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# **GPIAtlantic**

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## ***Annual Report 2006***

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## *Executive Summary*

In 2006, GPI Atlantic scaled back its work from the extremely busy and fast-paced previous year that included organizing a major international conference, and returned to dedicated research in order to focus on the completion of the remaining components of the Nova Scotia GPI and on its work for the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. Work proceeded throughout the year on several of the remaining GPI core components, including education, agriculture, debt, and sustainable transportation. A major report on Sustainable Transportation in Nova Scotia was released in November 2006, and final reports for the remaining components are all expected to be released in 2007. GPI Atlantic reports, materials, and results continue to be referenced regularly by the media, policy makers, and non-governmental organizations.

In 2006, GPI Atlantic continued to work with the Atkinson Charitable Foundation (ACF) and other partners on the development of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW). The CIW held two major events in 2006, a National Working Group meeting in June and a Working Conference in November. GPI Atlantic played a key role in preparing materials and research work for both of these events, in addition to providing ongoing leadership on the project as part of the Project Management Team and in its capacity as research director for the CIW.

Although most of its focus was on research in 2006, GPI Atlantic also began to move towards greater outreach and practical application of its work. It is playing a lead role in the development of the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative, in partnership with a number of other organizations, and increasing its focus on outreach and communication with members and supporters. These outreach activities include an expansion of membership and an increasing emphasis on fundraising from private donors as a way of diversifying the organization's funding base.

There is a burgeoning interest in new indicators of wellbeing and sustainable development, both nationally and internationally, and our greatest challenge continues to be managing the increasing demand for our work. We continue to receive far more requests than we have the capacity to respond to, even though we do not market our work, respond to requests for proposals, or solicit new work – all of which could expand our reach further *if* we had the capacity to do so. This means that we presently have to make careful decisions in selecting projects and activities that contribute to our core goals. Expanding our capacity to meet the demand for the work we do remains our most substantial challenge – a challenge that we have not yet effectively met.

Strengthening and maintaining key organizational infrastructure is therefore an important part of ensuring that GPI Atlantic is able to continue to do its work, and possibly expand it. Going forward, we would like to continue to produce high-quality research, while also improving and expanding our communications and outreach work, and encouraging the practical application of our research to improving sustainability in Atlantic Canada and around the world. Whether or not it is possible to accomplish both these goals simultaneously is something we need to consider carefully during the coming year.



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## ***1. Research***

### *1a) Core GPI research*

*The GPI Transportation Accounts: Sustainable Transportation in Nova Scotia* was released in November 2006. The report, many years in the making, was extremely comprehensive, at approximately 560 pages, with 70 tables and over 210 figures. This report, co-authored by Aviva Savelson, Sally Walker, Todd Litman (North America's leading expert on sustainable transportation), and others received excellent media coverage in daily newspapers and on television and radio, including six stories over a 3-page spread in *The Daily News*, which gave the study its lead front-page cover story. An overview of the media coverage is available on the GPI Atlantic website (<http://www.gpiatlantic.org/clippings/transpclips.htm>). This report was funded by Transport Canada's Moving on Sustainable Transportation program, the Nova Scotia provincial government (Conserve Nova Scotia and the Department of Energy), and the Halifax Regional Municipality. As a direct result of this report, GPI Atlantic has been invited to act as a member of the Minister's special advisory committee on transportation in Nova Scotia.

In 2007, work on the remaining core components of the GPI is expected to be completed. The following projects are all expected to be released in 2007:

- Education: A major 1,000+-page literature review on education by GPI Atlantic researchers Karen Hayward and Linda Pannozzo is already complete, and work on the actual indicator report – currently under way – will be completed in the spring of 2007. These education reports are being prepared for both the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) and the Nova Scotia Genuine Progress Index. Both the education literature review and the indicator report will be presented to the CIW national working group on June 4-5 in Toronto, and publicly released with the results of several other CIW domains in the fall of 2007. This work has received major funding from the Canadian Council on Learning.
- Soils and agriculture reports on social capital, land capacity, and water quality: GPI Atlantic researcher Jennifer Scott is currently completing work on these reports, with an expected release date of late spring 2007.
- Debt and Assets in Nova Scotia: Kimberly Tran, economist at the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council, is working on the completion of this report for the Nova Scotia GPI.
- Economic Security in Nova Scotia: This report was commissioned by GPI Atlantic and prepared by Dr. Andrew Sharpe, based on results and data from the Centre for the Study of Living Standards' Index of Economic Well-Being. It is expected to be released in late spring 2007.
- The Time Use report being prepared for the CIW will be adapted to prepare a short report on the Value of Free Time for the Nova Scotia GPI. This will be the final remaining component of the Nova Scotia GPI in this phase.
- GPI Atlantic researcher Aviva Savelson is working on adding an HRM chapter to our Sustainable Transportation report. This will be released by late spring or early summer 2007.

After more than ten years of work on the individual components of the GPI, GPI Atlantic will have produced over 70 reports containing detailed research on the indicators that make up the Genuine Progress Index. Although other potential indicators may be added at a later stage on

topics like culture and governance that were not covered in this initial developmental phase, the reports completed at the end of this phase cover 20 key components of the GPI that together constitute quite a comprehensive assessment of social, environmental, and economic aspects of wellbeing and sustainability.

As part of the culmination of this decade of important work, a new project began in 2006 to develop a set of headline indicators for the GPI. In collaboration with GPI Atlantic researchers past and present, a framework of seven key areas or domains (corresponding roughly to the domains of the CIW) and approximately 30 headline indicators was developed. Work on the necessary updating and data collection for these headline indicators has been undertaken by GPI Atlantic researcher Aviva Savelson, and has proceeded throughout the year. The headline indicators report is expected to be release in final form in the fall of 2007 as part of a major public event that will officially present the ‘completed’ GPI to the public and urge its adoption and use by policy makers.

This work on the headline indicators has helped to inform the ongoing work on the development of a GPI Atlantic database, funded by ACOA and the Canada Foundation for Innovation. GPI Atlantic continues to work on this database in cooperation with Statistics Canada and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing to ensure that our data sets reflect our key GPI indicators and most commonly used and authoritative statistics, and is compatible with the Canadian Index of Wellbeing framework as well. Having these data in a format that is easy to update and to access will be an extremely important long-term contribution to GPI Atlantic’s work, and will also help project the past decade of GPI work into the public arena. It will also enable us more easily to complete replications of our work for other provinces and to update the results of our own work as new data become available.

#### *1b) Other research projects*

In 2006, GPI Atlantic’s research focus was on the completion of the remaining core indicators (see list above). GPI Atlantic also conducted initial research work to update our 2000 Cost of Tobacco report for the Nova Scotia Department of Health Promotion and the Canadian Cancer Society. This update will be completed in 2007 by researcher Janet Rhymes.

Another key project in 2006 was GPI Atlantic’s work with Bhutan on the development of indicators that will reflect the country’s philosophy of Gross National Happiness and on the construction of a national survey to collect the data for those indicators. See section 2c of this report for more details on international work.

#### *1c) Canadian Index of Wellbeing*

GPI Atlantic continues to play a lead role in the development of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW). GPI Atlantic’s Executive Director, Ronald Colman, also acts as Research Director for the CIW. 2006 was a very busy year for the CIW. In addition to reviewing draft reports and providing feedback to CIW researchers, GPI Atlantic staff Ronald Colman and Clare Levin also assisted with the preparation for and attended two key CIW meetings – the National

Working Group meeting held in Ottawa in June 2006, and a CIW Working Conference held in Toronto in November 2006. The Working Conference included a “soft” release of initial results from the Living Standards and Population Health domains and from a report on the Ecological Footprint for Canada, the results of which GPI Atlantic provided major input into and then presented at the CIW conference.

The full public release of at least the first four domain reports from the Canadian Index of Wellbeing is planned for the fall of 2007. The CIW domains expected to be completed and released at that time are Living Standards, Population Health, Education, and Time Use. In addition, while a final report on the Ecosystem Health domain will not be ready for full release, preliminary results will be included in the public launch in order to ensure there is an environmental component to the release. In the next few months, GPI Atlantic will be preparing a report for the CIW summarizing our own key findings and recommendations for headline indicators, based on our last ten years of work on natural capital and environmental quality indicators. As well, research work and writing are actively under way on the CIW Community Vitality report, into which GPI Atlantic also provided substantial feedback, including recommendations on headline indicators.

The Canadian Index of Wellbeing continues to receive attention in international fora. In 2006 CIW representatives attended key OECD meetings in Bellagio, Milan, and Ispra, all in Italy, also attended by the United Nations Chief Statistician, the World Bank Chief Economist, and the OECD Secretary-General and Chief Statistician, to discuss alternative indicators. The meetings were co-hosted by the European Commission’s Joint Research Council, with which there has been active collaboration in several spheres. CIW representatives also attended meetings in New Zealand and Australia with key statisticians from several countries to discuss the development of comparable international indicators. This international interest is expected to continue going forward – Roy Romanow, spokesperson for the CIW, will be giving a presentation at the OECD’s World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge, and Policy, "Measuring and Fostering the Progress of Societies", taking place in Istanbul in June 2007, which will also be attended by three other members of the CIW National Working Group.

## **2. Projects**

### *2a) Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative / The Natural Step*

In November 2005, GPI Atlantic hosted a very successful workshop, titled *Building Sustainable Development*, as a follow up to the Rethinking Development conference held in June 2005. The goal of this workshop was to begin to develop concrete and meaningful actions that will make genuinely sustainable development practices the norm rather than the exception in this region, and ultimately in the world.

One of the direct outcomes of this workshop, coming from the actions that participants developed and recommended, is GPI Atlantic’s work on a project focused on The Natural Step. In 2006, we organized numerous presentations and strategy meetings related to using The



Natural Step framework to help move the Atlantic region towards greater sustainability. The presentations included hosting Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt, international sustainability leader and founder of The Natural Step, in Halifax in September 2006. Dr. Robèrt spoke to leaders from the business and non-governmental communities, as well as to all levels of government.

Also in 2006, GPI Atlantic produced a Primer on The Natural Step and community sustainability in Atlantic Canada. This report was prepared by Peter and Janet Eaton and has been used extensively in our conversations with stakeholders around sustainability in the region. This report will also be publicly released in 2007.

GPI Atlantic is partnering with The Natural Step Canada, the Nova Scotia Environmental Network, and SENSE (Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia for Everyone – a provincial working group on education for sustainable development) on this project, which is now called the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative (ACSI). Fundraising and planning efforts have picked up steam in 2007, and the ACSI is expected to be a major GPI Atlantic project in the coming year.

#### *2b) Education for Sustainable Development and Ecological Footprint*

In addition to working on the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative, GPI Atlantic is also pursuing other projects that were developed and recommended by participants at the *Building Sustainable Development* workshop. GPI Atlantic is partnering with other organizations (including Global Footprint Network and the Sierra Club of Canada – Atlantic Canada Chapter) on the development of a project to introduce the Ecological Footprint indicator into Nova Scotia schools. We hope to launch this project in the fall of 2007.

GPI Atlantic is also an active member of SENSE (Sustainability Education in Nova Scotia for Everyone) – a provincial working group leading efforts to align Nova Scotia's educational system with the goals and principles of the United Nations Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014). Both the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative and the Ecological Footprint project are also supported by SENSE. GPI Atlantic has contributed to the group through its work on these two projects, and also played a key role in the first year of development of SENSE by serving on the Steering Committee.

Both these projects were initiated in 2006 and are actively continuing in 2007. They are part of our outreach / public engagement initiative, which is designed to bring the GPI indicators into the public arena, and they are also in keeping with our mandate as an educational non-profit organization.

#### *2c) International Work*

International collaboration has become an increasingly important part of GPI Atlantic's work in recent years, and this trend became even more marked in 2006. A key project has been our continuing work in collaboration with The Centre for Bhutan Studies (CBS) on the development of a formal set of key and secondary indicators for Bhutan that will measure the country's



concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH) and its four constituent elements (environmental conservation, sustainable and equitable economic development, cultural promotion, and good governance).

The potential significance of this project is immense, both for Bhutan and internationally. Bhutan's King, who first pronounced in 1972 that "Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product," has abdicated the throne, and – after years of gradual decentralization of power – the country will next year become a full parliamentary democracy. The new indicators are intended to ensure that the King's holistic development policy that seeks to integrate social, cultural, economic, and environmental objectives, is not abandoned in the new multiparty democracy. Internationally, Bhutan is set to become the first sovereign nation in the world officially to adopt the new integrated indicators as the country's core measure of progress, replacing the longstanding misuse of GDP for that purpose. This move is bound to have major repercussions globally, particularly through the international organizations to which Bhutan belongs (like the United Nations), and to which it has applied (like the World Trade Organization).

GPI Atlantic's work on this project in 2006 was funded primarily by the International Development Research Centre and the United Nations Development Programme, and included two visits to Bhutan by GPI Atlantic researchers: Dr. Ronald Colman, GPI Atlantic Executive Director, worked intensively with CBS in April and May 2006 on the selection and development of appropriate indicators for measuring GNH and in developing the survey instruments that will enable CBS to collect the necessary data. Bhutan's new indicator framework is modelled on that of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing and GPI Atlantic, although it adds culture and governance domains. In many ways Canadian researchers are also learning from the Bhutanese in this process.

Mr. Michael Pennock, who designed and developed the database for GPI Atlantic's Community GPI in Nova Scotia, assisted CBS for an additional three months from September to December 2006. He worked very closely with CBS researchers on refining and coding survey questionnaires, creating a database for the survey data, doing some initial statistical analysis of the field test data, and in training CBS staff on survey methods, use of the database, and statistical analysis. Throughout the project, GPI Atlantic has provided ongoing support and assistance to CBS through provision of materials, review of documentation, and consultation. GPI Atlantic is committed to maintaining this support and relationship to the best of our ability and within our capacity.

GPI Atlantic was also involved in other international projects, including meetings in Bangkok to provide advice and input on the development of indicators of progress in the Mekong Delta countries; supporting the CIW in its ongoing international work (see section 1c above); and providing key input and advice on a planned international consultation on the development of internationally comparable indicators of wellbeing, to be held in New Zealand in November 2007 – an initiative that was spurred by GPI Atlantic's presentations in New Zealand. Despite this expanding activity, GPI Atlantic has had limited capacity, as noted above, to respond to requests for work – both nationally and globally. In the last two weeks alone, for example, we





had to turn down two invitations – to present GPI Atlantic’s work at a United Nations conference to be held in Bangkok in July, and to present to and participate in a conference on the new indicators that is being jointly sponsored by Japan and Bhutan in June.

#### *2d) GPI Youth*

Since the active and highly successful youth participation in GPI Atlantic’s 2005 ReThinking Development conference, we have been thinking more and more about the importance of maintaining and developing GPI Atlantic’s capacity into the future by developing a strong youth component, and by training young people in GPI Atlantic activities as well as in its holistic philosophy of progress assessed through integrated social, economic, and environmental indicators. Gwen Colman, GPI Atlantic Youth Program Director, who organized the youth contingent to the 2005 ReThinking Development conference, worked actively in 2006 with other GPI Atlantic staff and with youth who participated in the 2005 conference to develop this new focus. 2006 saw several fundraising proposals initiated to fund this new GPI youth project – two of which have now been successful, which will allow this work to continue and expand in 2007.

### **3. Outreach Activities**

In 2006, GPI Atlantic received a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to develop key aspects of our communications and outreach activities. This includes updating and re-designing our website (completed in 2006), preparing summaries of GPI materials suitable for policy and educational audiences, and expanding and improving our databases for both GPI Atlantic contacts and the mailing list for Reality Check. We have commissioned Silver Donald Cameron, esteemed Herald columnist, who has written many splendid articles on GPI Atlantic’s various reports both for the Herald and the Globe and Mail, to work on the policy/educational summaries. This project, too, will be coordinated with our headline indicators project, and many of the new summaries will accompany the release of those headline indicator results in the fall.

In addition, Ken Summers was hired as Outreach Coordinator in December 2006. He began his six month term by developing and mailing a year-end fundraising letter, which received a very favourable response. We mailed to approximately 160 people, bringing in almost \$3,000 with a response rate of 12.5%. We will be expanding both our membership and our general contact list over the next year, and expect to be able to increase both our mailing list for fundraising, and the amount of revenue generated. Ken will continue to work on both fundraising and outreach in 2007.

#### *3a) Presentations*

Throughout 2006, Executive Director Ronald Colman and Managing Director Clare Levin continued to present GPI Atlantic’s work to government officials, NGOs, universities, health care providers, and others, both regionally and in central Canada. As with the other capacity issues noted above, we are not able to respond to many of the requests for such presentations,

and we have been picking and choosing our presentations with increasing care in order not to spread ourselves too thin.

### *3b) Media*

GPI Atlantic continued to receive ongoing media attention in 2006. Our work was cited in more than 20 print articles of which we are aware and that we have collected and put on our website, 10 of which were directly related to the release of *The GPI Transportation Accounts*. In addition, GPI Atlantic was involved in several radio interviews and television media clips, and was cited in various books, including specific GPI Atlantic contributions to widely used university-level environmental studies and business texts.

As noted in several sections above, limited capacity is a constraint in this area too. We try to respond to media requests as we receive them, but we have not had the capacity to take the initiative to increase our exposure and to comment to the media on issues related to our research as they arise – our revelations on ATV accident rates were a case in point. After ten years of almost exclusive focus on research, we need to develop this communications function more effectively. Thus, additional media work to increase GPI Atlantic’s exposure (for example, issuing regular press releases on specific decisions or issues, or approaching a paper regarding a regular column) is something we are exploring in 2007.

### *3c) Membership*

GPI Atlantic revised its membership policy in 2006, creating a life-time membership of \$10. This policy is designed to encourage membership by keeping the fee low, and to minimize the maintenance needed by eliminating the need to renew annually and all the tasks that go along with that. Instead, the database of members will be maintained by sending regular mailings, primarily electronic, but at least one hard-copy fundraising mailing per year to all of the potential fundraising contacts.

Again, as with all the other areas noted above, we have not hitherto had the capacity to attend to membership issues, especially with our near-exclusive focus to date on research. Thus, as of December 31, 2006, GPI Atlantic had only 40 paid members, and it has been very many years since we have actively recruited members at all. However, that number has already expanded to 61 paid members (an increase of more than 50%), and is expected to continue to grow with the ongoing outreach and fundraising work that is planned for 2007.

### *3d) Reality Check*

After 11 very well received issues, no issues of *Reality Check: The Canadian Review of Wellbeing* were released in 2006 – the first year that we did not publish this review. This is due to the fact that the publisher, the Atkinson Charitable Foundation, has made the decision to wait until there are public reports from the CIW before releasing the next issue. This is expected to be in the fall of 2007.

Work on expanding the mailing list for this publication (funded by SSHRC) is ongoing and expected to be completed before the next issue is released. The goal is to increase circulation from 4,000 people (the number since inception) to 8,000, with a particular focus on the Atlantic provinces, which have been seriously under-represented in previous mailings.

#### **4. Administration**

##### *4a) Finances*

GPI Atlantic revenues and expenses in 2006 were both lower than in previous years, due to the scaling back of research work and projects in order to complete our core GPI for Nova Scotia. In past years, for example, our revenues and expenses were boosted by major projects like the Community GPI and the ReThinking Development conference. Total GPI Atlantic revenues in 2006 were \$278,394.77 and expenses were \$386,620.16, resulting in net loss of \$108,225.39 for the 2006 calendar year. This loss is actually more apparent than real, and is due primarily to the multi-year nature of several projects on which we are currently working. For example, we made significant expenditures (mostly on researcher salaries) on several key research projects (Transportation and Education in particular) in 2006 in order to complete them. In the case of both these projects, however, additional revenues have been committed and will be generated in 2007 that will be used to offset these past expenditures. In other words, we will be receiving income for these projects upon and after completion (particularly when we release the HRM chapter of the transport report and submit our CIW education report to the Atkinson Charitable Foundation), even though we have already spent the money to complete these reports. Fortunately, we have avoided any cash-flow problems due to pre-payments received for other projects.

GPI Atlantic's balance sheet also reflects a partial draw-down of the surplus GPI Atlantic had built up in previous years. This draw-down was necessary in order to support the additional unfunded expenses we incurred. For example, in order to complete the remaining GPI components, four major research projects (Agriculture, Economic Security, Debt, and Value of Leisure Time) are being self-funded and have no external source of funding. However, once additional revenues (that have been committed) are received in 2007, we expect at least a portion of our previous surplus to return.

Please see the financial statements for more detail.

Diversifying our sources of funding is a key priority for 2007. In the past, reliance solely on project funding has made funding core infrastructure, staff, and development costs a challenge. For example, we have never been able to afford an office, although we now need one more than ever, because project funding almost never covers such core costs. Developing a wider range of funding sources, including private donors and grants from foundations, in addition to project grants and research grants from government sources, will help to ensure that GPI Atlantic has the necessary financial resources to flourish and grow as we move forward.



#### *4b) Staff*

With the scaling back of some key projects in 2006, GPI Atlantic saw a decrease in the number of staff from the large numbers associated with the Rethinking Development conference in 2005. In 2006, GPI Atlantic maintained a core staff of 4 employees: Executive Director Ronald Colman, Managing Director Clare Levin, Youth Program Director Gwendolyn Colman, and Senior Researcher Karen Hayward.

In addition, a number of short- and longer-term contract researchers have been working on specific projects. Linda Pannozzo has been working on contract on our education report, Jennifer Scott on our soils and agriculture reports, Aviva Savelson and Todd Litman on our transportation report, Aviva on the headline indicators project, Andrew Sharpe on the economic security report, Kimberley Tran on the debt report, Mike Pennock on the Bhutan project, Mark Raymond (and now Janet Rhymes) on updating the Cost of Tobacco report, plus we have smaller additional contracts for work on our communications (Don Cameron), on *Reality Check* (Laura Landon), on our bookkeeping (Sara Winchell), on youth projects, and on other shorter-term projects and activities. At any given time in 2006, therefore, there were about 10 people working on various GPI Atlantic projects and activities.

In addition, Ken Summers was hired through a grant from HRSDC to serve as Outreach Coordinator for six months, beginning in December 2006. This position is expected to prove extremely valuable as Ken is working on several key outreach and fundraising initiatives that, once started, can continue on even without the support of a full-time outreach coordinator. See section 3 above on outreach for further details.

#### *4c) Board*

2006 was a year of renewal and change among GPI Atlantic's Board of Directors. We said good-bye and a heartfelt thank-you to five Directors who had sat on the board for a number of years – in fact since its inception – and who therefore played a key role in GPI Atlantic's development as an organization. Without their dedicated and creative time, effort and commitment, we would not be the organization we are today. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them again here for their enormous, skilful, and generous contribution:

Gilles Deveau  
Meinhard Doelle  
Andy Harvey  
Marty Janowitz  
Martha MacDonald

We are grateful that Kent Martin, Katherine Clough, and Hans Messinger are continuing to serve on the Board to provide continuity during this renewal period.



In addition, we welcomed three new Directors in 2006:

Nadine MacKay, Executive Assistant to the President and CEO at Ocean Nutrition Canada  
Heather McKibbin, Outreach Coordinator with the Ecology Action Centre  
Trudie Richards, professor of Public Relations at Mount Saint Vincent University

The process of board renewal will continue going forward as we begin to strengthen and re-build the Board and add new members over time.

## ***5. Future Directions***

After reducing our activities in order to focus on the completion of major reports in 2006, work is expected to ramp up again in 2007, with a number of major projects on the go – as indicated by some of the activities listed above. The completion of the final components of the GPI and the release of these reports, including the development and major release of the headline indicators report and the completion of the GPI Atlantic database, are all significant projects in and of themselves. In addition, GPI Atlantic will also be engaged in launching and managing the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative (see section 2a, above), developing the youth program (see section 2d, above), completing existing outreach projects (ongoing website updates, improved member communications, development of a membership database, and increased political outreach activities), and planning new ones, and continuing to maintain and strengthen our relationships with our supporters and partners.

This truly is a turning point for GPI Atlantic. The past ten years have represented a phase of dedicated research work and effort in the trenches, with an almost single-minded focus on producing detailed research of the highest quality on each of the components and indicators included in the GPI. As we near the completion of this core GPI research work, it is time to shift our focus to communicating and applying our research results, in order to ensure that our work is actually used. It seems important to maintain our commitment to innovative and high-quality research work, but at the same time we must also begin to incorporate new projects and opportunities with a view to applying the evidence we have amassed over the years. Our work with the Atlantic Canada Sustainability Initiative, with the youth project, and with the development of our outreach and communications work are examples of this new focus.

In addition, we must think carefully about how to build our organizational infrastructure and capacity in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of GPI Atlantic, and to respond more effectively to the growing demand for our work. We are beginning to expand this infrastructure by looking into a permanent physical space (an office), investing in our staff to develop and maintain key personnel, and diversifying our sources of funding. For example, in 2006, managing director, Clare Levin, participated in some very valuable training sessions, workshops, and conferences geared to non-governmental organizers and managers. These infrastructure developments will all be ongoing projects and constitute key efforts in building and maintaining an organization that can provide expertise and leadership on sustainability and holistic measurement issues well into the future.