

R3: Connecting for Climate Innovation Speaker Biographies

Keynote

- **Phil De Luna, Sustainability Expert,
McKinsey & Company**

Phil De Luna is currently an Expert, Sustainability at McKinsey & Company where he advises corporations, governments, and non-profits on decarbonization to enable sustainable inclusive growth. He is a Governor General Gold Medal winning scientist, ranked in the top 0.01% in the world in his field, a mentor at Creative Destruction Lab, and chair of Carbon Management Canada. Prior to McKinsey, Phil was the youngest-ever Director at the National Research Council where he built and led a \$57M

R&D program developing disruptive technologies to decarbonize Canada. He was a co-founder of CERT Technologies, a carbontech startup and finalist in the \$20M Carbon XPRIZE. He is a Member of the Royal Society of Canada, an adjunct Professor of Materials Science & Engineering at the University of Toronto, a former Member of Parliament candidate, a Globe & Mail Top 50 Changemaker, and a Forbes Top 30 Under 30.



Panel Discussions:

The Climate Impact Fund – Advances from Year One

- **Dustin Bowers, CEO, Plaex Systems**

Dustin Bowers is the founder and CEO of PLAEX Building Systems Inc. He has over 19 years involved in the construction industry and is a lifetime nature-lover. After the birth of his daughter in 2017, he was motivated to create a solution to global waste issues. Dustin has developed a modular construction block-building system that is simple, innovative, and made from over 90% recycled waste materials. The PLAEX system creates eco-friendly, sustainable modular structures that withstand storms, floods, earthquakes, and insects, all while offsetting carbon, helping to solve the plastic waste problem, and saving builders time and money.



- **Dr. Thierry Chopin, Professor, UNB Biology and Found, Turquoise Revolution**

Dr. Thierry Chopin was born and educated in France. He moved to Canada in 1989 and is Professor of Marine Biology at the University of New Brunswick in Saint John. His research focuses on the ecophysiology, biochemistry and cultivation of seaweeds of commercial value and the development of responsible and efficient Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture (IMTA) systems for increased environmental sustainability, economic diversification and societal acceptability. From 2010 to 2017, he was the Scientific Director of the Canadian Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture Network (CIMTAN), an interdisciplinary strategic network of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). He created his own company, Chopin Coastal Health Solutions Inc., in 2016. Dr. Chopin promotes a greener Blue Economy, the Turquoise Economy, in which ecosystem services, provided in particular by extractive aquaculture (seaweeds and invertebrates), are recognized, valued and used as financial and regulatory incentives, through nutrient trading credits, within a circular economy and cleantech approach.



- **Dr. Myriam Barbeau, Professor, UNB Biology**

Dr. Myriam Barbeau is a coastal marine ecologist and professor at the University of New Brunswick. Her more recent research programs investigate the ecology of soft-sediment coastal systems, namely salt marshes and mudflats. These ecosystems are highly productive and provide many services. Current research projects in collaboration with graduate students and colleagues include salt marsh community dynamics and restoration, ecology of marine invertebrates, hydroperiod of salt marshes in macro- and microtidal environments, fish use of salt marshes, invertebrate-shorebird interactions on mudflats, microbial diversity in mudflats, and coastal ecosystem linkages.



Going Green – Where to start? Resources for Businesses

- **Cassidy Weisbord, Hub Manager, Green Economy NB**

Cassidy grew up along the corridor between Montreal, QC, and the Laurentians where he developed a love for the outdoors, fishing, conservation, and the diverse aquatic ecosystems and organisms indigenous to our Canadian waterways. Building upon a social science degree (BA-Sociology) and a successful management career in specialty food manufacturing, sales, marketing, and distribution, Cassidy graduated from Lakehead University in 2011 with a master of science in aquatic biology. He also has an Advanced Diploma in Sustainable Aquaculture from the Marine Institute of Memorial University which he obtained in 2008. Through contract research and consulting, Cassidy continues to support NGO's, government, and industry in their efforts to innovate, capitalize on public resources, and adopt cleaner, more sustainable technologies and industrial practices, infrastructures, and community-based strategies. Cassidy has managed a diverse portfolio of clients and projects across a variety of industry sectors and thrives on the interpersonal elements of professional collaboration. As a multilingual, multi-disciplinary professional, Cassidy remains committed to life-long learning, personal and professional development, life-work balance, and creating a positive impact within his adopted community and province.



- **Émilie Landry, Technical Energy Advisor, NB Power**

Émilie is a Technical Energy Advisor for the commercial sector at NB Power. With a background in mechanical engineering, she has always had a keen interest for all things related to energy and the environment. In her current role, she is able to help New Brunswickers make conscientious decisions for their businesses by making them greener and more efficient, all while saving money. She loves helping customers understand the importance and the benefits of reducing their energy consumption and carbon footprint. As a proud New Brunswicker herself, Émilie was born and raised in Fredericton, where she currently resides.



- **David Kincade, Owner, Alberta Business Grants**

David Kincade is a business grant writer. With over a decade of experience, he has written winning applications for numerous provincial and federal programs, totalling over \$5 million in wins. Prior to Alberta Business Grants, David worked for four years at the Legislative Assembly of Alberta as a finance research analyst and executive assistant to the leader of the official opposition. He has taught political science students at the University of British Columbia, Wilfrid Laurier University, Grant MacEwan University, and the University of New Brunswick. David holds a master's degree in Canadian politics specializing in media and public opinion.



- **Emma Theriault, Owner, DAS Concrete**

Mohamed Adel is currently the East BIM/VDC Manager for Bird Construction, where he oversees the Digital Transformation and implementation of BIM/VDC in Bird Eastern region. Mohamed has a combined 12+ years of comprehensive experience in Digital Construction and project management that allowed him to lead the transformation on such a large scale like Bird. He has a bachelor's in civil engineering from Ain Shams University, a diploma of project management from the American University in Cairo and Digital Transformation from London Business School. Prior to joining Bird, Adel has worked in various organizations and countries, e.g., ALEC, a large multi-disciplinary construction company in Dubai.



- **Jess Peters, COO and Co-Founder at RIDDL**

A software and consulting company that measures ESG and impact data. Jess is motivated to build a more sustainable world by helping organizations reach their full potential. She has over 15 years of experience working in customer success for companies including Cydcor, Moneris, and Rogers. Jess has spent the last six years in product management, utilizing her professional training in both user experience and product management. She has developed a wide range of expertise by working closely with customers to create engaging experiences for a variety of products and services. Jess is also a mentor for females in technology and the Founders Institute.



Advancing Cleantech to Market – Pathways for Researchers and Entrepreneurs

- **Charles Gaudet, Trade Commissioner, Global Affairs Canada**

Over the years, Charles has worked in economic and business development roles for organizations such as the Business Development Bank of Canada, Export Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Opportunities NB. He has also experience in the private sector with Spielo Manufacturing managing several large clients in the United States as well as in Sweden and Iceland. With 12 yrs of service at Global Affairs Canada, Charles re-joined the department in 2015 as a Trade Commissioner for the ICT and Advanced Manufacturing sectors as well as senior liaison officer for New Brunswick. A native of New Brunswick, Charles was educated in the Greater Moncton area, and is a graduate of the Université de Moncton. Charles enjoys volunteering with the local sports associations due to his three very active 17-year-old boys.



- **Xavier Hébert-Couturier, CEO, Picketa Systems**

Xavier Hébert-Couturier, CEO of Picketa Systems, is a software engineer with a strong interest in agriculture. He studied at the University of New Brunswick in software engineering and technology management and entrepreneurship. With his technical background and passion for agriculture, he co-founded Picketa Systems in partnership with friends from rural northwest New Brunswick in 2020. The company specializes in real-time plant tissue analysis and developed the LENS solution is a key innovation in the field. The LENS solution is being used by farmers across Canada, having conducted over 2,200 analyses across New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island in 2021. Xavier's goal is to provide farmers with real-time data on nutrient levels and crop health, enabling them to make informed decisions about their operations, and improve crop yields and reduce costs.



- **Joe Allen, Managing Director, Energia Ventures**

Joe is an entrepreneurial and financial expert. Prior to leading accelerator programs, Joe worked as the Director of Investments at the New Brunswick Innovation Foundation (NBIF) managing their venture capital portfolio and overseeing the development of new investment clients. He spent time in various management positions within the Government of New Brunswick economic development sector and worked as the Chief Financial Officer of HJ Crabbe & Sons Ltd. Joe received his Bachelor of Business Administration with a concentration in accounting from the University of New Brunswick; where he served as student union vice-president of university affairs. He received his Chartered Accountant designation in 2004. Joe is also the cofounder and CEO of the award-winning Devil's Keep Distillery, based in Hanwell, NB.



- **Sarah Pyke, Ecosystem Lead, Sustainable Development Technology Canada**

Dr. Pyke is a self-starter with a commitment to generating and disseminating new knowledge. Entrepreneurship, academic impact, community involvement, and extracurricular activities have always been central to Sarah's life. She has been fortunate to be recognized for a number of academic and leadership awards locally, provincially, nationally, and internationally. Sarah is currently employed as an Ecosystems Lead with Sustainable Development Technology Canada (SDTC) where she is focused on supporting companies that will



contribute to a more sustainable economy and future. For the past five+ years, Sarah has been an active member of the broader start-up community, with a particular interest in advancing Atlantic Canada's start-up ecosystem. She has served as an informal mentor to start-ups (from Pre-Incorporation to Pre-Seed/Seed to Series A) and has also worked directly with two start-up companies. She sees tremendous opportunities for start-up companies to solve some of the globe's most complex and critical problems, especially when government, innovation, and high talent collide.

Sarah completed her PhD from Bournemouth University (BU) in the United Kingdom (UK), was the recipient of a fully funded BU Studentship, and was recognized by the Institute of Travel and Tourism as PhD Student of the Year at the UK Houses of Parliament. Sarah also holds a Master of Business Administration Degree in Community Economic Development as well as a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree and a Bachelor of Arts Degree, all from Cape Breton University (CBU). During her studies she was the recipient of the Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Master's Scholarship, the recipient of the CBU Silver Medal for highest academic standing and selected as one of Nova Scotia's top 21 emerging leaders.