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THE
**VITAL
COMMONS**

a policy agenda for the great lakes century



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Prepared by Matthew Mendelsohn, Reuven Shlozberg,
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The Vital Commons: A Policy Agenda for the Great Lakes Century
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Regions will be just as important as countries in ensuring the well-being of communities in the coming decades. The Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region—made up of the eight states and two provinces that surround these great waters—has everything necessary to succeed in this new world. We are convinced that strategic cross-border cooperation between states and provinces in the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region is essential to the region's future.

Regions are becoming more important because capital and talent tend to cluster geographically, so that employers have easy access to potential partners and employees. Clusters emerge in regions that possess natural, cultural, and place-defining attributes that make them attractive places to live and work. They also emerge near centres of public and private research and education.

The conventional narrative about the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region has been of a “rust belt” and the decline of heavy industry. Many communities in the region have not fared well in the past three decades as globalized patterns of production and trade have fundamentally restructured whole industries. These includes auto, steel, chemicals, machine tools, electronics, paper, and durable goods manufacturing.

This storyline misses the fact that production and trade models of the 20th century generated the wealth and infrastructure on which the Next Economy is being built. The capital, talent, and innovation produced in the 20th century are being deployed to produce new industries in the financial services, health services, food processing, energy, aerospace, ICT, transportation, and pharmaceutical sectors, among many others. Those who focus on the region's decline also miss its educational facilities, research institutions, skilled human capital, and global knowledge and connections.

These realities can, if leveraged, turn the conventional narrative on its head. But to do so requires that we recognize our common regional history and interdependence, think more consistently, and act much more purposefully, like a cross-border region with common interests.

In June 2011, the Mowat Centre and the Brookings Institution convened leaders from the government, business, labour, non-profit, and academic communities, from both Canada and the US, to identify ways to collaborate across the border and ensure the prosperity and sustainability of the region. Participants agreed that more mature collaboration across the Canada-US border was essential to effectively tackle the region's challenges and to capitalize on its significant opportunities.

Regions are in part geographic, political and empirically measurable, but they are also social constructs which require imagination. This act of imagining the region needs to be strengthened. This paper outlines the possible forms of cross-border regional collaboration. The Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region currently experiences a variety of sectoral partnerships. We propose a model of more mature collaboration through the establishment of a **Great Lakes Partnership Council (GLPC)** to connect and strengthen the many nodes of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region network and help support the successful sectoral initiatives already taking place.

The GLPC would be a civil society-led initiative. It would be a convenor, connector and organizer. It would work to fill leadership, information-sharing and advocacy gaps. It would identify and champion realistic initiatives and projects in the short-term, while continuing to scope out a long-term vision for the region.

The paper also outlines some of the most widely embraced proposals from the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Summit. These include...

- A permanent and independent joint cross-border regulatory commission
- An enhanced cross-border *Agreement on Government Procurement*
- Strengthened trusted shipper/traveller programs
- SME trade support programs
- A Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region Joint Transportation Strategy
- Extending the *Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy* to Canada
- A Global Blue Economy Summit and Expo
- A Great Lakes Conservation Area
- A Niagara Peace Park
- Negotiating a Regional Clean Energy Strategy

The Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region Summit was an important step in the identification of a deeper path to regional collaboration. This paper seeks to sustain the momentum by identifying practical steps that will enhance trade, improve the health and sustainability of the environment and promote our collective prosperity.



INTRODUCTION

Given its assets, the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region (GLSLR) should be among the world's most successful global regions, built on a foundation of sustainable economic prosperity. Despite relative decline in some communities and some sectors in the past two decades, the legacy of 20th century prosperity provides a strong foundation on which to build 21st century prosperity.

Fortunately, the GLSLR has everything required to succeed in the 21st century: rich human capital, world-leading educational institutions, corporate head offices, highly integrated supply chains, vibrant cities, and a relatively healthy ecosystem, including abundant freshwater. Collaboration across the Canada-US border will help capitalize on these assets.

In June 2011, the Brookings Institution and the Mowat Centre gathered over 250 business, government, and civil society leaders, from all the region's major sectors, in Windsor and Detroit for the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region Summit. The goal was to define an agenda for strengthening cross-border networks, hastening economic transformation, and addressing shared environmental challenges.

This paper's primary objectives are:

1. **To summarize the consensus that emerged from the Summit regarding the main challenges and opportunities facing the GLSLR (i.e. the "Detroit-Windsor Consensus").¹**
2. **Based on Summit input, identify a path forward to tackle these challenges and take advantage of these opportunities.**
3. **Identify the most promising ideas and projects that emerged from the Summit as candidates for collaboration.**

The main consensus item that emerged from the Summit is that enhanced regional collaboration is required if the region is to effectively tackle its challenges and capitalize on its significant opportunities. This paper proposes the establishment of a Great Lakes Partnership Council (GLPC) to connect and strengthen the many nodes of

.....
Taking the Canada-US partnership to the next level makes sense. Sticking with the status quo means continuing incremental decline.

- Colin Robertson, 2011

the GLSLR network, and facilitate more of the successful sectoral initiatives already taking place. The GLPC would be a civil society-led initiative. It would be a convenor, connector, and organizer.

Discussions at the Summit also identified a series of initiatives that will enhance the region's prosperity and sustainability, but require deeper collaboration consistent with the model proposed here. The top priorities for the GLSLR, and the Council's contribution to them, are presented in the final section of the paper.

This region collectively is such a powerhouse that we have to look at ourselves as a collective unit instead of individual provinces or states. Instead of competing, let's start asking how to collaborate so as to compete with the rest of the world.

- Len Crispino, President and CEO
Ontario Chamber of Commerce

The region has an ability to compete. It's either we work together or lose together.

Eddie Francis, Mayor of Windsor, Ontario
(quoted in D'Aliesio, 2011)

WHAT IS THE GLSLR? DEFINING THE REGION²

THE LAY OF THE LAND

The GLSLR comprises two provinces (Ontario and Quebec), eight states (Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) over forty First Nations, and numerous Canadian and US local authorities. GLSLR states and provinces are home to over 105 million people, 32 per cent of the combined populations of Canada and the US.

AN ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE

In 2009, the region generated \$4.6 trillion USD in economic output, making it one of the largest economies in the world—significantly larger than Germany, the UK, or France. Despite the decline of North American manufacturing, the region still produces nearly 75 per cent and 33 per cent of Canadian and American manufacturing respectively.

RICH IN HUMAN CAPITAL

The region's universities perform 38 per cent of all academic R&D in Canada and the US. The region generates 33 per cent and 70-80 per cent of patents in the US and Canada respectively. Combined, the GLSLR produces 41 per cent of university graduates in both countries.

A DIVERSE ECOSYSTEM

The region is populated by ecosystems that include boreal forests, fertile farmland, thousands of inland lakes, and vast networks of wetlands and marshes that together sustain one-fifth of all fish species in North America, and hundreds of millions of migratory birds. Thousands of kilometres of beaches, coastlines, and sand dunes make up a vast 'freshwater coast', equal to 45 per cent of the earth's circumference. This provides habitats for plants and animals, as well as countless recreational activities for the millions of people who live, work, and play in the region. The lakes themselves contain 84 per cent of North America's water supply and 21 per cent of the world's freshwater stores.

A SELF-CONSCIOUS REGION?

Regions are in part geographic, political and empirically measurable, but they are also social constructs which require imagination. This act of imagining the region needs to be strengthened.

The region's economy is deeply integrated and its ecosystem and watershed are truly a "commons." However, legitimate questions remain about the extent to which the GLSLR has a regional identity. Christopher Sands of the Hudson Institute notes that "what we don't do well as a region is talk and think like a region."

The lack of regional identity is an obstacle to deeper, more mature collaboration in the GLSLR and limits the ability to simply import collaboration models from other cross-border regions. This point is taken up below.

THE GLSLR AT A GLANCE

\$4.6 trillion*

GDP of the GLSLR

105 million

Population of the GLSLR

20

Number of world's top 100 research universities located in the GLSLR

2 million

Number of jobs in GLSLR states sustained by cross-border trade

Over 42%

Annual US - Canada two-way merchandising trade

11.5 million

Amount of annual cross-border tourist trips amounting to over \$4.1 billion spent

\$356 million

Value of goods and services crossing the Detroit - Windsor border every day

* All figures in USD.



THE DETROIT - WINDSOR CONSENSUS

A consensus was evident at the Summit regarding the main challenges and the path forward for the GLSLR. The Detroit-Windsor consensus is grounded in the region's recent experience, its assets, and commonly held perceptions about the future of the global economy and the environment. It focuses on three imperatives:

1. **Building the Next Economy, which requires a realistic understanding of the region's existing assets and the region's comparative advantages in the global economy.**
2. **Preserving a healthy ecosystem, which requires acknowledging that economic growth and sustainability are mutually inclusive, and must be pursued together.**
3. **Deepening cross-border and cross-sector collaboration and partnership in order to address gaps in regional leadership, knowledge sharing, and advocacy.**

Given our highly integrated economies and shared watersheds, Summit participants agreed that deeper collaboration is necessary in the transition to the Next Economy and the preservation of a healthy ecosystem.

There is a sense of optimism [about] the potential of our shared assets and [about our] ability to harness them for the common good. We have tremendous opportunity in the GLSLR if we continue to strengthen our partnerships and work collaboratively to achieve our goals.

- Brian McMullan, Mayor of St. Catharines, Ontario



BUILDING THE NEXT ECONOMY

Summit participants agreed that the region must make the leap to the Next Economy, which is defined and discussed at great length elsewhere (Austin et al, 2008; Vey et al, 2010). However, five elements of the Next Economy are worth identifying briefly here.

First, the Next Economy will be knowledge-driven and will rely on the development of innovative goods and services within the region. A highly-skilled and educated workforce will therefore be necessary to compete at the global level.

Second, metropolitan areas will be the epicentres of the Next Economy. They are where educated workers reside. They are where the strongest networks exist between government, labour, large firms, entrepreneurs, research and education institutions, and non-profits. The knowledge sharing and collaboration that occurs in these dynamic networks are what enables the transformation of ideas into gainful production.

Third, competition in the Next Economy will be between regional economies. Regional economies are built on a competitively diversified mix of industries, supported by integrated supply, research, and investment networks, efficiently spread within close geographic proximity. Regional economies, in other words, are a collection of clusters that reflect comparative advantage.

Fourth, the Next Economy will be export-driven. No region is self-sustaining; as regional economies expand and diversify to remain globally competitive, they must increasingly import the natural resources, goods, and services they lack and export based on their comparative advantage. New markets are opening for products and services, but new competitors are emerging as well.

(The Next Economy) will be driven by exports, powered by low carbon, fuelled by innovation and rich with opportunity. This is a vision where we export more and waste less, innovate in what matters, produce and deploy more of what we invent, and ensure that the economy actually works for working families.

It is important that governments and business focus on strengthening Canada-US supply chains *while at the same time* expanding exports to emerging markets such as Brazil, China, and India, where consumer demand and industrial production are growing far faster than in many of the region's traditional trading partners. In particular, capitalizing on our comparative advantages means the GLSLR must increasingly connect with emerging economies in Asia.

Fifth, a successful, innovative economy is a collaboratively networked economy. To secure its share of the global export market, economies need to continuously generate new technologies, products, processes, and new ways of working together. Innovation happens when people, capital, and ideas connect freely.

Summit participants agreed that the GLSLR has several advantages in the transition to the Next Economy. Its economy is highly integrated with \$220 billion USD in two-way merchandise trade (over 42 per cent of total Canada-US trade). It is a growing trade hub, an innovation and R&D powerhouse, and home to numerous thriving metropolitan areas. It has a large industrial base built over the preceding century on which lower carbon, high-tech industries can be built.

The GLSLR faces a number of specific challenges unique to its status as a cross-border economic region. These challenges include the propensity for governments to view each other as competitors, cultural cleavages, regulatory differences, currency fluctuations, and uncertainty with respect to the border.

The thickening border, in particular, was a persistent theme during the Summit. For example, the impact of border wait times and uncertainty on supply chains, tourism, and business travel is deterring investment and hurting productivity. Summit participants highlighted that building the Detroit River International Crossing (the DRIC) is a priority.

The regions of the world that are home to the next generation of manufacturers will gain quality jobs and secure wealth, while those regions with unprepared firms will feel the pain of job losses and a lower quality of life.

- American Small Manufacturers Coalition, 2009



Meanwhile, the challenge of building the Next Economy has intensified as a result of structural changes in the global economy. These include increased competition for market share and for human and financial capital from emerging markets, slow growth in mature industrial economies, and the transition away from labour and energy intensive manufacturing processes to high-value added, innovative, and lower carbon new manufacturing.

In this context, the region must come to terms with the reordering of the global economic and political order that changes the terms of trade for North America. Jurisdictions on both sides of the border have to ask what they can offer the world, what comparative advantages they possess and what resources they command that cannot be easily moved or reproduced in another jurisdiction. The region must undertake a historic intellectual pivot, moving from a mentality where Canadians and Americans make things together for the North American market, to recognizing that they have things that the world wants and understanding how best to offer these goods and services.

Although it is not the purpose of this paper to sketch out where the GLSLR has comparative advantage, it should be noted that products and services which exist at the intersection of agriculture, the environment and health will be incredibly important to the region's future, particularly those that are research, development and technology intensive. Water technology is but one area that plays to the region's strengths.

While currency fluctuations are beyond the control of government, monetary policies which seek fewer wild fluctuations in exchange rates would also be helpful for business planning on both sides of the border. The region's actors can also work on transitioning from a zero-sum mindset (protectionist procurement policies, for example) to a positive-sum mentality, bridging cultural divides, harmonizing regulations, promoting mutual understanding and streamlining border processes. Progress on all requires deeper collaboration.

China builds a bridge in six months, we take over ten years.

- Colin Robertson, Senior Advisor
McKenna Long and Aldridge

It will take a broad network of actors—corporate, civic, university, philanthropic, elected, federal, state, and local—to create the Next Economy in the Great Lakes region.

- Jennifer Vey et al, 2010

GAPS IN LEADERSHIP, KNOWLEDGE SHARING, AND ADVOCACY

The need to deepen collaboration to meet our broad economic and sustainability challenges achieved broad consensus coming out of the Summit. Although different collaboration needs were expressed in each sector, three broad collaboration gaps were identified: a *leadership gap*, a *knowledge sharing gap*, and an *advocacy gap*.

THE LEADERSHIP GAP

Leaders from all sectors acknowledge that the transition to the Next Economy and the preservation of our ecosystem require enhanced leadership at the regional level. Some sectors require cross-border policy coherence and harmonization. Other sectors require deeper or new partnerships and/or more effective coordination of existing initiatives. In either case, an umbrella organization could help bring actors together, start conversations, broker conflicts, conduct research, develop cross-border sectoral strategies, report on outcomes, and follow up.

Prominent sectoral expressions of the leadership gap include:

- The existing transportation system in the GLSLR is a relic of the past century. It is overextended, largely carbon intensive, and very expensive to maintain, upgrade, or expand. It is managed by numerous jurisdictions, each with its own vision and strategic priorities. By contrast, transportation in the Next Economy will have to be smart, lower carbon, integrated across different modes of transportation and across jurisdictions, and managed from a region-wide perspective. Currently, there is no agreement as to the kinds of projects to undertake, actors' respective roles, where and at what level of political jurisdiction to start, or even on how to approach making such decisions. Rebooting for the 21st century requires a new, overarching, cross-border vision and strategy for the sector.
- The energy sector faces rising consumer demand and a growing expectation for a cleaner energy mix, yet the sector in the GLSLR is still carbon-heavy despite strong potential and growing capacity for cleaner energy. The region's grid requires significant upgrade and smartening. Most problematically, the electricity system's regulatory regime and culture are built around a paradigm of jurisdictional self-sufficiency that impedes grid integration and hampers efforts to set regional targets and priorities (see also Goodman, 2010). The sector needs a cross-jurisdictional and cross-border sustainable energy strategy to guide

investment in innovation and infrastructure, grid integration and smartening, and coordination of regulations, definitions, and targets.

- While water stewardship in the GLSLR has long involved significant bilateral collaboration, some recent initiatives, such as the US Great Lakes *Regional Collaboration Strategy*, lack a cross-border dimension or reciprocity. It is imperative that the region's actors work to reassert a common regional water stewardship vision, harmonize legal and policy frameworks, and coordinate data collection and management.
- Nascent blue economy initiatives and willing regional investors are scattered throughout the region but are not well networked with each other or to international investors and clients. Emerging clusters in Milwaukee and southwestern Ontario are emerging world leaders. More effectively connecting with investors and clients, inside and outside the region, is vital for the sector to entrench its position as an innovative world leader and leverage this position for its economic success.
- In the tourism sector, visitor-attraction campaigns are largely ad hoc and uncoordinated, especially across the border, reducing their overall effectiveness while adding costs to their execution. A weak sense of regional identity and competition among jurisdictions contribute to this impediment. Greater coordination among regional tourism agencies could help overcome this.
- Collaboration among neighbouring post-secondary training institutions to coordinate and streamline programs, undertake mutual recognition of programs and credits, collaborate on research investments, and even coordinate budget cuts, can be an effective means of handling public funding reductions, as demonstrated recently in southeast Michigan according to one Summit participant. But such collaboration requires navigating an entrenched but increasingly outmoded institutional culture of independence and zero-sum competition.
- Better partnership-facilitation and ongoing support are needed to form and maintain new private-public partnerships (P3s) in a variety of sectors, most prominently in infrastructure, R&D, and advanced manufacturing.

THE KNOWLEDGE SHARING GAP

In many sectors, insufficient or ineffective knowledge sharing is a key impediment to more effective performance. For example, some actors miss out on crucial funding sources or partnership opportunities. Actors may be unaware of important regulatory changes because they do not have the capacity to navigate all relevant government information. Oftentimes actors working on similar or complementary initiatives on both sides of the border or in different sectors are unaware of each other.

There is a need across sectors for targeted, accessible and comprehensive information. For such initiatives to be effective, they must be maintained over time and updated regularly. There is therefore a common need for someone who will initiate, coordinate, maintain, and update one-stop-shops for information and knowledge sharing forums across the region's various sectors and jurisdictions.

Prominent sectoral expressions of the knowledge sharing gap include:

- Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), who are key drivers of growth (especially in the trade, manufacturing, agri-food, energy, and blue economy sectors), lack the personnel and expertise required to ensure compliance with increasingly complex border regulations, to effectively navigate a complex web of government funding opportunities, or to identify partnership opportunities outside their immediate networks. The analysis by the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses (CFIB) demonstrates that many SMEs now find cross-border trade prohibitive (Pohlmann, 2011). Many SMEs also find collaborations with post-secondary institutions on research and co-op employment programs untenable. An easily usable one-stop resource covering cross-border regulations, funding and partnership opportunities, along with live mentorship and support, would significantly boost SME and sector performance.
- Data collection, data management, and regulation in water stewardship suffer from a lack of coordination and insufficient data-sharing or data-alignment. Data is sometimes disseminated in raw form, rendering it inaccessible to private and government actors who need to make decisions. Coordinated data management, along with wide and accessible data-dissemination, is a scientific and practical necessity—and would save money.
- In the R&D and blue economy sectors, fruitful partnership opportunities are missed because researchers, investors and entrepreneurs with aligned or complementary work are not always aware of each other's activities, especially when located on different sides of the border. For example, a clearing house for proposed and current initiatives would generate more value for precious research funds and venture capital.
- In the tourism sector, a lack of coordination between jurisdictions means that visitors to one jurisdiction may remain unaware of nearby attractions, decreasing the sector's overall contribution to the economy. There is a strong case for sharing tourism and marketing strategies across agencies.



THE ADVOCACY GAP

In all sectors, more effective advocacy to legislators, policymakers, and regulators is needed. But the need to better attract potential clients and partners, or to change mindsets among the general public, is also significant in many sectors.

According to one recent report, there are currently over 400 separate regulations affecting cross-border trade and an estimated 5,000 annual changes to these regulations (Robertson, 2011). According to a Ford Canada estimate, “each truck crossing the border with vehicle components is now delayed by an hour, and some components cross the border six times as a car is manufactured” (Ibbitson, 2011). A recent study estimated that border delays cost Ontario alone between 1.3 and 2.4 per cent of its annual GDP and between 5.1 and 9.9 per cent of its annual trade volume (Nguyen and Wigle, 2011).

With increasing user fees and paperwork, multiple inspecting agencies, and growing protectionism, compliance costs for cross-border trade are high and rising. Calls to harmonize, simplify, streamline, or align regulations, processes, standards, documentation requirements, paperwork, and legal frameworks emerged in almost every sector.

Such calls also featured prominently in the Canadian government’s recent public consultations (Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness, 2011) and have been a staple of recent advocacy efforts by business groups and prominent stakeholders on both sides of the border (e.g. CFIB, US and Canadian Chambers of Commerce). The greatest challenge these advocacy efforts face is their cross-border and cross-sectoral dimension. Effective cross-border advocacy requires a deep knowledge of government structures, policy-making processes, and political cultures on both sides of the border and at all levels of government.

It also requires an ability to efficiently coordinate and aggregate both sector/issue-specific and region-wide campaigns. The Pacific Northwest Economic Region’s (PNWER) submission during the Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness consultations illustrates the value of cross-border and cross-sector regional coordination and aggregation of advocacy campaigns (PNWER, 2011).

Prominent areas where a more coordinated voice and advocacy are required in the GLSLR include:

- Harmonizing regulatory regimes, legal frameworks, and specific regulations regarding environmental, safety, and quality requirements for manufacturing across integrated supply chains, cross-border trade, agri-food and horticulture production and trade, and regarding water stewardship and clean energy targets, electricity and transportation infrastructure, R&D, and professional accreditation and licensure.

- Reversing protectionist tendencies on both sides of the border, especially on procurement.
- Educating the public about the potential gains from deeper collaboration and linkages and, where appropriate, tackling misunderstandings that hold up major cross border initiatives, such as the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC).
- Improving border crossings for business, including simplifying checks and documentation requirements, enabling pre-clearance and sealing of cross-border shipments at the factory or port of entry, making watch/denied-party information available to cross-border traders, and aligning, strengthening, and expanding trusted shipper and traveller programs such as C-TPAT, PIP, NEXUS and FAST. As Roy Norton, Canada's Consul General in Detroit, recently noted, "we have to move to a system where trusted shippers are trusted" (Ibbitson, 2011).
- Improving labour mobility and reciprocity in acceptance of professional credentials.
- Reporting border delays to regulating agencies and advocating their resolution.
- Extending federal research funding resources, which currently 'stop at the border', to cross-border partnerships.
- In the tourism sector there is a need to better coordinate and support cross-jurisdictional, and especially cross-border, joint visitor-attraction initiatives and events.

There are already many successful examples of cross-border and cross-sector collaboration, but these are insufficient if the region is to capitalize on its potential and succeed in the challenges outlined above. Virtually all leaders at the Summit acknowledged the need for deeper and more effective collaboration on leadership, knowledge sharing and advocacy in the region.



FROM HERE TO THERE

THE PATH TO MATURE COLLABORATION

Who are the conveners? Who has the power to convene?
 To bring together the regional players, including the
 government, corporate, non-governmental and others?...
 Part of what will make the region even greater is the
 creation of a fabric of relationships.

- Alan Broadbent, Chairman
 Maytree Foundation and Avana Capital

There was no explicit agreement as to what collaboration should look like or how it could be attained. We propose a model that a) is capable of plugging these collaboration gaps, and b) is appropriate for the Great Lakes - St Lawrence context.

By deeper and more effective collaboration, we mean “mature collaboration.” Mature collaboration engages actors from the private sector, government (political and professional), academia, and civil society. It networks different industries and economic sectors, and brings different industrial clusters together. In the GLSLR, it also entails collaboration across the international border.

Regional collaboration is not born mature. It begins with issue-based initiatives that are sometimes government-led and top-down, and sometimes ad hoc, private or non-profit sector led, and bottom-up.

Issue-based partnerships grow as the benefits of collaboration become evident. Private sector partnerships expand to include additional private, public, and government actors. Government agencies consult more broadly with private and public sector actors. Funding, regulatory, R&D, and outreach challenges are dealt with collaboratively. This is how sectoral collaboration evolves.

Collaboration in the GLSLR is now characterized by an advanced degree of sectoral collaboration. But many of the key challenges GLSLR actors face are regional—not sector/cluster-specific—in scope.

This points to a mature collaboration imperative for the GLSLR. To meet the region's key challenges, capitalize on its enormous assets and potential, and succeed in the Next Economy, collaboration in the region must mature beyond sectoral and issue-based collaboration, into an organic matrix of mutually beneficial cross-sector and cross-border collaboration.

The question is how to best attain mature collaboration in the GLSLR?

In tough times with dwindling resources, collective approaches confer obvious benefits.

- Kathryn Bryk Friedman, Director of Law and Policy Research
UB Regional Institute

We're the only jurisdiction that has a physical border between an integrated economy. Korea, the EU, Russia, Brazil, Japan, China are all self-contained units; they don't pull production parts from other jurisdictions.

- Mathew Wilson, Vice President, National Policy
Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters

The Europeans fought each other in WW2 and now their borders are totally fluid. We are the greatest allies and are now fortifying our borders between each other.

- Rob Merrifield, MP
Government of Canada

MODELS OF REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Table 1 (next page) scopes out five general models of regional collaboration. Each rests on particular sets of cultural, economic, and geopolitical foundations. Each envisions a different role for government. Each has distinctive scope, vision, and modes of operation, some of which may be ill-suited to the GLSLR's current needs.

In some models, government is the primary driver, and initiatives are centrally coordinated. In others, civic organizations and the private sector are primary, and initiatives are sector driven ad hoc. It is our conclusion that the model best suited to the GLSLR is the civil society alliance model.

Although both bottom-up and government-led collaboration is evident in the GLSLR, ad hoc sectoral collaboration is the most widespread. But this model is poorly situated to address shared challenges that transcend borders and sectors and therefore require broad-based collective action and cross-sector coordination. This is not to say that ad hoc sectoral collaboration should (or could) be replaced, but evolution should be encouraged.

The PNWER model, in particular, has been suggested as a potential model for deeper collaboration in the GLSLR. One advantage where government is the leader is the ability to coordinate (and potentially coerce) multiple regional actors with sometimes discordant interests around a guiding macro-level regional vision. Another advantage is the stability, longevity and legitimacy stemming from the legislated mandates and permanent administrative structures of government agencies implementing collaboration.

Despite these advantages, the GLSLR is not ready for this kind of formal regional cooperation, which requires a receptive social and cultural 'ecosystem'. The GLSLR lacks the regional cohesion that underpins the more formal models of government-led regional collaboration found in the Pacific Northwest or Europe. There would also be a mismatch between government-led collaboration and the bottom-up culture of collaboration in the GLSLR.

These factors (discussed in the page 22) make it unlikely that region-wide government-led collaboration can successfully take root in the GLSLR at this time. The networked civil society model proposed here is more mature than what we currently have and may help nurture a culture that would permit deeper and more formalized collaboration in the future.

Our conclusion is that, on the the path to mature collaboration in the GLSLR, **government is a partner, not the leader.**

TABLE 1 | Models of Macro Regional Collaboration

	STATUS QUO		
Model	Ad hoc, issue-by-issue relationships; no central coordination	Private sector initiative with government support; sector driven	
Example	Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Region	Quebec - New York Corridor Coalition	
Initiator	Bottom-up	Predominately bottom-up	
Mandate	8 Commissioners (4 appointed from each the United States and Canada) and one US Alternate Commissioner	A private-public partnership to broaden and deepen economic connectivity between Quebec and New York, with a special focus on the cross-border corridor region from Quebec City and Montreal through Plattsburgh to Albany and New York City.	
Membership	Varied	State of New York, Province of Quebec, Plattsburgh-North Country Chamber of Commerce, and the Federation of Chambers of Commerce of Quebec.	
Activities / Outcomes	Many sector-specific initiatives (e.g. Milwaukee)	The creation of a Quebec - New York Green Corridor Council; MOU between Hydro Quebec and the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering in Albany; MOU between the Quebec Ministry of Economic Development and NYSTAR, establishing guidelines for collaboration in research and innovation.	

The P3 model adopted in Quebec-New York is very useful in many sectors, but would be inappropriate as the primary organizing vehicle for the region. P3s tend to be project and issue-specific and to encompass a limited set of partners. They can be highly effective implementation tools to provide project planning and execution and to overcome risk-sharing and funding challenges—once the ‘what’ and ‘who’ of the project have already been defined. But they lack the broad vision, cross-issue reach, and inclusiveness needed to bring a multitude of diverse actors together or to define a vision that guides multiple partnerships and leads a series of distinct but complementary projects.

PROPOSED MODEL		
Civil society lead in coordinating initiatives; broad-based consultation with the public, private, and non-profit sectors	Legislated mandate from member states/provinces; permanent secretariat; input from private sector	Multilevel governance; institutionalized policy networks of national, regional, and local governments; legislated mandate
Toronto CivicAction Alliance	Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER)	European Union Macro-Regions
Mixed	Predominately government-led	Government-led
Improving the region's social, economic, and environmental future by convening individuals and organizations from all sectors.	Promote greater regional collaboration; enhance the competitiveness of the region in both domestic and international markets; leverage regional influence in Ottawa and Washington DC; achieve continued economic growth while maintaining the region's natural resources.	Member governments discuss regional priority issues and ways to address them.
A coalition of civic and business leaders organized in sector working groups and cross-sector partnerships with permanent secretariat to support.	Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, Yukon.	Baltic Sea: Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark. Danube: Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Ukraine, Herzegovina, Montenegro, Moldova.
Over a dozen projects to improve the social and economic future of the Toronto region, including the Emerging Leaders Network, Toronto Regional Research Alliance, and the Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council.	Developed the first crossborder, community bio-event resilience action plan; helped facilitate new Amtrak train service in cooperation with over 35 partner organizations; and led a coordinated effort to improve border crossing speed in advance of the 2010 Winter Olympics.	Several clean water initiatives; closer collaboration in large scale projects related to energy and transport infrastructure; discussions on how to improve tourism, cross-border trade, and maritime circulation surveillance.

Government-led alliances, ad hoc collaborations, and P3s will continue to have an important place in the mature matrix of collaborations that will lead the region into the Next Economy. Each can be highly effective tools in executing or facilitating certain collaborative initiatives. Many exist in the GLSLR — many are highly successful. But another form of collaboration is needed to help the GLSLR meet the challenge of building 21st century prosperity at the regional level.

Western states and provinces feel more disconnected from their federal governments than eastern states and provinces; this encourages direct north-south relationships outside the federal framework.

- Gordon Campbell, Former Premier of British Columbia

PNWER in the GLSLR?

As already noted, networks in the GLSLR are commonly built on positive, pre-existing, and informal relationships between actors at different levels of government, civic leaders, and private sector representatives. Whereas in Europe, bureaucratically led coordination is historically entrenched and widely accepted, in the GLSLR grassroots-based collaboration is very much in the region's genes. It is therefore doubtful whether the EU model is importable to the GLSLR.

While the PNWER model is closer to GLSLR reality, there are critical differences between the two regions. In particular, PNWER benefits from greater regional cohesion than the GLSLR, in part because of a shared sense of remoteness from federal centres, and in part thanks to less regional zero-sum competition due to the resource-based regional economy. Consequently, unlike the GLSLR, private and government networks had already been fairly well entrenched and formalized in the PNWER region even prior to the PNWER accord.

In sum, the structural, cultural, and geopolitical foundations necessary to support a PNWER model are absent in the GLSLR.

A CIVIL SOCIETY MODEL FOR THE GLSLR

THE GREAT LAKES PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL

Our analysis of Summit results suggests that the GLSLR's success in transitioning to the Next Economy requires a new, more mature form of regional collaboration. Of the five general models of regional collaboration, the model best suited is the civil-society led collaboration model (see page 24).

Under this model, a broad coalition of civic leaders establishes an organization to advance common interests. The primary commitment is one of intellectual, organizational, and moral capital—and time. The organization would be supported by a small secretariat to spearhead collaborative efforts. The organization's activities would be overseen by a Board of Directors representing a cross section of business, government, labour, and civic leaders.

The organization's mandate would be to coordinate and facilitate regional and cross-sector conversations and collaboration, advocate on behalf of shared interests, and share research and information. Issue and sector steering committees would help establish priorities, develop projects, direct initiatives, build partnerships, and report on outcomes.

The organization would help define a macro-level vision for the region. Its independent, permanent, and formalized organizational structure would provide it with dedicated staff, institutional memory and expertise, and clear lines of accountability and transparency.

As with the other models, there are trade-offs entailed in this model. It lacks binding legislative and decision-making authority, and therefore must rely on volunteers committed to a shared vision. It would be unable to force follow-through on commitments. Perhaps most challengingly, the absence of government mandate suggests that its funding would not be secure.

If the challenges can be overcome, the payoff would be substantial.

The effectiveness of all the region's existing collaborations will be significantly enhanced by a central, civil society-led organization tasked with facilitating and supporting cross-cutting and deeper linkages in the GLSLR. Such an organization is best suited to lead the region into, and to sustain over time, mature regional collaboration. The biggest lesson we learned from attendees of the Summit is that the region needs this type of organization.

THE CIVICACTION ALLIANCE MODEL

Background and Mandate

The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) shares many of the challenges experienced in the GLSLR: low economic growth, lagging levels of productivity and innovation, a crisis in transportation, lack of regional economic cooperation, and under-leveraged networks and human capital.

Recognizing the complex and multifaceted nature of these issues, a group of civic leaders in the GTA established the *Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance*. It functions as a “neutral platform for collaboration and leadership focused on improving [the Toronto] region’s social, economic and environmental future” (Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance, n.d.). CivicAction advocates that Toronto stop thinking like a city and start thinking as a region.

Cross-sectoral collaboration is at the core of CivicAction. The organization frequently convenes key players from a diversity of sectors in the GTA and facilitates the charting of widely agreed upon paths for action to tackle crosscutting challenges faced by the region. They conduct research and advocate for change based on this consensus.

Funding

CivicAction receives its funding from a variety of sources and partners, including businesses, banks, philanthropic organizations, and governments. Funding is often project-specific.

Governance

CivicAction is governed by an unprecedented diversity of regional and sectoral representatives organized into a Board of Directors and a series of sectoral/issue steering committees, all supported by a small secretariat. This model allows the organization to tap and build expansive networks throughout the region.

Results

Over the past decade, CivicAction has led numerous initiatives that have had a noticeable impact on the socio-economic fabric of the region.

- CivicAction hosts the *Toronto City Summit*. Held every four years, the Summit brings over 1,000 regional leaders under the same roof to discuss the best means for the region to achieve its potential. The Summit galvanizes support from myriad sectors in the region and provides direction to the work of Civic Action.
- The *Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council* (TRIEC) has engaged businesses across the region to act on increasing the economic integration and inclusion of skilled immigrants in the region’s labour market. TRIEC has connected thousands of skilled immigrants with meaningful professional opportunities.
- The *Toronto Region Research Alliance* (TRRA) is a P3 that creates opportunities for increased investment and innovation to further economic prosperity in the region. The TRRA continues to attract hundreds of millions of dollars from business and government to the Toronto regional economy.

THE GREAT LAKES PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL MANDATE: WHAT WOULD IT DO?

The Great Lakes Partnership Council will be mandated with addressing the three primary collaboration gaps - *leadership, knowledge sharing, and advocacy* (described on p. 12). These three over-arching priorities would be realized through a number of supporting activities.

1. MAPPING OUT WHO IS DOING WHAT IN THE REGION

There are many people and organizations in the GLSLR doing work that complements, or could instruct, other GLSLR actors. But we do not really have a good sense of who is doing what. As a result, efforts are duplicated, mistakes replicated, gaps perpetuated, resources wasted, opportunities missed, and growth is needlessly stalled.

The GLPC will have the broad vision, network connections, and research capacity to create and maintain an inventory of who is doing what in the GLSLR. It will have the ability to make this inventory available to regional actors from all industry sectors looking for partners in joint initiatives, or for best practices and experience to guide new initiatives. The GLPC will also have the ability to propose, based on this inventory, mutually beneficial collaborations to actors otherwise unaware of each others' complementary work.

2. ORGANIZING ISSUES INTO WORKABLE IDEAS

To effectively tackle the big economic and environmental challenges facing the GLSLR, these challenges need to be cut into manageable parts. Different actors with relevant interests and expertise can then be brought together into working groups to identify actionable short- and long-term responses to specific aspects of these challenges. In both the PNWER and the Quebec-New York Corridor regions, such working groups have proposed doable projects and initiatives that have achieved major accomplishments in areas such as transportation, critical border infrastructure, and energy planning, among others. Identifying comparable projects is crucial for the GLSLR.

The GLPC will have the macro-vision and research capacity to comprehensively identify the key parts of major regional challenges. It will have the network connections to identify relevant actors who could best hammer out solutions that are both actionable and enjoy wide stakeholder support. It will also have the capacity to set goals for these working groups that are consistent with a regional vision and that render these working groups distinct, clearly defined, and mutually complementary. And it will have the ability to connect these working groups to additional research should the need arise.

In the Great Lakes Region, a better understanding of what is going on in the region is needed: the problems, the solutions so far, and how to improve on the already available solutions.

- Jayson Myers, President and CEO
Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters

3. CONVENING, COALITION-BUILDING, BRAINSTORMING

Fruitful collaboration begins with targeted interaction among leaders who need to be convened for this purpose. This has been a challenge for the economically and politically diverse GLSLR, especially where cross-border and cross-sector networking is concerned.

There is a delicate art to successfully convening leaders to kick-start partnerships or devise strategies. Organizers have to gather the right mix of actors, representing the diversity of interested stakeholders while keeping numbers workable and ensuring no key leader is neglected. The summit, conference, or meeting requires the right mix of macro- and micro-level discussion groups to ensure a discussion that is both comprehensive and practical. To build on the meeting's momentum, discussion outcomes must be cohesively and faithfully collected and reported in a timely manner.

The GLPC will have the deep grassroots network to ensure the right mix of leaders, and the combination of broad vision and issue-focused capacity to attain the right mix of discussions in its events. It will also have the research, analysis, and reporting capacity (see below), as well as the public stature, to maintain the momentum sparked by its events.

4. FINDING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Many actors in the GLSLR are scrambling for investments, especially in researching and executing innovation and in infrastructure. As a result, mutually detrimental zero-sum competition replaces mutually beneficial cooperation in many sectors. And yet, some potential sources of funding for GLSLR initiatives remain underutilized because actors are unaware of them. Resources within existing organizations can be redeployed in new ways to support innovative initiatives and collaborations.

In addition to its capacity of mapping out who is doing what in the region, the Partnership Council will have the capacity to identify underutilized and redeployable resources, map them out, and bring them to the attention of relevant actors. Most notably, the GLPC will have unique expertise in navigating government information

and rendering it accessible to non-governmental actors, enabling it, for example, to create an inventory of available government funds and tax breaks and their criteria and application procedures.

There is a possibility of linking some of the regional foundations together to begin funding transformative and collaborative initiatives.

- Alan Broadbent, Chariman
Maytree Foundation and Avana Capital

5. REPORTING ON OUTCOMES

A commitment to report regularly on outcomes and initiatives is essential to facilitating collaboration in the GLSLR, and to sustaining stakeholder buy-in and broad public support for collaboration initiatives through changing economic and political realities. But in the absence of formal governance structures or institutions responsible for the GLSLR as a whole, it is not clear who will do this reporting or who they would be reporting to. The GLPC's broad lens, region-wide civil-society membership, and research capacity make it ideally suited for this task.

PRIORITY INITIATIVES FOR THE GLSLR

What are the priorities for the GLSLR? What role can the Great Lakes Partnership Council play in addressing these priorities? Table 2 presents the top priorities identified at the Summit and through our research.

In some of the identified priorities, the GLPC should play a leadership role as facilitator and convener. In others, the Partnership Council will adopt a more supportive, partnership role. The possible nature of the GLPC's role for each initiative is identified in table 2, although it is recommended that these initiatives be pursued even without the creation of the GLPC.

TABLE 2 | Priority Initiatives for the Great Lakes Partnership Council

Initiative	Sector/Issues	Rationale
A permanent, independent Joint Cross-border Regulatory Commission/Council ³	Trade Manufacturing Agri-food Transportation Human Capital R&D	The region's producers, traders, and innovators suffer significant compliance costs when undertaking cross-border trade or collaboration due to the volume, duplication, and frequent changes to border regulations. In some cases (especially with SMEs), such costs can be prohibitive, significantly reducing the region's trade capacity and hampering its growth potential. February 2011's bi-lateral Joint Declaration on Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness recognized this challenge and created important mechanisms to begin addressing it, namely, The Regulatory Cooperation Council and the Beyond the Border Working Group. However, these mechanisms will require continuity, coordination, and momentum if they are to be effective on an ongoing basis, and not just as one-off initiatives.
A permanent and enhanced cross-border Agreement on Government Procurement (AGP) ⁴	Trade Agri-food Manufacturing	The protectionist mindset that crept into border regulation over the last decade undermines regional growth, flies in the face of the region's reality of deep economic integration, and fosters a counterproductive culture of zero-sum competition within the region. The recent AGP does not cover all procuring agencies, only partially applies to some GLSLR states/provinces, and does not entail "long term ... commitments beyond those in the WTO GPA and NAFTA" (Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, 2010).
Strengthened trusted shipper/traveller programs ⁵	Trade Transportation Tourism Manufacturing	Robust trusted shipper/traveller programs add significant economic value, expediting the passage of goods and services across the border through the reduction of paperwork and wait times, especially for frequent traders and travellers. However, current programs (e.g. C-TPAT, PIP, NEXUS, FAST, and CSA) do not encompass all agencies with border mandates (for example, food inspection agencies). Certification in these programs is costly and slow, and not all border crossings have designated lanes/agents for members.
SME Cross-border/Cross-sector Trade and Partnership Support Program ⁶	Trade R&D Blue economy Manufacturing Agri-food	SMEs are key drivers of growth and innovation in the GLSLR. But many SMEs' growth potential is limited because they do not have the capacity to fully navigate border regulations or find relevant cross-border and cross-sector economic opportunities.

The Initiative Will ...

(1) Building on the current work of the Regulatory Cooperation Council, review existing regulations to identify opportunities for harmonization, streamlining, and simplification that do not lower overall regulatory standards or undermine key national interests; **(2)** Expanding on the current work of the Beyond the Border Working Group, advise both federal governments on an ongoing basis regarding possible border-thickening effects of new regulations and programs; **(3)** Study, pilot, and recommend joint programs to facilitate increased trade and labour mobility across the border, such as a single window customs information submission portal and spousal work visas for TN-1 status workers; **(4)** Encourage and identify areas where mutual reliance (accepting the regulatory decisions of trusted jurisdictions) should be used; **(5)** Undertake long-term planning and identify new or emerging areas where regulations might be needed, with the goal of developing frameworks and approaches that could be used on both sides of the border to prevent the emergence of new regulatory barriers to trade.

(1) Exclude products from limiting domestic procurement requirements and country-of-origin criteria; **(2)** Open access for service providers to government contracts on both sides of the border; **(3)** Create a permanent, long-term framework to override/exempt products and services from future protectionist encroachment.

(1) Expand existing trusted shipper programs to agencies with border mandates other than CBSA and CBP; **(2)** Ensure border crossings, including at airports, have enough dedicated personnel and lanes for effective delivery of programs; **(3)** Create an SME-specific trusted trader program with affordable certification costs; **(4)** Align existing programs on both sides of the border; **(5)** Expedite certification in these programs and widely promote membership in them; **(6)** Allow program certification to replace standard documentation requirements for frequent traders/shippers; **(7)** Explore creating a mechanism to enable trusted shippers to clear business partners against existing security watch lists.

(1) A mentorship program connecting SMEs with mentors experienced in cross-border trade and partnership; **(2)** An easily searchable online resource collecting all funds, grants, and other funding/investment sources operating in the region; **(3)** Searchable cross-sector online inventory of academic and private sector R&D initiatives and partnership opportunities.

Primary role of the GLPC

Advocacy: Support the work of the RCC by helping combat negative reactions/suspensions that arise from harmonization.

Press the RCC process to expand efforts to include “mutual recognition” of regulatory regimes.

Leadership: Bring together multiple stakeholders from a variety of sectors and with little to no history of prior collaboration.

Knowledge sharing: Periodic outreach to participating stakeholders to maintain momentum for initiative implementation; identify issues and solutions early in the process of emerging technologies or industries.

Advocacy: Promote proposal to decision makers.

Help combat negative reactions/suspensions that arise from this initiative.

Advocacy: Promote proposal to decision makers in the context of the Perimeter initiative and beyond.

GLPC will help combat negative reactions/suspensions that arise from this initiative.

Leadership and knowledge sharing: Initiative will rely quite heavily on the GLPC’s deep cross-border knowledge of government and cross-sector interconnections for many of its activities, to the point that it may be most efficient for it to be executed by the GLPC.

TABLE 2 CONTINUED | Priority Initiatives for the Great Lakes Partnership Council

Initiative	Sector/Issues	Rationale
GLSLR Joint Transportation Strategy ⁷	Transportation Trade	The GLSLR's overextended and carbon-heavy transportation system is long overdue for a serious upgrade, but governments struggle to find sufficient funding even to maintain the existing infrastructure. New border crossings and upgrades to existing ones, as well as better integration of different modes of transportation are particularly pressing needs. A large part of the problem is lack of a coordinated regional strategy, leaving jurisdictions to develop the system piecemeal, and to miss out on the budget savings inherent in cross-jurisdictional collaboration.
Extending US Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy to the Canadian side of the border	Water Stewardship Blue Economy Energy Tourism	The strategy is a collaborative US federal, state, tribal, and private sector initiative to ensure long-term sustainable development in the region. The federal government committed \$475 Million USD and \$300 Million USD in 2010 and 2011 respectively. However, comparable investment and a comparable plan are lacking on the Canadian side.
Global Blue Economy Summit and Expo	Blue Economy R&D	The GLSLR is home to a world-leading water technology cluster in places like Milwaukee and southwestern Ontario, with many promisingly innovative companies also emerging throughout the region. But networks of cooperation and brainstorming are only now beginning to connect the many blue economy nodes in the region. And the sector still falls short of its potential in attracting investors, exposing its products to clients (especially government procurement officers), or tapping into global greening networks.

The Initiative Will ...

(1) Set the framework for prioritizing border infrastructure, including cross-border projects such as DRIC; (2) Set the framework for integrating different modes of transportation (air, water, rail, car/truck), including airport-downtown connections; (3) Support research and planning on efficient deployment of border personnel and support staff, especially staff increases at major crossings, including those at airports, etc.; (4) Set the framework for the incorporation of clean technologies, including high-speed rail connections between the region's large urban centres; (5) Identify opportunities and partners for P3s to execute transportation projects; (6) Recommend relevant regulation harmonization to enable cross-border P3s; (7) Integrate broad-based consultation with relevant government and non-government stakeholders; (8) Integrate rigorous economic and environmental cost/benefit analysis into its decision making; (9) A US-Canada Joint Infrastructure Planning Commission (Robertson 2011), could serve as the institutional body overseeing the implementation of this strategy.

(1) Better align policies and strategies on both sides of the border reflecting the fact that water is a shared resource; (2) Leverage greater returns from coordinated investment.

(1) Build on Milwaukee's successful annual Water Summit and Ontario's recent Global Water Leadership Summit to create an annual international Blue Economy Expo and Summit; (2) the expo will showcase cutting edge products and in-progress initiatives to potential clients, investors, and business partners, with a concerted focus on attaining global reach (in 2010, the similar Singapore Water Week attracted 14000 attendees from 112 countries and generated projects and investments totaling \$2.8 billion USD, according to an anonymous Summit participant); (3) the Summit, taking place in the lead-up to (or in conjunction with) the Expo, will bring together the sector's innovators and business leaders to foster new collaborative initiatives, an exchange of ideas and research, and cooperation in marketing and outreach at the Expo and beyond; (4) Both the Expo and the Summit will be used as levers for generating awareness of budget-saving opportunities inherent in blue economy products/initiatives among procurement officers, developers, urban designers, and the general public; (5) The Summit and Expo will be used to brand the GLSLR's status as the world leader in the blue economy; (6) The Summit and Expo will also encompass water recycling and biotechnology.

Primary role of the GLPC

Leadership: The GLPC will be required to outline this vision from scratch, through broad preliminary consultation and research leading to vision- and collaboration-forming leaders' meetings.

Advocacy: Promote proposal to decision makers.

Targeted public information campaigns to combat negative perceptions (on issues such as the DRIC).

Knowledge sharing: Broaden awareness of this proposal to all relevant stakeholders.

Advocacy: Promote proposal to decision makers.

Leadership: Convene stakeholders and funders.

Advocacy: Promote participation in the Summit.

TABLE 2 CONTINUED | Priority Initiatives for the Great Lakes Partnership Council

Initiative	Sector/Issues	Rationale
Great Lakes Conservation Area	Water Stewardship Blue Economy Tourism Energy R&D	Despite significant achievements in pollution reduction and environmental protection, the preservation, restoration, and sustainable development of the Great Lakes ecosystem remains a key collaborative challenge for the GLSLR. The Lakes also have significant tourism potential, but it remains underutilized due to a mostly localized tourism industry that is often difficult to coordinate. The region's achievements, potentials, and attractions sometimes get lost behind the unattractive and persistent, but no longer accurate image of a declining and polluted 'rust belt'.
Niagara Peace Park ⁸	R&D Water Stewardship Blue Economy Energy Tourism	With a legacy of fruitful international collaboration, the Niagara region has been a poster child for the benefits of peace to tackling major collective action problems such as sustainable economic development, environmental protection, and heritage preservation. The bicentennial of the War of 1812 and the 1815 US-Canada peace accord offers a unique opportunity to celebrate this legacy and leverage it to catalyze cross-border collaboration throughout the GLSLR.
Regional Clean Energy Strategy ⁹	Energy R&D	Heavily dependent on energy to fuel its economic success, the GLSLR faces the daunting task of transitioning away from carbon intensive energy towards a portfolio of cleaner and renewable energy sources such as natural gas, hydro, solar, wind, and biofuel. The region already possesses significant capacity or potential with regard to these energy sources, but they are not efficiently leveraged. In particular, a paradigm of jurisdictional self-sufficiency regarding electricity production and transmission results in counterproductive intra-region competition, lack of efficiency in cross-jurisdiction electricity trade.

The Initiative Will ...

(1) Attain international recognition for the Great Lakes as an international conservation area; **(2)** Spur region-wide tourism initiatives such as a Great Lakes hiking/biking/driving trail, as well as more regionalized cross-jurisdictional initiatives and events; **(3)** Anchor a regional marketing campaign stressing the region's world-leading achievements in water stewardship, pollution reduction, ecological preservation, clean energy, and blue/green technological innovation.

(1) Designate the cross-border Niagara region as a peace park under the UN Global Peace Parks initiative; **(2)** Create a business park to consolidate and grow cross-border clusters in the Niagara region's signature industries and to promote cross-border strategic business alliances and marketing campaigns; **(3)** Promote cross-border tourist attraction campaigns, international events, cooperative research, and other cooperative opportunities; **(4)** Create a series of joint events to mark the US-Canada peace bi-centennial and celebrate the region's collaborative achievements in environmental protection, heritage preservation, sustainable development, education, research, and the protection of freedom (e.g., the Erie and Welland canals, the birth of hydroelectric power, the Underground Railway); **(5)** This initiative can serve as a pilot project for a series of similar initiatives at other GLSLR crossings, including initiatives incorporating other existing historical monuments to the Underground Railway, and the International Peace Memorial at South Bass Island, Lake Erie.

(1) Provide a framework for setting regional energy security and conservation targets and standards such as for GHG emissions; **(2)** Treat the GLSLR—rather than sub-regional jurisdictions—as the primary planning and administrative unit; **(3)** Guide investment in the 'smartening' and integration of the region's electricity grid; **(4)** Standardize renewable energy definitions across states/provinces; **(5)** Guide the harmonization of the region's RPS programs; **(6)** Position the GLSLR as North America's clean energy hub, and enhance the region's clean energy storage and trade capacities, possibly by creating a GLSLR Energy Trade Council; **(7)** Promote and guide investment in clean energy research and in "bilateral pilot programs that can drive innovation and the development of green technologies including information sharing and the identification of best practices" (Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2010); **(8)** The Clean Energy Dialogue mechanism could be used to arrive at such a strategy, but to do so it will require mandate adjustments and expansion, and possibly additional institutionalization.

Primary role of the GLPC

Knowledge sharing: Broaden awareness of this proposal to all relevant stakeholders.

Advocacy: Promote proposal to decision makers.

Targeted public information campaigns to secure buy-in.

Knowledge sharing: Broaden awareness of this project to all relevant stakeholders.

Advocacy: Promote proposal to decision makers.

Public information campaigns to secure buy-in.

Knowledge sharing: Pull well-developed programs or proposals for some components of these initiatives together and reconcile the sometimes competing visions.

Advocacy: Promote proposal to decision makers.

CONCLUSION

This could be the Great Lakes century. Creatively and strategically deploying the enormous assets of the region—including a healthy ecosystem, rich human capital, advanced research institutions, and vibrant cities and fertile farmland—will ensure the prosperity and sustainability of the region.

But threats exist as well, including creeping protectionism, global economic challenges, and threats to our natural environment. Organized collaboration will help overcome these challenges.

Successful collaboration is already underway across the region and many organizations are successfully leading initiatives that strengthen communities on both sides of the border. This paper has summarized the conclusions from the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Regions Summit, during which a wide consensus emerged that the region would benefit from even greater, more mature collaboration.

We have outlined what such collaboration should look like at this time in the region: an organization driven by civic leaders, described here as the Great Lakes Partnership Council. Such a council could champion the many initiatives identified in this paper and support those already underway. It is the logical next step toward more mature collaboration in the region and would help ensure that we can realize the vision outlined in this paper: that in the 21st century, we can achieve so much more by working together than alone.

ENDNOTES

1. Quebec government officials note that their government does not officially endorse the recommendations presented here.
2. Data for this section was collected from: Austin et al, 2008; Government of Canada, 2011; Katz & Hjartarson, 2011; Times Higher Education, 2011; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, n.d.; World Business Chicago, 2011.
3. See also: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2010; Kergin & Mathiesen, 2008; Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness, 2011; PNWER, 2011; Pohlmann, 2011; Robertson, 2011; U.S. Chamber of Commerce & Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2009.
4. See also: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2010; Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness, 2011; PNWER, 2011; Pohlmann, 2011; Robertson, 2011.
5. See also: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2010; Kergin & Mathiesen, 2008; Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness, 2011; PNWER, 2011; Robertson 2011; U.S. Chamber of Commerce & Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2009.
6. See also: Pohlmann, 2011; Schwanen, 2011.
7. See also: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2010; Kergin & Mathiesen, 2008; Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness, 2011; Robertson, 2011; U.S. Chamber of Commerce & Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2009.
8. See also: Mitchell, n.d.; Urban Design Project, n.d.
9. See also: Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2010; PNWER, 2011.

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APPLIED PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH
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About the Mowat Centre

The Mowat Centre is an independent, non-partisan public policy research centre located at the School of Public Policy and Governance at the University of Toronto.

The Mowat Centre undertakes collaborative applied policy research and engages in public dialogue on Canada's most important national issues, and proposes innovative, research-driven public policy recommendations, informed by Ontario's reality.

We believe a prosperous, equitable and dynamic Canada requires strong provinces, including a strong Ontario, and strong cities.

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“The region must undertake a historic intellectual pivot, moving from a mentality where Canadians and Americans make things together for the North American market, to recognizing that they have things that the world wants and understanding how best to offer goods and services.”

