



April 25, 2012

**Rio+20: The Future Canadians Want**

Although Canada was once seen as a country that played a leading role in forging international agreements, the positions taken by Canada on the global stage over the last few years have more often obstructed progress, rather than catalyzing support, towards achieving environmental goals.

As Canadian environmental non-governmental organizations, we urge the Canadian government delegation to play a positive role in the Rio+20 negotiations.

The majority of Canadians, including the many members and supporters of our organizations, see Rio+20 as a unique opportunity to mobilize international support for adopting sustainable practices and making Canada itself "sustainable to the core".

We ask the Canadian government to work with us towards the future we want. Although our organizations have many specific goals related to the issues and themes that will be discussed at Rio+20, we urge Canada, at a minimum, to:

- 1) reaffirm the Rio principles contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including the precautionary principle;
- 2) implement Agenda 21, the Rio Conventions and the Millennium Development Goals particularly MDG#7, which requires integrating the principle of sustainable development into country policies and reversing the loss of resources, as Canada committed to do at the last Rio conference;
- 3) support the upgrading of the United Nations Environment Program to a UN specialized agency for environmental protection with the same status and resources as the World Health Organization;

- 4) recognize the economic, environmental and social values of intact natural systems and incorporate their true value into decision-making; and,
- 5) end subsidies for fossil fuels.

We regret the government's failure to talk to Canadians about the most effective ways to steer Canada and the world towards sustainability, which will be discussed at Rio+20. We hope that, after the conference is concluded, the government will find a way to enlist Canadians in the massive effort that it will take to make sustainability part of every facet of our lives.

Canadian Environmental Law Association  
Greenpeace  
Environmental Defence  
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society  
David Suzuki Foundation  
Ecojustice  
Mining Watch Canada  
Ontario Nature  
Canadian Women's Health Network  
Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment