



Premiers Committed to Action on Climate Change, Disaster Mitigation

SASKATOON, SK, July 11, 2019 – Climate change is a global threat, with immediate and long-lasting, tangible impacts on the natural environment, public health and safety, as well as on infrastructure and the economy. Premiers reiterated the importance and urgency of timely action and their commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to move towards achieving Canada's Paris Agreement targets and to ensure all jurisdictions are responsive, adaptive and resilient to the effects of climate change.

Premiers discussed the unique climate change plans of each jurisdiction. Premiers agreed that provinces and territories must retain the ability to design climate change plans that reflect their distinct needs and priorities. This is consistent with both the Québec Declaration (April 2015), supported by all provinces and territories, and the Vancouver Declaration (March 2016) signed by all First Ministers. Canada's industries are leading the world in sustainable innovation, lowering emissions, enhancing sequestration and addressing climate change. Premiers call on the federal government to support emission credit trading across international borders and work with provinces and territories on a strategic approach to finalize the rules under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. This includes ensuring provinces and territories get full credit for reductions resulting from actions in their jurisdictions. They also discussed the need for sufficient federal funding to be available in a timely fashion to support local adaptation and mitigation priorities, including the balance of the Low Carbon Economy Fund to each province and territory equitably.

Natural Disaster Mitigation, Adaptation and Assistance

Natural disasters can strike anywhere and no Canadian is immune to their potential effects. Wildfires, floods, and permafrost thaw are happening more frequently and their severity is increasing. Canadians expect their governments to make every effort to prepare for, and respond to, those events and mitigate their consequences on health, homes and the economy.

Provincial and territorial governments are responsible for emergency management within their respective jurisdictions; through hands on experience of local issues, strategic knowledge of the territory and expertise in emergency response, they are the best suited to coordinate natural disaster management, in collaboration with Indigenous partners and municipalities.

The federal government must support the capacity and ability of provinces and territories to cope with disasters; the federal government also has a responsibility to support Indigenous communities. However, these roles are undermined by the limited scope of current federal programs meant to address climate change, adaptation measures and disaster mitigation efforts. Premiers call for the restoration of the lower pre-2015 threshold for accessing Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements funding and agree that funding related to natural disaster mitigation, adaptation and resilience should be adequate, flexible, timely, streamlined, and enable provinces and territories to respond to the needs in their jurisdiction, considering the variability in the frequency and type of disasters affecting individual provinces and territories.

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