

G8 / G20 Briefing Document:

A Climate Change Agenda for Canada

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Greenpeace has four demands each for the G8/G20 Leaders and the Harper government

Mind the Gap!

- G8 and G20 leaders must keep the global average temperature increase as far below 2°C as possible. Current global emission reduction pledges put us on a pathway to a 3 °C world and climate chaos. They must close this gap by ensuring global greenhouse gas emissions peak by 2015 and fall close to zero by 2050.
- The Harper government should honour its Kyoto commitment, and adopt a science-based emissions reduction target of at least 25 per cent below 1990 levels by the year 2020.

End Subsidies for Big Oil & Big Coal

- G8 and G20 leaders must phase out subsidies to the fossil fuel industry, something they committed to last year, producing clear evidence this is happening.
- The Harper government should end its preferential tax treatment for coal and tar sands (worth \$2 billion per year), and end its \$800 million in direct subsidies for carbon capture and storage.

Build a Green Economy

- The G20 must build a green economy and lead the world in creating a green energy future.
- The Harper government should restore its support for national renewable energy and home retrofit programs.

Climate Finance for Climate Justice

- Developed G20 leaders must provide financing for the world's poorest countries in order to adapt to climate change; switch to a clean energy economy; and stop deforestation. This should be new and additional financing of \$30 billion for three years of Fast Start Funding, rising to at least \$100 billion per year by 2020.
- The Harper government's announced \$400 million in Fast-Start Funding for 2010 should be confirmed as additional to foreign aid and the same amount should be confirmed for 2011 and 2012, rising to at least \$3 billion per year by 2020.

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The Gigatonne Gap: The Harper Government's Failure to Act on Climate Change

Under the Copenhagen Accord¹, 125 countries, producing 85 per cent of global emissions, recognized in principle the need to limit the global average temperature increase to 2°C.² However, the pledges for targeted emission reductions will not even come close to achieving that goal. The voluntary pledges, even if countries did what they promised, would lead the world to a warming of 3°C or more – a temperature increase that would result in catastrophic climate change impacts around the world. An increase of 1.5°C is already considered too dangerous by most countries.

The gap between the voluntary pledges under the Copenhagen Accord, and the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions necessary to avoid catastrophic climate change impacts, has been called the “gigatonne gap” - a gigatonne (Gt) is one billion tonnes.. In order to prevent a planetary disaster, we must keep the global average temperature increase as far below 2°C as possible, which means that global emissions must be reduced to 40 Gt or less by 2020.³ Because emission reduction pledges under the Copenhagen Accord total only 48 to 54 Gt, there is a “gap” of 8 to 14 gigatonnes.⁴

The world must find the ambition and political will to prevent this global catastrophe, and Canada must contribute its fair share to this effort.

Far from doing its fair share, Canada has utterly failed to take meaningful action on climate change. Canada is the only country that signed the Copenhagen Accord to have both weakened its pledged emission target, and completely rejected its Kyoto Protocol target. The current target of the Harper government for **2020** is 2.5 per cent **above** the 1990 level, whereas the Kyoto target for **2008-2012** was six per cent **below** the 1990 level.

On January 30, 2010, Canadian Environment Minister Jim Prentice announced a new, weaker target for Canada's greenhouse gas emissions in 2020⁵ – 17 per cent below 2005 levels by 2020.⁶ The government's previous target (adopted in 2006 as part of the government's “Turning the Corner” climate change plan) was a 20 per cent reduction below 2006 levels by 2020.

Greenhouse gas emissions are typically referenced to 1990, which is the emissions base year used by the Kyoto Protocol. Thus, a 17 per cent reduction from the 2005 level by 2020, is 2.5 per cent **above** 1990 levels. The previous target (a 20 per cent reduction from the 2006 level by 2020) was three per cent **below** 1990 levels. Canadian greenhouse gas emissions were 731 million tonnes in 2005; 718 million tonnes in 2006; 750 million tonnes in 2007; and 734 million tonnes in 2008 (the most recent year for which data are available).⁷ Canada's 2008 emission level was 24 per cent above the 1990 level of 592 Mt, and about 30 per cent above the Kyoto target of 558.4 Mt.

To put these numbers in perspective, Greenpeace and other environmental groups have called on Canada to adopt a science-based emissions reduction target of at least 25 per cent below 1990 levels by the year 2020.

On the eve of the G8 and G20 summits, the Harper government made an announcement of proposed regulations for coal-fired electricity generation that would shut down older coal plants at the end of their useful lives – apparently reducing greenhouse gas emissions by about 15 megatonnes (Mt).⁸ However, the announcement provides no details... this is clearly not a plan to ‘kill coal’, but rather a plan that would see the construction of new “clean coal” plants based on Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS).

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However, CCS is unproven and technologically uncertain, and it is prohibitively expensive, requiring massive taxpayer subsidies.

Moreover the government says that the new regulations will not be published until 2011 and will not come into effect until July 1, 2015. The Harper government has promised new regulations before and then failed to deliver. Under the April 2007 Regulatory Framework for Industrial Greenhouse Gas Emissions, the Harper government promised to have regulations on coal emissions (and other industrial sectors) by January 1, 2010. The regulations were never put in place.

In the lead-up to the G8 and G20 summits, the Harper government has been under high-profile international pressure to both reduce Canadian greenhouse gas emissions, and to make climate change a prominent part of the G8 and G20 agendas at the summits in Huntsville and Toronto June 25-27, 2010. Speaking to an Ottawa audience on May 12, 2010, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated:

“We have an opportunity to address an existential threat to human kind – a threat posed by climate change. The science is sobering. And climate change is happening much, much faster than you may realize [...] We must be ready and we must be committed to leave this planet Earth to succeeding generations more hospitable and more environmentally sustainable. That is our political and historical responsibility. That’s what I’m doing as the Secretary General – I’m going to discuss with Prime Minister Harper, as the leader of the G8, and as a chair of the G20 this year, and as one of the most developed countries in the world, Canada has a special role and special responsibility to play. That is what I want to emphasize here.[...] I urge Canada to comply fully with the targets set out by the Kyoto Protocol. You can strengthen your mitigation target for the future.”⁹

At a meeting in Ottawa on May 27 2010, Mexican President Felipe Calderon also called on Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper to act on climate change, and stressed the urgency of the situation in Mexico as droughts plague the country and threaten the water supply of Mexico City.

“In Mexico, we cannot wait. We cannot wait for the developed countries to make a decision [on climate change]. Some of them, like the U.S., could take another eternity to decide on what they had decided since the Kyoto Protocol. [...] We know that the quality of life, and the future, is at risk. And I mean the future of a great deal of humanity.”¹⁰

As host of the upcoming United Nations climate change conference in Cancun, November 29 to December 10, 2010, Calderon has an important role to play in putting climate change negotiations back on track following the disappointing outcome in Copenhagen in December 2009.¹¹

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Fossil Fuel Subsidies:

Canada's Continued Support for the Fossil Fuel Industries

At their summit in Pittsburgh, September 24-25, 2009, the G20 leaders called for the end of "inefficient fossil fuel subsidies", and for the G20 energy and finance Ministers to come to the Toronto summit with implementation strategies and timelines for their subsidy phaseouts.¹²

The Pittsburgh Leaders' Statement recognized that: "Inefficient fossil fuel subsidies encourage wasteful consumption, distort markets, impede investment in clean energy sources and undermine efforts to deal with climate change", and noted that elimination of fossil fuel subsidies would reduce global greenhouse gas emissions in 2050 by 10 per cent.

The G20 has requested a report on subsidies from the International Energy Agency, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank.¹³ A primary issue of contention is the definition of "subsidy", which can occur at the retail level (for example gasoline prices in China are capped and are about half of the price in Canada), as well as subsidies to fossil-fuel producers and users such as oil companies and coal-fired electricity producers. There are thus serious equity issues that must be addressed. There is a significant difference between subsidies that benefit the poorest people in the world, versus subsidies that benefit the very richest corporations in the world.

Phasing out fossil subsidies is extremely important, since it has the potential to free up funds to promote renewable energy and efficiency/conservation; develop green economies; support national programs to fight climate change; and provide climate financing for the developing world.

According to a 2005 report for the Climate Action Network, Canadian oil and gas companies (including the tar sands) benefited from a federal subsidy of \$1,085 million in 1996. That amount had increased 33 per cent to \$1.4 billion by 2002. Total expenditure over the 1996 to 2002 period was \$8.3 billion.¹⁴

As progress on fossil subsidies, the Harper government points to its 2007 Budget commitment to phase out the Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance (ACCA) for the tar sands by 2016, starting in 2011, as well as the phaseout of two other tax subsidies... "earned depletion" and "resource allowance." However, the overall oil and gas sector tax rate has actually decreased relative to the 2001-02 level, and five major tax subsidies, identified in the 2005 Climate Action Network report, still remain in place.

The remaining Canadian tax subsidies include:

- Canadian Exploration Expense
- Canadian Development Expense
- Canadian Oil and Gas Property Expense
- Atlantic Investment Tax Credit and
- Scientific Research and Experimental Development Tax Credit.

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According to the Pembina institute, that level of subsidy has risen to a level of about \$2 billion per year at this time.

In a leaked secret memo, Canada's Deputy Minister of Finance, Michael Horgan, recommended to Finance Minister Jim Flaherty that Canada should live up to its commitment in Pittsburgh to phase out fossil subsidies in Canada.¹⁵

The leaked memo argued that there is no financial justification for continuing subsidies for fossil fuel companies: "These measures were historically premised on factors such as exploration risk, spillover benefits of exploration to third parties (similar to R&D), large capital requirements, price volatility, and a desire to be competitive. Today, however, it is not clear that these factors are unique to the sector or merit preferential treatment."

Horgan noted in the leaked memo that: "Rationalization of resource tax preferences was supported by Minister Prentice in his pre-Budget 2010 letter to you. It could also help respond to his concern about maintaining Canada's reputation as a 'clean energy superpower', and help defend against U.S. government or individual company actions targeted, for example, against oil sands."¹⁶

Direct Subsidies for Carbon Capture and Storage

The Harper government is also providing direct subsidies to the fossil fuel industry in the form of support for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) projects. In its March 2010 budget, it was noted that the Harper government has "announced over \$800 million" in subsidies for carbon capture and storage projects, under two programs, the Clean Energy Fund , and the ecoENERGY Technology Initiative.¹⁷

Subsidies have already been provided under the Clean Energy Fund for three large-scale carbon capture and storage projects:

- \$120 million for the Shell Quest CCS project
- \$315.8 million for the TransAlta Keephills CCS project for a coal-fired power plant near Edmonton
- \$30 million for the Alberta Carbon Trunk Line project

As part of its Economic Action Plan, the Harper Government has also conducted a consultation on the tax treatment of carbon capture and storage assets, and thus seems to be moving backwards on the G20 commitment by supporting a new fossil subsidy through a favourable tax treatment for CCS.¹⁸

Greenpeace has condemned CCS as a risky and highly expensive technological "false solution" that will divert much-needed funding from more reliable and cost-effective alternatives such as renewable energy and efficiency.¹⁹

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Climate Finance:

Canada's Failure to Support Climate Justice

For many developing countries, the achievement of science-based emission reduction targets will depend on rich countries fulfilling their promises to provide finance and technology.

Under Section 8 of the Copenhagen Accord, it was agreed that financing would be prioritized for those developing countries most vulnerable to climate impacts and least able to afford mitigation and adaptation measures. Africa, for example, includes 33 of the world's 49 *Least Developed Countries*, and climate change is already eating up its development opportunities, eroding hard-won development gains and entrenching poverty.

Developing countries need to know how much money is going to be available for them, where it will come from, and how it will be disbursed through to 2020. If rich countries fail to reduce their own emissions, they will need to provide more funding for developing countries to keep the global average temperature increase below 2°C. This reflects one of the basic foundational principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: that all countries should act in accordance with their "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities".

Under the Copenhagen Accord, it was agreed that developed countries would contribute to fast-start climate funding in an amount "approaching" US \$30 billion over the three-year period 2010-2012. The money was to be balanced between mitigation and adaptation expenditures.²⁰

The Copenhagen Accord also committed rich industrial countries to "a goal of mobilizing jointly US \$100 billion a year by 2020" to be given to developing countries for both mitigation and adaptation. The Accord suggested that the funding would come from "public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources of finance".²¹

This medium-term target amount for annual climate funding from developed to developing countries by 2020 was about half the amount of US \$195 billion proposed by Greenpeace and other environmental groups at the Copenhagen negotiations in 2009.²² This proposed amount was to be additional to Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments and include: (a) at least US \$95 billion per year for low-carbon development; and (b) at least US \$100 billion per year for adaptation to climate change impacts.

On March 4, 2010, pursuant to Section 9 of the Copenhagen Accord, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the formation of a High-level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing (AGF). The group has 19 members, and is chaired by former U.K. Prime Minister Gordon Brown, and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia.²³

The group has a mandate to present a consensus finance proposal, for both short- and medium-term financing to the Danish and Mexican presidents of the United Nations COP 15 and 16 climate conferences in November 2010, prior to the annual United Nations climate change conference (COP 16) in Cancun, Mexico, November 29 – December 10, 2010.²⁴

The question, of course, is how those funds will be raised. The AGF had its first plenary meeting in London on March 31, 2010, and working group meetings were scheduled in Washington, April 25-26, and Paris, June 21-22. A plenary meeting is scheduled for New York on July 13, 2010. This will make

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the G8/G20 summits in Huntsville and Toronto very timely. Announcements of finance commitments from G8 countries for short- or medium-term financing would be particularly welcome in Toronto in order to build momentum on the road to Cancun.

Canada's Fair Share of Climate Finance

If the Harper government is serious about the climate change crisis, then Canada needs to commit to its fair share of both climate financing for developing countries, and domestic reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. The Greenhouse Development Rights Framework is a means of quantifying the relative obligations of each country in an equitable fashion. In a report commissioned by EcoEquity, SEI, and the Heinrich Boll Foundation, Canada was assessed with a Responsibility and Capacity Indicator (RCI) of about three per cent. This represented a combined calculation of per capita income, population, per capita emissions, cumulative emissions, share of population over the development threshold, share of global capacity, and share of global responsibility.²⁵

In another similar exercise, the Pembina Institute concurred that a global assessment of responsibility for climate financing demonstrated that Canada's fair contribution would be in the range of three to four per cent of the global total.²⁶

If we assume that Canada should provide financing in the amount of three to four per cent of the proposed US \$30 billion in fast-start climate funding, this would amount to a total of US \$900 to 1200 million over the proposed three-year period 2010-2012. To put this in perspective, the security cost for each of three days of the G8 and G20 summits in Canada is over CAD \$300 million.²⁷

If we assume that Canada will provide financing in the amount of three to four per cent of the proposed US \$100 annual climate funding by 2020, this would amount to US \$3 to 4 billion annually by that time.

If we assume that Canada will provide financing in the amount of three to four per cent of the annual climate funding of US \$195 billion proposed by Greenpeace by 2020, this would amount to US \$5.85 to 7.8 billion per year by that time.

On May 28, 2010, Canada's International Development Minister Bev Oda and Environment Minister Jim Prentice announced Canada's "first installment" under the Copenhagen Accord for "fast-start funding" to fight climate change in the developing world through the Global Environment Facility (GEF).²⁸ At that time, only an annual commitment of CAD \$18.5 million was earmarked for climate change funding, spread over four years, 2010-2014.

On June 23, 2010, on the eve of the G8 and G20 summits, the Harper government committed to provide CAD \$400 million this fiscal year as Canada's 2010 contribution to the Fast-Start Funding promised by developed countries under the Copenhagen Accord.²⁹ This represents about 4 per cent of the first year of funding for the overall three-year commitment of US \$30 billion. This is a positive first step towards Canada providing its fair share of the climate financing for adaptation to climate impacts and emissions reduction in developing countries. However, several serious concerns remain...

- Will the \$400 million in climate finance be new and additional monies? i.e. will it be additional to existing Official Development Assistance (ODA) and climate programs? This is difficult to assess, since in its March 2010 budget, the government froze ODA for the next four years.

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- Where will these monies be directed? i.e. will they be directed to effective programs in the poorest and most vulnerable countries?
- This is funding is for only one year of the proposed three-year Fast-Start Funding program. In order to build positive international momentum, the Harper government should make a firm commitment to the entire three years of the program.

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¹ *Copenhagen Accord* (draft version December 18, 2009)

http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/cop_15/application/pdf/cop15_cph_auv.pdf

² This refers to a global average temperature increase of 2 degrees Centigrade above pre-industrial levels.

³ On a global scale, emissions of greenhouse gases now total about 45 to 47 gigatonnes (Gt).

⁴ *Mind the Gap*, Greenpeace International, May 2010.

⁵ Environment Canada, “Canada Lists Emissions Target under the Copenhagen Accord” *News Release*, February 1, 2010.

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⁶ Canada’s Submission to the UNFCCC of its Quantified Economy-Wide Emissions Target <http://www.climatechange.gc.ca/cdp-cop/default.asp?lang=En&n=C4BD2547-1#p4>

⁷ Environment Canada, *National Inventory Report 1990-2008*, April 2010.

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/Publications/default.asp?lang=En&xml=492D914C-2EAB-47AB-A045-C62B2CDACC29>

⁸ Environment Canada, “Government of Canada to Regulate Emissions from Electricity Sector”, *News Release*, June 23, 2010.

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=714D9AAE-1&news=E5B59675-BE60-4759-8FC3-D3513EAA841C>

⁹ Mike Blanchfield Harper rejects UN chief's plea to make climate change G20 agenda's top priority, *The Canadian Press*, May 13, 2010. <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/un-chief-wants-environment-on-g20-agenda-urges-canada-to-live-up-to-kyoto-targets-93587324.html?viewAllComments=y>

¹⁰ Campbell Clark and Brian Milner, “Mexico’s President pushes Ottawa to act on climate change: Felipe Calderon breaks diplomatic ranks with host Stephen Harper, says ‘we cannot wait’ to follow U.S. lead”, *Globe and Mail*, May 28, 2010. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/mexicos-president-pushes-ottawa-to-act-on-climate-change/article1583574/>

¹¹ This conference is known as “COP 16 & CMP 6”. It is the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP 16) and the 6th Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 6), under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

¹² *G20 Leaders’ Statement – The Pittsburgh summit, September 24-25 2009*. See: Preamble, sections 24-26; Main Statement, sections 29-30. <http://www.pittsburghsummit.gov/mediacenter/129639.htm>

¹³ *G20 Leaders’ Statement – The Pittsburgh summit, September 24-25 2009*. Main Statement, section 30. <http://www.pittsburghsummit.gov/mediacenter/129639.htm>

¹⁴ Amy Taylor, et al., *Government Spending on Canada's Oil and Gas Industry: Undermining Canada's Kyoto Commitment*, Pembina Institute for the Climate Action Network, January 31, 2005. <http://www.greeneconomics.ca/pub/181>

¹⁵ Mike De Souza, “Phase out subsidies to oil and gas, Flaherty urged”, *Edmonton Journal, Canwest News Service*, May 26, 2010.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/business/Phase+subsidies+Flaherty+urged/3071210/story.html> The leaked memo from Deputy Minister Horgan was dated March 18, 2010.

¹⁶ Mike De Souza, “Harper sidesteps questions about eliminating subsidies to fossil fuel industry”, *Canwest News Service*, May 26, 2010.

<http://www.canada.com/technology/Harper+sidesteps+questions+about+eliminating+subsidies+fossil+fuel+industry/3074220/story.html>

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¹⁷ *Budget 2010: Leading the Way on Jobs and Growth: Tabled in the House of Commons by the Honourable James M. Flaherty, P.C., M.P. Minister of Finance, March 4, 2010.* For references to carbon capture and storage, see pages 103 & 245.

<http://www.budget.gc.ca/2010/home-accueil-eng.html>

¹⁸ *Budget 2010: Leading the Way on Jobs and Growth: Tabled in the House of Commons by the Honourable James M. Flaherty, P.C., M.P. Minister of Finance, March 4, 2010.* Page 245.

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¹⁹ *False Hope: Why carbon capture and storage won't save the climate*, Greenpeace International, May 5, 2008.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaigns/climate-change/coal/carbon-capture-and-storage/>

²⁰ *Copenhagen Accord* (December 18, 2009). See section 8.

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²¹ *Copenhagen Accord* (December 18, 2009). See section 8.

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²² *Climate Action Network International, Fair, Ambitious and Binding: Essentials for a successful climate deal*, November 2009.

http://www.climateactionnetwork.org/climate-change-basics/CAN_FAB_Essentials.pdf

²³ *United Nations, Secretary-General Names Members of High-Level Advisory Group on Mobilizing Climate Change Resources, Secretary-General News Release SG/A/1223 ENV/DEV/1113, March 4, 2010.*

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2010/sga1223.doc.htm>

²⁴ *UN Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing (AGF)*

<http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/pages/financeadvisorygroup>

²⁵ *Tom Athanasiou et al., Canada's Fair Share in a Climate Constrained World: An analysis of Canada's climate obligations under the Greenhouse Development Rights Framework*, A EcoEquity, SEI, Heinrich Boll Foundation, April 2009.

<http://www.climateactionnetwork.ca/e/issues/climate-justice/gdr-canada-fair-share.pdf>

²⁶ *Clare Demerse, Our Fair Share: Canada's Role in Supporting Global Climate Solutions*, Pembina Institute, April 2009. <http://pubs.pembina.org/reports/our-fair-share-report.pdf>

²⁷ *Cost of the G8 and G20 summits has been estimated at \$1.1 billion CAD, including \$933 billion for security.* See: Mike Blanchfield, "G8-G20 \$1B price tag sparks audit calls", Canadian Press, May 27 2010

<http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/article/815621--g8-g20-1b-price-tag-sparks-audit-calls-hard-questions-from-angry-opposition>

²⁸ *Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), "Canada Increases Funding for Global Effort to Fight Climate Change", News Release, May 28, 2010.*

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²⁹ *Environment Canada, "Government of Canada Makes Major Investment to International Climate Change" News Release, June 23, 2010.*

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