

## ***Bill C-12 Submission***

***Without at least yearly monitoring, Canada will miss its 2030 Paris targets.***

***To deal effectively with the Covid-19 Emergency, we monitor every day; the Climate Emergency requires an equally serious level of engagement.***

***Reporting every 5 years on the Climate Crisis would be like reporting on Covid-19 cases every 3 months - simply not acceptable.***

### **Introduction**

To deal with any crisis, it is mandatory that progress is checked carefully — and regularly. The old adage that “You can’t manage what you don’t measure” comes to mind. In the case of Covid-19, we track daily: new cases, positive tests, hospitalizations, deaths, vaccination rates, nationally and regionally. The public expects this level of reporting; public health demands this level of scrutiny to guide effective policy.

Only through this close and regular monitoring can we possibly get a handle on the pandemic and whether we're doing what we need to do in the realm of public health in order to get out of this crisis situation.

## Different Crisis. Same Strategy.

The strategy should be no different for the Climate Crisis. If we are to reduce Canada's carbon footprint by half this decade, as we must according to the best science,<sup>1</sup> it is mandatory that we conduct the same kind of detailed tracking of key markers and indicators to establish whether or not we're on course to meet our current Paris targets and beyond.

Canada needs to reduce its carbon footprint by 7% per year, every year over the next 9 years. ***To accomplish this we need to have at least yearly targets, not one every 5 years.*** No one would sincerely attempt such an ambitious program -- and only check progress every half decade.

The federal government standard for major projects is yearly budgeting. Why would we check our emission-cut progress in four years and then at the end of the decade if we truly wanted to meet our targets?

Bill C-12 now has 2030 as its first milestone year. Even if this is changed to 2025, it is still dangerously inadequate. It falls far short of the kind of attention we need to give our carbon reduction activities, if we are going to have any chance of meeting the goals that Canada has set for 2030.

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<sup>1</sup> IPCC. Global Warming of 1.5 °C. <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

## **Carbon Budgeting**

A second serious concern with Bill C-12 is that the federal government has not come up with carbon budgeting as recommended by the IPCC, which is absolutely key to making carbon reductions. Again, without carbon budgeting we will simply not meet our targets.

We cannot continue to expand the most carbon intensive segment of our economy. The fossil fuel industry is a relatively small part of our economy providing <1% of jobs and < 7% of GDP, but it is responsible for more than 25% of Canada's carbon footprint, and this is increasing.<sup>2</sup> Without reining in fossil fuels expansion, we cannot expect to meet the goals we have set to keep warming under 1.5 degrees C.

Canada has been a climate laggard over the last three decades, letting our carbon footprint expand by over 20% because of the fossil fuel industry expansion. Other countries and regions, the EU in particular, have honoured their commitments and dramatically reduced their carbon footprint. Canada committed to reduce our carbon footprint in nine previous agreements - but failed to meet any of them.

## **Recommendations**

Four recommendations:

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<sup>2</sup> Environmental Defence.

1) We have to monitor our carbon footprint and associated metrics every year, if not every quarter, through the 2020s. Taking stock every five years would be like checking in every few months on Covid-19 case counts and deaths. This is patently absurd. The pandemic would continue to rage and would take forever to bring under control. The situation is no different for the Climate Crisis which is at least an order of magnitude more serious than the pandemic.

2) Bill C-12 has to be greatly strengthened with serious penalties for missing targets.

3) A completely independent climate science voice must be appointed to hold the government accountable - not just a group of hand-picked people to provide feedback which the minister can use at his or her whim.

4). The Liberal government needs to be doing carbon budgeting. We simply will not be able to reach our climate goals without a proper reckoning with the expansion of the oil and gas industry in Canada.

## **Conclusion**

It is very worrying that the oil and gas industry has secretly been meeting with senior representatives of the PCO, environment and climate change, natural resources, and

finance during the Covid-19 crisis.<sup>3</sup> It is clear that the Liberal climate plan reflects what the oil and gas industry wants - fossil-fuel expansion at a time when the best science makes it crystal clear we must be reducing and ultimately eliminating fossil fuel extraction in this country.

We have a choice to make! We either continue to let the oil and gas industry expand its enormous carbon footprint or we end the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure and then start finding ways to start to wind it down over the remainder of this decade, because we are worried more about our children's future than principally foreign millionaires' bank accounts.

It's in the Environment Committee's court; you will be held responsible. If Bill C-12 goes through in its present form - too weak to make a difference - you will have to look your children and grandchildren directly in the eye and explain why you chose to serve a greedy industry rather than save young people's futures.

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<sup>3</sup> Martin Lukacs, Oil lobby, Trudeau government formed secretive committee during pandemic. The Breach, April 13, 2021.