



# Policy Position

## Canadian Youth Delegation

### **Meaningful Engagement and Community Consultation**

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As youth, the impacts of climate change and the responsibility for mitigating them and adapting to them will fall squarely on our shoulders. Policies on climate change mitigation and adaptation will have long-lasting impacts on the lives of young people and we must be actively involved in shaping them. Small island, rural, Arctic, Indigenous and other vulnerable communities are already facing the first impacts of climate change. Their reliance upon resource-based livelihoods or the locations and configurations of their lands and territories make them especially vulnerable to future impacts. Despite being on the frontlines of climate change they are also largely excluded from decision-making.

The Canadian government must engage with Canadians to devise practical, equitable and cost-effective approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address the impacts of climate change. This can be achieved through education, consultation, involvement, collaboration and empowerment. The Canadian government must ensure that all citizens are well informed about climate change and have genuine opportunities to have their voice heard in relation to key policy and resource allocation decisions. Consultation may occur through community forums, surveys, community panels/juries, focus groups and workshops. Canadians should be included in all stages of policy development-planning, needs assessment, design, implementation, evaluation and monitoring-to ensure that the interests, concerns and aspirations are understood and incorporated. In particular-different age, gender, cultural and socio-economic perspectives must be included in policy development as well as significant opportunities for urban, rural, First Nations and remote location perspectives and participation. Collaborative approaches that emphasize engaging citizens and communities in informed and deliberative democracy with a focus on stewardship and empower Canadian to take action should be used.

### **Mitigation**

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First and foremost, at COP17 Canada must work with other parties to close the gap between current emission targets and what the science declares necessary to keep warming below 1.5°C. Mitigation targets should be divided amongst countries based on their historic responsibility for climate change and respective capability. The Greenhouse Development Rights framework is the fairest method currently available to calculate appropriate national emissions targets because it is based on historic emissions, differing economic capacity and non-monetary barriers to emissions reductions.

To meet our targets, Canada must adopt economy-wide emissions reductions plans that include all major fossil fuel emitters including the oil, gas and coal industries. A system of ambitious emissions targets for major industrial facilities is one of the most important policy initiatives to achieve a just and sustainable future. To date, Canadian government policy has served to facilitate the dramatic growth of emissions in the oil, gas and coal sectors by focusing on reducing the intensity of emissions instead of regulating or restricting absolute emissions, which allows the overall volume of emissions to grow. Furthermore, the government continues to facilitate the construction of new infrastructure in fossil fuel industries that will increase and lock-in production levels at a capacity that is dangerously unsustainable.



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Without a dramatic change in policy direction, the expansion of Tar Sands development will single-handedly compromise other Canadian efforts to mitigate climate change, preventing Canada from fulfilling its 2020 and 2050 emissions reduction commitments.

The Canadian government must create a just transition towards a sustainable energy future. To achieve this Canada must end all subsidies to the oil, gas and coal sectors and invest in climate-friendly industries. Domestic mitigation initiatives for countries to meet their emission reduction targets should be emphasized.

The current emphasis by the Canadian government on Carbon Capture and Storage is not part of a serious effort to mitigate climate change because while CCS could reduce emissions from individual projects, with production expected to more than double, a net increase in total emissions is inevitable without real action.

Canada must work with other Parties at COP17 to come to a fair, ambitious and legally binding agreement. Canada should not support proposals that are market-based including emissions trading, Joint Implementation, and the Clean Development Mechanism which are false solutions to climate change that do not reduce emissions to fair and safe levels, risk perpetuating poverty and injustice, and risk violating the land rights of Indigenous and forest peoples.

At COP17, Canada must work with other Parties to build a robust Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) framework. Further, Canada must work with other Parties to close loopholes to ensure that emissions are actually reduced to fair and safe levels by implementing rules to minimize damage from hot air (surplus AAUs); disallowing double counting of emissions reductions and financial flows and increasing accountability and ambition in reducing emissions from forests.

### **Adaptation**

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The Canadian Government needs to show leadership in negotiating innovative and holistic solutions to the adverse impacts that climate change is already set to produce. Canada needs to take a stand and assert that the objective of the UNFCCC Adaptation Framework be based on the priority of human security - committed to the protection of human rights, as well as ecological and economic self-determination.

A greater financial commitment is needed by all industrial countries to cooperate in the installation and maintenance of physical and social infrastructure necessary for communities around the world to withstand extreme weather events and slow-onset changes in climate patterns. Adaptation finance needs to be directed towards protecting people's fair and safe access to fundamental human needs.

Canada also needs to be critical of any economic or environmental policy that compromises resilience to climate change or produces greater hazards and vulnerabilities. Canada needs to negotiate for just, equitable and democratic popular sovereignty over food and energy systems as well as access to safe land, shelter and water.

Effective adaptation will require the fair and open access to migration, as well as respect



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internationally for indigenous sovereignty and self-determination.

### Technology Transfer

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The transfer of climate-friendly technology can allow developing countries to avoid the carbon-intensive development path of the Global North and is therefore vital to reducing global emissions. Technologies must be clean, environmentally sound and accessible for all developing countries.

At COP17, Canada must work with other Parties to agree on the structure, function, components, location and workplan of the Technology Mechanism as well as come to an agreement on IPRs for low-carbon technology. The Technology Mechanism must fulfill the commitments of development and transfer of technology between developed countries and developing countries, with the full and active participation of Indigenous peoples and social organizations of the world, and be accountable to the UNFCCC. Technological innovations for mitigation and adaptation that are currently governed by Intellectual Property Rights must become public dominion. Other tools such as prizes can be used instead to encourage innovation.

### Finance

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As a rich industrialized country that gained its wealth through irresponsible fossil fuel consumption, Canada has the responsibility to commit to and advocate for strong commitments from developed countries to mitigation and adaptation finance in line with the principle of Common But Differentiate Responsibility. Canada and other industrialized countries must give their ‘fair share’ to help the most vulnerable countries. Based on the Greenhouse Development Rights framework Canada’s fair share obligations within GDRs are 2.7% of the global mitigation requirement or about 470 megatonnes CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent by 2020 and 2.7% of the global adaptation burden.

Canada must reject the involvement of international financial institution including the IMF and World Bank, and the ‘development’ paradigm they promote which re-enforce power inequalities in climate financing. The faulty Capitalist economic model is a root cause of climate change and should not be used as a platform for climate finance.

Specifically, in cooperation with other Parties at COP17 Canada must reject the World Bank’s involvement with the Green Climate Fund because the World Bank is a lending institution whose structures, track record and policies are in contradiction to the principles of just, fair and effective climate finance.

The Canadian government must redirect the Fast Start Financing from the World Bank to instead fund grassroots initiatives for the mitigation and adaptation of climate change. Canada must ensure that all its financing is given in the form of grants not loans so as to not further indebted countries and instead enable them to take a climate-friendly development path.

Canada must move away from the endless growth economic model, towards an economic model that is locally oriented and focused on an equal distribution of wealth and the stewardship of our



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environment. Furthermore, Canada must redirect spending from destructive projects including the military<sup>1</sup> and the fossil fuel industry and instead invest in a transition to a green economy in Canada and in meaningful international mitigation and adaptation financing.

The transition to a green economy is vital to young Canadians because employment would grow faster and be of a greater quality with better climate policy. As more and more youth struggle to find meaningful employment and pay down mounting debt, the Canadian government must develop an immediate strategy for a just and timely transition towards meaningful, green jobs for all.

### Forests

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There is a need to integrate forest conservation and restoration strategies with sustainable livelihood strategies that correlate with Millennium Development Goals, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the outcomes of the Cochabamba-based World Peoples' Conference on Climate Change – not through oppressive forest policies proposed in the UNFCCC process (REDD+).

We call upon the Canadian Government to show leadership on behalf of frontline communities through the condemnation of false solution policies like Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation plus conservation (REDD+) that violate the sovereignty of forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and their rights to free, prior and informed consent and self-determination.

Currently, Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) allows countries to report activities that remove carbon and not count activities that release carbon, so actual emissions are higher than reported. We call upon the Canadian government to adopt a position on LULUCF that calls for an improved accounting system with mandatory reporting to fill in loopholes and ensure that Canada accounts for all emissions from forests including pest outbreaks and forest fires so that emissions are actually reduced to fair and safe levels.

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<sup>1</sup> The military produces enough GHGs to put the global human population and all other living systems in the danger of extinction. The military does not only fuel climate change through military operations and equipment procurement, but there is an irrefutable connection between recent military activity and oil. Furthermore, it is clear that war and other military pursuits are most prevalent in areas of economic and social inequality. Climate change not only reduces people's ability to provide for themselves and their communities, but it exacerbates existing social inequalities and could lead to massive civil unrest. Given the strong connection between the military operations, fossil fuels, and climate change, Canada must shift its military spending to transitioning towards a just and green economy. This will not only allow Canada to better reach its emissions targets, but it will reduce climate chaos worldwide and promote peace between nations.