



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

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BY: **Ms. BOUTIN-SWEET (HOCHELAGA)**

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PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE CATHERINE MCKENNA_**

Response by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Protection of the environment

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The effects of climate change and the need to act are increasingly evident in Canada and throughout the world. In response, Canada joined other countries in developing the Paris Agreement, an ambitious agreement that is galvanizing international efforts to limit global temperature rise and build climate resilience. The Government of Canada is proud that Canada was one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Paris Agreement in October 2016. The Paris Agreement aims to hold the increase in global average temperatures to well below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. The Paris Agreement is both ambitious and fair: it commits all countries to take the most ambitious action possible on climate change and progressively increase their level of ambition over time, while taking into account their individual national circumstances.

Canada ratified the Paris Agreement following a vote in the House of Commons on October 5, 2016, thus contributing to its entry into force less than a year after its adoption. Canada is now working towards implementing its commitments under the agreement, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions by collaborating with Provinces and Territories and Indigenous Peoples on implementing the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. The Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change, adopted on December 9, 2016, is a comprehensive plan to reduce emissions, accelerate clean economic growth, and build resilience to the impacts of climate change. The

Framework will allow Canada to meet or exceed its 2030 emission reduction target of 30 percent below 2005 levels under the Paris agreement.

The development of the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change was informed by input from Canadians across the country, who made it clear that they want to be part of the solution to climate change. Under the Vancouver Declaration, First Ministers asked four federal-provincial-territorial working groups to: work with Indigenous Peoples; consult with the public, businesses and civil society; and, present options to act on climate change and enable clean growth. The working groups heard solutions directly from Canadians, through an interactive website, in-person engagement sessions, and independent town halls. Representatives of Indigenous Peoples contributed their knowledge and expectations for meaningful engagement in climate action and provided important considerations and recommendations either directly to working groups or to ministers, which helped shape this framework. Ministers also reached out to Canadians, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and Indigenous Peoples to hear their priorities.

The Pan-Canadian Framework supports the transition to a prosperous, decarbonized economy through investments of nearly \$2.3 billion in clean technology and innovation that promote clean growth; including for early-stage technology development, and encouraging “mission-oriented” research to help generate innovative new ideas and create economic opportunities. Other complementary actions include: support for research, development, demonstration and adoption of clean technology in Canada’s natural resource sectors; and, an Impact Canada Fund to support clean technology and a Smart Cities Challenge. It will also be important to ensure a commitment to skills and training to provide Canadian workers with a just and fair transition to opportunities in Canada's clean growth economy.

These actions and other investments to support the transition to a prosperous, decarbonized economy were announced through Budget 2017, including:

- \$2 Billion Low Carbon Economy Leadership split into two parts, \$1.4billion for the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund to support new provincial and territorial actions to reduce emissions, and the remainder going to the Low Carbon Economy Challenge fund to support ambitious projects by all provinces and Territories as well as municipalities, Indigenous governments and organizations, businesses and both not-for-profit and for-profit organizations;
- \$21.9 billion to support green infrastructure, including for electricity, renewable energy, reducing reliance on diesel in Indigenous, northern and remote communities, electric vehicle charging and natural gas and hydrogen refuelling stations, new building codes, and disaster mitigation and adaptation.

Canada’s most recent national report on climate change progress to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – the 7th National Communication and 3rd Biennial Report – shows strong progress towards Canada’s 2030 target. The report finds that, as a result of recent government action, Canada’s GHG emissions are projected to be 583 MT of CO₂ in 2030, which is 232 MT lower than what was projected in our Second Biennial Report (released in early 2016). This decline in projected emissions is the biggest improvement in Canada’s emissions outlook since reporting began, and it is widespread across all economic sectors, reflecting the breadth and depth of the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. These projections also do not account for new policies that may be implemented by governments - municipal, provincial, territorial or federal - between now and 2030, and Canada and the provinces and territories have committed through the Pan-Canadian Framework to report on progress and take stock of results in order to increase ambition over time. Through this process, we may find that new or modified policies are needed in the future.

In addition to the policies mentioned above, the Government of Canada has developed a Mid-Century Strategy, in which Canada examines an emissions abatement pathway consistent with net emissions falling by 80% in 2050 from 2005 levels. This is consistent with the Paris Agreement's 2°C to 1.5°C temperature goal. The strategy focuses on meeting climate-change objectives and enabling growth, requiring significant long-term investments in infrastructure to support transformation to a low-carbon economy. Canada's mid-century strategy is not a blueprint for action nor is it policy prescriptive. Rather, it is based on modelling of different scenarios and is meant to inform the conversation about how Canada can achieve a low-carbon economy. As a result, it will be a living document.

When the policies and programs within the PCF are fully implemented it will not only allow Canada to meet its 2030 target in full, but position Canada to set and achieve deeper emission reduction targets beyond 2030, as required by the Paris Agreement.

Canada's natural spaces are a vital component of our culture, heritage, economy and our future, and they are of global importance. Canada's forests, wetlands, prairies, tundra and oceans provide essential ecosystem services. Approximately 30% of the world's boreal forest, 20% of the world's freshwater resources, the world's longest coastline and one of the world's largest marine territories are ours to enjoy, protect and share. Canada's natural areas include critical habitat for species at risk on land and at sea, thousands of lakes and rivers that provide drinking water and energy, and forests and wetlands that store greenhouse gases, produce oxygen and regulate flooding.

Protecting these important areas from degradation is one of our key means of conserving biodiversity in Canada and is vital in maintaining the ecosystem services provided by these areas. Canada's parks and protected areas provide a living legacy for future generations of Canadians, affording opportunities for people to discover and learn about nature. Canada has made great progress through the creation of national, provincial, and municipal parks and many other types of conservation areas that complement the role of protected areas in conserving nature. As pressures that threaten to degrade natural areas continue to increase, even greater effort is required to protect our land and water through a variety of means.

2018 Budget included a commitment to further investments to help grow a healthy and sustainable clean economy including investing \$1.3 billion over five years in protecting Canada's ecosystems, landscapes and biodiversity, including species at risk. This historic investment in nature conservation in Canada will provide an opportunity for the Government of Canada to collaborate with not-for-profit organizations, Indigenous communities, provincial and territorial governments, corporations and other partners to create a true legacy for future generations. As part of the \$1.3B investment, the Canada Nature Fund will provide federal funding of \$500 million over five years to create a \$1 billion fund in partnership with corporate, not-for-profit, provincial, territorial and other partners, with a primary focus on protecting spaces and species at risk. This investment is in addition to funds spent by many other conservation-minded organizations such as other governments, non-governmental organizations, private foundations, and private donors.

The Government of Canada is making these investments, in part, to help us reach and exceed our commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The international community used the best science available to establish a series of national-level conservation targets under that convention. As part of one of those targets, Canada has pledged that by 2020, at least 17 percent of terrestrial areas and inland water, and 10 percent of coastal and marine areas, will be conserved through networks of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. In February 2017, Ministers for parks, protected areas and biodiversity conservation committed to work with all levels of government, Indigenous people and stakeholders on a collaborative initiative called the Pathway to Canada Target 1; a plan to meet the quantitative and qualitative elements of the target. Canada's plan will describe how conservation

partners across the country will meet the target through protected areas, Indigenous protected and conserved areas (IPCAs), and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs).

The Government of Canada understands that the environment and economy go hand-in-hand. The government will continue to support sustainable and responsible land use decisions by others to protect biodiversity in working landscapes. By encouraging sustainable land use, Canadians can both provide a measure of protection for ecosystem health while also maintaining social and economic development.