

November 4, 2024
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The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, M.P.
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Copy: The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, M.P.
Minister of International Development
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

The Honourable Bardish Chagger, M.P. (Waterloo)
The Honourable Tim Louis, M.P. (Kitchener-Conestoga)
The Honourable Mike Morrice, M.P. (Kitchener Centre)
The Honourable Valerie Bradford, M.P. (Kitchener South – Hespeler)
The Honourable Bryan May, M.P. (Cambridge)

Canada at the UN Climate Change Conference, Baku (COP29)

Dear Minister,

As we did last year in our COP28 letter to you of November 27, 2023, we at *Faith Climate Justice Waterloo Region (FCJ)* are writing to urge strong action by Canada at the upcoming COP29. At that time, and indeed in the months after COP28, we very much appreciated the exchange of letters that we had between our group and your office.

We have been active in our community in promoting the well-being of all creation and in advocating for justice for those most impacted by climate change, at home and abroad. COP28 provided some cautious optimism on two pressing issues – the *Loss and Damage Fund* to support developing countries, and the reduction of the GHG emissions that are the cause of global warming which necessitates a *Loss and Damage Fund*.

Loss and Damage Fund

COP28 surprised the world by agreeing early in the conference to formally begin the process of launching the fund. We were pleased to read that progress has been made as the *Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage* has held its first meetings, co-chairs have been elected, and an Executive Director appointed. The Fund is thus equipped to begin distributing funds in 2025.

While progress has been made on the operational aspects of the fund, many are concerned that the funds contributed to date are grossly inadequate with little growth being reported since the end of COP28. With estimates that the annual funding need for loss and damage will approach \$600 billion by

2030, the current amount of around \$700 million will be quickly exhausted. We urge Canada to continue its effective support of growing the *Loss and Damage Fund* within the climate finance negotiations that will happen ahead of and at COP29. We also urge Canada to significantly increase its own contribution to the fund since the amount offered to date of \$16 million (CDN) seems embarrassingly meagre for a G7 country.

GHG Emissions Reduction

By 2030, whether the estimated need for loss and damage funds is \$300 billion or \$600 billion, it seems obvious that the growing need of the developing countries for compensation will far outstrip the funds that developed nations are willing to provide. This is especially true since the record global warming caused by GHG emissions is continuing unabated leading to dire drought conditions in some areas of the globe and increasingly violent weather in others. The unavoidable conclusion from this is that the nations of the world must immediately prioritize the reduction of GHG emissions. You recognized this reality in your January 15, 2024 letter to us where you noted that at COP28 *“Canada strongly advocated for accelerated commitments to reduce emissions as limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels is the most effective means of avoiding further loss and damage. Without this, no amount of funding for loss and damage will ever be sufficient.”* Further, since fossil fuel production and burning are the largest sources of global GHG emissions, their phase-out in a just, orderly and equitable manner must be a specific focus for COP29.

The COP28 final document made history by naming fossil fuels as a major cause of GHG emissions for the first time and calling for a "transition away" from coal, oil and gas. This breakthrough was welcomed but also tempered by the refusal of the fossil fuel industry to accept earlier stronger language to "phase out fossil fuels". A year later, it is extremely discouraging to read that the COP29 agenda proposed by Azerbaijan, the third petrostate in a row to host the COP, does not include any mention of phasing out planet-warming fossil fuels: coal, natural gas, and oil. In fact, the host country plans to increase its fossil fuel production even in the face of ever rising emissions from fossil fuels.

Canada’s international responsibility at COP29 is the same as its domestic responsibility – to bring truth to the power of the fossil fuel industry and to focus on driving towards policy and planning that sees the rapid phase-out of fossil fuels in a just, orderly and equitable manner. We recognize that this is not easy. Many oil-rich nations are arranged against progress in this direction as are the legions of fossil fuel lobbyists (an estimated 2,456 at COP28 including some from Canada) even in the face of our global failure to be on track for meeting the targets of the Paris Agreement. In Canada, as a Sept 24, 2024 *Globe and Mail* editorial proclaimed, [*Canada falls further behind its Paris climate promise*](#). Perhaps this is not surprising when we see the *Globe and Mail Report on Business Magazine* of Sept 26, 2024 cover article on Suncor CEO Rich Kruger which is titled *Suncor CEO Rich Kruger is all in on oil. He’ll figure out the shift to renewables later*. **There is no later, our future depends on aggressively moving away from fossil fuels today.**

Renowned speculative fiction author Kim Stanley Robinson, in his award-winning 2012 novel titled *2312*, looks back from the year 2312 at the 2005 – 2060 time period which, in the novel, is called *The*

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Dithering; called *dithering* because the nations of the world could not decide on effective action to reduce GHG emissions and our Earth tipped into climate-ravaged destruction. You can read an account of our **real-life dithering** and how we can break out of it in the June 2024 [UN Secretary-General's special address on climate action](#) - we must not permit Robinson's fiction to become our reality.

Sincerely,
Members of Faith Climate Justice Waterloo Region



Links

[Ahead of COP29, the Climate Loss and Damage Fund Is Drying Up \(greenqueen.com.hk\)](#) (Oct. 5, 2024)

[How does the loss and damage fund work for climate justice? | Global Witness](#) (Sept 30, 2024)

[The Board of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage Holds its Historic First Meeting | UNFCCC](#) (May 6, 2024)

[Summer 2024 Sets Global Heat Records Amidst Climate Crisis - Climate Fact Checks](#) (Sept 23, 2024)

[Emissions from Fossil Fuels Continue to Rise \(nasa.gov\)](#) (March 5, 2024)

[No Mention of Fossil Fuel Phaseout in COP29 Agenda | Earth.Org](#) (Sept 19, 2024)

[COP29 climate hosts say they'll keep expanding fossil fuels \(phys.org\)](#) (June 7, 2024)

[Record number of fossil fuel lobbyists at COP28. How many are Canadians? | Globalnews.ca](#) (Dec 5, 2023)

[Secretary-General's special address on climate action "A Moment of Truth" | United Nations Secretary-General](#) (June 5, 2024)

[COP28: Landmark summit takes direct aim at fossil fuels \(bbc.com\)](#) (Dec 13, 2023)

[Globe editorial: Canada falls further behind its Paris climate promise - The Globe and Mail](#) (Sept 24, 2024)

[Suncor CEO Rich Kruger is all in on oil. He'll figure out the shift to renewables later - The Globe and Mail](#) (Sept 26, 2024)