

Statement from Canadian Environmental Leaders Regarding Canada's Kyoto Plan

Toronto, Ontario - Our organizations exist to work for the public interest. It was out of regard for this mission, and of the profound importance of getting the Kyoto plan right, that we expressed our concerns regarding the amendments to the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) as introduced by the government in the budget legislation on March 24.

Notwithstanding these concerns, we are united in our support for the use of CEPA by the federal government as an appropriate regulatory authority to ensure that industry's contribution to emission reduction in the Kyoto period is delivered at the levels that were promised to Canadians in the 2002 Climate Change Plan for Canada. We underline that securing such a target for industry emission reductions is an essential element of an effective Kyoto plan.

The government has acknowledged that its proposed amendments to CEPA in the budget legislation are not legally required to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. The existing wording of CEPA gives the federal government all the authority it needs to establish a regulatory framework to control and reduce industrial emissions of greenhouse gases, which are at levels that are toxic to the environment.

Canadians have been waiting thirteen years for a real climate action plan, ever since the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was signed and ratified by Canada in 1992, and especially since the Kyoto Protocol was agreed to by Canada in 1997. The Kyoto Protocol is now binding international law and Canada must put forth a credible plan to implement the greenhouse gas reduction target to which we have agreed.

The ball is now clearly in the government's court. The release of Canada's climate plan is urgently needed. We will evaluate it on its merits and communicate this assessment to the Canadian public in whose interests we work.

Canadian Environmental Law Association
David Suzuki Foundation
Environmental Defence
Great Lakes United
Greenpeace
Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development
Pollution Probe
Sierra Legal Defence Fund