

July 31, 2024

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada,
The Honourable Pierre Poilievre, Leader of the Official Opposition,
The Honourable Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada,
The Honourable Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada,
The Honourable Yves-François Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois,
The Honourable David Eby, Premier of British Columbia,
The Honourable Danielle Smith, Premier of Alberta,
The Honourable Scott Moe, Premier of Saskatchewan,
The Honourable Wab Kinew, Premier of Manitoba,
The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario,
The Honourable François Legault, Premier of Québec,
The Honourable Blaine Higgs, Premier of New Brunswick,
The Honourable Dennis King, Premier of Prince Edward Island,
The Honourable Tim Houston, Premier of Nova Scotia,
The Honourable Andrew Furey, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador,
The Honourable Ranj Pillai, Premier of Yukon,
The Honourable R.J. Simpson, Premier of Northwest Territories,
The Honourable P.J. Akeegok, Premier of Nunavut

The lives of the people in Jasper, a mountain town beloved by Canadians, a place so many of us have spent time in, have been devastated because of a fast-spreading wildfire. Our hearts go out to the people of Jasper and all of the communities and Indigenous Nations facing evacuation, the loss of their homes, businesses and traditional lands. We grieve with them during this unimaginably difficult time.

To the leaders of governments in Canada, we have a different message: how many more of our communities need to burn before our leaders act with the urgency required?

In order to stem wildfires, and other increasingly severe weather events, while protecting Canadians, the only way is through decisive action on climate change.

Reducing emissions – starting with Canada’s biggest polluters – is key to preventing fires from getting worse, and protecting our loved ones and our collective health and safety. The science shows that climate change, driven by the burning of fossil fuels, makes wildfires [bigger, hotter, and more frequent](#). Climate change [more than doubled](#) the likelihood of extreme fire weather conditions in Quebec last year. Thirty-seven [per cent of burned forest area](#) in Western Canada and the United States over the last few decades can be linked to 88 major fossil fuel producers and cement manufacturers. Meanwhile, according to a recent Abacus poll, almost all [\(89%\) of Canadians](#) have noticed an increase in natural disasters over the past decade, while seven in ten say it is because of the effects of climate change.

We, the 80 undersigned organizations urge the federal government, with support from all federal and provincial leaders and political parties, to immediately, with no further delays, regulate oil and gas companies responsible for one third of Canada’s carbon pollution to sharply reduce their emissions, along with the financial institutions that bankroll them, so that devastating wildfires, heat domes and floods don’t continue to worsen across this country.

Jasper is the latest in a growing list of communities in Canada that have been devastated by wildfires:

- 2023 - Enterprise, NWT
- 2023 - Ktunaxa Nation community of aq'am, BC
- 2023 - Skwłāx te Secwepemcúlecw, Little Shuswap Lake, BC
- 2023 - Upper Tantallon, NS
- 2023 - Barrington, NS
- 2023 - Mistissini, QC
- 2023 - Senneterre, QC
- 2023 - Fort Chipewyan, AB
- 2021 - Lytton, BC
- 2017 - Tahltan First Nation
- 2016 - Fort McMurray, AB
- 2015 - La Ronge, SK
- 2011 - Slave Lake, AB

Meanwhile, across Canada, more than [750 wildfires burn](#), with the majority burning out of control.

We are heartbroken to see so many families forced to leave their homes, unsure about whether they'll have one to return to. In last summer's record-breaking wildfires, over 232,000 people were evacuated, including [25,000](#) Indigenous people, making up 10% of evacuees despite only being 5% of Canada's population. Millions more across North America were exposed to unprecedented, harmful levels of wildfire smoke.

It's important to underscore the particular toll climate related events have had on Indigenous peoples, accounting for [more than 42% of fire evacuations](#) from 1980 to 2021.

We, the undersigned, say enough is enough.

Eight years ago, Canada signed the Paris Agreement. That same year saw the largest evacuation in Canadian history due to a wildfire in Fort McMurray.

Since then, oil and gas companies and some politicians have pushed back against regulating Canada's largest and growing source of emissions, the oil and gas industry. Those emissions [continue to climb, while Canadians' homes are burning.](#)

While limiting warming to 1.5°C requires a just transition away from fossil fuels, oil production in Canada [reached](#) a record level this year, with Canadian banks and financial institutions among the world's top funders bankrolling oil and gas companies. Canada – a large and rich historical polluter – has the second largest oil and gas expansion plans in the world.

Canadians deserve better than ongoing delays that have prevented a cap to rising oil and gas emission being implemented and climate policy that has been weakened by persistent fossil fuel lobbying.

This country has been more intent on bankrolling financially and environmentally irresponsible projects like the \$34 billion Trans Mountain pipeline expansion than sharply reducing emissions, required for a safe climate. In the last month, at least \$1.5 billion in new government financing

was allocated: \$300 million for Enbridge, \$500 million for Cedar LNG, \$500 million for Strathcona Resources and \$200 million for Coastal GasLink.

Now we see [Trans Mountain being prioritized](#) for protection as 'critical infrastructure' despite it originally [being declared at low risk](#) from wildfires, while Jasper and Jasper National Park burn.

We ask our federal and provincial governments and all-party leaders to stop playing politics with our health and safety and take urgent action to hold the oil and gas industry accountable for the devastation it causes and end our collective dependence on fossil fuels, while supporting workers and communities and ensuring social dialogue through this transition.

What's needed is meaningful cooperation across jurisdictions to regulate and cap the industry's climate pollution; ending the flow of private and public funds to oil and gas; redirecting them to affected communities and those currently dependent on fossil revenue; and regulating the financial institutions bankrolling fossil fuel projects.

Governments in Canada must put the health of people in Canada and our communities above fossil fuel profits – before another town or city burns or floods due to the impacts of climate change.

Signed,
Stand.earth
Ecojustice
Greenpeace Canada
Équiterre
The Council of Canadians
Environmental Defence Canada
The Climate Justice Organizing HUB
Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
David Suzuki Foundation
West Coast Environmental Law Association
Climate Action Network - Réseau action climat Canada
Union of British Columbia Indian Chief
re•generation
Wildlands League
Leadnow
Decolonial Solidarity
New Brunswick Anti-Shale Gas Alliance
Shift: Action for Pension Wealth & Planet Health
RBC Off Screen
Gidimt'en Checkpoint
Canadian Interfaith Fast For the Climate
Alberta Wilderness Association
Wilderness Committee
Seniors For Climate Action Now!
Green Majority Radio
Friends of the Earth Canada
The ChariTree Foundation
Canadian Unitarians For Social Justice
For Our Kids Canada
Citizens' Climate Lobby Canada

Climate Emergency Unit
Council of Canadians, Calgary Chapter
Change Course
Citizens for Public Justice
350 Canada
Grand(m)others Act to Save the Planet
Burnaby Residents Opposing Kinder Morgan Expansion-BROKE
Green 13
Sierra Club Canada Foundation
The Climate Reality Project Canada
Canadian Health Association for Sustainability and Equity (CHASE)
My Sea to Sky
Sectoral Climate Arts Leadership for the Emergency (SCALE-LeSAUT)
Idle No More
Conservation Council of New Brunswick
PIPE UP Network
Climate Justice Saskatoon
The Saskatchewan Coalition for Sustainable Development
Doctors for Planetary Health - West Coast
Mères au front
Music Declares Emergency Canada
Ateliers pour la biodiversité - Workshops for Biodiversity
Indigenous Climate Action
Shake Up The Establishment
Protect Our Winters Canada
Oil Change International
Teachers for Future Turtle Island
BCTFDivestNow
Protect the Planet
Transition Salt Spring
The Centre for Climate Justice
The Nulla Project
Ministry for Social Justice, Peace, & Creation Care - Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto
South Fraser Unitarian Congregation
Canadian Voice of Women for Peace
Women's International League for Peace & Freedom-Canada
Vancouver Cohousing
Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition
Sierra Club BC
Kootenay Outdoor & Environmental Learning Society
Climate Justice Victoria
Georgia Strait Alliance
Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment
New Westminster Climate Action Hub
West Kootenay Climate Hub
Force of Nature Alliance
Seniors For Climate
Plant Based Treaty
Pro Information Pro Environment United People Network
Alberni Valley Transition Town Society