

## **Environmental Groups Ask Premiers To Go Back to the Drawing Board and Make Climate Protection the Priority in National Energy Agreement**

### **For Immediate Release**

**July 16, 2015, St. John's, Newfoundland** – Environmental groups from across Canada today asked Canada's premiers meeting in Newfoundland to delay adopting a new national energy strategy that will undermine any hope of making deep cuts to greenhouse gas emissions.

“Approving tar sands pipelines like Energy East and Kinder Morgan, which is what this strategy appears to do, would lock in high carbon emissions and make it practically impossible for Canada to reach its climate reduction targets,” said Dale Marshall, national program manager with Environmental Defence.

The groups ask that the new plan include 2 key principles:

- Halt any new tar sands development or high-carbon infrastructure, including new pipelines, oil train infrastructure and tankers.
- Prioritize clean energy infrastructure over new oil and gas proposals that ensure Canada's emissions decrease and result in a diversified and resilient economy.

In Quebec, Premier Couillard committed his government to cut GES emissions from 80 to 95 per cent by 2050 and has repeatedly emphasized the importance of taking bold climate action, but now he is also talking about the importance of building Energy East. In Ontario, Premier Wynne, is also unclear on her climate commitment.

“The quickest way to lose your climate credibility is to endorse a tar sands pipeline, which is why we are so confused by Premiers Couillard and Wynne's contradictory position going into these meetings. The science is very clear, the tar sands need to stay in the ground if Canada is going to do its part to act on a growing climate crisis,” said Patrick Bonin of Greenpeace. “We hope Premiers Couillard and Wynne pause before they flush all their good work down a pipeline their citizens don't want and the planet can't handle.”

Petitions from Leadnow, 350.org and the Council of Canadians have already gathered more than 10,000 signatures in the past 24 hours calling on premiers to scrap any deal that would fast track dangerous tar sands pipelines. Also, more than 25,000 people across Canada took to the streets of Quebec City in April asking premiers to say yes to climate and no to tar sands expansion.

“This is the moment when Premier Notley should be signaling a new direction for Alberta that recognizes a strong national energy strategy must be informed by strong climate goals,” said Louise Comeau, executive director of Climate Action Network Canada.

Meanwhile, in British Columbia, where most of the population is opposed to the construction of Enbridge and Kinder Morgan pipelines, Premier Christy Clark has developed five conditions that would need to be met before any new pipelines could be built. So far only one of the five conditions has been met.

Canada's tar sands, one of the world's dirtiest sources of oil, are the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. Production is set to expand from current 2.1 million barrels a day to over 5 million a day – and new pipelines like Energy East, are needed by industry to

achieve this goal. Study after study and evidence from countries around the world show the jobs and wealth generated by clean energy sectors are soon set to outpace the fossil fuel economy, if not already.

Groups asking for a new energy strategy include Environmental Defence, Greenpeace Canada, Climate Action Network Canada, the Council of Canadians, Ecology Action Centre, ForestEthics, Transition Initiative Kenora, 350.org, Ecology Ottawa, AQLPA, Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition (MEJC), Red Head Anthony's Cove Preservation Association, Regroupement vigilance hydrocarbures Québec (RVHQ) and the Conservation Council of New Brunswick

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