel-efficient vehicles to be applied to the subsidy of energy efficient mass transportation systems
- 4) The Province legislate that there be a gradual phase-in of buses using hydrogen fuel cells and or other alternative fuels.

8. Energy Efficiency

RESOLVED that the Green Party of Manitoba support and work towards provincial legislation which will set and pursue clear goals and objectives for increasing the efficiency of energy use in Manitoba.

9. Drought-Adapted Agriculture

OVERVIEW: The Canadian prairies have a history of drought cycles. Industrial, export-oriented agriculture arose during the relatively humid 20th century. Unfortunately, therefore, its inherent capital-, energy-, and water-intensive technologies are ill-suited to function when the inevitable extreme droughts return.

RESOLVED: by this 2005 policy convention that the Green Party of Manitoba support and work towards legislation that will require the Province to work cooperatively with other provinces, the Government of Canada and the U.S. government to set and pursue clear goals and measurable objectives to make the urgent transition from the present water-intensive industrial agriculture to a drought-adapted agriculture based on ecological principles.

10. Lake Winnipeg Pollution

RESOLVED: by this 2005 policy convention that the Green Party of Manitoba support and work towards:

1. the Province of Manitoba creating, strengthening, and enforcing necessary laws and regulations that will protect surface and groundwaters from contamination by industrial chemicals and human and animal manures

and ensure clean, safe water;

2. the Province of Manitoba dedicate more resources to enforcement and dismantling procedural obstacles so the public can enforce the law where the government lacks either the resources or the political will; and be it further

3. the Province of Manitoba adding new and innovative tools to our legal system's tool kit to address water contamination from non-point sources like agricultural and urban run-off and air-borne pollution; and

4. the Province of Manitoba mandating that urban and rural populations and housed livestock operations adopt ecological sanitation technologies that contain human and animal manures, sanitize them and return them to the soil to complete, once again, natural cyclical processes.

11. Water Soft Paths

RESOLVED: by this 2005 policy convention that the Green Party of Manitoba support and work towards the Province of Manitoba creating, strengthening, and enforcing necessary laws and regulations that will protect surface and groundwaters from contamination by industrial chemicals and human and animal manures and ensure clean, safe water; and be it further

RESOLVED: by this 2005 policy convention that the Green Party of Manitoba support and work towards the Province of Manitoba dedicate more resources to enforcement and dismantling procedural obstacles so the public can enforce the law where the government lacks either the resources or the political will; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba support and work towards the Province of Manitoba adding new and innovative tools to our legal system's tool kit to address water contamination from non-point sources like agricultural and urban run-off and air-borne pollution; and be it further

RESOLVED: by this 2005 policy convention that the Green Party of Manitoba support and work towards the Province of Manitoba mandating that urban and rural populations and housed livestock operations adopt ecological sanitation technologies that contain human and animal manures, sanitize them and return them to the soil to complete, once again, natural cyclical processes.

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12. Potable Water

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba advocates legislation which will:

- * Legislate watershed reserves for the protection of domestic water sources and, within those watersheds, ban logging, road building, pesticide use, grazing and industrial development
- * Ban the privatization of municipal water and wastewater services
- * Support federal government initiatives to ban bulk water exports
- * Ban the deposition of untreated human and livestock sewage into waterways
- * Require the phase-out of chlorination water treatment systems, replacing them with ozonation, ultra-violet sterilization, sand filtration and other safer water purification systems

13. Youth Suffrage

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba support lowering the voting age to 16 for provincial elections.

14. Aboriginal Education

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba adopt a policy stating that Manitoba Education shall collaborate with the aboriginal community to prepare and implement a plan designed to improve the educational experiences of aboriginal students and their families.

15. Chemical Pesticides

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba adopt a policy promoting alternatives to chemical pesticides in Manitoba; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the GPM adopt policy to actively encourage all institutions, organizations, and residents in Manitoba to seek alternatives to chemical pesticides; and be it further

RESOLVED: that the GPM condemn the use of chemical pesticides in Manitoba.

X. POLICIES FROM 2006 POLICY CONVENTION

1. Canadian National Organic Standard

RESOLVED: that the GPM calls upon all governments to adopt the uniform, high quality, Canadian National Organic Standard.

2. Organic Farm Research and Education

RESOLVED: that the GPM calls upon all governments to increase research funding, farm extension services, and public education for organic and natural farming systems.

3. Pension Protection

RESOLVED that:

1. The GPM joins Justice James Farley of the Ontario Superior Court judge Farley in calling for a public review of provincial and federal pension legislation; and
2. The GPM calls upon all governments to prohibit all companies from claiming possession of pension trust fund earnings, and generally to protect the pension benefits which workers have earned.

4. Fossil-Fuel Independence

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba (GPM):

1. Support and work towards the development and implementation of a comprehensive fossil-fuel independence commission and plan, which would have as their primary goal the reduction of fossil-fuel use in Manitoba; and
2. Give primacy to soft-path analysis in terms of fossil-fuel use reduction; and
3. Work towards the development and implementation of localization strategies for both urban and rural Manitobans, with a focus on local, including bioregionally-based, trade and socio-economic development to reduce fossil-fuel use; and
4. Ensure that large-scale energy projects are scrutinized by an independent, transparent citizens' assembly with the onus of proof placed on proponents to demonstrate sustainability beyond a reasonable doubt;
5. Implement a special program under the auspices of the fossil-fuel independence commission to help Manitobans transition their homes off natural gas using the purchasing and contracting powers of the government; and
6. Give special consideration to those of minor means by utilizing progressive taxation principles in all localization and fossil-fuel reduction strategies.

5. Manitoba Energy

RESOLVED: that the Green Party of Manitoba advocate for:

4. A new mandate for Manitoba Hydro to seek: First to reduce energy consumption through various programs of incentives and disincentives, then secondly to explore and implement renewable forms of energy beyond hydroelectric power;
5. Manitoba Hydro to pursue energy production based on ecological principles;
6. Manitoba Hydro's name to be changed to "Manitoba Energy"; and
7. The newly mandated and renamed, Manitoba Energy, to be and remain owned by the people of Manitoba.

6. Current/Future Hydroelectric Development in Manitoba

RESOLVED that:

1. A Green government would not consider initiating the construction of any new hydroelectric dams in Manitoba until a full assessment on the potential for energy conservation has taken place, and actions taken accordingly, and until the soft path on energy (including wind and other newer technologies) have been explored and developed in accordance with ecological principles;
2. Plans for any dams currently being discussed but for which no work has been legally tendered or contracts signed should be abandoned until all the energy alternatives are considered;
3. The Green Party of Manitoba advocate for an independent, citizen-driven commission/task force to be set up to do a complete ecological assessment on both the total cumulative effects of past hydroelectric dams in Northern Manitoba and the potential future ecological impact that the construction of more dams and their future decommissioning would have on the entire watershed. Traditional ecological knowledge of the area's inhabitants would be solicited and integrated into the assessment;
4. The Green Party of Manitoba calls on Manitoba Hydro to clean up the debris left behind by Hydro activity, that Manitoba Hydro fund this fully, and that Manitoba Hydro work with the people of Northern Manitoba to carry out the clean up.

7. Aboriginal Rights and Hydroelectric Development

RESOLVED that:

1. The GPM calls upon all governments to recognize that the aboriginal communities of northern Manitoba, including but not limited to those signatory to Treaty # 5 have collective aboriginal rights to the waters of the North, and as such may have to be compensated if any further development on the waters is to take place; and

The GPM advocate for a commission to be set up to assess if any breaches of aboriginal rights by the Manitoba government and Manitoba Hydro have taken place, and to recommend a format for reopening negotiations on compensation

8. Hazardous Waste

Background:

Approximately 2000 metric tonnes of household hazardous waste enters our landfills annually. According to the latest estimates from waste audits approximately 21% of household hazardous wastes are diverted from landfills. We are unable to account for the amount of waste that enters our sewers. The collection and treatment of hazardous waste is an important step in managing the risk and controlling the damage to our ecosystems. The rate at which new chemicals are being produced has outpaced the ability of public institutions to fully test their risks and the risks of their breakdown products.

RESOLVED that the GPM:

1. Integrate short-term efforts to collect and treat hazardous waste, with long term efforts to eliminate the generation and demand for products that produce hazardous waste;
2. Apply demand side management practices to products that generate hazardous waste; and
3. Raise public awareness of consumer products that result in hazardous waste and alternatives to these products.

9. Nanotechnology and Nanobiotechnology (Synthetic Biology)

Purpose:

Addressing the issues of nanotechnology and nanobiotechnology (synthetic biology) in our society.

RESOLVED that the GPM support:

1. A moratorium in Manitoba on the commercialization and production of nanotechnological and nanobiotechnological (synthetic biology) products and materials pending a thorough, transparent assessment of same;
2. A recall of all current commercially available products in Manitoba containing nano-particles especially, but not limited to consumer products;
3. A moratorium in Manitoba on nanotechnological and nanobiotechnological research pending the adoption of generally agreed or otherwise stringently safe protocols on such research; and
4. Research to assess the possibility of nano-particle toxicity and wide publication of this research.

10. Nanotechnology and Nanobiotechnology Assessment

RESOLVED that the GPM support a comprehensive, transparent assessment of nanotechnology and nanobiotechnology (synthetic biology), apply the precautionary principle in order to determine the costs, benefits, and non-cost-benefit effects of the development of said technologies and to elucidate what forms thereof, if any, could be beneficially developed.

11. Nanotechnology and Synthetic Biology Research Safety Protocols

RESOLVED that the GPM support the development of stringently safe protocols in Manitoba for research on nano-materials and processes.

[Note from Member: important to distinguish public vs. private monitoring in research facilities].