

Vote for action on climate change

Climate Action Network Statement
September 24, 2008, Montréal

Government action on climate change is at stake in this election. Canadians want the next federal government to help Canada break its dependence on costly fossil fuels in order to meet the environmental and economic challenges we face. To date, no Canadian government has taken action on the scale required.

The evidence from scientists and economists is clear:

Urgent action on climate change is vital for our economy, our environment, our health and our future.

The cost of doing nothing is staggering. If governments fail to act, the effects of rising sea levels, stronger storms, increased drought, heat waves and other environmental damage would cost the Canadian economy billions of dollars and harm the well-being of future generations here at home and abroad.

Delaying action to cut our dependence on fossil fuels puts Canada's economic competitiveness at risk in the growing global market for clean, renewable energy and cleaner transportation technologies.

The economics are simple. All evidence shows that the costs of action are manageable and the projected costs of inaction are devastating. But, if we act effectively, the potential benefits for innovation and job creation in Canada's economy would be significant.

The solutions are clear:

The good news is that effective and innovative solutions exist and can be implemented now.

We need to make polluters pay, to invest in eco-friendly, sustainable energy alternatives and to make sure that the needs of vulnerable communities are addressed. Moreover, the federal government should stop spending billions of dollars of public money to subsidize activities that contribute to climate change or endanger our future.

In this election, Canadians should judge all parties against their commitment to:

- a comprehensive and effective climate action plan that is capable of reaching targets aligned with the scientific assessment of what we need to do to avoid dangerous climate change
- a just price on greenhouse gas pollution no lower than \$30/tonne in 2009
- world-leading regulations and substantial infrastructure investment to cut greenhouse gas pollution from vehicles, buildings and other sectors

- strong measures to support energy conservation and clean, renewable energy alternatives
- an end to the billions of dollars of government subsidies for the fossil fuel and nuclear industries.
- financial support, skills training and job development for workers and communities as they move to a more sustainable energy system
- protection of Canada's carbon rich forests and wetlands
- urgent measures to help vulnerable communities adapt to climate change impacts in Canada and abroad.

A clean environment and a strong economy are inseparable. Voters have a stark choice to make in this election. The future is in their hands.

This statement was issued on behalf of 25 of Canada's leading environmental groups working together to promote action on climate change.

For further information:

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Climate Action Network brings together Canada's leading environmental organizations to promote sustainable energy alternatives and action on climate change.