

Climate coalition calls for an ambitious climate plan at federal-provincial meetings

Joint Media Release

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Ottawa – A coalition of 74 environmental and social justice groups representing hundreds of thousands of people across Canada is demanding that federal, provincial and territorial leaders embrace the policy changes needed for Canada to meet its Paris climate change commitments.

In a [letter](#) sent to Prime Minister Trudeau and all provincial and territorial leaders on February 24, the groups spelled out their expectations ahead of inter-provincial meetings on climate policy, held March 3.

“Canada was an early advocate of limiting the rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and of incorporating Indigenous peoples’ rights, gender equality and a just transition for workers into the Paris Agreement. Meeting these commitments will require an ambitious action plan,” said John Dillon, Ecological Economy Program Coordinator with KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives.

The letters details six initiatives that elected officials must take to avoid catastrophic climate change and to ensure a just transition away from fossil fuels:

1. A new science-based emission reduction target consistent with a 1.5 degree temperature rise. Canada needs a new science-based emission reduction target consistent with keeping the rise in global temperatures under 1.5 degrees Celsius. Cutting our emissions as much as possible as soon as possible will set us on a path to achieving this goal, whereas delaying action may preclude any possibility of staying under a 1.5 degree rise.

2. A clear and measurable plan for a just transition to 100% renewable energy by 2050. Canada needs to transition to 100% low-carbon electricity by 2035 and strive for 100% reliance on renewable sources for all forms of energy by 2050. Investing in renewable energy creates up to eight times as many jobs as investing in oil and gas extraction.

3. An end to subsidies for fossil fuel industries and investments in a green economy. The 2016 federal budget is an opportunity to act on Canada’s 2009 promise to eliminate subsidies to fossil fuel industries and announce significant initiatives to support public transit, green infrastructure and clean technologies. Annual Canadian subsidies to fossil fuel industries averaged \$2.9 billion over 2013 and 2014, with \$1.7 billion of this from the federal government.

4. A carbon fee set at \$30 per tonne and a commitment to increase it over time. The government must establish, in consultation with the provinces and territories, a national standard for pricing carbon emissions through a carbon fee set initially at \$30 per tonne of greenhouse gases and increasing in steps to a level consistent with limiting temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

5. A far-reaching, permanent regulatory approval process for assessing energy projects. A new, permanent regulatory approval process for assessing energy projects must replace the flawed National Energy Board process. It must respect Indigenous peoples' rights to free, prior and informed consent as required by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which the government of Canada has promised to uphold, and it must account for the downstream carbon emissions of the projects.

6. A \$4 billion annual contribution to climate adaptation and mitigation measures in the Global South. Based on precedents where Canada has contributed 3% to 4% of multilateral funds, Canada's fair share of the \$100 billion (U.S.) promised in the Paris decision document requires a contribution of \$4 billion a year by 2020.

"This is a defining moment for the Trudeau government. They have a tremendous opportunity to set Canada on the path to a safe, prosperous and sustainable energy future. It will require vision and courage to take this path, but we have no choice if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change," said Lyn Adamson, co-chair of Climate Fast.

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Canadian Friends Service Committee

Canadian Interfaith Fast for the Climate

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

Canadian Voice of Women for Peace

Ciel et Terre

Citizens' Climate Lobby

Citizens for Public Justice

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Creating Resilience to Extreme Weather (CREW)
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For Our Grandchildren
Friends of the Earth
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Green Neighbours 21
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Just Earth
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La Coalition Vigilance Oléoducs (CoVO)
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Montréal pour tous
Mouvement STOP oléoduc
Mur de femmes
Noor Centre
Ontario Clean Air Alliance
Our Horizon
Pacific Wild
Parvati.org
Passive Buildings Canada
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Post Carbon Toronto
Projet Écosphère
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Vegans and Vegetarians of Alberta
The WaterWealth Project
We Love This Coast
Wintergreen Renewable Energy Co-op
Zero Carbon Ontario