

## Greater Victoria Acting Together - Climate Justice Survey Responses

Green Party of Canada = Cowichan-Malahat-Langford Candidate

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Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your survey which is prefaced by your statement that “current plans to cut emissions are not enough to curb a global rise in temperatures”! **CODE RED** is how we must act, and now! I agree.

- 1) In order to adhere to Canadian commitments made at COP 2015 Paris, to keep average global temperature increases below 1.5 degrees C, we endorse the elimination of subsidies to all fossil fuel related industries within the next five years (2026), and will mandate redirection of these subsidies to retraining workers in sustainable industries such as geothermal, solar, wind and other innovative pursuits ramping up. Canada has the technology now to be a world leader in geothermal energy and must not waste this opportunity. The Green Party opposes the Trans Mountain expansion, subsidies to LNG production, and fracking.
  
- 2) BC and other provinces have been plagued by wildfires, often caused by human carelessness, as well as by lightning strikes. These fires are exacerbated by drought, which has left monoculture plantations particularly susceptible to fire. Harvesting of timber, road building on alpine summits and logging in ancient growth areas results in land destabilization, mud slides, and desertification. Fairy Creek, in the CML Riding, is only the latest example of efforts made by forest defenders to prohibit this irresponsible practice. In the Cowichan Valley there have been two devastating and enormous fires within the last month, threatening dairies and other farms, as well as the communities around Chemainus, blanketing the entire eastern coast of the Island and the Gulf Islands in smoke.

- 3) Many of Canada's forests have become net emitters of GHGs. This can be at least partially addressed by addressing diversity in ecosystems, permitting more species to survive. Mass destruction of non-commercially valuable trees by the spreading of chemicals leaves evergreen coniferous forests more susceptible to fire and disease, destroys wildlife habitat where so many species are at risk, endangering fragile ecosystems. Extreme weather, lightning strikes and water shortages are compounded by rampant development of all kinds. These destructive practices are what increase greenhouse gas emissions, as nature's own carbon capture systems are destroyed.
- 4) Yes, I will publicly speak out in support of the CRD's position against highway expansion. There are better ways to move people around, including rail.
- 5) Yes, the Green Party supports generous permanent ongoing funding for public transit operations. We also support development of liveable, accessible neighbourhoods and communities that reduce the need for people to travel to obtain needed goods and services. This will require a higher level of communication and cooperation between all levels of government, and increased infrastructure supports in the delivery of health care services.
- 6) Canada must move towards food independence; almost 80 per cent of our fruits and vegetables are imported. Traditional greenhouses are responsible for large amounts of GHG emissions: we need to put our green energy sector to work in rectifying this problem. The federal government can support local and diversified farming in Canada by eliminating personal income taxes for small farms and producers, and making it easier for farmers to lease or purchase farming operations. We can improve succession planning for farmers to lease or purchase farming operations. We can support Agricultural land reserves established in provinces and territories to prohibit mega-houses and non-farming use. Agriculture Canada must make regional and territorial allowances for harvesting/slaughter/processing of animal products and transport of live animals. Encouraging a plant based diet will provide a more sustainable and secure food system, reducing GHG emissions.

- 7) In order to tackle the climate crisis and social inequities at the same time, a Universal Basic Income must be established for all. In countries where this is already in place, studies have substantiated that this does not impede the workforce, but has improved living conditions, general health, and educational opportunities. Improved mental health resources and decriminalization of street drugs will address, in part, the opioid crisis, which leaves too many Canadians marginalized or in worst case scenarios, dead, impacting extended families and communities. UBI will also address the shortage of affordable housing, but enormous efforts must be focused on building public housing and providing clean water across the country to all communities.
  
- 8) I am hearing from Indigenous communities in our CML Riding that housing is in a critical state, particularly on reserves, where growing extended families are forced to live in housing that was never designed to respect cultural practices. In local communities such as Pune'luxtth and in Quw'utsun, the volume of water in aquifers and in the Chemainus, Koksilah, and Cowichan Rivers is extremely low (we can see this with our own eyes), yet industries that consume vast quantities of water are not being asked to reduce consumption in the droughts and extreme heat. Building codes still do not encourage the use of grey water or water collection systems (cisterns) resulting in summers plagued with flooding and enormous snow accumulation. Lakes where people used to enjoy swimming have been clogged with toxic green algae due to increases in temperature and the unchecked development in surrounding communities. They are frequently not safe for people, and have sickened and even killed dogs who swam in them. Measures will need to be taken again this year to facilitate the migration of salmon to breeding grounds upriver.
  
- 9) I do not agree that scaling up is necessary to combat the climate crisis. Existing institutions can re-tool and leverage resources, while working closely with indigenous and other communities to reduce rampant consumerism. We can add value to wood products right here. Minimalist and locavore lifestyles are known to create less stress and negative health issues, increasing gross domestic happiness rather than GDP. People come to this Riding from all over the world, not to scale up, but to slow down! Cowichan area farmers were

some of the founders of the international “Slow Food Movement”, which addresses both the needs of farmers and consumers.

The never ending rhetoric of “jobs, jobs, jobs” needs to be addressed with compassion and pragmatism. Over centuries, industries have changed dramatically; cart builders became automobile producers, digital cameras replaced film, cellular phones have overtaken land lines, and the internet has changed most everything. We outsource shipbuilding (e.g. BC Ferries) to foreign lands, when we have the capacity in Canada to build ships right here. I am not suggesting isolationism; we are part of a global economy. We are not scaling up for war, nor can we continue levels of consumerism that were encouraged in the 1940s. Humanity has reached a point of consequences: this is the time where we must reduce, re-use, recycle and repurpose, accounting for the entire production cycle of goods from raw materials to waste.

#### Summary Remarks

Canada, from a population perspective, is a small player in the global scheme, while occupying one of the largest land masses of any nation, with vast quantities of fresh water. Yet we are experiencing faster global warming than any place on Earth. We have excellent universities and post-secondary educational resources, where we need to embrace and encourage the development of new technologies. We can set standards for this century, leading the world in scientific, energy, medical and agricultural pursuits. We are ideally located here to thrive in a changing world, laying out a map for the future. The Green Party will be a major player in the creation of that map.



Walking the Talk: This CML candidate practices what she preaches, repurposing signs from a previous campaign to match this election's updated image! Thanks to Ice Bear, local indigenous artist, for his creative time, talent and treasury, repurposing stock and emphasizing CODE RED!

Approved by Official Agent.