

Climate Action News this week

Published by Climate Action Network – Réseau action climat Canada
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February 27th, 2008 Edition

National News

Federal Government Delivers “Polluter Gets Paid” Budget

The Harper government has rejected BC’s lead on taxing carbon-polluting activities in its third budget, but will hand out \$300M to the ailing AECL, \$250M to Ontario carmakers and \$240 to bury carbon in Saskatchewan. “This is not an environmental budget,” says the Green Budget Coalition.

News Coverage:

<http://www.financialpost.com/money/taxes/story.html?id=324780>

<http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Science/2008/02/26/4878335-cp.html>

Read the Budget:

<http://www.budget.gc.ca/2008/home-acceuil-eng.asp>

Canada Would “More than double” Emissions Savings in 2016 with California Fuel Efficiency Standard

An exhaustive analysis by the California Air Resources Board confirms that Canada would more than double its greenhouse gas reductions in 2016 with California tailpipe standards rather than U.S. federal fuel economy (miles/gallon) rules. Transport Canada will set new standards for cars sold in Canada by the end of this year, and is leaning heavily toward the weaker approach (see “What You Can Do”, below).

Get the report:

http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/ccms/reports/pavleycafe_reportfeb25_08.pdf

“Science in Retreat” in Canada

An editorial in the latest issue of the prestigious journal *Nature* condemns the Harper government for its “manifest disregard for science.” The publication cites the closing of the office of the national science advisor in January, the muzzling of Environment Canada scientists, and the snubbing of Canada’s IPCC Nobel-Prize winning scientists as examples of a “dismal track record” by a government “sceptical of the science of climate change.”

Get the article:

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v451/n7181/full/451866a.html>

News Coverage:

<http://www.nationalpost.com/news/canada/story.html?id=324923>

Rick Mercer’s Blog:

<http://www.rickmercer.com/blog/index.cfm/2008/2/20/Circle-the-wagons--science-is-coming>

Kyoto Report Card: Follow the leaders or get out of the way

The Sierra Club of Canada’s 2008 Kyoto Report Card provides a serious picture of a federal government determined to talk without acting on climate change.

Get the Report Card:

<http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/kyoto/>

News Coverage:

<http://www.canada.com/topics/news/politics/story.html?id=250b233d-a3e5-4094-a299-8825f5af36cd&k=31969>

<http://canadianpress.google.com/article/ALeqM5hnLAqfb7d-Qqc40W-fkAPQzqSjNw>

Federal Government Derelict of Duty on Tar Sands, the “Most Destructive Project on Earth”

Environmental Defense is accusing Ottawa of “letting the Tar Sands hold Canadians hostage on global warming” by failing to apply existing laws to reduce emissions and clean up a world-class toxic hot spot. The assessment is contained in a report released February 15th entitled *Canada’s Toxic Tar Sands: The Most Destructive Project on Earth*.

Get the report:

<http://www.environmentaldefence.ca/reports/tarsands.htm>

On the Hill

Elections Canada to Investigate "Friends of Science"

Elections Canada will investigate a series of ads placed in "five major Ontario markets" that could have influenced the outcome of the 2006 election. Created by the anti-Kyoto group "Friends of Science," the ads suggested people are being misled about climate change, and urged voters to ask their MPs questions about wasting "billions on global warming theories." Liberal MP Mark Holland is also recommending a parliamentary hearing into Conservative links to the ads.

News stories:

<http://www.dose.ca/news/story.html?id=b2307acc-cc2a-42dc-b562-3ed737847a4d>

<http://www.canada.com/topics/news/politics/story.html?id=595cc20a-7e54-4882-b3db-23e75f19a9a4&k=48047>

Across Canada

Oil Companies Call for Partial Freeze on Tar Sands

Forty-six companies and aboriginal members are calling for a freeze in land lease licenses to allow time to establish conservation preserves in Alberta's north.

News coverage:

<http://calsun.canoe.ca/News/Election/2008/02/26/4877116-sun.html>

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20080225.RALBERTA25/TPStory/National>

Greenpeace Reaction:

<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/February2008/25/c5778.html>

Athabasca Treaty Chiefs Unanimously Approve Tar Sands Moratorium

Treaty Chiefs representing the Treaties 6, 7 and 8 nations of Alberta have passed a resolution to end new oil sands approvals until Treaty First Nations have approved a comprehensive watershed management plan and resource development plan for the region.

News Release:

http://www.tarsandstimeout.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=63&Itemid=1

News coverage:

<http://www.canada.com/calgaryherald/news/story.html?id=e2ecbd20-6ca4-49e4-8165-c458a225aa34&k=23013>

B.C. Sets Groundbreaking Carbon Tax

B.C. made climate policy history for North America February 19th with its decision to tax fossil fuel use including gasoline, diesel, natural gas, coal, propane and home heating fuel. The rate starts at \$10 per tonne of carbon-equivalent emissions and will rise by \$5 per year for the next four years, hitting \$30 per tonne by 2012. Environmentalists are applauding the move an important but insufficient first step, and are pointing to a leadership vacuum in Ottawa.

News Coverage:

<http://www.thestar.com/News/Canada/article/305170>

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/Canada/1039035.html>

B.C. Government Budget Highlights:

http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2008/highlights/2008_Highlights.pdf

B.C. Government Backgrounder:

http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2008/backgrounders/2008_Backgrounder_Carbon_Tax.pdf

Press Releases:

<http://www.climateactionnetwork.ca/e/news/2008/bc-carbon-budget-2008-02-20.html>

http://www.bcsea.org/media/080219-BC_Budget2008.asp

<http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/media/item.shtml?x=1468>

BC Carbon Tax Fine for BC and Regulatory Maze OK for Canada – Baird, Lunn

Unlike Canada's business and industry leaders who are crying for regulatory certainty, Environment Minister Baird and Natural Resources Minister Lunn see no problem with a patchwork quilt of regulatory regimes at different government levels, and across the provinces and territories.

Read the stories:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20080221.wbccampbell21/BNStory/National/home>

http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20080220/carbon_tax_080220/20080220?hub=TopStories

World News

Australia's Garnaut Review Warns of Climate Catastrophe, Calls for Global Carbon Budget, Deep Reductions Now

In its initial report released February 21st, the Garnaut Climate Change Review warns the Rudd Government of Australia's "exceptional sensitivity to climate change", and that "only an international agreement on distributing the abatement burden across countries has any chance of achieving the depth, speed and breadth of action that is now required...".

Executive Summary and Full Report:

<http://www.garnautreview.org.au/CA25734E0016A131/pages/reports-and-papers>

News Coverage:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/02/22/2170028.htm>

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/environment/climate-change-act-now/2008/02/21/1203467281202.html?page=fullpage#contentSwap1>

Who's the Greenest Candidate for the U.S. Presidency?

Not John McCain, if voting records are the measure. Here are the statistics from the League of Conservation Voters' 2007 Report Card, released last week: Clinton's 2007 score = 73% (87% over lifetime); Obama = 67% (86% lifetime) John McCain = 0% in 2007 (24% lifetime).

Press Release and Score Card:

<http://www.lcv.org/newsroom/press-releases/lcv-releases-2007-national-environmental-scorecard.html>

News Story:

<http://www.planetark.com/dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/47101/story.htm>

Take Action

Canadians may want the cleanest cars available with currently existing technologies, but they won't get them unless Transport Canada gets the message that relatively weak U.S. federal CAFE standard is unacceptable for this country. Tell them today. Share the link. Deadline: March 15. www.cleancarscanada.ca.

Looking Ahead

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| March 3 | Alberta goes to the polls |
| March 12-14 | GLOBE 2008 Business & Environment Conference, Vancouver |
| March 14-16 | Major Economies Meeting technical workshop on sectoral approaches and Gleneagles Dialogue on Climate Change, Clean Energy & Development, Chiba, Japan |
| March 31- April 4 | First Working Group Meeting on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention and First Meeting of Article 3.9 Working Group under the Kyoto Protocol |