

For immediate release
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**AS CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES LOCAL WATER RESOURCES,
NEW GUIDE ADVOCATES THE 'SOFT PATH' TO WATER SECURITY**

Today, as world leaders gather in Montreal to negotiate climate protection measures, two Canadian organizations release their practical guide for local governments to cope with "climate chaos." *The Soft Path for Water In a Nutshell*, co-published by the POLIS Project on Ecological Governance and Friends of the Earth Canada, outlines the "soft path" to freshwater management—an innovative approach to water planning that is "soft" on the environment and ensures water security for Canadian communities.

"In the face of climate change—and the ensuing chaos—security of water resources must be an urgent action item for every community in Canada," says Oliver M. Brandes, co-author of the guide and Water Sustainability project leader at the University of Victoria's POLIS Project on Ecological Governance. "Focusing on water efficiency alone is not enough to move freshwater management onto a sustainable path; we need to change attitudes and water use habits. Conservation is the best source of 'new' water for the future and, instead of consuming as if Canada is water rich, we would be better off recognizing our limits and working toward water security. The 'soft path' to freshwater management will help communities do just that."

Freshwater management in Canada traditionally focusses on supplying more and more water to meet increasing demands. This 20-page booklet explains how the "soft path" differs from conventional, supply-focussed water management and lays out a step-by-step process to address water security or a "soft path" plan. The guide is written for water managers, community and government leaders, policy makers and concerned citizens who want to take a proactive approach to sustainable water management. This includes measures such as new forms of sanitation, urban redesign for conservation and drought-resistant landscapes.

"New approaches for water security are needed right now," says Dr. David Brooks, co-author of the guide and director of research for Friends of the Earth Canada. "You could learn to live without oil, and we should, but you will not survive without fresh water. Climate chaos will force us to re-think how we manage our voracious demand for energy and water. We offer the *Soft Path* as a way to do that—a way that respects the environment and leads to social prosperity."

Copies of *The Soft Path for Water in a Nutshell* are available at www.waterdsm.org or www.foecanada.org or by calling the POLIS Project at (250) 721-6388 or FOE Canada at (613) 241-0085.

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Media contacts:

Oliver M. Brandes (POLIS project) at (250) 721-8193 or omb@uvic.ca
David B. Brooks (Friends of the Earth Canada) at (613) 241-0085 or foe@foecanada.org
Ellen Reynolds (POLIS project) at (250) 472-4637 or ellenr@uvic.ca