

Backgrounder: Federal-provincial climate plan negotiating process

Federal and provincial-territorial governments are engaged in a national process to develop a climate action plan for Canada. The national effort to cut the greenhouse gas emissions changing the climate began in the months leading up to the United Nations negotiations on a new climate agreement that concluded in December 2015 in Paris, France.

Negotiations among federal and provincial-territorial governments were launched at the first of two First Ministers Meetings (FMM and includes the prime minister and premiers) held in November 2015 in Ottawa, and again in Vancouver in March 2016. The Vancouver Declaration (<http://www.scics.gc.ca/english/conferences.asp?a=viewdocument&id=2401>) established a process for negotiating a national climate action plan in 2016. First Ministers will meet in early November 2016 to consider outputs from four working groups established in March. These working groups are co-chaired by the federal government and provinces and include:

1. Mitigation co-chaired by the federal government, British Columbia and Alberta
2. Adaptation co-chaired by the federal government and PEI
3. Carbon Pricing co-chaired by the federal government and Quebec and Ontario
4. Clean technology, innovation and jobs co-chaired by the federal government , Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Working group reports will be finalized by July and passed along to senior officials and environment ministers for integration into a final report that will be presented to the Prime Minister and Premiers in November 2016. While reports are being finalized, federal and provincial governments have begun bilateral negotiations on elements of the national climate plan that each province/territory will contribute. Federal Environment and Climate Change Minister Katherine McKenna will be in the Atlantic region in August as part of these bilateral discussions. The goal is for Canada to ratify the Paris Agreement in late fall 2016 once agreement has been reached on a climate plan.

Interested stakeholders can submit proposals for consideration in the national process through an Environment and Climate Change Canada online portal (<http://letstalkclimateaction.ca/ideas>). In New Brunswick, we have an opportunity to contribute by making submissions to the Select Committee of the Legislature on Climate Change. The Select Committee will host hearings beginning in late August. The deadline for petitioning to present to the committee is July 15 and the deadline to make a submission is August 15. The Conservation Council of New Brunswick's climate action plan proposal is our contribution to these national and provincial processes.