

To: the Standing Committee for the Environment and Sustainable Development,

Francis Scarpaleggia (Chair) Dan Albas, Monique Pauzé (Co-Chairs)

Members: Yvan Baker, Laurel Collins, Joël Godin, Matt Jeneroux, Lloyd Longfield, Yasmin Ratansi, Brad Redekopp, Raj Saini, Peter Schiefke

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OUR TIME TO ACT

This is the time we need to be a good ancestor. Bill C-12 before you lacks the true targets and mechanisms required of the *Climate Accountability Legislation* needed in Canada at this time. However, we have the opportunity with this legislation to make it a law that will go into our history books as the selfless action of 'Good Ancestors' who act to protect their descendants into seven generations.

The true target needed to be met is a reduction of our GHG emissions **by 60% below the current 730Megatonnes** ⁽¹⁾ that we are spewing into the atmosphere. This reduction must be accomplished by 2030 if we hope to keep the planetary window open allowing us to accomplish our net-zero by 2050. With such a goal **we need a mid-target for 2025** to ensure we are on course. The path required to achieve this will be hard and Canadians will need to trust that the decisions are correct and based on science, and ultimately are for our survival. Therefore, the arms-length, independent advisory board determining the carbon budgets to adhere to must be made up of:

- Climate and Natural scientists who understand the physics and our ecosystems,
- Indigenous elder knowledge based in care for the land, and
- Independent engineering professionals versed in clean, efficient energy technologies.

This advisory board cannot be partisan and must not include fossil fuel industry representatives as **our path cannot be a negotiation**. This legislation must set real mechanisms to achieve this path as failure is not an option. These targets must be met. This needs to be seen as a war effort as we are fighting for the future of our species. This is an existential emergency and this law must carry that weight.

You do not need to be reminded that the time in which we find ourselves is fraught with climatic disruption. We have learned to thrive as a species on a planet where the seasons and weather were predictable from one month to the next. We could build our cities, plant our crops, undertake our livelihood, and raise our families with the assurance that we would be able to do the same thing in the following year. **We no longer have the assurance of continuity and we are the perpetrators of this change**. The economic systems and fossil fuel lifestyles we have come to enjoy and rely on have changed the balance of energy flow on our planet. In mining the fuels/ energies left from ancient times we have been able to exponentially grow our populations and technologies but unfortunately in doing so

outstrip the ability of our planet to sustain us. The continued mining, extracting and burning of these fuels has and continues to warm our atmosphere causing the climatic disruptions changing the world that humans have known for millennia. Since we have created this situation it is our responsibility to rectify the balance required by our planetary systems.

All nations, particularly the northern, first world nations who have contributed the most to the extraction and burning of fossil fuels have the moral responsibility to step up and do the most to control the emission of GHG that are causing this warming to happen. Canada has not stepped up, we have not accepted the responsibility to curb our extraction and reliance on fossil fuels. We have closed our eyes and covered our ears to what is happening in our own country. Our Arctic is disappearing and still we listen to and try to appease the oil and gas companies. These companies, who have for decades known the impact fossil fuels have on our climate, and have systematically denied the connection. ⁽²⁾ Unbelievable betrayal by those we have elected to lead us into history.

The planetary systems are now doing their own warming through feedback loops and our elected MPs continue to want to negotiate the targets that we will 'try' to attain. Please view the attached videos on the climate feedback loops that are taking hold in all of our systems – atmosphere, permafrost, forests, and albedo (the reflective quality of ice).

Climate Emergency: Feedback Loops, <https://feedbackloopsclimate.com> ⁽³⁾

If you did watch these videos then the consequences of our inaction should now be branded on your psyches. Once you know this truth you cannot forget where our planet is headed. The *Climate Accountability Legislation* that you will be discussing, in its present form, is an insult to living and future Canadians; particularly to our grandchildren and beyond. This legislation as written does not account for anything that matters. The IPCC has indicated that we have this decade (which is now only 2021-2029) to make the difference. ⁽⁴⁾ **If we do not, the planetary window will close, feedback loops will take over and net-zero in 2050 will be unattainable.**

The legislation you are looking at marks our first target as 2030 and a **mere** 30% which was PM Harper's target before the Paris Agreement. As shown that is just too late, and would be considered failure in getting to our net-zero goal and achieving a 1.5deg increase. The 1.5deg increase is something that scientists feel we would have a chance to adapt to. ⁽⁵⁾ Anything higher and it is unlikely our existence as we know it will be recognizable. The real target needs to be 60% for 2030 and we need a 2025 target for the urgency of what is in front of us is great. We need an all-out war time effort to mobilize, to communicate, to not leave anyone behind and to achieve this great task. The legislation you are reviewing is not courageous or bold enough to get the job done. The fate of our human species depends on us not missing that planetary window for change.

Who will set the 'carbon budgets' that we will be accountable to meet. In this present legislation it is unclear who will be on the advisory board. It is suggested that various people, maybe a climate scientist but surely industry representatives will tell us what is possible. Winston Churchill did not ask British industries whether the war was something the Allies could win. We do not have the transition time or 'carbon budget' that some MPs are espousing. There is no time to build pipelines for the oil industry. There is no time to claim stranded fuels. It is insulting when we are told that sending our fuels offshore does not impact our GHG emissions. We are no less culpable in this planetary disaster. There is one atmosphere and it does not care where the coal or oil or natural gas is burned. Canada is a rich, first world country who has extracted and burned many of the GHGs that are creating the disaster we find ourselves in. We have the moral obligation to step up and do our part in this war to rebalance the global energy flows. With the stronger, bolder legislation that we need, our grandchildren will still be living with disruption however you will give them a chance.

We need **courageous, bold non-partisan leadership**. People who will speak the truth and not accept defeat. We do not need negotiators at this point in history. The climate scientists are the experts who need to be charting the path. Our MPs and industry reps should be fearfully listening and courageously doing what is needed. As should we all.

As Canadian citizens and parents & grandparents, we are calling on you all to push for amendments to this climate legislation that includes:

- A 2025 milestone for serious 30% emissions reduction
- A stronger emissions reduction target of 60% by 2030 ⁽¹⁾, to align with IPCC recommendations + account for feedback loops, and that will be enshrined in law
- 5 year carbon targets to keep us on track
- Mandatory annual progress reports on Canada's GHG reductions that will inform plans to adjust targets on an ongoing basis and help Canadians adapt to their new reality
- A clear legal duty to reach the set targets so that they endure governments of the future
- Clearly defined and robust roles for an independent advisory body that must be funded and include climate science experts and Indigenous elders to help set targets, review, assess, and report to Parliament on progress.

We have run out of time to prevent the worst impacts of the climate crisis. It is imperative that the government amend Bill C-12 to make it much stronger if we are to secure a livable future for our grandchildren.

With anguish we thank you for reading and pray for a good outcome.

Endnotes:

1. Climate Action Network, 'Getting Real about Canada's Climate Plan', <https://climateactionnetwork.ca>
2. Shannon Hall, 'Exxon Knew about Climate Change Almost 40 Years Ago', *Scientific American*, October 26, 2015 <https://www.scientificamerican.com>
3. Featured Scientists in Feedback Loops Videos – <https://feedbackloopsclimate.com>
 - a. George Woodwell, Ecologist, Founder, Woods Hole Research Center
 - b. Warren Washington – National Center for Atmospheric Research
 - c. Dr. Andrew Tanentzap – Dept of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge
 - d. Brendan Rogers – Earth System Science, Woods Hole Research Center
 - e. Don Perovich – Engineering professor, sea ice geophysics, Dartmouth College
 - f. Dr. Sue Natali – Arctic ecologist - Woods Hole Research Center
 - g. Dr. Beverly Law – Professor, Dept of Forestry&Ecosystems, Oregon State University
 - h. Marila Holland – National Center for Atmospheric Research, Colorado
 - i. Dr. Jennifer Francis – Arctic atmospheric sciences - Woods Hole Research Center
 - j. Kerry Emanuel – meteorologist & climate scientist - M.I.T.
 - k. Dr. Phil Duffy – physicist - Woods Hole Research Center
 - l. Mike Coe – Woods Hole Research Center
4. IPCC 2018 Report, [SR15 SPM version report LR.pdf \(ipcc.ch\)](https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15_spm_version_report_LR.pdf)
5. Climate Reality Project, [2030 or Bust: 5 Key Takeaways from the IPCC Report | Climate Reality \(climaterealityproject.org\)](https://climaterealityproject.org/2030-or-bust-5-key-takeaways-from-the-ipcc-report)

Eco-Elders for Climate Action gathers elder voices to advocate for meaningful action by our governments to ensure a carbon-neutral future for all generations. We are Calgary based. ecoeldersyyc@gmail.com