



Liberal
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NORTH VANCOUVER

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Climate Change: Canada's Shame

Any remaining illusion, in the eyes of the world, that Canada is serious about climate change was shattered last week by the Harper government's release of its latest targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Six weeks after missing a United Nations deadline to submit its targets, Canada unveiled a promise to reduce our emissions by 30% from 2012 levels by 2030.

That's less than targets set out by any other industrialized country in advance of a critical global conference in Paris this year. And, as international commentators were quick to point out, Canada's promise just isn't credible as we have failed to achieve all our previous global commitments.

As recently as last December, Environment Canada said that the country is on track to get only halfway to our 2020 emissions commitment agreed to by Mr. Harper just six years ago.

Rogue state

The beginning of Canada's decline to a climate change rogue state was signalled by Mr. Harper several years ago when, referring to the first global forum on climate change, he said famously: "Kyoto is a socialist plot intended to suck wealth from the first world."

Since then, his government has dramatically reduced its support for climate research, cut major federal programs supporting renewable energy development, gutted decades' worth of environmental legislation and muzzled government scientists.

The fine print of last week's announcement outlines emission standards for most sectors of the economy – with the dubious exception of the oil sands. And the document leaves open the possibility that Canada will not make the 30% cut solely based on our own emissions, but will purchase offsets from countries that do.

We know what to do

Canada can achieve meaningful targets. Justin Trudeau has put forward a Liberal blueprint to lead collaboratively with the provinces on an action plan. (More in this space next week on how a Liberal government would restore Canada's international respect and credibility on climate change.)

This is a defining issue of our time. It affects our children and the kind of world we are leaving them like no other.

It's what motivated me to spend the past 17 years working as a leader in BC's clean technology sector. And it's a key reason why I left the private sector a year ago to work to become your Member of Parliament in North Vancouver.

If you care about climate change and the future of the planet and want to see a government that will take decisive and effective action, the upcoming federal election is your chance. Join us.

You are invited to attend "Building a Better Canada: A Community Conversation with Jonathan Wilkinson" at the John Braithwaite Community Centre, 145 1st St W, May 21st @ 7:00 p.m.

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