



Amendments to C-12: Canadian Net Zero Emissions Climate Accountability Act

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Lyn Adamson,
Co-Chair, ClimateFast
416-731-6605,
www.climatefast.ca
lyn@climatefast.ca

About ClimateFast

Our purpose is to build and support a strong, informed civic movement that ensures our elected representatives make climate change a top priority and take decisive, urgent and just action. Our vision is a thriving world where the climate is safe for all people and ecosystems. Representing over 2000 people, ClimateFast was founded in 2012.

TIME FOR BOLD ACTION, AMBITIOUS TARGETS AND CLEAR ACCOUNTABILITY

We are writing to express our deep concern that the current bill as written, while well intentioned, will fall far short of the goal that is needed to safeguard a living planet for our children and grandchildren.

It is essential to look to the year 2100 to see where the current trajectories would take us. On a business-as-usual path that is to a temperature rise of 4 – 5 degrees (on average, more extreme in some areas) and this is unlivable.

We see widespread agreement that there must be net zero emissions by 2050.

However this horizon is much too far away. We have to set the steps that will take us there and get started right away. We can only measure our progress by what we must do in these very few years we have, this decade we are in right now, which scientists tell us **must be our turnaround decade.**

The IPCC has told us that we must cut 7% per year every year of this decade at a minimum - and we haven't started yet. And this plan of 40 – 45% cut by 2030 does not reflect Canada's fair share target based on our history of fossil fuel emissions. **We must do more** in order to do our part of the goal to stay under a 1.5 degree (global, average) temperature rise.

Therefore taking a first target year of 2030 is not acceptable. We must make major reductions by the year 2025, and therefore we urge that you set an ambitious target for 2025, and measure each year how we are doing on the path to get there. **A fair share target would be 60% reductions by 2030 plus international assistance to other countries in their transition.**

We urge you to aim high and then take the steps to achieve it. This may seem overly ambitious, but we have waited much too long with emissions unsustainably high - and we now need to act fast.

Science tells us that it is possible to get there.

C 12 must be strengthened in these ways:

- 1) Establish a 2025 target
- 2) Provide for annual reports on progress
- 3) Name an advisory committee made up of scientists
- 4) Establish a committee that lasts beyond the government's term
- 5) Set targets commensurate with the science, as in what is required to stay under a 1.5 degree rise
- 6) Set a fair share target that includes our responsibility to support global transition – 60% by 2030
- 7) Set budgets 10 years in advance - measured in terms of carbon budgets rather than percentage reduction
- 8) The Commissioner for the Environment and Sustainable Development should be an Independent office of Parliament to ensure independence of advice.

Carbon budgets establish a fixed amount of carbon that can be emitted over a given time period and are internationally recognized as a better measurement for ensuring emission reductions. In the interests of long-term planning the budgets should also be set **10 - 15 years in advance**, rather than the current five years.

Accountability: Bill C-12 must impose a clear **legal duty** on the government to meet the targets.

Bill C-12 establishes an **Advisory Body** to simply advise the Minister for the Environment. The Bill needs to be amended to strengthen the role and independence of the Advisory Body **by specifying the qualifications of appointees** including a demonstrated understanding of **climate change, its impacts, and Canada's treaty responsibilities**. The role of the Advisory Body should be expanded to include both advising on **interim targets** and **reporting on progress** toward meeting those targets. **Progress reports should be required on an annual basis.**

Establish a framework for national and subnational intergovernmental

cooperation. An intergovernmental approach to emission reductions is crucial if Canada is to meet its targets. Bill C-12 should be amended to include an institutional framework for cooperation, consultation, and negotiation between the provinces and territories. **Indigenous governments must be full partners** in planning and implementing a carbon budget and emission reductions targets. Responsibility for meeting the carbon budget must be shared equitably across regions and must include implementation of a **just transition for workers and communities** affected by the shift to a low-carbon future.

In addition to C-12 –

Sharing the effort internationally:

Canada's fair share also means helping developing countries to reduce GHGs.

Canada's fair share is at least \$4bn annually.

We support the position of a **Chief Climate Scientist** that would both educate the public in understanding that we are in an emergency, and need to act, fast.

The credibility of a person in this position would strengthen **public engagement**.

In addition to an expert advisory body a **roundtable** on environment and economy could bring representatives of different sectors together to implement the changes needed to achieve the deep targets that are set out by the scientific advisory body.

Our children are counting on us to act.

We believe people are ready for action. Polling indicates that **76% of the public** see climate change as serious or extremely serious. (see Rollup of Public Opinion Polls).

Young people are even more anxious about the future and taking strong action will reassure them that we are serious about safeguarding their future. We cannot get it wrong. We need to get it right!

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Nations who have passed climate accountability legislation include: the United Kingdom Climate Change Act (2008); Mexico, General Law on Climate Change (2012); Finland, Climate Change Act, (2015); Sweden, Climate Act, (2018); New Zealand, Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill (2019); Germany, Climate Action Law (2019); The Netherlands, Climate Act (2019); Mexico. For a full list as of May 2020 see: <https://www.ecojustice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/6-Mini-Briefing-on-international-climate-change-laws-abbreviated-March-2020.pdf>

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