

Canadian Civil Society Decries Government Inaction on Climate Change

There comes a time when disdain towards the Canadian government's lack of morality on the issue of climate change needs to be expressed clearly. We, the undersigned civil society organizations, feel that time now.

There is no question that the planet is facing a serious climate change crisis that requires leadership from all national governments including our own. Instead of positive efforts to confront the crisis in an equitable and morally acceptable way, we have witnessed Canadian government inaction and attempts to undermine climate change policy.

Some examples include:

- Canada is the only country coming out of the Copenhagen UN climate negotiations to return home and weaken its emission reduction target, allowing more climate change pollution.
- Canada is the only country to have ratified and then renounced its commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, a legally binding international agreement our country signed.
- Canada allowed the funding for the important EcoENERGY renewable energy programme to expire while continuing to subsidize the oil and gas industry approximately \$1.4 billion annually.
- In 2010, in an unprecedented and undemocratic show of disrespect for the will of Parliament, Conservative Senators killed the only piece of climate change legislation under consideration in Parliament without even bothering to debate the bill.
- Canada's foreign policy includes lobbying against important climate policies in the European Union and United States that penalize tar sands relatively high greenhouse gas pollution.

The federal government has failed to regulate greenhouse gas emissions in Canada, in spite of our international commitments and the federal government's own inadequate targets. The unsustainable pace of development of the tar sands will increase Canada's greenhouse gas emissions by up to 100 MT or more in this decade. This disturbing pattern of inaction and attempts to undermine climate change policy by the current Canadian federal government, coupled with a staunch defence of Canada's fossil fuel industry shows that this government has lost its moral compass.

We, as Canadian civil society are united in declaring this unacceptable.

The next major round of UN climate negotiations is November 28 to December 9, in Durban South Africa. Consistent with this pattern, Canada has a track record of acting more in the interests of big oil companies than Canadians at UN climate negotiations. The world needs an ambitious, equitable and binding international agreement on climate change. If Canada refuses to lead or follow in this pursuit, we should at least get out of the way.

We are committed to a continued expansion of our efforts in communities across this country to address climate change and to expose the failure of our federal government on dealing with the climate change question. We demand change. Anything less would be failing in our moral responsibility to ourselves, our children and grandchildren, to take action on what has been called the most serious crisis humanity has ever faced.

(see reverse side for endorsing organizations)

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Alternatives

Association québécoise de lutte contre la pollution atmosphérique (AQLPA)

Canadian Auto Workers' Union

Canadian Federation of Students

Canadian Peace Alliance

Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Canadian Youth Climate Coalition

Common Frontiers

Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada

Council of Canadians

Ecology Action Centre

Edmonton Friends of the North Environmental Society

Équiterre

Greenpeace

Greenspiration

Indigenous Environmental Network

National Union of Public and General Employees

Polaris Institute

Public Interest Alberta

Public Service Alliance of Canada

Sierra Club Canada

Sierra Youth Coalition

Toronto Climate Campaign

United Steelworkers of Canada

Vegans & vegetarians of Alberta Association

Windfall Ecology Centre