

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

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UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS
CHIEFS COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 27TH-28TH, 2019

MUSQUEAM COMMUNITY CENTRE, X^WMƏƏK^WƏY^ƏM (MUSQUEAM TERRITORY)

Resolution no. 2019-02

RE: Climate Emergency and BC First Nations Climate Emergency Plan

WHEREAS the October 2018 report entitled “Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C” by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the November 2018 Fourth National Climate Assessment report found that:

1. Human activity is the dominant cause of observed climate change over the past century;
2. A changing climate is causing sea levels to rise and an increase in wildfires, severe storms, droughts, and other extreme weather events that threaten human life, Indigenous food security, healthy communities, and critical infrastructure;
3. Global warming at or above 2 degrees Celsius beyond pre-industrialized levels will cause:
 - a. mass migration from the regions most affected by climate change;
 - b. wildfires that, by the end of the century, will burn twice as much average area per year in Canada by the end of the century as has burned in the recent past, and the diseases associated with that;
 - c. a loss of more than 99 percent of all coral reefs on Earth;
 - d. more than 350,000,000 more people to be exposed globally to deadly heat stress by 2050;
4. Global temperatures must be kept below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrialized levels to avoid the most severe impacts of a changing climate, which will require:
 - a. global reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from human sources of 40 to 60 percent from 2010 levels by 2030; and
 - b. net-zero emissions by 2050;

WHEREAS climate change, pollution, and environmental destruction have exacerbated systemic racial, regional, social, environmental, and economic injustices by disproportionately affecting indigenous communities, communities of color, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, depopulated rural communities, the poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the unhoused, people with disabilities, and youth;

WHEREAS climate change threatens the security and way of life of Indigenous peoples throughout Canada and the world, which has been evident in British Columbia as record-breaking temperatures in the summer of 2018 contributed to rampant forest fires, drought, and elevated water temperatures impacting wild salmon and other species;

WHEREAS the mandate letter for Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, George Heyman, called upon him to implement a climate-action strategy that would allow BC to meet carbon reduction targets and legislate a new 2030 reduction target. Heyman was mandated to ensure that the legal rights of First Nations are respected, and that BC's interests remain protected in the face of the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion and the threat of increased tanker traffic;

WHEREAS by Resolution 2016-06, the UBCIC Chiefs Council demanded that any climate change plan developed by Canada must be done in conjunction with Indigenous peoples and must recognize and uphold our inherent and constitutionally protected Indigenous Title, Rights and Treaty Rights and be consistent with the historic Supreme Court of Canada's *Tsilhqot'in Nation* judgment. Further, the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to ensure that any climate change plan developed by Canada must stop the further expansion of fossil fuel production and export, and support development of alternative energy and alternative energy economies;

WHEREAS in July 2018 the BC government released three intention papers: *Clean, Efficient Buildings*, *Clean Transportation* and *A Clean Growth Program for Industry* that would inform the clean growth plan to be later released;

WHEREAS UBCIC provided a submission responding to the three intention papers and while the framework for sustainable energy growth with fewer emissions was a step in the right direction, UBCIC highlighted important concerns around consent, accessibility, and existing projects and environmental disasters including the Mount Polley mine disaster, the TMX, and the Site C Dam, that are contributing to carbon emissions, environmental harm, and violations of Indigenous Title and Rights, and Treaty Rights;

WHEREAS the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which the Governments of British Columbia and Canada have adopted without qualification and have committed to implement, affirms:

Article 18: Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

Article 29(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

Article 32(1): Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources;

WHEREAS the Province's climate change plan, CleanBC, was introduced in December 2018 and was developed with inadequate engagement with First Nations. CleanBC broadly states how an agenda of reconciliation and self-determination will be advanced and implemented, with no explanation of what exact steps were and will be taken to consult with and involve First Nations in planning and carrying out the initiatives. No mention was made of any of the negative environmental repercussions of the Site C Dam and liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects, or their impacts on the Title and Rights of First Nations, despite the recommendations to do so by UBCIC;

WHEREAS CleanBC's aim to reduce emissions by 40% by 2030 from 2007 levels clashes with the increased greenhouse gas emissions associated with approved big energy projects like the LNG Canada facility, the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion and Site C Dam. The plan's targets also no longer align with the more ambitious scientifically-approved reduction target identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to be 40-60% by 2030 from 2010 levels and net zero emissions by 2050 so that the global 1.5-degree temperature target can be met;

WHEREAS First Nations have the right to determine and direct their own environmental strategies and policies concerning the continued development of projects that directly impact the welfare and conservation of their lands, territories, and resources; and

WHEREAS the UBCIC Chiefs Council recognize the breakdown of the stable climate and sea level under which human civilization developed constitutes a climate emergency.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council demands that any climate change plan developed by British Columbia must be done in conjunction with Indigenous peoples and must recognize and uphold our inherent and constitutionally protected Indigenous Title, Rights and Treaty Rights and be consistent with the historic Supreme Court of Canada's *Tsilhqot'in Nation* judgment;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive to ensure that any climate change plan developed by British Columbia must stop the further expansion of greenhouse gas emitting projects and infrastructure (whether the GHG emissions are produced locally or via fossil fuel exports), and support development of renewable energy and alternative energy economies;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council supports the development and implementation of a BC First Nations led climate action session that will strengthen and facilitate First Nation participation in a just transition to an economy that achieves greenhouse gas reductions to 40-60% by 2030 from 2010 levels and net zero emissions by 2050 and work to rectify the shortfalls of the CleanBC plan;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the UBCIC Chief's Council directs UBCIC Executive, working with the BC Assembly of First Nations and the First Nations Summit as the First Nations Leadership Council, to seek resources and plan a climate action session for First Nations in BC that will involve strategy and planning around First Nations participating in achieving greenhouse gas reductions of 40-60% by 2030 from 2010 levels and net zero emissions by 2050 through a fair and just transition for our communities and workers; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive, working with the BC Assembly of First Nations and the First Nations Summit as the First Nations Leadership Council, to prepare a bold Just Transition Plan for BC to review and provide feedback on. This BC First Nations' Just Transition Plan will align with the IPCC's recommendations and scientifically backed reduction targets and will establish the importance of ensuring that climate planning protects traditional ecological knowledge, and is respectful of and co-created with First Nations in BC.

Moved: Dustin Rivers, Squamish Nation (Proxy)
Seconded: Chief Chad Eneas, Penticton Indian Band
Disposition: Carried
Date: February 27, 2019