

{ ENVIRONMENT }

The Current Situation

Since the 2015 election, the Alberta Government has put a price on carbon, capped oil sands emissions at 100 Mt, set targets for significantly cutting methane emissions from oil and gas operations, and begun phasing out coal-fired power. Additionally, the government has set a target to get 30 per cent of Alberta's electricity from renewable resources such as wind, hydro, and solar by 2030.

With an investment of \$645 million from its carbon levy, the provincial government created Energy Efficiency Alberta, a new crown corporation to implement many of its programs to reduce energy usage in residential and commercial settings. The government has also made changes to increase Albertans' engagement in micro-generation of renewable power and launched programs to support Indigenous communities and school boards to help them shift their electricity base away from reliance on fossil fuels and toward renewable energy generation.

In 2016, the provincial and federal governments committed to protecting at least 17 per cent of land and inland water systems by 2020 by building networks of protected areas and implementing other conservation measures. Action on that promise has included protection of the Castle Wildland Provincial Park, home to many at-risk species in southern Alberta.

At the same time, the Alberta government has been actively lobbying for approval of new oil and gas pipelines, which run counter to its climate change commitments. Without the

consent of Indigenous peoples whose lands are directly affected by these projects, successive governments have failed to fully implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which would enshrine land rights and the self-determination of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities in law.

Alberta's Climate Leadership Plan is missing clear targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Between 1990 and 2015, our emissions increased by 56 per cent, primarily due to the increase in oil and gas exports. Due to a lack of public reporting, Albertans currently have no way of knowing if the climate policies being implemented are actually reducing our emissions.

The federal government's commitment in signing the Paris Accord on climate change, which commits to keeping global warming below two degrees Celsius compared with preindustrial times, was followed up with a federal carbon price floor to be phased in beginning in 2018. The federal carbon price standard will reach its maximum of \$50 per tonne by 2022. However, according to the Pembina Institute, a carbon price of at least \$140 per tonne would be required for Alberta to make its fair contribution to reducing Canada's emissions.

Our federal and provincial governments do not yet have clear plans to meet our international commitments to prevent catastrophic climate change. Without such plans in place, we are unlikely to meet the challenge climate change poses to our planet for the sake of present and future generations.



Priorities for Advancing the Public Interest

The Vision: Protect our environment and support a just transition away from the use of fossil fuels to a green economy powered 100% by clean and renewable energy, ensuring workers in affected sector do not bear the brunt of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Government of Alberta should adopt the following priorities to ensure we have clean air and water, as well as a healthy planet to live on for generations to come:

1. Set greenhouse gas emissions targets in line with the science of climate change and clear plans to meet them

- Implement measurable greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets that correspond with Alberta's share of Canada's international climate commitments
- Adopt a clear system of regular public reporting on emissions levels
- Phase in a higher carbon price that will allow Alberta to meet our fair share of Canada's emissions reduction targets

2. Fully implement the United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- Fulfill the promise to fully implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and advocate the federal government do the same
- Oppose pipeline projects that cross Indigenous lands without each First Nation's free, prior, and informed consent

3. Support community renewable energy projects and micro-generation

- Focus support for new energy generation on publicly owned projects in partnership with municipal governments, school boards, First Nations, and Métis settlements
- Create greater incentives for small-scale owners of renewable energy sources to sell excess power into the grid

4. Work closely with communities in transition

- Ensure workers and communities that are heavily reliant on fossil fuel industries are fully supported in their transitions to clean industries

5. Increase investments in sustainable transportation

- Reduce Albertans' need to rely on personal vehicles for routine transportation, particularly in large and medium-sized cities, by investing more in public transit
- Expand investment in regional public transportation in consultation with communities across Alberta
- Support cities to make walking and biking more safe and accessible

6. Protect our lands and water

- Continue adding ecologically-important land and water areas to the government's protected list to meet or exceed the current 17% commitment