

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2002

MEETING OF ATLANTIC ENERGY MINISTERS

Hon. Michael Currie hosted a meeting of Atlantic provinces' energy ministers yesterday, in conjunction with the national Joint Meeting of Ministers of Energy and Environment, in Charlottetown, PEI.

"The meeting with my colleagues from our neighbouring provinces last night provided an excellent opportunity to consider our shared challenges and opportunities", Minister Currie said. "The energy sector is of vital importance to the prosperity of the Atlantic Canadian region, and by working together we will be able to capitalize on the full benefits of the region's energy strengths." The development of an integrated approach, especially for federal/provincial discussions, and for discussions with the United States, is a key priority for the Atlantic ministers.

The May 21st meeting marked an important first step in the establishment of an Atlantic Energy Ministers' Forum. The premiers identified the establishment of this Forum as a priority action area in their report *Working Together for Atlantic Canada: An Action Plan for Regional Cooperation*, released in November 2001.

Through the Atlantic Ministers' Forum, provinces will have an opportunity to work together to promote the development of new energy resources, ensure the security of our energy supplies, develop policies that benefit the region, encourage the development of new forms of energy, and enhance business development in Atlantic Canada. The Forum will provide an on-going opportunity for provinces to identify where they should focus their collective efforts to ensure that the energy sector in Atlantic Canada continues to grow into the future for the benefit of all Atlantic Canadians.

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