

From: [Environment and Climate Change Canada](#)

National statement

December 10, 2019 – Madrid, Spain

“Hello,

“I want to begin by thanking Spain for helping Chile host this COP. Canada welcomes Chile’s priorities including a focus on oceans, renewable energy, the circular economy, and biodiversity.

“As Canada’s new Minister of Environment and Climate Change, I am pleased to be here. My predecessor, Catherine McKenna, built important partnerships with many of you, and I look forward to strengthening those relationships and building new ones. In my previous role as Canada’s Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, I saw the impacts of climate change on our oceans.

“In British Columbia, my home, we see it in what’s happening to wild Pacific salmon stocks. Each year yields less, meaning less food for Indigenous communities, less income for fishers, and less biodiversity in our ecosystem.

“Lives are being impacted. Last year, heatwaves took the lives of almost a hundred. Forest fires devastated Canada’s West, driving thousands from their homes. Expert Canadian scientists recently released a report that showed Canada is warming at twice the global rate, and, in our North, its three times. We’ve all seen the reports about the potential of an ice-free Arctic. In August, I joined Prime Minister Trudeau, in Nunavut, to declare interim protection of Tuvaijuittuq (Tu-vai-you-ee-tuq), protecting Canada’s High Arctic and northern animals.

“Climate change is a defining issue of our time and one of the reasons I entered politics. Before this, I ran clean-technology companies. I am optimistic about technology’s potential to make deep cuts to carbon emissions, carve new paths to prosperity, and create jobs. Canada is ready to be among the leaders in this global economic shift.

“In October, Canadians re-elected our government with a mandate to take ambitious climate action. Last year, we enacted a price on pollution, and many said, at the time, that the political risk was too high. Instead, over two thirds of Canadians voted for parties that support pricing. We saw huge turnouts at September’s climate marches, including when Prime Minister Trudeau marched alongside half a million people in Montréal.

“Canada is proud to be a part of international efforts to increase cooperation and climate ambition with an emphasis on gender equality and the empowerment of women. In 2017, we co-founded the Powering Past Coal Alliance, with the UK. While hosting the G7 last year, we introduced the Ocean Plastics Charter to fight plastic pollution.

“We are also delivering on our commitment to support developing countries, including ensuring responsiveness to the needs of small islands states and coastal communities.

“It’s also in this spirit of partnership that we are a candidate for the United Nations Security Council, for 2021–22, when we would serve as a member seeking to represent all voices. This is why one of our candidacy’s priority pillars is to address climate change, together.

“Here in Madrid, we must unlock opportunities for deeper emission reductions and help countries meet and exceed their targets. On Article 6, Canada is committed to ensuring environmental integrity—by avoiding double counting, ensuring transparency, and promoting sustainable development—so that international cooperation can help all of us increase our ambition.

“By establishing robust rules, here at COP25, we can provide the certainty the private sector needs to mobilize finance and create a cleaner economy.

“We all saw the latest scientific reports: We know we must increase our ambition. Canada has done a lot—introducing a price on carbon, phasing out coal, making historic investments in renewables, building public-transit projects across the country, doubling our protection of nature, for example. But we must do more. We know we need to not only meet our Paris target, but we also must work to exceed it.

“We will come forward with legislation that commits us to our net-zero goal, with milestones every five years, paired with a Just Transition Act to make sure we keep people at the centre of our policies. We must address climate change in a way that’s empathetic and sensitive to legitimate concerns about this transition, including those in our hydrocarbon-producing regions.

“I am proud to be doing the work alongside the incredible Canadians we have here at COP, which include provincial and territorial governments, industry, environmental groups, labour, medical professionals, young people, parliamentarians, and Indigenous Peoples—and in partnership with all of you.

“Indigenous communities are the first to feel the impacts of climate change. Canada strongly supports respect for human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the implementation the Paris Agreement including Article 6.

“Together, we will build an environmentally and economically sustainable world.

“Thank you.”

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