



Climate Emergency – Declarations and Action Plans

Background

The climate crisis poses immediate, interconnected, and complex threats to people and the planet. The rapidly warming planet is a reality caused by human activities and the world will face catastrophic impacts of climate change within 80 years if the average global temperature increase exceeds 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The climate crisis poses an immediate risk to everything CFUW promotes and protects: quality public education, the rights of women and girls, justice and peace. A climate emergency declaration is an acknowledgement of the human causes of climate change and that the measures being taken to date have not been sufficient to control or reduce global warming. CFUW urge that all levels of government, the corporate sector, and community organizations declare a climate emergency and follow up by drafting and implementing measurable action plans, based on science and social justice, that work urgently to mitigate the factors creating this climate crisis and to also prepare for its unavoidable consequences such as floods, fires, storms, climate refugees, food and water insecurity, and social conflict.

Quick Facts

- As of September 2020, 1781 jurisdictions worldwide had also declared an emergency. Of the 486 declarations in Canada, 400 are Québec municipalities that endorsed a Déclaration d'Urgence Climatique
 - The Assembly of First Nations, school boards, colleges and universities, 22 medical and health organizations, and civil society coalitions have all declared climate emergencies
- Currently, our planet is on track for 3° to 5°C of warming by 2100
 - Canada's rate of warming is about twice the global rate: a 3°C increase globally means a 5 to 6°C increase for Canada
- G20 countries are responsible for about 80% of global carbon emissions
 - Canada ranks in the top 15 of per capita emitters worldwide
- Women and children are 14 times more likely to die in the aftermath of natural disasters and those who survive and are displaced, face high risks of sexual assault and trafficking.

Relevant Legislation & Canada's Obligations

- **2015 The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):**
 - SDG 13 urges UN Member States to take swift action in mitigating climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing climate resilience, and protecting the natural environment
- **2016 The Paris Agreement:**
 - A landmark agreement to combat climate change within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change to limit global warming to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°
- **2016 Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change:**
 - The Government of Canada's plan to meet emissions reduction targets, grow the economy, and build resilience to climate change in accordance with the *Paris Agreement*
- **2019 House of Commons Non-Binding National Climate Emergency:**
 - Passed with 186 votes to 63. Calls on the House to recognize that "climate change is a real and urgent crisis, driven by human activity" and to "declare that Canada is in a national climate emergency...".

Climate Emergency – Declarations and Action Plans 2020

Adopted at the 2020 AGM

RESOLVED, University Women (CFUW) urge provinces, territories, municipalities, and other community groups and organizations to declare a climate emergency if they have not already done so;

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the Government of Canada, the provinces and territories, municipalities and other community organizations, and the corporate sector to follow the climate emergency declaration by drafting and implementing measurable action plans, based on science and social justice, that work urgently to mitigate the factors creating this climate crisis and to also prepare for the unavoidable consequences such as floods, fires, storms, climate refugees, food and water insecurity, and social conflict.

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) foster relationships with Indigenous peoples for climate advocacy and urge governments, organizations, and advocates for the development and implementation of climate action plans to collaborate with Indigenous peoples and respect their leadership and traditional knowledge as long-time stewards of the environment.

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge all levels of governments to put the safety of women and children first in all actions to address climate emergencies and include women in the decision making, recognizing that women and children are disproportionately affected in climate emergencies



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Take Action

- CFUW members should write letters to their municipality urging them to declare a Climate Emergency if they have not already done so.
- CFUW clubs should circulate a petition to ask their municipality to declare a Climate Emergency if that has not been declared.
- CFUW members or clubs should write letters to the municipalities that have declared a climate emergency to ensure that they follow that with a detailed plan to reduce greenhouse gases with ambitious targets for 2030 and 2050.
- CFUW members should support the implementation of their local climate action plans.
- CFUW members should write their MP to ask that the Federal government develop a clear plan with measurable outcomes to reduce greenhouse gases and achieve the goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.
- CFUW members and/or clubs should write their MPP/MLA/MNA to urge that the province/territory declare a Climate Emergency and follow that with a clear plan to reduce greenhouse gases.
- CFUW members should collaborate with community groups taking climate action and explore ways to support the youth climate movement locally, nationally, and internationally.

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