

Climate Change and the BC Government

On March 20, 2023 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the [synthesis report](#) summarizing findings of their latest technical research published in 2021-22, based on analyses of thousands of scientific papers. Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary-General, issued yet another dire warning - **“Humanity is on thin ice and that ice is melting fast. Our world needs climate action on all fronts — everything, everywhere, all at once.”**

Under the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015, governments agreed to work to keep global heating within 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, which science indicates we must do to avoid the worst effects of climate change. **Between 1990 and 2019, BC’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions rose 27%**, a failure contributing to Canada’s position as the only G7 nation that has increased its GHG emissions since 2015.

The BC government’s **CleanBC Plan** pledges to reduce GHG emissions by 40% from 2007 levels by 2030, and by 80% by 2050. But projections show that **expanding liquid natural gas (LNG) production is incompatible with achieving BC’s emissions reductions targets**. Under the current plan, **BC’s emissions would exceed the 2050 CleanBC target by 227%**.

GHG emissions occur throughout the natural gas supply chain. These emissions are mostly methane, which is **84 times more potent a climate change driver than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period**.

The BC Government subsidizes the oil and gas industry with hundreds of millions of dollars a year. The government’s recent Review of Oil and Gas Royalties eliminates the most egregious subsidies, but the new royalty system continues to incentivize fracking and LNG development.

Despite **strong opposition from First Nations** whose traditional territories are being exploited for LNG development, the **BC government pushes ahead, using armed force** if deemed necessary, as in the case of the Wet’suwet’en opposing the Coastal GasLink Pipeline. In the case of the Blueberry River First Nation, 69% of its traditional territory in Northeast BC is being exploited for fracking.

Fracking uses **enormous amounts of fresh water**. A single well can use up to 600 Olympic-sized swimming pools worth of fresh water. Most of that water is so contaminated by fracking chemicals that it can never be restored to the hydrological cycle.

At the same time as the BC Government is promoting fossil fuel development, it is allowing destruction of some of the most ancient, rare old growth forests across the province, all in areas where it promised last November to stop logging. Old growth forests remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The older the tree, the greater its potential to store carbon and slow climate change.

Urge the BC Government to:

- Institute a moratorium on fracking in BC;
- Reduce BC’s GHG emissions by 8.5% per year below 2007 levels for a 60% reduction by 2030;
- Invest 2% of BC’s GDP to advance the zero-emissions economy and create thousands of new jobs;
- Rapidly wind down fossil fuel production and use;
- End all subsidies and financial incentives to the oil and gas sector;
- Commit to protecting BC’s remaining 2.6 million hectares of old-growth forests, permitting logging only in secondary, previously logged forests.