



CANADIAN COUNCIL ON  
RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY  
CONSEIL CANADIEN SUR  
L'ÉLECTRICITÉ RENOUVELABLE

June 14, 2016

The Hon. Catherine McKenna P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
*c/o Environment and Climate Change Canada*  
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Dear Minister McKenna:

On behalf of the Canadian Council on Renewable Electricity, please find enclosed our recommendations for how Canada can deliver greenhouse gas emission reductions and clean growth.

As you know, Canada is a global leader in using renewable electricity to power homes, businesses and our economy at large. With more than 65 percent of our electricity coming from renewable sources, we are a leader amongst the G7 group of countries. Now, more than ever, the world is looking for ways to decarbonize our global economy, and renewable electricity will play a crucial role in this shift.

The wind, water, oceans and sun provide an inexhaustible supply of renewable energy to power our economy. Having these sources work optimally together can provide even greater solutions for a decarbonized economy. This is why the Canadian Hydropower Association, Marine Renewables Canada, Canadian Solar Industries Association and the Canadian Wind Energy Association have pulled together to form the Canadian Council on Renewable Electricity.

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As illustrated in our recent report, ***Powering Climate Prosperity: Canada's Renewable Electricity Advantage***, ensuring our electricity grid is powered by clean, renewable electricity offers a key climate change solution. And the more we electrify our economy—from transportation, to industry to buildings, —with renewable resources, the faster and deeper we can cut greenhouse gas pollution and ensure Canada stands out as a climate change leader. Beyond our borders, we can also help lower greenhouse gas emissions in the United States through increased exports of electricity, technologies and expertise to offer solutions at an international scale.

As representatives of Canada's renewable electricity sector, we look forward to collectively supporting your government's efforts to deliver low-carbon solutions to Canadians.

Sincerely,

*Jacob Irving, Canadian Hydropower Association*  
*John Gorman, Canadian Solar Industries Association*  
*Robert Hornung, Canadian Wind Energy Association*  
*Elisa Obermann, Marine Renewables Canada*

Encl. *Canadian Council on Renewable Electricity Recommendations for a Pan-Canadian Framework for Clean Growth and Climate Change*

cc:

Marlo Reynolds, Chief of Staff  
Michael Martin, Deputy Minister

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## Canadian Council on Renewable Electricity Recommendations for a Pan-Canadian Framework for Clean Growth and Climate Change

Climate change science clearly states that greenhouse gas emissions reductions of 80% or more will be required by 2050 if the climate change targets agreed at COP 21 in Paris are to be met. Given the critical role energy production, transmission, distribution and use plays in the generation of greenhouse gas emissions, any serious effort to decarbonize Canada's economy must have enhanced energy productivity as the first priority.

In addition, there is a broad consensus that any credible climate change plan seeking to meet the level of ambition agreed to in Paris must have at its heart the continued decarbonization of electricity generation—replacing existing fossil fuel generation with zero-carbon power over time, and ultimately producing all electricity with non-emitting sources of generation. Just as importantly, Canada's broader energy system must also increase its reliance on electricity—fuel switching away from fossil fuel sources to clean, renewable power in a variety of energy end uses. It is only by taking these actions together that Canada will be put on a path to achieve the scale of emission reductions needed to meet both our national 2030 target and put our economy on the right trajectory to achieve the much deeper reductions required by 2050—all while creating new and expanded economic and social benefits.

Fortunately, from coast to coast to coast Canada is blessed with abundant and diverse renewable energy resources and can build on a strong foundation to become a global leader in the transition to a low carbon economy. With its

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diverse mix of renewables—including hydro, marine, solar and wind—we have the opportunity to create an electricity system, and an energy system, dominated by clean renewable energy. From utility scale to distributed, baseload to variable generation, Canada can deliver a clean, reliable and affordable electricity system to power our future prosperity.

The following recommendations are offered to help Canada decarbonize both its electricity system and, through increased electrification of other sectors, the broader energy system:

1. **Aim for a Zero Carbon Electricity Grid by 2050**—Approximately 80% of Canada’s electricity production is zero carbon today. The federal government should seek to enable and facilitate achievement of national targets for electricity generation that move us close to 100 per cent zero-carbon electricity by 2050. Federal, provincial and territorial governments should work together to achieve these targets by:
  - a. Defining and agreeing upon national targets for non-emitting electricity generation that move Canada towards a zero-emissions electricity supply by 2050. The previous federal government had adopted a target that 90% of Canada’s electricity supply should be non-emitting by 2020. While inadequate action to support that objective means that it is no longer achievable, we believe Canada should establish targets that identify the years in which Canada will see 90% and then 95% of its electricity supply met through zero-emissions generation prior to 2050.
  - b. Taking steps to significantly reduce pollution from any remaining coal- fired electricity generation in Canada beyond 2030, and establishing federal GHG regulations for electricity generated by natural-gas that become increasingly stringent such that these plants will be required to produce significantly fewer greenhouse

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gas emissions by 2050, while providing flexibility in compliance through mechanisms such as allowing the use of offsets.

- c. Establishing a national, economy-wide price on greenhouse gas pollution that rises over time.
  - d. Reviewing federal tax laws to ensure they provide incentives for renewable energy investors that are at least equivalent to those provided for investors in other energy sectors
  - e. Supporting clean electrification in remote and northern Indigenous communities and industrial facilities.
  - f. Convening and supporting forums for electricity system operators from across Canada to come together to discuss common challenges related to the transition to a zero carbon electricity grid and identify best practices and priority actions to facilitate low carbon implementation plans.
2. **An Electrified Economy**—The federal, provincial and territorial governments should commit to increasing the use of electricity in our energy system to over 50 per cent of all energy used in Canada by 2050.<sup>1</sup> To achieve this target, they should cooperatively develop sector-specific strategies that include interim targets to drive fuel-switching from fossil fuels to electricity and to maximize the potential to decarbonize energy used by all forms of transportation, industry and buildings. The Pathways for Deep Decarbonization in Canada<sup>2</sup> analysis has shown that meeting the greenhouse gas emission reductions required in 2050 will require increased electrification at the following scale:
- a. Transportation: Increasing the use of electricity for transportation to meet 10 per cent of energy needs in 2030, and over 30 per cent of energy needs in 2050.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://deepdecarbonization.org/countries/#canada>

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

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- b. Industry: Increasing industrial use of electricity to meet 45 per cent of energy needs in 2030, and over 50 per cent of energy needs in 2050.
  - c. Buildings: Increasing the use of electricity in buildings (residential and commercial) to meet 80 per cent of energy needs in 2030, and 100 per cent of energy needs in 2050.
3. **A Renewable Electricity Export Strategy**—Federal and provincial and territorial governments should prioritize the development of a renewable electricity export strategy. Key components of such a strategy should include:
- a. Educating Canadians about the country's renewable energy potential and how exporting some of that potential is good for Canada and North America, both environmentally and economically.
  - b. Working with governments on the development of a North American clean electricity strategy, including streamlined permitting processes for cross-border transmission projects.
  - c. Developing a broader international strategy to address policy barriers and increase the export of renewable electricity, technologies, services and products.

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