



Elizabeth May, O.C., M.P.

Your Member of Parliament in Saanich-Gulf Islands

September 2016 Newsletter

Introduction

I am happy to report some good news. Since my last newsletter, I was named as a full member of the House of Commons Special Committee on Electoral Reform. I will be working intensively to deliver our report by our December 1st deadline. Minister Monsef has asked every MP to hold a town hall meeting on this critical issue. The Saanich-Gulf Islands town halls on democratic reform will be September 16th on Salt Spring and September 6th in Sidney. Minister McKenna has asked for MPs to hold town halls on climate. The SGI climate consultation will share space on September 16th on Salt Spring Island while September 14th at UVic will focus solely on climate. With so much activity in responding to the climate issue at the moment, a focus on climate action is particularly timely.

We have a real opportunity for action from the new federal government. But as I write, nothing has changed in Canada's climate agenda. We have the same target as under the previous government. We have no plan to get there.

I have been working on the climate issue since 1986, when I was Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister of Environment in the Mulroney Administration. I often say I had the great good fortune to learn climate science from government scientists before the myth of doubt was invented. While wearing many different hats since then – lawyer, Executive Director of Sierra Club of Canada, Leader of the Green Party, and Member of Parliament – I have never stopped pushing for meaningful climate action. I have always known that reducing greenhouse gases can and must be done in a way that stimulates our economy and creates jobs. And now we have a real chance to deliver.

In this issue of the Saanich-Gulf Islands constituent newsletter, I will report on progress since the October 2015 election: the Paris Accord at COP21, the launch of a First Ministers Process to develop a climate plan, and the commitments agreed to with North American partners, first in March in Washington DC with President Obama, and then the results of the North American Leaders' Summit in June.

A lot has been happening. Let's take stock of progress.

Global Climate Negotiations

At the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, every nation on earth signed the first legally binding treaty to avoid climate catastrophe. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was then quickly ratified by all nations and became legally binding in 1994. We are all still operating under the UNFCCC.

As a treaty, its goals were clear, but it lacked timelines, targets or deadlines. It committed all nations to reduce human-caused greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to avoid atmospheric levels before they could become "dangerous." It also committed all nations to work to adapt to those levels of climate change that could no longer be avoided.

As an international treaty, it did not merely exist as a document. It created a process. It actually created a global climate parliament. Every country that both signed and ratified the convention is called a "Party to the convention." Every year since 1994, the Conference of the Parties – or COP - has met to advance the UNFCCC goals. COP3 in 1997 was in Kyoto – hence "Kyoto Protocol." It was the first time nations agreed to legally binding timelines and targets.

Despite the tendency in Canada to dismiss Kyoto as a failure due to our government's withdrawal, the reality is that most countries that took on targets in 1997 met or exceeded those targets. But as GHG emissions rose in the US (which ratified the UNFCCC but never ratified the Kyoto Protocol), and significantly from the growing economies of the developing world, particularly China, GHG levels globally kept rising. The annual COPs focused on the next, more comprehensive, version of Kyoto. The 2009 COP15 in Copenhagen was supposed to be the deadline for a new treaty, but it failed in spectacular fashion. Getting talks back on track after that disaster was a huge effort in diplomacy and global pressure. And that's how COP21 in Paris became the "do or die" last chance.

The Paris Agreement

I was enormously proud and honoured to work within the Canadian government delegation at COP21. As your MP, under the previous government, I was not allowed to represent my own country in the talks. I managed to work for civil society or other governments (Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan) in order to participate in the global climate talks.

But inviting leaders of opposition parties to be members of the Government Delegation to COP21 was the least of the improvements from the Canadian government. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Hon. Catherine McKenna, went to Paris committed to push for a more ambitious treaty. If Canada's election had been December 19 instead of October 19, it is an open question whether the negotiations would have succeeded. Minister McKenna made Canada one of the first industrialized countries to call for a legally binding agreement aimed at holding global average temperature rise to no more than 1.5°C. It is no exaggeration to say Canada showed real leadership at COP21.

Let's start with the goals of the Paris Agreement. It is a turning point. For the first time 195 nations have essentially agreed that our economies are going off fossil fuels. The treaty calls for reducing emissions sufficiently to avoid global average temperature ever exceeding 2°C above what it was before the Industrial Revolution, while striving to keep the world safer by holding global average temperature to no more than a 1.5°C rise. That implies keeping concentrations of GHG to no more than 425-450 parts per million. And that measurement means very dramatic reductions in GHG emissions.

The Paris Agreement requires countries to formally submit their own plans, both for emission reduction

Constituency Office

1 - 9711 Fourth Street
Sidney, BC V8L 2Y8

Phone: 250-657-2000
or 1-800-667-9188
Fax: 250-657-2004

Email: elizabeth.may.cta@parl.gc.ca

Hill Office

518 Confederation Building
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Phone: 613-996-1119
Fax: 613-996-0850

Email: elizabeth.may@parl.gc.ca

Online

www.elizabethmaymp.ca

@ElizabethMay

ElizabethMayGreenLeader

Continued on page 2

The Paris Agreement—continued

targets, adaptation and financing to help poorer countries, to the United Nations climate secretariat. These targets can be removed at any time, but only to be replaced with more aggressive targets. This is the “ratcheting up” feature of the Paris Agreement.

At the level of climate science and the intersection with politics, the meeting was also a success. The decision text benefits from including real numbers - it specifies a global emissions figure for 2030 (55 gigatonnes).

Another innovation that bodes well for the Paris Agreement is that it will be legally binding on the United States without the requirement to be ratified in the US Congress. If any one thing was the undoing of Kyoto, it was that the Clinton Administration realized it did not have the required votes to gain 2/3 Senate approval and never tried to obtain ratification. The George W. Bush Administration then announced it had no intention of ever trying. The Paris Agreement has been carefully negotiated to avoid any triggers to require US ratification. The White House will legally accede to it as an extension of existing commitments of the UNFCCC, already ratified under President George H. W. Bush (the first).

While the Paris Agreement is legally binding, it, like the Kyoto Protocol, does not have any sanctions to punish non-compliance. If anything, its enforcement mechanism is a form of global peer pressure, or group shaming. Every five years there will be a “global stock-taking” to assess whether the collectivity of commitments is on track to meet the Paris Agreement long term goals. That process actually started even before the talks opened in Paris on November 29, 2015. And the news is not good.

The current aggregate of all tabled targets of all nations - if achieved - take us to a range of global average temperature increase of 2.7 to 3.5°C. Anyone familiar with climate science will recognize in those temperatures a threat to human civilization itself. They are not merely “failed targets”; they suggest a “failed species”.

No one who negotiated the Paris Agreement can be under the impression that our work is now done. Our work is only beginning.

Of all the currently tabled targets, Canada’s is among the weakest. While the European Union pledge is to reduce GHG to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030, Canada’s pledge is even weaker than the US, and is the weakest of any G7 nation. Our base year is 2005, when emissions were far higher than in 1990. And our deadline year is 5 years later than the US. Under former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Canada pledged to reduce emissions 30% below 2005 levels by 2030.

If Canada wants to have any credibility in signing and ratifying the Paris Agreement, then our target must be significantly boosted. It is time to stop debating what is possible and start doing what is necessary.

But there is push back. Even though Environment and Climate Change Minister Catherine McKenna has always referred to the Harper target as “the floor,” forces are gathering to set that goal in concrete.

This is an “all hands on deck” kind of moment. Carbon pricing is only one mechanism. Improving energy efficiency, hiring legions of carpenters, electricians and plumbers to reduce the 30% of GHG emissions that come from our leaky buildings, improving the East-West electricity grid to bring green renewable power from one province to another, will accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels. Carbon pricing is a necessary step, but it is not by itself enough and by itself it is too costly.

There was a Cabinet document prepared for the Conservative Administration as the 30% below 2005 by 2030 target was put forward. It suggested that Canada should look to buy credits in other nations.

Reducing GHG fast enough to avoid 1.5°C, we would be smart to put resources into reductions in developing countries where the price per tonne is much lower. The discussion in the Cabinet document to the previous government was right about this. The atmosphere does not care where the GHG come from – a tonne of GHG from India or Venezuela has the same warming impact as a Canadian tonne.

The Vancouver Declaration

In the decades since I have been working on the climate crisis, a prime minister has only twice convened a meeting of first ministers (the PM and Premiers) solely to address the climate threat. Both of those meetings happened since October 19, 2015. The first was in the lead-up to the Paris talks. Most premiers also attended the negotiations in Paris. And then we had the more formalized process launched March 3rd in Vancouver.

In the election campaign, unlike the other parties, the Liberals refused to say what their target for GHG reductions would be. Instead, they promised that within 90 days after the Paris negotiations they would start a federal-provincial process to develop a national plan. Justin Trudeau, as Liberal leader in the election, committed to a national carbon price and the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies.

That process of working with the provinces on the issue of carbon pricing began in early March in Vancouver. To combat climate change, the First Ministers made firm commitments to:

1. **Implement** GHG mitigation policies in support of meeting or exceeding Canada’s 2030 target of a 30% reduction below 2005 levels of emissions, including specific provincial and territorial targets and objectives;
2. **Increase** the level of ambition of environmental policies over time in order to drive greater GHG emissions reductions, consistent with the Paris Agreement;
3. **Ensure** deep reductions in GHG emissions and a competitive economy, provide certainty to business, and contribute global solutions to a global issue;
4. **Transition** to a low carbon economy by adopting a broad range of domestic measures, including carbon pricing mechanisms, adapted to each province’s and territory’s specific circumstances, in particular the realities of Canada’s Indigenous peoples and Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. The transition also requires that Canada engage internationally;
5. **Implement** strong, complementary adaptation policies within our respective jurisdictions to address climate risks facing our populations, infrastructures, economies and ecosystems, in particular in Canada’s northern regions; and
6. **Implement** a collaborative, science-based approach to inform Canada’s future targets that will increase in stringency as required by the Paris Agreement.

They also set up four working groups that have been meeting ever since with the goal of reporting back in the fall:

- Clean technology, innovation and jobs;
- Carbon pricing mechanisms;
- Specific mitigation opportunities; and
- Adaptation and climate resilience.

The working groups will be required to report back to the “ministerial tables charged with overseeing their work” who will make recommendations to the First Ministers. The reports will be made public.

The timeline established by the Declaration is as follows:

- **September 2016:** Working group reports submitted to governments
- **October 2016:** Recommendations made to First Ministers and reports made public
- **Fall 2016:** First Ministers meet “to finalize the pan-Canadian framework on clean growth and climate change, and review progress on the Canadian Energy Strategy”
- **Early 2017:** Framework implementation completed

Progress in North American Co-operation

Two major opportunities to advance climate action in North America have occurred so far this year. March 10th was the bi-lateral meeting in Washington DC between US President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Trudeau, followed by the June 29th North American Leaders' Summit.

All the targets in the Canada-US-Mexico agreement are for action by 2025. They pledged to, by 2025, reduce methane emissions from the oil and gas sector by 40-45%, to move to 50% clean electricity, and to make progress in supporting greater integration of smart renewable electricity grids, greater support for clean energy vehicles, and work on a complete understanding of the social costs of the climate crisis. The three nations also committed to an updated and more aggressive 2016 amendment to the successful Montreal Protocol. While the Montreal Protocol, which I worked on in Environment Canada in 1987, was aimed at protecting the ozone layer, a number of ozone depleting substances are also powerful greenhouse gases. And one additional new commitment, that all three nations will ratify the Paris Agreement this year and work to see its entry into force this year.

A call to have the Paris Agreement enter into force in 2016 is a new level of ambition. To enter into force, the treaty must be ratified by 55 countries, equivalent to 55% of global emissions. Of course, to claim global leadership, Canada still needs to catch up with other countries, notably the European Union (as it currently exists with the UK) on track to reduce GHG by 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. The current Harper target for Canada of 30% below 2005 levels by 2030, when converted to a 1990 baseline, is 14.7% below 1990. Hard to claim leadership when we are so far behind.

On June 29th, President Barack Obama's historic address to Parliament also devoted significant priority to the threat of the climate crisis. His words seems aimed more at those within the US who still doubt the global scientific consensus:

There is one threat, however, that we cannot solve militarily, nor can we solve alone, and that's the threat of climate change. Now, climate change is no longer an abstraction. It's not an issue we can

put off for the future. It is happening now. It is happening here in our own countries. The United States and Canada are both Arctic nations, and last year when I became the first U.S. president to visit the Arctic, I could see the effects myself. Glaciers like Canada's Athabasca Glacier, are melting at alarming rates. Tundra is burning, permafrost is thawing.

This is not a conspiracy. It's happening. Within a generation, Arctic sea ice may all but disappear in the summer. So skeptics and cynics can insist on denying what's right in front of our eyes, but the Alaska natives that I met, whose ancestral villages are sliding into the sea, they don't have that luxury. They know climate change is real. They know it is not a hoax.

And from Bangladesh to the Pacific islands, rising seas are swallowing land and forcing people from their homes. Around the world, stronger storms and more intense droughts will create humanitarian crises and risk more conflict.

This is not just a moral issue, not just an economic issue, it is also an urgent matter of our national security. And for too long, we've heard that confronting climate change means destroying our own economies.

But let me just say, carbon emissions in the United States are back to where they were two decades ago, even as we've grown our economy dramatically over the same period...

We can do it. We can do this. We can help lead the world to meet this threat. Already, together in Paris, we achieved the most ambitious agreement in history to fight climate change. Now, let's bring it into force this year.

With our agreement with Mexico that we announced today, let's generate half the electricity on this continent from clean energy sources within a decade. That's achievable.

Let's partner in the Arctic to help give its people the opportunity they deserve while conserving the only home they know. And building on the idea that began in Montreal three decades ago, let's finally phase down dangerous HFC greenhouse gases.

Earlier this spring I asked in my newsletter on Electoral Reform for feedback. Here are the results:

Do you support equal and fair voting by PR?

Yes: **82%** No: **12%** Not sure: **5%**

Do you agree that it can be done without a referendum?

Yes: **63%** No: **17%** Not sure: **19%**

What is your preferred voting method?

Hybrid PR: **44%** MMP: **16%** STV: **17%** FPTP: **12%**
 Ranked Ballots: **3%** Mix of Hybrid, MMP, STV: **2%**

Do you think we should make voting mandatory?

Yes: **40%** No: **44%** Not sure: **15%**

Should we reduce the voting age?

Yes: **21%** No: **66%** Not sure: **11%**



Meeting President Barack Obama on June 29, 2016.

Your opinion matters!

What matters to you is important to me, and I want to know your priorities!

Please take a moment to answer the questions on the right, cut along the dotted line, and mail your opinion back to me postage free. You can also go to my MP website www.elizabethmaymp.ca and complete the survey online.

If you have more than one person in your home, feel free to contact my constituency office in Sidney at 250-657-2000 to get additional copies of the survey mailed to you.

Thank you!

How high a priority is it for you for the federal government to implement a strong climate plan?

Very high High Not that high Not at all

How high a priority is it for you for the federal government to replace the previous government's target for climate action?

Very high High Not that high Not at all

What do you believe to be the single best climate policy described in this newsletter?

What policy would you like to see that is not mentioned in this newsletter?

Concrete steps to fight climate change

It is clear that carbon pricing is essential. There are a wide spectrum of carbon pricing systems -- from cap and trade to carbon tax. A system of Carbon Fee and Dividend is a pragmatic and workable option.

The current patch-work quilt of carbon pricing across Canada is not good for business certainty. It also perpetuates the dangerous signal that dumping carbon pollution in the atmosphere is a "free" service -- offered by future generations to avoid responsible action now.

We have cap and trade for Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba within the Western Climate Initiative, an internal, too-low carbon tax in British Columbia and an internal rebate to the industry as a carbon price in Alberta. For consistency of planning and to ensure a predictable transition away from carbon-based fuels, a national carbon price is needed.

Carbon Fee and Dividend is an ideal back-filler and gap-filler. A revenue neutral carbon price can be returned to the taxpayers. Carbon Fee and Dividend is best fitted to this purpose. As a revenue neutral fee it will deliver a market pricing signal across the economy. To increase the acceptance of this move by provinces, every dollar collected under a federally managed Carbon Fee and Dividend should be returned to the taxpayers of the province from which the fee was collected. Where carbon pricing is already in effect, it would have a smaller impact. Its main benefit would be to ensure a uniform, national carbon price.

We must end federal subsidies to fossil fuels. This must apply to all fossil fuels, including the recent new subsidies to LNG and support for fossil fuels through Export Development Canada.

We still waste more than half the energy we use. The best "bang for buck" reduction of emissions - tonne for tonne - dollar for dollar - is in energy efficiency. We need a massive, federally funded, job creating, GHG cutting strategy in retrofitting our built infrastructure - commercial, residential and institutional.

The Eco-Energy programme for homes should be resurrected and expanded. We need to create tax incentives to reduce energy waste in institutional and commercial buildings as well as residential properties. The focus should be on resilience. (A similar programme should be available to make homes in areas vulnerable to earthquakes more seismically secure.) We can cut GHG, create

reduced lifetime costs for heating and cooling our homes and create tens of thousands of jobs.

A close second to energy efficiency is in getting all fossil fuels out of electricity production. We can move to 100% renewable energy without a single new large hydro dam. The missing ingredient is an enhanced east-west electricity grid.

BC Hydro must not be allowed to complete Site C. In addition to the clear violation of Treaty 8 First Nations' treaty rights, the \$8 billion white elephant of a project is entirely linked to providing electricity for fracking natural gas. Fracked natural gas has the same carbon footprint as coal.

There is huge potential for wind energy in BC's Peace region. Rather than build Site C, we should promote wind power and use the existing reservoirs for storage. Just as Denmark sells its excess wind power to Norway where it is then used to pump water up into reservoirs, to be released when the power is needed, BC should marry its wind and hydro facilities to sell power to Alberta to speed the closing of coal plants.

Key renewable energy technologies must be encouraged -- from home use to communities to large industries. With solar becoming more affordable by the day, we should provide homeowner incentives to install photovoltaic roofing panels. Solar should be promoted in remote communities to replace trucked in diesel. Canada has a huge natural advantage in wind, solar, geothermal, tidal and run of the river, low impact hydroelectric. We should also plan ahead to capitalize on co-generation (district energy). Canada should consider replicating what Denmark did in mapping its "thermal grid." It maximized the use of waste energy by mapping its potential. While making use of this information is provincial jurisdiction, mapping its potential could easily be federal research.

We must invest in climate adaptation and resilience to save lives. We need to get back to work on adaptation. We must re-establish federal-provincial cooperation in flood control, but it needs to be expanded to an unprecedented level of municipal-provincial-federal-First Nations adaptation resilience.

Agriculture Canada, the Canadian Forest Service and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans must accelerate their currently limited work on adaptation of the climate-dependent industries they regulate. Health Canada must expand work on vector-borne diseases. Lyme Disease is spreading due to climate change as will other diseases.

September Town Halls

**Democratic Reform Consultation
Saanich Peninsula
Tuesday, September 6**
7:00—8:30pm
Mary Winspear Centre
2243 Beacon Avenue
Sidney

**Saturna Island
Wednesday, September 7**
7:00—8:30pm
Saturna Island Community Hall
109 East Point Road

**Galiano Island
Friday, September 9**
7:00—8:30pm
Galiano Community Hall
141 Sturdies Bay Road

**Mayne Island
Monday, September 12**
6:30—8:00pm
Mayne Island Community Centre
493 Felix Jack Road

**Pender Island
Tuesday, September 13**
6:00—7:30pm
Pender Island Community Hall
4418 Bedwell Harbour Road

**Climate Change Consultation
Saanich
Wednesday, September 14**
7:00—8:30pm
Bob Wright Centre, Room B150
University of Victoria

**Climate Change, Democratic Reform
and TPP Consultation
Salt Spring Island
Friday, September 16**
6:00—8:30pm
Multi-Purpose Room, Gulf Island
Secondary School
232 Rainbow Road

Unless otherwise noted, town halls are open to discussion on any topic.

Name _____

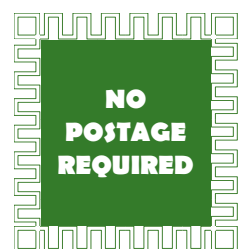
Address _____

City / Town _____

Province _____ Postal Code _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please fold here



Elizabeth May, O.C., M.P.
518 Confederation Building
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6