



Young Leaders' Summit on Northern Climate Change Inuvik, NT., August 2009

On Thursday, August 20, 2009, 60 young Canadians issued a declaration that laid out a call for action on northern climate change. The declaration highlights four areas of concern about the progress of climate change issues and upcoming negotiations and concludes with a call for action. The young leaders from across Canada had gathered in Inuvik, Northwest Territories for a summit on climate change on August 17 – 20, 2009.

The Summit helped to build the capacity of our young leaders to speak on climate change at home, nationally and internationally. 2009 is a critical year as the international community negotiates what countries' greenhouse gas reductions targets and other commitments will look like after 2012. It is vital that northern voices are heard during these negotiations, and the summit and resulting action plans generated by participants will help this to happen.

The summit was organized by the Arctic Athabaskan Council, Climate Action Network Canada, Ecology North, Gwich'in Council International, and the Pembina Institute.

THE DECLARATION OF THE YOUNG LEADERS' SUMMIT ON NORTHERN CLIMATE CHANGE IN INUVIK, NWT, AUGUST 20, 2009

In August 2009, sixty young Canadians gathered in Inuvik, Northwest Territories for a summit on climate change. We are from communities across Canada and are united by the magnitude of the climate change crisis, so much so that we were moved to tears by our shared experiences. We call for immediate and coordinated global action, as the world faces no graver threat. We must act now if we are to avoid dire consequences. The only thing that frightens us more than climate change is our governments' failure to respond to it.

We, the young leaders, declare that:

Climate Change is a Human Issue

Our lives have already been altered by the impacts of the climate crisis. Climate change has affected our health, our food security and our cultural identities. As Northern leader Sheila Watt-Cloutier told us, "climate change is not just an economic story, it's not just an environmental story, it's a human story."

Our North is Highly Vulnerable to Climate Change

Emissions from around the world have led to the present-day reality of climate change. The rapid changes we have seen and experienced in the Arctic show us how vulnerable the North is. As landscapes change, many animals face the prospect of extinction and those who have contributed the least to climate change are being most affected by it.

Climate Change is Happening Now

Our North is warming, our ice is melting, climate change affects us. The immediacy of the crisis was illustrated in Pangnirtung, Nunavut in the spring of 2008. Erosion and flooding washed out an essential bridge and the community experienced a loss of all water and sanitation services. These families faced the dangers and realities of climate change first-hand.

We Must Act Now

It is not too late to prevent further devastation. Canada must now be a leader in reducing emissions and motivating the world to act. We also have the responsibility to help vulnerable communities adapt. Leaders at all levels must develop and implement policies that will address the climate change crisis. As summit delegate Joel Hilchey, 26, stated "We can change the way the world does business. This is our opportunity."

The time for a strong, concerted response is now.

Lacia Kinnear

Holly Goulding

~~Michelle~~

~~Emily~~

~~Dan Gully~~

~~Shay~~

~~Mark~~

~~William~~

Cynthia James

Ky Brown

S. Conroy

~~Maria~~

~~[Signature]~~

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Digit Kroeger

Quonda Francis

Chelsea Cheddis

~~Mark~~

~~Dorothy~~

~~Abraham~~

Douglas E. Litcher

~~CSO~~

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K. Ma

J. Johns

Maryann Adams

~~Mark~~

Amber Simpson

Christie

~~Dee~~

~~Silber~~

Pierre Marchand

~~Jane~~

~~L.V.~~

~~Pat~~

Tom Arvisek

Ed Hickey

~~[Signature]~~

~~Bill~~

~~Bill~~

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James Hudson

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J. Paul

AMC Kelley

Anch Rank

Rayna Thomas

M. Shree

Jarah Glover

Pam Orr

Nicole Cook

Jennifer Grant

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PAUL TSCHELE

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Susan Evans

Founding Organizations



Climate Action Network Canada is a coalition of more than 50 organizations from across Canada working together to prevent catastrophic climate change and promote sustainable and equitable solutions. We are the only network in Canada that brings labour, development, faith-based and aboriginal groups together with national and provincial environmental organizations in a united effort to fight global warming. The network is coordinated by a secretariat based in Ottawa.

For a list of member organizations see:
<http://www.climateactionnetwork.ca/e/about/members/organizations.html>

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Founded in 1971, Ecology North is a leading environmental organization based in Yellowknife and a member of Climate Action Network Canada.

Ecology North has three main objectives:

- ..Promote public environmental education and awareness
- ..Promote sustainable living
- ..Reduce the impact of climate change

Its work has included:

- ... Working with Canadian Climate Impacts and Adaptation Research Network (C-CIARN)
- ... Participating in a number of workshops throughout the Northwest Territories on climate change adaptation, including co-hosting the 2007 Climate Change Leadership Summit.
- ... Working on a project to strengthen the NWT's overall

response to climate change including the development of a carbon pollution tax.

- ... Working with the Dehcho First Nations and the Tlicho Government to start regional climate change planning.

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The Pembina Institute was founded in 1985 by a group of citizens concerned about the impact of oil and gas development in Drayton Valley, Alberta.

The Pembina Institute is a national, non-profit sustainable energy think-tank with a focus on the transition towards sustainable energy production and consumption, and its mission is to catalyze this transition. However, issues such as climate change, energy equity, energy security and economic/social development are global issues. Part of their strategy is to attempt to influence key international decisions, work in partnership with counterparts in other countries, and make sure that Canada plays its part in a global transition. The organization works through :

- ... Participating as active members of an Ottawa climate team that focuses on federal and international policy,
- ... Providing research for governments, communities, and companies on adaptation, and the implications of oil and gas development (including oil sands),
- ... Engaging in provincial climate-change initiatives.

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The Arctic Athabaskan Council

The Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC) is an international treaty organization established to represent the interests of United States and Canadian Athabaskan member First Nation governments in Arctic Council forums, and to foster a greater understanding of the common heritage of all Athabaskan peoples of Arctic North America. AAC is one of six Permanent Participants to the Arctic Council.

The AAC was formed in 2000 and the founding members include: Council of Yukon First Nations, Dene Nation, Kaska Tribal Council, and 15 Alaskan Tribal Governments. AAC membership represents approximately 45,000 Athabaskan peoples whose historical range was 3 million square kilometers.

Strategic priorities of the AAC are primarily climate change, biodiversity, and contaminants. In accomplishing our goals, AAC works in partnership with Indigenous organizations, communities, governments, researchers, and environmental non-governmental organizations around the world.

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Gwich'in Council
International



Gwich'in Council International

The Gwich'in Council International (GCI) was established as a non-profit organization in 1999 by the Gwich'in Tribal Council in Inuvik, NWT, to ensure all regions of the Gwich'in Nation in the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Alaska are represented at the Arctic Council, as well as to play an active and significant role in the development of policies that relate to the Circumpolar Arctic.

The founding members of GCI includes six Alaskan Gwich'in communities (Arctic Village, Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon, Birtch, Circle and Venetie) two Gwich'in representative bodies in Canada — Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation representing Vuntut Gwitchin in Old Crow, Yukon, and Gwich'in Tribal Council representing four communities in the Beaufort Delta region in the Northwest Territories. In total, the Gwich'in Council International founding members represent approximately 9,000 indigenous peoples of Gwich'in descent. The GCI Secretariat rotates between the Gwich'in Tribal Council in Inuvik, NWT and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation in Old Crow, Yukon

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