

**Submission by Canada**  
**Views on advancing the work of the Durban Platform**

April 2013

In Decision 1/CP.17, Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) established the Ad hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform on Enhanced Action (ADP) with the objectives of: a) reaching a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force, under the Convention, applicable to all Parties, by 2015 for implementation by 2020; and b) exploring options for enhancing global mitigation ambition prior to 2020.

Canada is fully committed to the ADP process and is pleased to provide this submission in response to the invitation by the Co-Chairs to submit information, views and proposals on: a) matters related to the work of the ADP; and b) actions, initiatives and options to enhance ambition (FCCC/ADP/2012/3, paragraphs 29 and 31).

**A post-2020 agreement**

Twenty years ago, in the face of growing scientific evidence of climate change, 166 Parties signed on to the Convention with the overarching goal of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Since then, membership of the Convention has grown to 195 Parties, and over this period, we have taken important strides toward the ultimate goal of the Convention. However, it is evident that more action is required to address the global threat of climate change. Learning from our experience, it is also clear that we need to change our approach if we are to be more effective in our efforts.

In this respect, the ADP is an important turning point and represents a significant opportunity, in that it sets out a new way for broader collective action so far unseen in the history of the UNFCCC. Our task, ambitious as it is, is to develop a post-2020 climate regime agreement that will help us meet our commitment to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2°C above pre-industrial levels.

Over the course of 2012, during the ADP roundtables, we have had the opportunity to share our views on how such an agreement should be shaped. In these discussions, many Parties have stressed the centrality of the principles of the Convention, and have talked about the notions of “common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities” and “equity” as elements to guide the design of the new, post-2020 agreement.

In fact, since the inception of the UNFCCC, Parties have always respected and been guided by the principles of the Convention. We agree that the new, post-2020 international climate change agreement “under the Convention” should be no exception. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the world of today is very different from that of 1992, when the Convention was first established, and will very likely be even more so in 2020 and beyond. For the

Convention principles to be meaningful and relevant, they must be applied in a way that reflects the shifting realities, and more specifically, current and future responsibilities and capabilities.

Moreover, if we are to meet the goals of the Convention, we must design a new agreement that is flexible enough to provide for a dynamic global climate regime that will remain relevant over the longer-term. We must also ensure a design that will encourage increased transparency and accountability, and a regime that is facilitative and accommodating of ever-changing national circumstances. In short, we must ensure the development of a regime that encourages and motivates national action to achieve our collective goals.

In the past year, we have also spent much time considering what we mean by an agreement that would be “applicable to all”. In our view, this means that, in practice, all Parties, particularly all major emitters, must take on meaningful mitigation commitments under the same agreement. This does not mean, however, that all Parties would necessarily have the same commitments, as we recognize that Parties face a wide range of national circumstances, opportunities and constraints. When we talk about equity, we mean that a post-2020 agreement can only be equitable if every Party to the UNFCCC contributes efforts commensurate with its capabilities and responsibilities, in a way that reflects current global realities and projected future global circumstances, fulfilled in a climate change framework that allows for an evolution of commitments as national circumstances evolve.

With respect to the scope of the post-2020 agreement, we believe that the new agreement must be underpinned by ambitious post-2020 mitigation commitments by all major emitters, consistent with our collective commitment to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Clearly, adaptation, finance, technology, and capacity-building will also continue to be important in the post-2020 period. This is why we must recognize the importance of the many existing and new initiatives and institutions that we have established to comprehensively address these issues, such as the Adaptation Committee, the Green Climate Fund, and the technology mechanism. Moving forward, we should allow these processes to unfold according to the work plans we have agreed and concentrate our efforts under the ADP on mitigation and ambition.

Finally, until we have a clearer idea of the scope of the post-2020 agreement, we believe that it would be premature to consider the important issue of the legal form such an agreement should take. Our common goals and objectives, as articulated in the Convention, can inform us on the design of the new agreement. As outlined above, we must aim for the broadest possible participation in a new global climate change regime. To accomplish this, the new agreement should: provide for flexibility, transparency and accountability; encourage greater and broader ambition continually; and facilitate Parties in meeting their commitments. A robust system of measurement, reporting and verification is critical to meeting these objectives in the new agreement. Moreover, to encourage greater and broader ambition continually, a new climate change regime should provide countries with the flexibility to voluntarily modify and update their mitigation commitments, with a view to encouraging more aggressive action over time.

## **Enhancing mitigation ambition prior to 2020**

Canada is not unique in acknowledging the importance of economic growth and development, and the need to balance these goals with our common responsibility to protect the environment. In this respect, the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP15) in Copenhagen, Denmark was a breakthrough with all Parties, both developed and developing, committing to a common, long-term global goal and specific, nationally-appropriate mitigation targets and actions.

To date, about 100 Parties, representing about 85% of global greenhouse house emissions, have already inscribed mitigation commitments under the Cancun Agreements. This is a major achievement. Moreover, Parties further agreed a wide range of key measures to support Parties reach these commitments, and decisions taken successively at COP16 in Cancun, COP17 in Durban and COP18 in Doha continued to facilitate their implementation.

However, while efforts are underway to implement these commitments, recent studies indicate that there still exists an ambition gap between the current collective mitigation pledges and our commitment to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. It is for this reason that Parties have agreed to a work programme under the ADP to consider options for enhancing mitigation ambition immediately and up to the entry into force of the new, post-2020 agreement.

Clearly, encouraging the Parties that represent the rest of the 15% of global emissions is one important way of addressing the ambition gap, although we recognize the need to provide flexibility for the least developed countries, small island developing states and African countries. Many of the initiatives and institutions that are being established, such as the registry for nationally appropriate mitigation actions, the technology mechanism, may be able to provide the assistance and incentives needed for these Parties to come forward with pledges.

Moreover, we expect that the many projects and initiatives that were launched as a result of fast-start financing will also make a significant contribution, given that developed countries have now exceeded their commitment to provide \$30 billion in fast-start financing. As just one example, Canada's fast-start contribution of \$1.2 billion has helped supported a wide range of clean energy, forests and agriculture projects in developing countries that will have significant impacts both in reducing global emissions and in leveraging private sector finance for even greater impact. The transparency and accountability measures that we have established and enhanced are also building confidence that Parties are fulfilling their commitments under the Cancun Agreements, and showing where more work can be done to enhance global mitigation action.

We must continue to embrace new, flexible and creative approaches to motivate even greater and broader mitigation actions. In this respect, we would be remiss in neglecting the voluntary complementary initiatives outside the UNFCCC that are helping to raise mitigation ambition. Notably, Canada has been playing a leadership role in the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to reduce short-lived climate pollutants, which a growing volume of scientific studies indicate can be an important part of the climate change solution. Not only do efforts under the Coalition help to address climate change, but they also realize co-benefits such as reducing air pollution and improving human health, agriculture and ecosystems.

For the past four years, Canada has also been working with its North American partners in proposing to phase down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) under the Montreal Protocol. Canada also continues to support the work of the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Maritime Organization, the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases, and the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) Partnership. These initiatives, by virtue of their flexibility and nimbleness, are able to contribute positively to the overall climate change efforts in specific, targeted areas, thus complementing our efforts under the UNFCCC.

Science has clearly demonstrated the imperative for all Parties to act while we are still able to bend projected global emissions trends downwards. The ADP represents an unprecedented resolve by the international community to cooperate in this regard and sets the stage for a new, more effective approach. It is now our responsibility to seize this opportunity and build a new climate change regime to help us address the threat of climate change effectively and sustainably. Canada is committed to the Durban Platform and we look forward to working with all Parties and the Co-Chairs to reach a successful outcome under the ADP.