

News release

GREENPEACE

Greenpeace and Inuit explore solar energy potential in the Arctic

25 September 2015 (Clyde River, Nunavut) – Greenpeace Canada and Clyde River’s Hamlet Council and Hunters and Trappers Organization are working together this week to determine renewable energy possibilities in the coastal Baffin Island community that has been opposed to oil exploration plans in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait.

Along with a solar energy expert from the Vancouver Renewable Energy Coop (VREC), Greenpeace is in Clyde River to conduct a solar assessment for the Piqqusilirivvik Inuit Cultural Learning Facility and some private homes to help the community move away from burning costly and polluting diesel fuel for electricity.

Collaboration between Greenpeace and Clyde River began over a year ago when Mayor Jerry Natanine invited the environmental organization to support [his community’s legal battle](#) to protect Inuit traditions and livelihoods from the impacts of oil and gas exploration in Baffin Bay and Davis Strait. The Federal Court of Appeal has since [dismissed the application for a judicial review](#) on the seismic blasting decision, but the community plans to seek leave to appeal at the Supreme Court of Canada.

“Inuit rights were ignored when oil and gas exploration was approved for Baffin Bay and Davis Strait,” Natanine explained. “We would like to pursue energy choices that will bring prosperity to our communities, not harm our food sources and climate. We also want to have a say in what happens in our waters and on our land.”

Duncan Martin, a solar energy expert with VREC, who is on the ground in Clyde River today to conduct the solar assessments, said:

“VREC has experience designing and installing solar photovoltaic systems in remote areas in Canada. Solar energy is a reliable and emissions-free source of electricity that is well-suited to contribute to the energy mix across Canada’s North. Solar can help reduce dependence on diesel fuel, which is expensive and unhealthy. This project also shows that solutions to climate change exist today. They’re not some futuristic, pie-in-the-sky idea.”

Jessica Wilson, head of Greenpeace Canada’s Arctic campaign, also in Clyde River today, added:

“The Harper government has failed northerners by forcing risky energy projects forward and by ignoring the potential for sustainable industries to thrive in Canada’s Arctic. More

of the same narrow focus on extreme oil extraction – especially considering the volatility of oil prices – is fiscally and environmentally irresponsible. Greenpeace is honored to follow Clyde River’s leadership in exploring alternatives to oil development in their community.”

During this week’s trip to Clyde River, Greenpeace hosted a community feast and presented on the risks of seismic blasting, met with local leaders, and is now recording a crowdfunding video to help pay for a solar panel installation next year.

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For more information:

Diego Creimer, Communications, Greenpeace Canada 514-999-6743

dcreimer@greenpeace.org