



6 December, 2016

Dear Prime Minister and Premiers,

As leaders of the conservation community in Canada, we would like to commend your efforts in developing a Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. We are writing this letter to urge you to recognize, within the Pan-Canadian Framework, ***the important role of Canada's terrestrial and marine ecosystems in reducing emissions, and helping all species, including humans, adapt to a changing climate.***

The Paris Agreement on climate change specifically states that parties should act to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases as referred to in Article 4, paragraph 1(d), of the Convention, which refers to forests and oceans as well as other terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems.

Recognizing the important role of Canada's ecosystems in mitigating climate change within the Pan-Canadian Framework would provide significant opportunities for federal, provincial, and territorial governments to use cost-effective nature conservation and restoration strategies to protect and enhance our carbon sinks and stores, and contribute to both our international commitments on climate change and Aichi targets on conserving biodiversity. Working to protect land in partnership with Indigenous peoples in ways that respects their rights and interests could also contribute to reconciliation efforts in Canada.

Conservation measures like expanding protected areas systems, restoring and conserving habitat, and protecting species at risk are important for climate adaptation and would contribute to climate change mitigation by sequestering and/or avoiding the loss of carbon stored in ecosystems. An ecosystem focused component of the climate plan would complement the necessary deep reductions in fossil fuel emissions required to avoid catastrophic impacts of climate change.

Conversely, we are concerned that by overlooking Canada's ecosystems as an important part of the solution, the Framework will fall short of achieving its intended climate outcomes.

We recommend that the Framework be fully developed in accordance with the Paris agreement and that federal, provincial, and territorial governments affirm their commitment to ecosystems'

conservation and enhancement as an important part of Canada's developing climate mitigation and adaptation strategy. We welcome the opportunity to work with you over the coming year to advance Canada's transition to a low carbon economy and to design and implement effective ecosystem-based approaches in Canada.

Thank you for supporting the important role of Canada's ecosystems in addressing the impacts of climate change. We very much look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Jessica Clogg, Executive Director, West Coast Environmental Law

Eric Hebert-Daly, Executive Director, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)

Susanna Fuller, Ecology Action Centre

Tim Grey, Executive Director, Environmental Defence

Dr. Karla Guyn, Chief Executive Officer, Ducks Unlimited Canada

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Theresa McClenaghan, Executive Director and Counsel, Canadian Environmental Law Association.

Beatrice Olivastri, Chief Executive Officer, Friends of the Earth Canada

Steven Price, President, Bird Studies Canada / Etudes d'Oiseaux Canada

Peter Robinson, CEO, David Suzuki Foundation

Scott Vaughan, President and Chief Executive Officer, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)