

Vancouver, April 10th 2015

Open letter to all Provincial and Territorial Premiers,

This week you will be attending the Premiers' Summit on Climate Change in Québec. The summit is an opportunity to chart a new course for our common future. Scientific data says that we must bend the greenhouse gas curve downwards in order to avoid dangerous climate change. In March, Switzerland committed to reduce its emissions by 50% for 2030 while Norway and the European Union committed to a 40% reduction. The fossil fuel era is ending. April 14th 2015 can mark the beginning of Canada's transition towards a low-carbon society.

We represent the *Sustainable Canada Dialogues*, an initiative of scholars from all 10 provinces. Our recent position paper *Acting on Climate Change: Solutions from Canadian Scholars* proposes a "made in Canada" climate action plan.

There is no silver bullet to address climate change. Instead climate change policy needs to trigger a long term transition allowing Canadians to plan for the future while recognizing that goals take time to accomplish. The transition towards a low-carbon society will permit governments, businesses and citizens to prepare for the expected changes and take action. It will allow citizens to make choices about what is acceptable and desirable in the low-carbon futures we need to build together.

As with past transitions, there will be controversies and setbacks. Some economic sectors will contract - as others expand. No one knows in advance which technologies or institutional solutions will ultimately prove most effective, cost-efficient, and environmentally as well as socially positive. We do not know what the world will look like in thirty or fifty years' time. However, nations around the globe are engaging with the challenge of defining low-carbon development trajectories.

We are alone in North America. Both Mexico and the U.S.A. have risen to the challenge but Canada has yet to submit its new emissions reduction commitment. Premiers, please ask the Federal Government to contribute positively to the UN process and upcoming Paris Climate Conference in December. Adopting clear and ambitious policy orientations, such as those that we put forward, ushers in great opportunities for innovation by developing new technologies, businesses, and employment.

Accordingly, on April 14th we urge you to agree on two fundamental steps to begin this transition. **First, put the same price on carbon across all provinces and territories.** Canadian business needs a national carbon price in order to invest in the capital equipment, research and development necessary for future prosperity.

Second, begin to unleash Canada's vast renewable energy potential by strengthening interprovincial cooperation for production and distribution of low carbon electricity, and by working with cities and regions in every province to develop local energy sources, green jobs, and more resilient communities. Deploying renewable energy technologies and systems will open new markets and trigger significant positive change in the economics of energy in Canada.

The Paris Climate Conference will feature sub-national governments in a prominent way. Your decision to join the international efforts to address climate change will allow Canadians to enter the playing field and become front-runners in the global transition to strong, low carbon economies.

Since our position paper *Acting on Climate: Solutions by Canadian scholars* was launched on March 18th, we have received messages from all over Canada. The solutions we presented are giving hope in a situation that seemed insurmountable. We sense that many Canadians are concerned about climate change – but don't know what can be done about it.

As Premiers you have a critical opportunity to demonstrate compelling leadership taking actions to create a sustainable future for each of the provinces and territories. The most important aspect of this transition to a low-carbon society is to start now. The time is ripe. Please, act now.



Yours truly,

Catherine Potvin, Department of Biology, McGill University for the Sustainable Canada Dialogues

Co-Signataires

Aitken, Sally, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia
Anctil, François, Institut EDS, Université Laval
Bennett, Elena, Department of Natural Resource Sciences, McGill University
Berkes, Fikret, Natural Resource Institute, University of Manitoba
Bernstein, Steven, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto
Bleau, Nathalie, Built Environment Program, Ouranos
Brown, Bryson, Department of Philosophy, University of Lethbridge
Burch, Sarah, Department of Geography and Environmental Management, University of Waterloo
Byrne, Jim, Department of Geography, University of Lethbridge
Creed, Irena, Department of Biology, Western University
Cunsolo Willox, Ashlee, Department of Nursing and Indigenous Studies, Cape Breton University
Dale, Ann, School of Environment and Sustainability, Royal Roads University
de Lange, Deborah, Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University
Dyck, Bruno, Asper School of Business, University of Manitoba,
Entz, Martin, Department of Plant Science, University of Manitoba
Etcheverry, Jose, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University
Fenech, Adam, Climate Laboratory, University of Prince Edward Island
Fraser, Lauchlan, Faculty of Science, Thompson Rivers University
Godbout, Stéphane, Biological Sciences, Université Laval
Henriques, Irene, Schulich School of Business, York University
Heyland, Andreas, Department of Integrative Biology, Guelph University
Hoberg, George, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia
Holden, Meg, Department of Urban Studies and Department of Geography, Simon Fraser University
Hoffmann, Matthew, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto
Gordon Huang, Institute for Energy, Environment and Sustainable Communities, University of Regina
Jacob, Aerin, Department of Geography, University of Victoria
Jodoin, Sébastien, Faculty of Law, McGill University
Kemper, Alison, Faculty of Entrepreneurship, Ryerson University
Lucotte, Marc, Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, Université de Québec à Montréal
Maranger, Roxane, Département des sciences biologiques, Université de Montréal
Matthews, Ralph, Department of Sociology, University of British Columbia
Mauro, Ian, Department of Geography, University of Winnipeg
Margolis, Liat, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, University of Toronto
McDonnell, Jeffrey, School of Environment and Sustainability, University of Saskatchewan
Meadowcroft, James, School of Public Policy and Administration, Carleton University

de Québec en Outaouais

Mkandawire, Martin, Verschuren Centre for Sustainability in Energy and the Environment,
Cape Breton University

Morency, Catherine, Department of Civil, Geological and Mining Engineering, Polytechnique
Montréal

Mousseau, Normand, Département de physique, Université de Montréal

Oakes, Ken, Department of Biology, Cape Breton University

Otto, Sally, Department of Zoology, University of British Columbia

Palmater, Pamela, Departments of Politics and Public Administration, Ryerson University

Palmer, Taysha S., Knowledge Transfer Consultant

Paquin, Dominique, Climate Simulation and Analysis, Ouranos

Perl, Anthony, Department of Political Science, Simon Fraser University

Potvin, André, École d'architecture, Université Laval

Raudsepp-Hearne, Ciara, Consultant

Ramos, Howard, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology, Dalhousie University

Robinson, John, Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability, and Department of
Geography, University of British Columbia.

Simard, Suzanne, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia

Sinclair, Brent, Department of Biology, Western University

Slawinski, Natalie, Faculty of Business Administration, Memorial University

Stoddart, Mark, Department of Sociology, Memorial University

Sylvester, Shauna Centre for Dialogue, Simon Fraser University,

Villard, Marc-André, Département de Biologie, Université de Moncton

Villeneuve, Claude, Département des Sciences, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

Wesche, Sonia, Department of Geography, University of Ottawa

Wright, Tarah, Faculty of Science, Dalhousie University