



## → **CUC IN ACTION** →



### **CURRENT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY EVENTS**

**OCTOBER, 2009**

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### **MEMO ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

To: Congregational Presidents, Congregational Social Action Chairs, Social Responsibility Chairs, Environment Monitoring Group, Environment Discussion and Newsletter Editors

From: Jennifer Dickson - Executive Director, Canadian Unitarian Council

Re: Climate Change Day of Action October 24, 2009

On October 24th, 2009, concerned citizens of the world can participate in an International Day of Climate Action. Thanks to Bill McKibben, who wrote the popular book about global warming "The End of Nature" and who co-founded this action, the global voice of humanity can rise together and call for reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to 350 parts per million (ppm) – a safe level as determined by climate scientists. Levels above this put us all at the mercy of catastrophic climate events – and the current level is close to 390 ppm. Urgent international action is needed to put a cap on carbon emissions.

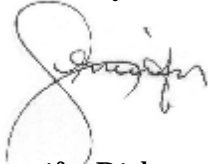
For our children and grandchildren's sake, we must let our governments know we care about climate – before December – when world leaders will meet in Copenhagen, Denmark, to sign the "post-Kyoto" climate change treaty. We want Canada's leaders to listen to us, the people, and to take scientifically required action. For more info, see [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) and/or <http://www.eco-justice.org/> (then click "Join the 350 Movement").

We encourage congregations and communities to join in taking climate action anytime – leading up to, on, and beyond October 24th. Ideas include:

- ® Plan a worship service, on "Climate Justice and Global Poverty" for either Sunday October 17th or Sunday October 25th.
- ® During the week of October 17 – 23, visit your MP and ask for his/her support for the Climate Change Bill C311 which comes up for 3rd reading this Fall, and ask for him/her to sign the pledge for politicians.
- ® Plan a church and/or community activity addressing climate change or calling attention to the need for climate action (see <http://350.org/> for examples – a tree planting, walk, speakers, music, art, workshop, bike action, community clean-up, film, skit, carbon-free local dinner, rally, etc).
- ® Promote your activities with local newspapers, radio stations, etc. before the Day of Action to publicize what you will be doing and why.
- ® Circulate petitions for signatures.
- ® Share what your congregations and community are doing. Please send your info to Janet Vickers (mail to [janet@cuc.ca](mailto:janet@cuc.ca)).
- ® Register your action and send in a photo to <http://www.350.org/>.

Thanks for getting involved in this important ministry of caring for the earth and its climate for the life and health of all creatures.

Yours truly,



Jennifer Dickson  
Executive Director



<http://www.350.org/> WEBSITE:

24 OCTOBER 2009

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CLIMATE ACTION

What is the Day of Action?

We're calling on people around the world to organize an action on October 24 incorporating the number 350 at an iconic place in their community, and then upload a photo of their event to 350.org website.

We'll collect these images from around the world and, with your help, deliver them to the media and world leaders. Together, we can show our world and it's decision-makers just how big, beautiful, and unified the climate movement really is.

To help you take part in October 24's international day of climate action, we are:

- \* Lifting public awareness on the need for an international climate treaty to reach 350
- \* Assembling a coalition of hundreds of organizations committed to this vision of a more sustainable world
- \* Connecting you with others in your community and across the planet who are building this movement
- \* Providing on-line resources and tools that make pulling together an event easy
- \* Linking your October 24 event with hundreds of other actions at iconic places around the world
- \* Leveraging the day of action for meaningful political change

350.org is an open-source campaign: it's your ideas, input, and energy that will make October 24 and this movement for change a success. Have something to contribute? <<http://www.350.org/contact>> Contact Us.

350 isn't one organization, it's a platform—a global network connecting people in every corner of the planet. The 350 network consists of over 200 organizations around the world—click here to check them out <<http://www.350.org/friends>> This network gets stronger as it grows—to get your organization involved please e-mail [partnerships \[at\] 350.org](mailto:partnerships@350.org)

## **REPORT FROM VANCOUVER – KARL PERRIN**

We had a good Environment Committee meeting this afternoon at the Armstrong's solar house. Good energy for gardening, greening UCV, and the Climate Change Day of Action on October 24.

Below is the main event in Vancouver: "Bridge to a Cool Planet". Others across Canada may wish to get ideas from this website. We are fortunate that Andrea Reimer, Executive Director of the Wilderness Committee is now on City Council, so we're getting lots of support from the City.

I won't be on the steering committee, but I'll be close enough to keep others informed. The steering committee is hoping for 10,000 (not including a possible wedding on the bridge). The evening event will be for 400 and Steven Epperson will speak, among many others.

<http://www.bridgecoolplanet.ca/en/index.php>

I am hoping to have our Environment Committee sponsor a booth for Eco-Spirituality including our annual multi faith Pilgrimage to Burns Bog.

We will have a large banner with 350 hands on it. Mary Bennett is in charge. We're working out the how-to.

October 24 is a week before Samhain/Halloween! I'm considering being Harper on the 24th.

Karl Perrin  
Environment Committee, Unitarian Church of Vancouver

## **CUC LETTER TO MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

The Honourable Jim Prentice  
Minister of the Environment  
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière  
28th Floor – 10 Wellington St.  
Gatineau Quebec K1A 0H3

Dear Minister Prentice,

On July 7, 2009, we wrote Prime Minister Harper (as enclosed) who in response, advised us that he was referring the matter to you. We are still looking forward to your reply. A prompt reply would be appreciated.

As previously explained, the issue of climate change is important to us, as a key principle of our religion is "*respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are part*". We firmly assert that the challenges and consequence of failure in the face of today's economic crisis pale in comparison to failure on the climate change front in the longer term.

The opportunity exists to respond to today's economic challenges with a 'green revolution'. British Columbia and Québec lead in using economic instruments (carbon tax) that are revenue neutral. Their initiatives illustrate one example of how a green revolution can be resourced – the revenues from taxing carbon pollution can be recycled to stimulate the economy and to subsidize carbon reduction initiatives and other green projects.

We would appreciate learning what targets you will be promoting, assuming a leadership position on behalf of Canadians at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15) in Copenhagen in December 2009. In addition please let us know how you plan to deal with each of the five points listed below:

1. Canada has a very high emission rates per capita compared to average of industrialized countries despite Canada's high share of hydropower;
2. Canada has markedly increasing emissions in most sectors; projections have recently been corrected upwards;
3. Canada is expanding energy-intensive un-conventional oil development (tar sands); neither provincial nor planned federal regulation will reduce overall emissions;
4. Canada has no official/enforceable climate plan; proposed national plan does not even aim for compliance with Kyoto target and

5. Canada has failed to meet our Kyoto target – the federal government’s proposed plan (released 26.04.2007) that aims for 20 % reduction from 2006 emission levels by 2020, i.e. 11 % above the Kyoto target in 2020; Canada is also out of compliance with federal law requiring development of a plan to meet Kyoto obligations.

We appreciate the heavy burden you carry as minister of the environment. We all carry the burden of our children's future as we respond to urgent environmental challenges today, but that burden falls most visibly on your shoulders and those of your colleagues in government. If we are to avert a catastrophic change, the time to act is now, and there is no time for half measures. Change is often hard, and there are costs, but these are insignificant compared with the devastating costs of unchecked climate change.

We have serious concerns about Canada’s inadequate response to date to the crisis. This letter repeats some of our concerns, as they were formerly conveyed to the Prime Minister. We would like to hear from you what steps your government is taking to address these issues. It is imperative that the world move beyond the Kyoto targets, and we would like to hear from you what steps your government is taking to do so.

We strongly support bold Canadian leadership on this matter and look forward to a response well in advance of the meeting in Copenhagen in December.

Yours truly,

*(Original signed by)*

Jennifer Dickson  
Executive Director

cc: The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada