

**Abstract Submission for 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian River Heritage Conference**

Title of Presentation:

WATER MANITOBA 2030: VISIONING SUSTAINABILITY:  
A Sustainable Water Resources Management Plan for Manitoba

Category: River Management

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## Abstract

Although Canada is widely regarded as a water abundant nation, this coarse generalization belies the reality of regional water resources stresses - particularly in the Prairie Provinces with Manitoba no exception. In November 2003, the Canadian Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry published a report entitled, "Climate Change: We Are at Risk", concluding that more frequent and widespread drought on the Prairies as a result of climate change is likely. In a recent analysis of the 2001-02 Prairie-wide drought, the Saskatchewan Research Council observed that Water supplies previously believed reliable were negatively affected with several failing to meet demand requirements with wide ranging impacts on agricultural production and processing, water supplies, recreation, and tourism. Furthermore, recent concern over eutrophication risks to Lake Winnipeg has heightened public expectation and the political will for improved water resources management.

The creation of Manitoba's Department of Water Stewardship, the release of Manitoba's Water Strategy (2003), and the enactment of the Water Protection Act (2006) are all manifestations of the political will to improve water management. Although the key governance instruments for integrated water resources management are now in place, Manitoba currently has no comprehensive water resources planning framework that states targets, initiatives, strategic directions, and timeframes. *Water Manitoba 2030: Visioning Sustainability* project currently being managed by IISD will help fill this gap, as it articulates a new vision for integrated water resources management in Manitoba using *natural capital* and *water soft path* analyses, and the concept of *payments for ecosystem services*. This presentation is essentially a synthesis of the preceding three presentations in this session.

Biographical sketch:

Dr. Henry David (Hank) Venema directs the Sustainable Natural Resources Management program at IISD. Hank has with extensive experience in water resources planning, rural energy, rural development, and conventional energy sector planning in North America, Africa, and Asia. Hank's research on systems approaches for water management and rural development has appeared in *Water International*, *Water Resources Development*, *Journal of Hydrology*, *Journal of Environmental Management*, *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change* and *Global Environmental Change*, and has been widely cited by the IPCC's Third Assessment Report on Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability.

Dr. Venema is a gold medalist in Physics and Civil Engineering from the Universities of Winnipeg and Manitoba respectively. Dr. Venema also holds Master's Degree in Water Resources Engineering from the University of Ottawa and a PhD in Systems Design Engineering from the University of Waterloo where he was both an NSERC 1967 Science and Engineering Scholar and an IDRC Doctoral Research Scholar.