

On October 12th 2011, Ethics Centre hosted a luncheon event featuring keynote speaker Bruce March, Chairman, President & CEO of Imperial Oil. Mr. March spoke about the responsible development of Canada's Oil Sands and the progress being made to reduce the ecological footprint of the sands extraction and processing operations.

"Canada's oil sands developers have made a collective commitment to improve our environmental footprint. Late last year, six major oil sands mining developers, including ourselves, joined forces in a unique technology-sharing agreement that will see the group exchange proprietary research in order to speed up the reclamation of mining tailings ponds, and ultimately eliminate them.

If you detect a sense of optimism in me, you'd be right. Our industry is making solid progress. We are relentlessly pursuing energy efficiencies, best practices and new technologies to reduce emissions, conserve water, improve land use, speed up reclamation, and reduce the marginal cost of production.

We're getting better at talking to our stakeholders and responding to our critics. And we know we have a positive story to tell. North Americans should not have to choose between energy security, economic well-being, and a clean environment. It's not an either-or-proposition. A healthy environment and a strong economy are both important and all of us should expect nothing less ."

Mr. March noted that sustainability is gaining importance across Canadian industries. He stated that he considers Imperial Oil to be a manufacturer that satisfies energy needs.

With regards to the future of the energy industry, Mr. March believes that although new sources of sustainable energy will grow in importance in the future, history shows that, it will take decades for a complete transition off of fossil fuels. "The energy industry is here to stay, for long and for the betterment of people's lives.", noted Mr. March.

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