

1Sky * Center for Biological Diversity * Climate Action Network Canada *
Earthjustice * EcoJustice Canada * Environmental Defence Canada *
ENE (Environment Northeast) * Equiterre * Friends of the Earth * Greenpeace Canada *
Greenpeace USA * Interfaith Power and Light * League of Conservation Voters *
National Wildlife Federation * Natural Resources Defense Council *
Oil Change International * Pembina Institute * Safe Climate Campaign * Sierra Club *
Sierra Club Canada * SustainUS * Union of Concerned Scientists * U.S. Climate Action
Network * World Wildlife Fund Canada * World Wildlife Fund United States

April 14, 2010

The Right Honorable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
24 Sussex Drive, Ottawa
Harrington Lake, Gatineau Park
Canada

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500
USA

Dear Prime Minister Harper and President Obama,

At the G8 and G20 meetings last July in L'Aquila and Pittsburgh, and in Copenhagen, world leaders committed to fight climate change, phase out subsidies for fossil fuels and support innovative mechanisms to generate climate finance for developing countries mitigation and adaptation efforts. We urge you to build on these commitments by putting climate on the agenda for the Toronto G20 meeting in June and agreeing to:

- Specific additional steps to keep global average temperature rise from pre-industrial levels to well below 2° C;
- Curb expansion of high-carbon intensity industries such as tar sands oil development;
- Support innovative financing mechanisms to generate substantial new and additional public financial support for developing countries, as pledged in the Copenhagen Accord; and
- Take immediate action to fulfill your commitment at the Pittsburgh G20 to phase out fossil fuel subsidies.

These necessary steps, proposed at the very moment when the global economic crisis and the climate crisis have collided, reflect the immense business and job opportunities available to the United States and Canada from pursuing a transition to a low-carbon economy. They also represent a clear formula for ensuring that both crises do not worsen.

G20 countries must lead in a cooperative effort to keep the earth's temperature from warming no more than 2° C above pre-industrial levels. Keeping the increase as far below this level as possible is critical to limiting the impacts of climate change. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we have a reasonable chance of meeting this objective if developed countries as a whole cut their emissions by 25-40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and by 80-95 percent below 1990 levels by 2050; within this time frame, major developing countries also must act.

Mitigation action pledges and commitments put forward before and since Copenhagen are an important first step. They do not, however, put the world on track to reduce emissions fast enough to achieve the 2° C commitment and avoid catastrophic climate change. The G20 should determine how to close the gap between the 3 – 4° C world, which would be the result of existing pledges and the 2° C goal you collectively committed to in Copenhagen.

The G20 should also call on countries with rapidly growing high-carbon intensity sectors, such as Canada's tar sands oil, to curb expansion in the face of the dire need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Sectors such as Canada's tar sands oil industry are not only a fast-growing source of greenhouse gas emissions, but expansion of this industry keeps us on the old path of dependence on fossil fuels and undermines efforts at home and internationally to build a low-carbon economy.

The Copenhagen summit also produced historic commitments from the world's developed countries regarding climate finance. Countries agreed to jointly mobilize \$100 billion annually by 2020 for developing country mitigation and adaptation activities, and to provide short-term financing approaching \$30 billion for the three-year period between 2010 and 2012. Collectively, most developed countries appear to be on track to approach the short-term goal, but much more must be done to assure the much larger resources pledged beyond 2012. In that light, the G20 should support innovative mechanisms which generate substantial new and additional public funds. We urge you to consider a financial transaction tax, levies on bunker fuels, and reallocating the International Monetary Fund's Special Drawing Rights, each of which have significant potential to assist developing countries in adapting to climate change, reducing deforestation, and investing in a global clean energy economy.

Elimination of fossil fuel subsidies represents one of the most promising new and additional sources of climate finance. During the Pittsburgh summit last September, G20 leaders committed to "phase out and rationalize over the medium term inefficient fossil fuel subsidies while providing targeted support for the poorest." Funds previously used to support the fossil fuel industries most responsible for greenhouse gas emissions should be redirected as a source for climate finance. We are encouraged by the recent efforts in the U.S. to end a dozen tax breaks for oil, gas, and coal companies that total \$36 billion over the next decade. We call on the G20 to end tax breaks for oil, gas, and coal companies and to shift these resources to support clean energy development, forest protection, and adaptation to climate change in developing countries.

We look to the G20 to help move the world towards a low-carbon economy based on sustainable energy resources. Please act now to turn commitments into reality. The UN Framework

Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) should continue to be the venue for reaching agreement on the global response to climate change. The Toronto Summit presents a critical opportunity to make concrete progress on the road to the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties meeting in Cancun, Mexico in December.

Sincerely,

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Director
Safe Climate Campaign

CC: James Jones, Michael Froman, and Madhuri Kommareddi, National Security Council; Hillary Clinton, Department of State; Timothy Geithner, Department of the Treasury; Lisa Jackson, Environmental Protection Agency; Carol Browner, White House Office of Energy and Climate Change Policy; Larry Summers, National Economic Council; Todd Stern, Department of State; Jim Prentice, Ministry of Environment; Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance; Len Edwards, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Linda Duncan, New Democratic Party; Bernard Bigras, Bloc Québécois; David McGuinty, Liberal Party of Canada