



# Beyond GDP: Rethinking Indicators of Progress

**Wednesday April 7, 2010, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon**  
**(registration and networking breakfast at 8:30)**

Alumni Hall, Victoria College Building, 91 Charles Street West, University of Toronto

**Panel:**

**Andrew Sharpe** Executive Director, Centre for the Study of Living Standards  
**Lynne Slotek** CEO, Canadian Index of Wellbeing  
**Peter Victor** Professor of Environmental Studies, York University

**“GDP measures everything except that which makes life worthwhile.” Robert F. Kennedy**

More than forty years after this quote was recorded, Gross Domestic Product remains the most commonly used indicator of economic growth, and therefore, progress. But criticism and calls for more appropriate indicators also persist. For example, amid growing concern about the environment, it is problematic that GDP counts cleaning up pollution or responding to global warming as productive growth.

In the economic realm, the recent global slowdown has shown that short-term growth strategies can produce critical vulnerabilities that threaten long-term prosperity.

Perhaps then, we must reevaluate what progress entails and how we will measure it. Some important new work is addressing these issues. In France, Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz recently published a report that “identifies the limits of GDP as an indicator of social progress” and “considers what information might be required for the production of more relevant indicators.” Here in Canada this discussion is gathering steam as new research is emerging.

This event brings together a panel of speakers who are advancing this discussion. **It will be of particular interest to public servants as the questions addressed relate to the heart of our mission.** If GDP growth is no longer unequivocally in the public interest, then what replaces this goal and how do we know if we are achieving it?

Come hear from our panel and then get a chance to share your own thoughts, experiences and questions with fellow participants.

- **Andrew Sharpe** is the Founder and Executive Director of the Ottawa-based Centre for the Study of Living Standards. The CSLS produces an Index of Economic Well-being for Canada and the Provinces.
- **Lynne Slotek** is the CEO of the Canadian Institute of Wellbeing and the National Project Director of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW). She is also a member of the Canadian Sustainability Indicators Advisory Committee.
- **Peter Victor** is a Professor of Environmental Studies at York University, and former ADM in the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. He is author of *Managing Without Growth: Smaller by Design, not Disaster*.

**To Register:**

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please contact  
Kit Chapman at 416-363-6509 x1

email: [ipac-trg@sympatico.ca](mailto:ipac-trg@sympatico.ca)

**Fax to: (416) 363-5612** No faxes after 9:30 p.m. **Be green and save paper - don't use a cover sheet!**

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