

# **ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS**

**For year 2000, Updated to April, 2001**

*Report to GPI Atlantic Annual General Meeting,  
3 May, 2001*

**World Trade and Convention Centre, Halifax, NS**

## ANNUAL REPORT TO MEMBERS:

### Where Have We Come From and Where We Are Going?

*(Please Note: Annual Report is from GPI News #3, January 31, 2001;  
Update to April 2001 from GPI News #4 follows this report)*

GPI Atlantic is in transition. We are on a new, expanded course of action and we are adjusting to new circumstances. This report summarizes the different aspects of the GPI work -- where we have come from and where we are going.

#### 1. A Short History

GPI Atlantic was founded as a non-profit society in early 1997 for the purpose of constructing a "Genuine Progress Index" as a measure of wellbeing and sustainable development for Nova Scotia. Many worthy pioneers had seen clearly the flaws of relying on economic growth statistics to assess social wellbeing and had developed excellent methods of accounting for the value of natural resources, unpaid work and quality of life.<sup>1</sup>

GPI Atlantic borrowed from and built on these many outstanding pioneering initiatives both in this country and abroad with the single purpose of *applying* the best available methods in one place at one time so that they could be used as a practical policy-relevant tool. An 18-month literature review convinced GPI researchers in Nova Scotia that there was no obstacle to putting these methods into practice and presenting them to government for actual adoption and use as annual measures of progress.

In other words, we determined not to come up with our own theories and methods of measurement, but simply to apply in practice the best concepts and methods of assessing societal wellbeing that others had developed. We set ourselves a *practical* objective -- to plug in the Nova Scotia numbers to the best frameworks and measures already developed. We wanted to see these better measures of progress *used* by government and society. If Nova Scotia could become the first jurisdiction to adopt, use and apply a Genuine Progress Index in practice, and if those measures began to influence policy, we were convinced the idea would spread and other jurisdictions would take notice.

#### We encountered two major challenges:

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Redefining Progress in the USA developed the first US Genuine Progress Indicator in 1995. Economists Hazel Henderson, Marilyn Waring, William Nordhaus, Andrew Harvey and many others developed measures of time use, wellbeing and quality of life. The World Resources Institute and ecological economists in many countries pioneered new assessments of natural resource values and ecosystem service values, while William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel in British Columbia developed a new measure of the "ecological footprint" of consumption patterns. As well, the "Oregon Benchmarks," "Sustainable Seattle," Hamilton-Wentworth's "Vision 2020," the Ontario Social Development Council, the Edmonton Social Planning Council and many other groups pioneered quality of life assessments in local and regional jurisdictions. Statistics Canada has developed unpaid work valuations and pioneered a new Canadian System of Environmental and Resource Accounts.

- 1) ***There were no short-cuts.*** To find and analyze vital but hidden statistics, to join the dots so that the numbers made policy-sense, and to make our methods and sources completely transparent, was time consuming. We ended up producing major reports on each component of the Genuine Progress Index -- much longer and more detailed than we had anticipated.

The Nova Scotia *GPI Water Quality Accounts*, the first comprehensive valuation of a province's water resources anywhere in Canada, were 240 pages. The forthcoming *GPI Forest Accounts*, again the first of their kind, are 180 pages. The *Cost of Crime* was 220 pages, and the valuations of unpaid work were also very detailed. The GPI population health reports to date add up to more than 200 pages. We believe that this detail will create a solid ground for future, and much more concise updates, but each component of the GPI is taking many months and, in some cases, years to develop.

- 2) ***Good research requires adequate funding.*** We received \$119,000 start-up funding in 1997 from the Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development and ACOA which got us through the first 18 months of literature review, indicator and methodology development, early research and production of the first four GPI reports. Since then, we have used subsidized internships, summer student programs, and occasional small grants and contracts to carry the work forward.

At present, government is in a belt-tightening phase and it is difficult to acquire continuing public support. As well, the structure of government, each department administering its own specialized budget, makes it awkward to fund a project designed to show the links between social, economic and environmental realities. As a result, probably 70%-75% of the GPI research has been conducted on a voluntary basis. The researchers often do other things to support themselves, and carry on the GPI work in their spare time. This has slowed us down.

Nevertheless, the GPI reports have been remarkably well received. In the last few months alone, GPI Atlantic results have produced several lead front-page newspaper stories in Nova Scotia, interviews on CBC, and numerous requests for information and presentations. Because of the interest it generates, the GPI work has also *spawned* a host of *related* work that does get funding and provide limited income for the core GPI work.

That's why we've had to adapt to circumstances, change the way we operate, and chart a new course. This report will tell you about that change. GPI Atlantic is now engaged in many related activities. Nevertheless, we are still 100% committed to our core mission -- the creation of a provincial Genuine Progress Index for Nova Scotia that can serve as a model for other jurisdictions. Our *other* activities make that core mission possible.

## 2. A New Direction

The best way to describe what GPI Atlantic now does is by dividing our activities into three parts:

- Our core provincial GPI project;
- Community GPI;
- Guest speaking and consulting on a local, provincial and national level.

The community GPI projects are separately funded. Speaking and consulting help to fund the core GPI work. Through these contracts, we have started to become more self-sufficient and self-reliant.

As part of our new direction, we are also concentrating on expanding our membership base to build real support from within. To do this, we have to develop an organization. We are now putting real effort into structuring GPI Atlantic as an organization with capacity to bring in members, communicate effectively, and administer basic tasks like distributing reports.

For the first time ever, we held a full-day strategic planning session on December 15 with 16 GPI researchers, board members, staff and advisers, skillfully facilitated by Rochelle Owen. As a result, we are now implementing several key recommendations from that day-long gathering. Until now, and for the past three years, we have put every ounce of funding, resources and energy into the research itself. But there was a complete consensus at our December 15 meeting that we now need a functioning organization in order to be as effective as we can be, and to support further research properly.

So, for the first time, we have hired an administrator, Ginger Brooks, to create a GPI "organization." We now have a fully functioning web site since last summer, and have begun to work out all the kinks in that. Tom Krausse has just designed our first GPI database for members and subscribers, with an effective system of selling reports and maintaining contact with members. For the first time we also have an active, functioning board of directors.

In short, we are developing the infrastructure that can support the GPI work successfully. Our little internal joke for a long time was that the only unsustainable thing about GPI Atlantic's sustainable development project was GPI Atlantic itself.

We are now turning this unsustainable situation around -- focusing on creating the infrastructure and building an effective organization; and doing other work that can support the core GPI.

A few words on each of the three sets of current GPI Atlantic activity will illustrate the work that is now under way, and how it supports the core GPI work.

### **3. Community GPI in Kings County and Glace Bay**

In early 1999, the Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society, a non-profit group, approached GPI Atlantic and asked whether it was possible to develop a community-level Genuine Progress Index that would allow a community to assess its own wellbeing and progress. Later that year, representatives of the National Crime Prevention Centre asked the same question: Could a local community use the GPI to assess whether it was becoming safer, stronger and more secure?

Our answer in both cases was: -- in principle "yes" -- a GPI that links social, economic and environmental wellbeing is theoretically possible at any level. However there is a major practical obstacle. Unlike the provincial GPI, which relies primarily on Statistics Canada and other existing government databases, there are almost no available data at the community level. Statistics Canada labour force surveys, general social surveys, population health surveys and other essential data sources used in the provincial GPI have sample sizes that are too small to provide community-level information.

To develop a community-level GPI, in other words, would require that we go into an entirely new field -- survey administration and data collection. On the one hand, there was a tremendous opportunity to collect exactly the information we needed for a Genuine Progress Index rather than rely on other data not intended for that purpose. On the other hand, this was a daunting task, especially as the GPI consists of many components, and a survey that provided data on a range of social, economic and environmental factors would be very large.

Nevertheless, it *is* at the level of community that the rubber hits the road in terms of quality of life, -- where people actually *experience* whether their communities are becoming stronger or falling apart, whether they feel safer or not, whether their air is clean and their water drinkable, whether they are becoming healthier or not, whether there are jobs available. National and provincial averages that speak of falling unemployment rates don't mean much in industrial Cape Breton, for example.

### ***Collecting Our Own GPI Data***

Community representatives told us time and again that they wanted and needed a way of telling how *they* were doing as a community. So we took up the challenge, and joined with the NS Citizens for Community Development Society and community groups in rural Kings County in the effort to create a community Genuine Progress Index. With some initial funding from HRDC and the Rural Secretariat, we worked with about 150 community members representing 40 different community groups in Kings County over the course of a year to lay the ground.

In a series of meetings, we first identified important indicators of wellbeing -- issues identified by citizens and community groups as having vital importance to them as measures of their quality of life and progress. Then we divided into smaller groups by topic area -- employment issues, peace and security, health and education, community service and volunteerism, soils and agriculture, and environmental sustainability. Each group spent several months identifying vital questions of importance. From that process we constructed a questionnaire and survey designed to get the information we needed for a community GPI.

At that point, too, we ran out of money. In February, 2000, with funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre, we expanded the project to Glace Bay, Cape Breton. The NCPC was particularly interested in assessing the differences in indicators of community strength and wellbeing between a relatively prosperous and growing rural community (Kings County) and an industrial community with declining industries and very high unemployment.

In Glace Bay we also formed a partnership with HRDC to create some labour market partnership positions, and we forged alliances with community groups, including the Cape Breton Wellness Centre, the local community health board, the community service groups operating under the umbrella of the Glace Bay Citizens Service League, and community development groups. Across the board, there was interest, support and enthusiasm for the project.

We brought on a Glace Bay project director, Ken Macdonald, set up a GPI office in the Citizen Service League's "Town House" in downtown Glace Bay, and employed some local residents as survey administrators. We consulted extensively with Statistics Canada's Social Survey Methods Division, which did three extensive reviews of our questionnaire to ensure that the questions were



clear and unambiguous, and that data would be compatible with existing provincial and national data to allow comparisons. We then field-tested the survey in Glace Bay and made extensive revisions.

### *Partnerships*

Data collection is now under way in Glace Bay, and the NS Citizens for Community Development Society has just received a \$45,000 grant from the Canadian Rural Partnership to administer the survey in Kings County as well. In addition, we have formed an alliance with Dalhousie University's Population Health Research Unit which will store and process the data and produce spreadsheets and results according to the needs and interests of the two communities.

We also have a partnership with the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Council and the Coastal Communities Network which are interested in exploring how communities can use good information and research to influence policy. Many community groups in Cape Breton and Kings County have also joined the effort. Dalhousie University researchers have told us that the survey will yield data never before available in Canada, and will allow correlations between health, work and time use patterns, voluntary work and other social and economic factors that will be of great significance.

Data collection is slow and laborious, and full of challenges, particularly given the size of the survey, and we have limited staff and resources. But we are proceeding, and confident that we can do the job. The real fun will start when the data are available, and the two communities can use the results to learn about themselves, set community goals, and impact policy.

From the results and the baseline 2001 data, the two communities will identify the most meaningful indicators of progress and create a report card on which they can measure their development on an annual basis. One goal of the community GPI project is also to produce a manual that any community in Canada will be able use to construct its own index of wellbeing and progress.

We estimate that it will take two more years to achieve these goals. By early 2003, we feel confident that both Kings County and Glace Bay will have a working Genuine Progress Index in place, and that the two communities can then act as leaders in training other communities to do the same.

From the perspective of GPI Atlantic, which intended only to construct a provincial index, the community GPI is a surprising and unexpected development. It is also challenging and time-consuming. But we are very excited about it, delighted with the partnerships created, and constantly amazed that we are literally creating our own GPI database. We are beginning to think that the GPI will spread from the bottom up rather than from the top down -- a "trickle-up" process that will gradually percolate higher levels of government.

### **4. National and Contractual Relationships**

As a result of the Nova Scotia GPI work over the last four years, GPI Atlantic is now recognized as being one of the leaders in sustainable development and wellbeing indicator work in Canada. There is an increasing demand for GPI Atlantic presentations throughout the country, and GPI Atlantic is now regularly represented at national gatherings on the subject. As a result of this exposure, we are for the first time being offered some contractual work that can begin to support the further development of the Nova Scotia Genuine Progress Index.

All this has come unexpectedly, and quite frankly, as something of a surprise. First, we spent three years waving the GPI flag and trying to get some funding from outside Nova Scotia. But our "local" project attracted no funding from the various agencies we approached in Ottawa and sustainable development indicator work aroused only passing interest in Upper Canada. Several times we heard that a Nova Scotia project could not possibly have national implications. Now suddenly, sustainable development and quality of life indicator work is very fashionable, so there is a lot of interest.

Secondly, we have remained local and provincial in our focus, in the belief that if we can develop this index well in one place at one time, it will be more effective as a working model for others than if we look too far afield. As well, we believe that the culture and value system of Atlantic Canada are much more amenable and attuned to the indicators we are describing than most places, and so there is a better chance of this index being adopted in practice and actually used by government here than elsewhere.

So this sudden turn-around has taken us by surprise, and necessitated a new approach and organizational strategy. This is basically good news, because it enables us to become more self-reliant and self-supporting, to develop our own organizational structure and integrity, and to pay our researchers more regularly.

Here is a partial list of GPI Atlantic's involvements at the national level, and contractual relationships and fee-paying presentations that support the core GPI work.

### ***National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy***

In February, 2000, Finance Minister Paul Martin announced a three-year \$9 million initiative to develop new environment and sustainable development indicators for Canada, in a way that would better integrate environmental and economic accounting. The money was given to Environment Canada and the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE), which were both instructed to work closely with Statistics Canada on this project.

Our initial hope was that a small fraction of that money might be used to support our work and pay our researchers. However Environment Canada decided to keep \$4.5 million for the development of a new Canadian Information System on the Environment. The Round Table decided to use the remaining \$4.5 million to develop the indicators themselves, and it invited GPI Atlantic to join a steering committee for that purpose.

The NRTEE committee, co-chaired by Dr. Stuart Smith, chair of the NRTEE, and Dr. Peter Pearse of the University of British Columbia, includes assistant deputy ministers from Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada and Health Canada, the Assistant Chief Statistician, the General Director of Economic Development and Corporate Finance in Finance Canada, the executive directors of the NRTEE and the Fraser Basin Council, the director of government affairs for Dow Chemical, a vice-president of TD Bank, a senior vice-president of Noranda Inc., and several others.

That steering committee has now met twice, most recently on January 17, 2001. GPI Atlantic has made formal presentations at both meetings and participated actively in the discussions. We will also

make a workshop presentation at a stakeholder conference on the sustainable development indicators to be held March 27-28, to be attended by about 200 potential "users" of the new indicators.

So far, some of our GPI suggestions are being adopted, such as the need to measure forest age and species composition, and the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions in the first stage indicator development. Others are not being adopted, such as the need to include indicators of income distribution on the grounds that wealthy groups have a disproportionate impact on the environment because of their greater resource consumption and waste production. While the GPI links social, economic and environmental factors, the NRTEE is not as comfortable including social components.

### ***Health Canada Commonwealth Secretariat Indicators Working Group***

GPI Atlantic participates in a small working group assembled by Health Canada to construct a new model of health indicators for the British Commonwealth countries. Several meetings in Ottawa have produced a concept, and the challenge now is to make the model practical and workable. The model is being presented February 15 to Health Canada's Policy Forum.

### ***Obesity Report Replications***

Our main source of current income is a 3-month contract with Hoffman-La Roche to replicate the GPI report on the *Cost of Obesity for Nova Scotia* for other Canadian provinces. These reports will be in our web site bookstore shortly, and summaries will be posted in the "Articles and Press Releases" section of the web site. The income from this project has enabled us to hire our first administrator.

### ***Working with Newfoundland***

A splendid working partnership has been struck with the Government of Newfoundland Statistics Agency, which is very interested in working with GPI Atlantic to expand its own community accounts to include some GPI indicators. Newfoundland's Strategic Social Plan, its Social Audit, and its Community Accounts are naturally aligned with GPI Atlantic objectives, so this is an exciting and enjoyable mutual working relationship. Newfoundland has gone further than any other province in the country in developing community indicators of wellbeing, and Nova Scotia is now looking to adopt that framework here.

Four days of meetings in Halifax on October 27-30, 2000 and another two days in St. Johns January 24-25, 2001 explored the areas of cooperation and began some concrete number-crunching exercises. Our Newfoundland venture is what we like to do most -- search the data, correlate specific social, health and economic data, analyze the results, and seek answers to pressing social questions. The Newfoundland folk understand intuitively that the purpose and best use of statistics is to help people, build and strengthen community, and create social benefit.

### ***Reality Check: The Canadian Review of Wellbeing***

GPI Atlantic is working closely with the Atkinson Charitable Foundation in Toronto to produce a prototype of a new Canadian Review of Wellbeing entitled *Reality Check*, which will work towards the development of a new Canadian index of wellbeing. The review will describe existing quality of



life and wellbeing indicator projects in Canada, and will present concrete results from around the country that show the difference between the new measures and conventional measures of progress.

GPI Atlantic will perform the chief editorial function. Articles have already been written and submitted, and the prototype is currently in the design stage in Toronto. In February, the prototype for the first issue will be reviewed by experts and journalists, and then submitted to the Atkinson board of directors for a decision to proceed with production.

The good news is that GPI members and subscribers will now receive *both* the GPI News *and* the prototype of the new national Review of Wellbeing at no extra charge.

### ***Canadian Policy Research Networks Quality of Life Indicators Project***

GPI Atlantic worked as an adviser and consultant to the Canadian Policy Research Networks in its Quality of Life Indicators Project, and reviewed project results with a panel of experts in Ottawa on December 12-13, 2000. The CPRN conducted 40 nationwide workshops in which citizens were asked what quality of life issues mattered to them, and what indicators of wellbeing they would like to see. The top issues for Canadians were health, education, the environment, and social programs, all ahead of the economy in their lists of priorities.

### ***Environment Canada***

GPI Atlantic presented its work and participated in a full-day sustainable development indicators workshop sponsored by Environment Canada in Toronto January 23, 2001. Also present were Mathis Wackernagel, co-author of the Ecological Footprint; the US Environmental Protection Agency and Environment Canada SOLEC indicator directors for the Great Lakes; Ann Kerr, director of the Environment Canada indicators division in Ottawa; Ori Loucks of the University of Miami in Cincinnati; and representatives of Statistics Canada, Environment Canada and the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy

### ***NS Voluntary Planning Agency***

GPI Atlantic is working on an ongoing basis with the Nova Scotia Voluntary Planning Agency, developing proposals to the NS government on a vision statement for the province and on a life-long learning project. The Voluntary Planning Agency is interested in partnering with us to link our community GPI projects to its vision of creating "learning communities" that can improve governance and the quality of civic participation.

### ***Other GPI Presentations***

The projects mentioned above and presentations of the GPI work have become the main source of income for GPI Atlantic and for the GPI researcher salaries. There have been recent GPI presentations to the Health, Work and Wellness Conference in Toronto, Recreation Nova Scotia annual conference, Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia annual conference, the Solar Energy Society of Canada annual conference, and the New Brunswick Round Table on the Environment and the Economy.

Upcoming GPI presentations and consultations include:

- January 30, 9.30am: Nova Scotia Health Research Council, Westin Hotel, Halifax.
- January 31, 7.30pm: Kings College Journalism School, Halifax, with Jim Meek.
- February 7, Cooper Institute, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.
- February 13-14: Further working sessions with Newfoundland Statistics Agency.
- March 15-16, Miramichi, New Brunswick, on social inclusion.
- March 27-28, National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy stakeholder conference on sustainable development indicators, Ottawa.
- March 29-30, Climate Change Conference, Fredericton, New Brunswick.
- April 20 or 27, (to be confirmed): Cape Breton Regional Municipality annual volunteer awards, Sydney.
- May 15, 10.30am: St. Johns, Newfoundland: Senior Social Service Managers Forum.
- May 26, 9am, Halifax: Heart and Stroke Foundation (on value of voluntary work).
- June 22, Montreal (tentative): Canada Pension and Benefits annual conference.
- Sept. 20-21, St. John, New Brunswick: Community development and beautification conference.

***GPI Atlantic work has also been featured in:***

- The Treasury Board's *Managing for Results*.
- The Nova Scotia Environment Act Review Panel's recommendation to the Nova Scotia government, which included a specific recommendation for the adoption and use of genuine progress indicators.
- Lead front-page news stories, and radio and TV spots, on the GPI *Cost of Tobacco in Nova Scotia* results. Two lead front-page follow up stories featured the GPI results, which have now helped move the Nova Scotia government to announce a planned increase in tobacco taxes in the coming year. (See summary of results below in this issue.)
- Newspaper stories and a CBC Maritime Noon phone-in on GPI Atlantic's Christmas gift story (see below in this issue.)
- CBC interview taped on the GPI Halifax Harbour cleanup study for upcoming Maritime Noon slot.

***The Cost of HIV/AIDS in Canada***

GPI Atlantic has just completed (January 20,01) a 10-page analysis on *The Cost of HIV/AIDS in Canada*, prepared for the Maritime Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, and submitted for publication in a Commonwealth Secretariat publication. The GPI study, co-authored by Colin Dodds MA, Ronald Colman PhD, Carol Amaratunga PhD, and Jeff Wilson BES, found that HIV/AIDS costs the Canadian economy \$2 billion a year. The next issue of GPI News will feature results from this study, and the report will be available from the GPI web site bookstore.

**In sum**, we have become somewhat self-supporting through this contractual work and through our membership base. The GPI Atlantic work is also becoming exposed to an ever wider audience. Our hope is that this activity will draw more attention to our core projects and help to attract much needed funding.

## 5. The Core Nova Scotia Genuine Progress Index: Upcoming Releases

The best way we can spread the GPI approach and make a real contribution to these new methods of measuring wellbeing is to produce a workable, policy-relevant Genuine Progress Index for Nova Scotia. The real challenge in the coming year, therefore, is to maintain that strong central focus, even as we take on other activities and become more self-supporting by fulfilling contracts and responding to requests for GPI assistance and presentations. We have certainly been slowed down in that core mission, but we are still making steady headway and moving slowly towards our goal. Here is an update on upcoming releases and work in progress.

- The ***GPI Forest Accounts***, authored by GPI researcher Sara Wilson, M.Sc. (Forestry), have been through several expert reviews and revisions, and we are now in the final production stage. The 180-page report, replete with charts and tables is the fruition of nearly three years research and numerous early drafts, and reveals ground-breaking new data on the state of Nova Scotia forests never before published. The report is scheduled for release in February. Watch the newspapers and the GPI web site on this one -- we expect it to make waves!
- The GPI ***Water Quality Accounts*** were accompanied by a detailed case study applying the GPI full-cost accounting methods to an analysis of the costs and benefits of a cleaner Halifax Harbour that are predicted from the proposed sewage treatment plants. Similarly, work is currently under way on a detailed **case study of sustainable forest harvest methods in Nova Scotia** that can show a sustainable way forward for our forest industry. GPI researchers Linda Pannozzo and Minga O'Brien are currently hard at work on that project.
- The Nova Scotia ***Ecological Footprint***, authored by GPI researcher Jeff Wilson, has also been reviewed and revised and is now in the final revision and production stage. We expect it to be released in February as well. This is a vital component of the Genuine Progress Index that complements the GPI natural resource accounts in a very important way. While natural resource accounts inevitably place responsibility for sustainable harvest methods on producers, the Ecological Footprint places the onus for sustainability squarely on the shoulders of consumers from where the demand for natural resource products originates. Thank you Nova Scotia Public Interest Research Group for a recent \$1,500 grant towards the completion of this GPI component.
- The GPI ***Greenhouse Gas Accounts***, authored by GPI researcher Dr. Sally Walker, have been woefully under-funded. We have been through as many revisions and re-writes as our voluntary efforts and limited budget can manage, but we still want to do more work on what is now a third draft. We have received some excellent feedback from expert reviewers, and we know that another 2-3 months of work can make a substantial difference to the final report. Based on income from speaking engagements and consultations in December-January, we can now dedicate an additional \$2,000 to that task that will take us at least part way towards completion.
- Good news is that we have just received a 3-month grant from the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy to do more work on the GPI ***Soils and Agriculture Accounts*** and the GPI ***Marine Environment / Fisheries Accounts***. While this grant will not "complete" these reports to the full extent, we will produce and release the completed sections in March this year at the same time that we present results to the Round Table.

In fact, GPI soils researchers, Jennifer Scott MES and Julia Cooper will be ready to release the first section of the Agriculture work, on *The Economic Viability of Farming in Nova Scotia*, in February. That detailed report has already been reviewed by five experts in the field and extensive feedback is now being incorporated into the final draft. Fisheries researchers Dr. Tony Charles of St. Mary's University, Heather Boyd and Amanda Lavers MES, are currently working a first draft report of that set of accounts.

- A first draft of the GPI ***Sustainable Transportation*** component, prepared by researchers Dr. Larry Hughes of Dalhousie University, Vanessa Husain, and David Caulfield, has been prepared and carefully reviewed. We predict that another 2-3 months work is now required on the second draft before it is ready to be sent out for review, and we predict that the final report will be ready for release in the late spring or early summer.
- GPI researcher, Anne Monette MES, is working steadily at the ***Air Quality*** component of the Nova Scotia Genuine Progress Index and is now at a very interesting stage of applying for the first time a brand new Environment Canada model assessing the cost of the health impacts of air pollution. We anticipate that the final Air Quality report will be ready for release in April. In the absence of a dedicated GPI web site manager, Anne has also performed yeoman duty for GPI Atlantic in keeping our web site functional and making GPI materials accessible to members and the general public.
- After working full-time for six weeks on ***The Cost of HIV/AIDS in Canada***, Colin Dodds MA is now returning to his primary GPI research on the ***Income Distribution*** component of the Genuine Progress Index. As with the Soils and Agriculture work, we will release this component in sections, with the first part, analyzing income trends over time by quintile distributions, expected to be ready for release by March.
- Earlier GPI reports on the economic value of voluntary work, the economic value of unpaid household work, the cost of crime, the cost of obesity, the cost of tobacco, women's health, the value of water resources, shorter work time options, and other issues are all available on the GPI web site at [www.gpiatlantic.org](http://www.gpiatlantic.org). Brief biographies of GPI researchers are included in the GPI Atlantic profile on the web site.
- One of the most exciting things discussed at the December 15 full-day GPI strategic planning session was the possibility of using existing results from individual reports to begin construction of the Genuine Progress Index itself in such a way that results can be updated annually. So far, all effort has gone into constructing each individual component of the index slowly, carefully and painstakingly, one part at a time, with attention to proper methodology and location of data sources.

However, at our December 15 meeting, we realized that, even before all components are completed, we will soon have a sufficient mix of social, economic and environmental results to operationalize the GPI itself. We will re-visit that possibility later in 2001, and perhaps organize a special retreat to evaluate all results from our four years of work to date and to select the key indicators and results that should be updated in an annual index of genuine progress. That index can then be expanded as future research on the separate components continues.

As you can see there is enormous amount of ongoing core GPI research that is going into the construction of the Nova Scotia Genuine Progress Index, and many researchers are hard at work. Almost all this work is under-funded, and so the contractual work and GPI presentations are providing partial support. Our membership base, and the ongoing support of GPI News subscribers helps to keep that core work going. Thank you! This annual report is intended simply to provide an overview of the multiple activities of GPI Atlantic. We hope it is useful, and we thank you for your generous and indispensable support.

Ronald Colman  
Director, GPI Atlantic

***Please note GPI Atlantic has a new phone number (902-489-7007) and a new fax number (902-820-2007). GPI director, Ronald Colman, has a new email address: [colman@gpiatlantic.org](mailto:colman@gpiatlantic.org). Our address is still the same: Box 489, RR#1, Tantallon, NS B0J 3J0.***

## UPDATE: APRIL, 2001

### *Nova Scotia Ecological Footprint Released*

The Nova Scotia Ecological Footprint, one of the 22 core components of the N.S. Genuine Progress Index, was publicly released on March 13. Authored by GPI researcher, Jeff Wilson, the report received front page news coverage the following day, and was covered in a CBC Maritime Noon interview. In addition, columnist Ralph Surette devoted his Saturday Chronicle-Herald column to the GPI report, calling it “prophetic.” The coverage triggered another column by Brian Lee Crowley, president of the Atlantic Institute for Market Studies the following week. The Surette and Crowley columns are included in this issue of the *GPI News*.

The report is significant as the major GPI measure of sustainability from the *consumption* point of view, and thereby encourages ordinary citizens to take responsibility for the environmental impact of their daily behaviour. The study found that Nova Scotians need 8.1 hectares per person to produce the resources they consume and absorb the wastes they produce, compared to a globally available space of 1.8 hectares per person. If all the world’s citizens were to consume at Nova Scotian levels, we would need four additional planets earth to provide the necessary resources and absorb the waste. Produced.

The report recommends specific methods for reducing our current ecological footprint, and suggest a one-million hectare collective footprint reduction target for Nova Scotia by 2002. It notes that we have already reduced our solid waste footprint by 50% in just five years, and concludes that a one-hectare per person footprint reduction can be achieved without compromising our current standard of living.

A summary of major results is included in this issue of *GPI News*. The Ecological Footprint report (100 pages) is available free to members and GPI News subscribers.



### ***Community GPI Takes a Big Leap Forward***

In February we received the wonderful news that our two community GPI projects – in Glace Bay and Kings County – have received \$326,935 in funding over the next three years from the Canadian Population Health Initiative (CPHI) to develop and apply community health indicators as a pilot project for Canada. We were one of six projects nationwide to receive funding from CPHI.

The CPHI letter states that "the CPHI Council felt that your team has presented an exciting community-based research Program....The Council is excited about the prospects for this innovative and unique community-based work as well as the potential implications for policy and infrastructure that, it is hoped, will emerge from it."

The CPHI project is a partnership of GPI Atlantic with Dalhousie University's Population Health Research Unit (PHRU), the St. Mary's University Time Use Research Program (TURP), the Cape Breton Wellness Centre at the University College of Cape Breton, the Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society, the Maritime Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, and many community and academic partners in Cape Breton and Kings County, including community health boards and public health authorities.

The CPHI project will use the GPI data collected in both communities to investigate the relationship between health outcomes and a wide range of health determinants at the community level, and it will turn the research findings into policy recommendations and action to improve the health of the population in both places. A manual and other materials will be prepared to enable other communities in Canada to construct their own indicators of community health.

Combined with existing funding from the National Crime Prevention Centre's Business Action Program and the Canadian Rural Partnership (the latter secured by the NS Citizens for Community Development Society), we can now move quickly ahead to complete our data collection and data entry in a timely way.

In Kings County, the NS Citizens for Community Development Society and GPI Atlantic interviewed six excellent candidates and have just brought on a very capable project manager, Cindy Trudel, who is now hiring survey administrators and coordinators to take 2,000 lengthy and detailed questionnaires into the field from April through June, 2001.

In Glace Bay, we have contracted the Market Research Centre at the University College of Cape Breton to administer the remaining 1,300 questionnaires (700 have already been collected by our own GPI staff there). The five full-time GPI Glace Bay staff members have now begun data entry of the survey information already collected.

At the same time, Michael Pennock of Dalhousie's PHRU and Dr. Andrew Harvey of the St. Mary's University Economics Department and TURP, have been working hard on a unique new database design with the assistance of two recently hired research assistants. This database will be able to link a wide range of information from time use, volunteer and employment patterns to health and security outcomes.

In other words, we are now steaming ahead on all fronts with many new partners and workers in the field. Two representatives from CPHI are coming to Nova Scotia from Ottawa in early April to meet the academic partners in this project in Halifax, and the Kings County community partners in Wolfville.

The community GPI is a big step forward for GPI Atlantic as well. This is the first time we are collecting our own data for the specific purpose of constructing a Genuine Progress Index. The questionnaire underwent three detailed reviews by senior methodologists at Statistics Canada, and was field-tested in both communities, and we have learned a lot from our mistakes as well as our successes.

We are confident that the outcomes of this project will provide a real breakthrough in the capacity of communities to assess their own wellbeing and progress, and we are delighted that we finally have the funding to see the project through to completion.

### ***National Round Table Assists Completion of GPI Natural Resource Accounts***

GPI Atlantic is grateful to the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy for providing financial assistance towards the completion of the GPI renewable natural resource accounts – Forests, Fisheries/Marine Environment, and Soils and Agriculture, and the Ecological Footprint analysis.

All of these accounts have been in the final stages of data analysis and the first draft stage of writing for some time, but have been delayed by lack of funding; so the NRTEE funding is crucial in bringing these important GPI components to fruition. Particular thanks go to Carolyn Cahill, NRTEE policy advisor, for making this possible. The NRTEE funding will allow our researchers to get paid for their time in this final stage (a lot has been voluntary), and report releases in all three areas will take place in the coming months.

We have received excellent and helpful review comments on the forest report from many experts, and we have delayed the release of that report until we can incorporate this feedback and follow up on the advice we have received. The NRTEE funding is also allowing completion of the Sustainable Forestry Case Studies by researchers Minga O'Brien and Linda Pannozzo. These will form an important appendix to the Forest Accounts and demonstrate a clear and viable way forwards for the future.

### ***GPI Greenhouse Gas Accounts Completed***

The Nova Scotia Greenhouse Gas Accounts (212 pages), authored by Dr. Sally Walker, have been completed, and are scheduled for release this month. Results were previewed in the last issue of *GPI News*, and were presented by Dr. Walker to the Northeast Premiers and Governors' Climate Change conference in Fredericton on March 30.

### ***Solid Waste Funding Secured – Internship Available***

GPI Atlantic has received \$10,200 in funding from Environment Canada's Science Horizons internship program to bring on a recent science graduate to work on the Solid Waste component of

the Nova Scotia Genuine Progress Index. An additional \$6,000 is being contributed by Halifax Regional Municipality. Work on this component will begin in May of this year and will be supervised by GPI researcher, Anne Monette.

If you know of a suitable candidate for this internship, please let us know at [info@gpiatlantic.org](mailto:info@gpiatlantic.org). Science Horizons interns must be 30 years or younger, a recent science graduate, currently unemployed or underemployed (not working in an area related to their field of study), and eligible to work in Canada. Science Horizons internships have been vital in enabling the completion of the GPI Water Quality component (Kelly Macdonald and Sara Wilson) and the GPI Air Quality component (Anne Monette), which is currently in draft stage.

### ***First GPI Agriculture Release Scheduled for April 24 in Kings County***

Jennifer Scott, MES, has completed the first section of the GPI Soils and Agriculture Accounts -- a report on Farm Viability in Nova Scotia (45 pages). Current plans are to release this report at a press conference in Kings County, Nova Scotia's prime agricultural region, on April 24.

Reports on farm economic woes have dominated the news in recent months, but almost always from the perspective of farmer complaints. We believe this GPI report is the first in Canada to apply in practice a set of clear, objective indicators for the economic viability of farming as concrete measures of progress, to establish viability thresholds for each indicator, and to track changes over time.

The report provides detailed information on four specific indicators of farm viability:

- expense to income ratio;
- return on investment;
- debt to net income ratio;
- direct payments to producers and dependency ratio.

Although this first Agriculture release focuses on strictly economic measures, it is clear that economic stress may imperil responsible environmental stewardship by reducing the resources available to farmers to manage their land sustainably. Future Soils and Agriculture releases will focus more directly on the physical resource component, and recommend specific indicators of progress in the ecological and social dimensions of farming.

### ***GPI Atlantic Profiled at National Sustainable Development Indicators Conference***

More than 650 people attended the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy's National Sustainable Development Indicators Conference in Ottawa on March 27. Representatives were roughly evenly divided between government (federal and provincial), business, non-governmental organizations, and academics.

In the morning, the conference was addressed by:

- the Federal Minister of Environment, David Anderson,
- the Chief Statistician of Canada, Ivan Fellegi,
- the Chair of the NRTEE, Dr. Stuart Smith and the NRTEE executive director, David McGuinty
- pioneer indicators expert Hazel Henderson (U.S. Calvert-Henderson Quality of Life Indicators),

- the principal architect of the UN Human Development Index, Selim Jahan, of the United Nations Development Program, and
- the World Bank's senior environmental economist, Kirk Hamilton, architect of the World Bank's Genuine Savings indicators that include natural resource depletion and investment in education.

Environment Minister, Mr. Anderson, called for “more comprehensive and accurate measures of progress” than are provided by the GDP, and for sustainable development indicators that are as usable, rigorous, well accepted and inspiring of trust as “more narrowly defined economic indicators” are today. Mr. Anderson invoked the native tradition of considering the interests of seven generations hence in any important policy decision.

The afternoon session profiled sustainable development indicators work under way in Canada today. GPI Atlantic presented its methods of valuing natural capital and measuring its depreciation, and used results from the GPI Forest Accounts as an example. The GPI presentation aroused considerable interest, and there were many comments and questions from the floor, including from Statistics Canada's Environment Division Director, Claude Simard, and from the World Bank's Kirk Hamilton.

The GPI Atlantic presentation and others at the conference will be published in a special autumn 2001 issue of *Isuma*, the journal of policy research produced by the Policy Research Secretariat of the Government of Canada. It will also be posted on the GPI web site in May.

### ***Canadian Review of Wellbeing Prototype Distributed***

The Atkinson Charitable Foundation and GPI Atlantic have produced a prototype first issue of *Reality Check: The Canadian Review of Wellbeing*, which was distributed for comment to participants at the national sustainable development indicators conference in Ottawa on March 27. It has also been sent for review to many journalists and opinion leaders. The attractive eight-page three-colour review will be published four times a year.

Its mission is to promote the creation of a reliable, non-partisan Canadian Index of Wellbeing to be issued regularly, that will provide a more full and accurate picture of how Canadians are really doing. It will report on wellbeing indicator initiatives across the country at the national, provincial and community levels, and it will present sample results from these various projects. Its goal is to influence policy decisions by Canadian governments and discussions among ordinary Canadians by highlighting dimensions of wellbeing that are hidden in our conventional economic indicators of progress.

Review comments will be taken into account in the coming weeks, and revisions made; and the first issue will then be presented to the Atkinson Board of Directors for project funding approval. Edited by GPI Atlantic director Ronald Colman, the review will then be distributed to policy makers and public opinion leaders. It will be sent free of charge to GPI Atlantic members.

### ***Other GPI News, Activities and Presentations in Brief***

- **7 February:** Presentation on *The Real Cost of Poverty: Overcoming Barriers to Genuine Progress*, The Cooper Institute, **Charlottetown**, Prince Edward Island.

- **9 February:** Meeting with Nova Scotia Department of Health, Dalhousie University Population Health Research Unit and Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre on a new population health approach for Nova Scotia.
- **12-14 February: St. Johns, Newfoundland:** Working with Newfoundland Statistics Agency on indicators for Newfoundland and Labrador Strategic Social Plan, and on community health and time use surveys. Includes meeting with Penny Rowe, director, Community Services Council.
- **15 February:** Teleconference with Health Canada's Policy Group, Ottawa, on the new "dynamic model of health" developed by the Commonwealth Secretariat's Working Group of which GPI Atlantic is a member.
- **20 February:** Meeting with Newfoundland Health Minister, Julie Bettney, on population health indicators.
- **21 February:** With Bill McKay, First Nations Forest Representative, and GPI forest researcher Linda Pannozzo, -- Meeting and presentation to executive directors and staff of International and Canadian Forest Stewardship Council during their one-day visit to Halifax.
- Community survey advice provided gratis to **NS Paraplegic Association** for upcoming needs survey in Cape Breton.
- Two recent task forces heard presentations from GPI Atlantic, and their final reports (**February**) have both specifically recommended the use of Genuine Progress indicators:
  - Nova Scotia **Environment Act** review panel;
  - Department of Fisheries and Oceans review of options for restoring flow to the **Petitcodiac River**.
- **February-March:** Consultations with **Canadian Policy Research Networks**, Ottawa, on final indicator selection for Quality of Life Indicators Project.
- **March:** GPI Atlantic was elected by members of the **Forest Stewardship Council** who are small woodlot owners, to sit in the 4-member Economic Chamber of the Maritime Regional Committee of the Forest Stewardship Council. This is the committee (on which GPI Atlantic served for three years) that produced a far-reaching set of standards for sustainable forestry in the Maritimes. JD Irving is also represented in the Economic Chamber of the Council.
- **March 15:** Presentation on Costs of Social Exclusion/Inclusion at Health Canada sponsored conference in **Miramichi**, New Brunswick. (Presentation summary included in this issue of *GPI News*). Full day conference participation.
- **March 16:** Presentation on "Climate Change in the Genuine Progress Index" to Climate Change Conference sponsored by the Atlantic Centre for International Cooperation, **Memramcook**, New Brunswick.



- **A Busy Week for GPI Atlantic – 6 Conferences/Presentations in a Week!**  
During the week of March 26-30, GPI Atlantic was represented at six out-of-province conferences and meetings:
  - **Toronto, March 26-27:** GPI Atlantic was invited to participate in and advise at a workshop of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council on social science research on the new economy; and at a conference on Economic Valuation sponsored by Prevention Dividend. GPI Atlantic Board member, John Odenthal, represented GPI Atlantic at both events.
  - **Ottawa, March 27-28:** GPI Atlantic presentation to the National Round Table's Sustainable Development Indicators national conference (March 27), and participation in full day National Round Table stakeholder workshop (March 28). GPI Atlantic is a member of the National Round's Environment and Sustainable Development Indicators Steering Committee.
  - **Fredericton, March 29-30:** GPI Atlantic climate change researcher, Dr. Sally Walker, gave presentations on the GPI to the New Brunswick Departments of Transportation, and Environment and Local Government; and on the GPI Greenhouse Gas Accounts to the Northeast Premiers and Governors' Conference on Climate Change.
- **March:** Dr. Maureen Reed, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, **University of Saskatchewan**, has received a teaching release for the fall 2001 semester specifically to examine the work of GPI Atlantic, with emphasis on the community GPI project. GPI Atlantic is supporting Dr. Reed and her partners in the Community-University Institute for Social Research at the University of Saskatchewan in their application to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for their proposed research on community-based GPI indicators.
- **March 22:** As a result of prior contacts with GPI Atlantic, 20 British Columbia community groups, with support from provincial and federal government agencies, establish **GPI Pacific** in Vancouver, with the intent of cooperating and working with GPI Atlantic to create a Genuine Progress Index for British Columbia.

#### ***Upcoming Events Include:***

- **April 5:** Presentation on *Economic Costs of Social Exclusion* to Health Canada's Population and Public Health Branch Executive Committee, Halifax.
- **April 5:** Interview with Atlantic Canada's *Saltscapes* magazine.
- **April 21:** Presentation with Leonard Poetschke on community GPI to annual general meeting, Nova Scotia Citizens for Community Development Society, Sobey Building, St. Mary's University, 10am to 12 noon. **Note: Anyone interested in the community GPI project in Kings County and Glace Bay, and who wishes to participate, is urged to attend this meeting.**

The NS Citizens for Community Development Society is also looking for new board members for the next year, and would welcome GPI Atlantic members interested in the community GPI. The working relationship between GPI Atlantic and the NS CCDS is a long and fruitful one, and follows the initiation of the community GPI project by NS CCDS in 1998.

- **April 26:** Presentation to Diabetes Care Program of Nova Scotia on *Costs of Obesity in Nova Scotia*, 6pm, Prince George Hotel, Windsor Room, Halifax.
- **April 27: Sydney, Cape Breton:** Presentation to Volunteer Awards dinner, Cape Breton Regional Municipality Recreation Department.
- **April 28:** Meetings with GPI Glace Bay director, staff, and survey coordinator.
- **May 3: GPI Atlantic Annual General Meeting and Celebration, 7pm-9.30pm**, World Trade and Convention Centre, 1800 Argyle Street, 7<sup>th</sup> floor boardroom. **Members: Please join us on this occasion.**
- **May 9, 7pm:** Introductory presentation on the Genuine Progress Index, St. Margaret's Bay Shambhala Centre, 13495 Peggy's Cove Road, about 100 metres from the lights at Highway 3
- **May 14-16: St. Johns, Newfoundland:** consultations with Newfoundland Statistics Agency; May 15, 10.45am: Presentation to Senior Social Service Managers Forum.
- **May 26, 9.30am:** Presentation on Value of Volunteerism to Annual General Meeting, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia, Halifax.
- **June 1, 9.30am:** Presentation to Gerontology Association of Nova Scotia on volunteerism and aging.
- **Upcoming GPI report releases:** (All dates are subject to funding availability).
  - Anticipated for April-May:
    - *The Nova Scotia Greenhouse Gas Accounts* (researcher: Dr. Sally Walker)
    - *Farm Viability in Nova Scotia* (section 1 of the GPI Soils and Agriculture Accounts) – scheduled for release April 24 in Kings County (Jennifer Scott)
    - *Income Distribution in Nova Scotia* (Colin Dodds).
  - Anticipated for May-July:
    - *The GPI Forest Accounts* (Sara Wilson, Linda Pannozzo, Minga O'Brien)
    - *Air Quality in Nova Scotia* (Anne Monette)
    - *The GPI Fisheries Accounts* (Dr. Tony Charles, Heather Boyd, Amanda Lavers)
    - *The Full Costs of Transportation in Nova Scotia* (Dr. Larry Hughes, Vanessa Husain, David Caulfield)
    - *The GPI Soils and Agriculture Accounts* (second release – Jennifer Scott and Julia Cooper).
    - Plus a special *Profile on Newfoundland and Labrador*, replicating several GPI components for that province – in particular the Value of Voluntary Work, Population Health variables, and the Cost of Crime.