



**POUR NOS ENFANTS
FOR OUR KIDS
MONTREAL**

January 28, 2021

Dear Minister Scarpaleggia,

We are writing to you today as parents, citizens and on behalf of our children who rely on the adults and politicians around them to save them from the impacts of the climate crisis. For the health of our communities and the well-being of our children and grandchildren, we need stronger climate action – including real emissions reduction accountability – and we need it now.

Our organizations represent thousands of concerned parents across Quebec and we would like to request an urgent meeting with you this week to discuss Bill C-12.

As a member of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development you have a vital role to play in strengthening Bill C-12, the Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act. This Bill is one of Canada's last opportunities to listen to science, act on the climate crisis and ensure our children inherit a liveable planet. As the Covid-19 pandemic has shown us, delaying crucial action in a public health crisis can be disastrous. We need an Accountability Act that takes the necessary action. Our children and grandchildren are counting on you.

In 1992, before many of our children were born, Canada signed on to its first climate change accord at the Earth Summit. Ten years later, having failed to meet these first targets and with increasing emissions, Canada signed on to the Kyoto Protocol. Canada's Kyoto target was to reduce 1990 emissions by 6% before 2008-2012. We withdrew in 2011 as our emissions had increased by over 30%. Similarly we failed to meet the agreed upon reductions of the Copenhagen Accord. With the present government we signed on to the Paris Agreement in 2015 but have continued to have increasing emissions and failed to meet these targets.

It is already too late to avoid some of the devastating consequences of climate change, like species extinction and the displacement of families around the world to sea level rise. As parents and grandparents, we cannot sit by and watch our country embark on another climate change promise that does too little, too late. We can no longer accept weak goals, ten year delays and methods that lack real accountability. We have to start now while there is still time to prevent the worst case scenarios. It is the only way to protect our children and their generation.

A climate accountability law could be an effective tool to tackle climate change, as we've seen being implemented in other countries where emissions are steadily decreasing, like in New Zealand, U.K., Germany, Sweden. However, for Canada's Bill C-12 to succeed in its purpose, it must undergo major changes.

Here are the changes that must be taken to make this Act effective:

1. **Ambitious action taken now:** Deferring the start date to 2030 when we are 30 years late in meeting any of our goals is not acceptable. It also means a different government will be in place and may decide not to take action. We need to reset the starting date to 2025 with a plan in place for 2021-2025. Green recovery measures must be taken immediately in response to the COVID-19 epidemic. This can have a large, and long term impact on lowering emissions and ensuring jobs in a green economy.
2. **Binding targets:** Targets must ensure that Canada is on a path to less than 1.5 degrees of warming. Despite promises to exceed the current target, the federal government's emissions target in this new Act for 2030 is a mere 30% decrease, a goal unchanged from the Harper-era. Even if this target is met, it puts us on a path for 3 degrees of warming by the end of the century, which scientists tell us will result in catastrophic and irreversible climate change. If we are to stay below the safest scenario of 1.5 degrees, the target must be doubled to a 60% decrease by 2030.
3. **Real and effective accountability:** The Act must have a more robust system of accountability that ensures targets are met. This would include
 - 5 year impact reports
 - Mandatory timelines
 - Binding agreements with enforcement by the courts as in the UK and New Zealand Climate Acts.
4. **An impartial and qualified Advisory Committee:** The Advisory Committee must be a proactive advisory committee that would be made of informed citizens with climate science backgrounds (excluding industry representatives) that would be involved in the evaluation of how well the government is doing in meeting the targets and able to speak out to ensure transparency. The UK has set up a very effective advisory board and could be the prototype for the development of this committee.
5. **Mandatory annual progress reports to parliament:** that report on Canada's GHG reduction targets that will inform plans to achieve targets and help Canadians adapt to a changing climate.

6. **Respect Indigenous Rights:** ensure that Indigenous peoples have a role in the planning and the advisory component of this Bill. We must respect and fully adopt the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP).

Our children are counting on your committee to mitigate the disaster that looms over their future. We are hopeful that you will ensure that the government listens to its citizens and climate scientists and makes the necessary changes to Bill C-12.

Sincerely,

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