

The Canadian Economic Rethink

At War or Getting It Right?



The impact of economic policy reaches far beyond the financial realm. Inevitably, the relationship between governments and corporations is also central to ecological policy and the response to human rights problems. Today, money does more than talk; it sets the stage and dictates the script.

The daunting problems we now face are the consequence of a failed economic system. The only way out of this dead end is to change the very foundation of this system. If we are to survive, protect public health, and truly prosper, the human economy must be rooted in the reality and within the limits of the Earth's physical systems. As highlighted on pages 4 and 5, some countries are already in the forefront of this momentous shift. Canada, however, under Prime Minister Harper, is aggressively defending the destructive status quo and doing his utmost to silence critical voices. The call to throw him out and stop the war on Canada's natural beauty is growing. Trend is not destiny and Canada is not Harper.

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Prime Minister's Report Card STEPHEN HARPER

Subject	Grade
TRUE COST ECONOMY	F
ECOLOGY	F
EQUITY	F



The Harper Government: Canada Backsliding From a Better World

Our world needs bold leadership to steer us back on the right path. Imagine a world where people live well without waste or excessive demand on the Earth's nourishing web of life. This can be difficult to picture in our current utterly mad reality. To make this possible, we must help under-consumers (the malnourished and wanting) move up to a reasonable level of consumption while we assist over-consumers (the wasteful and indifferent) in reducing their demands and moving down to a reasonable level. Moderating human demand is the only way to protect remnants of wild nature and to allow damaged land, water and sky to heal.

Some countries are taking significant steps to meet this challenge. Others, like the United States, have abandoned leadership. As the pressures of extreme weather events, economic strain, and human rights abuses mount in North America, will Canada rise to the occasion and fill the leadership void, or will it continue to backslide?

We reviewed more than a dozen scorecards that grade nations on their performance on major economic, ecological, and social equity policies. In this report, we call attention to a short but meaningful list of bold actions from around the world that begin to advance the fundamental economic change necessary for the survival of human societies and the natural systems that support them. Our first report (2012) highlighted Brazil; this second report highlights Canada (with special focus on the Provinces of British Columbia and Alberta)—a country which abounds in forests, lakes, rivers, fish and wildlife, but is also the site of some of the most environmentally destructive energy and mining projects in the world. In the past, Canada had been a leader in promoting some aspects of human rights and sustainability.

TOWARD A NEW FOUNDATION: WHO IS MEETING THE CHALLENGE?

This report highlights sixteen changes that would help lay this new foundation. If every country made most of these changes, we could shift the human enterprise from its current dead end path in a single generation. Additional material, including footnotes and the Brazil report, is available on our website at www.FDNearth.org. We welcome your suggestions.

Who's Rethinking?

TRUE COST ECONOMY:

I **Why:** In our current free market system, corporations reap profits but avoid the full accountability (cost) of their production by shifting the burden to others, often in the form of pollution and resource depletion. There are many consequences to operating an economic system with hidden and shifted costs. In the short term, the pollution ruins the health of people and of natural systems. In the longer term, ignoring true costs in our gargantuan global economy disrupts the planetary life support systems that sustain all life and human civilization. In a True Cost Economy, the cleanest forms of production would be the cheapest, because prices would include the substantial costs now shifted to others. For example, if the price of coal-fired electricity included the cost to human health and to planetary systems, such as acid rain and climate disruption, it would not be cheaper than power from renewable sources such as wind and solar. Coal power would be *far more expensive*.

Who does it well: Since Sweden enacted a carbon pollution tax in 1991, it has reduced its emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) and maintained a robust economy. Costa Rica, which implemented a carbon tax in 1997, is using some of the funds generated to support forest conservation and sustainable land practices.

British Columbia: BC has had noteworthy achievements on ecological and First Nation issues. In 2008, the province took the positive step of enacting a carbon tax with support from both political parties. But dangerous mining and energy projects have proceeded, nevertheless, because the carbon tax rate was set too low to encourage a shift to less damaging modes of mining and energy production. As a consequence, mining and energy operations can still dodge the costs of the long-term economic and ecological damage they cause.

Alberta: U.S. top climate scientist Dr. James Hansen said the Keystone XL pipeline in AB “would practically guarantee extensive exploitation” of the tar sands and “will leave our

children and grandchildren a climate system with consequences that are out of control.”

Harper: Harper did not seek to extend BC’s carbon tax model to the whole nation. Harper killed the only national advisory body on sustainable development, the National Round Table on Environment and Economy. He also eliminated the posts of Ambassador for Environment and Sustainable Development and Ambassador for the Circumpolar North.

2 CARRYING CAPACITY:

Why: The future of the human enterprise depends on stemming the growing disruption of the Earth’s life support system. Modern global civilization is exceeding ecological limits and the renewal power of natural systems on many fronts—ranging from growing water shortages to vanishing species. Establishing national institutions and programmes that monitor planetary boundaries, or “carrying capacity,” will help identify the most urgent threats and set priorities for a strategic retreat from danger zones. At the moment, there are no effective institutions empowered to limit economic activity that threatens planetary boundaries.

Who does it well: No country has adequately met this challenge.

British Columbia: A province-wide movement for ecological sustainability is growing and offering a grass-roots response to approaching limits. Vancouver, while not without problems, is still a leader in programmes which aim to reduce human demands on natural systems by promoting urban farming, mass transit, carbon neutral building, and other innovative initiatives.

Alberta: This province has great potential for wind and solar energy, yet business and government leaders continue to overwhelmingly favor dirty energy sources—coal, gas, oil, and tar sands—which will scar the land and water for centuries.

Harper: Because of its relatively low human population, Canada, unlike many other nations, has likely not exceeded the carrying capacity of its lands. The Harper government, however, is aggressively pursuing massive projects to harvest timber and mine fossil fuels—operations which will generate unprecedented pollution, accelerate climate disruption and liquidate rivers, fisheries, and biologically diverse forests through manifestly unsustainable extraction. In a challenge to the pursuit of growth at all costs, Montreal hosted the First North American Degrowth Conference in 2012.

3 PUBLIC BANKING:

Why: Privately-owned banks answer to shareholders, who generally rank short term profits as their highest priority, and thus, foster the reckless risk-taking that continues to jeopardize the global economy and undermine the stability of the Earth’s life support system. Public banking operates in the public interest, through institutions owned by the people through their state or community. Instead of pursuing maximum profits through speculative investment, private banks provide credit to the local community and thereby help create jobs and promote prosperity.

Who does it well: The Bank of North Dakota, the only state-owned bank in the U.S., has a century long record testifying to the ability of public banks to spur job growth, build small businesses, lower debt costs to local governments and even out credit cycles that inhibit recovery from recessions.

British Columbia: BC does not have a province-wide public bank.
Alberta: Alberta has had a number of public banks which date back to the 1930s, when the Alberta Treasury Branches were created to provide banking and credit services to small businesses and struggling farmers at affordable interest. The Branches grew and flourished for several decades, but their power was reduced in the 1970s. But the institutions remain and could, if restored to their former role, again play a vital role in provincial life and in its economy.

Harper: Harper does not support public banking and his bias against it has perhaps come at a high cost. Some experts contend that Canada could have avoided massive budget cuts in March 2012 had it continued borrowing from its own central bank, as was the practice from 1939 to 1974.

4 COMBATTING EXCESS:

Why: The world’s rich minority, who squander resources and consume insatiably, place a far greater burden on the Earth’s life support system than the billion who live in extreme poverty. For this reason, there is an urgent need to create a new institution dedicated to combatting the excesses of the privileged and wasteful class—a World Bank to Moderate Excess. Its mission would be to educate the world about the burden of this over-consumption and to promote policies aimed at curbing this destructive behavior.

Who does it well: Repair cafes have emerged in the Netherlands to encourage reuse of broken and weathered possessions by providing free repair services by eco-concerned citizens. More powerful policy-driven economic actions to reduce consumption are needed.

British Columbia, Alberta, and Harper: No substantial national or province-wide programmes exist to reduce over-consumption.

5 ORGANIC COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE:

Why: Industrial agriculture is destroying vital habitat, brutalizing the soil, employing the use of carcinogenic and mutagenic chemicals and creating dead zones in the oceans. The increasing number of extreme weather events may spell the collapse of industrial agriculture, jeopardizing food security worldwide. Applying True Cost Economy and Carrying Capacity thinking to agriculture shapes a more organic, healthy, decentralized (bioregional), and resilient system.

Who does it well: Cuba’s loss of subsidized oil, fossil fuel fertilizers, and pesticides forced the nation to grow more food locally using more sustainable production methods. Today, 50% of fresh produce consumed in Havana is grown within the city limits. As of 2010, 35.9% of agricultural products in the Falkland Islands were grown organically; in Liechtenstein: 27.3%; and in Austria 19.7%. Bhutan deserves special mention for becoming the first country to fully commit to organic agriculture by banning the sale of pesticides in 2013.

British Columbia: Though BC lost organically certified farms between 2009 and 2010, an organic and local food movement is building in the Province, and BC has protected a significant amount of farmland in its Agricultural Land Reserve. However, developers keep trying to open the Reserve for construction.

Alberta: AB also lost organically certified farms between 2009 and 2010.

THE ECONOMIC RETHINK: Where Does Canada Stand?

ECONOMY	British Columbia	Alberta	Harper
1. True Cost Economy [Starting with a Carbon Pollution Tax]	C-	F	F
2. Carrying Capacity [Keeping within natural limits of world's life support systems]	C-	F	F
3. Public Banking [Support of local economies]	C	B	D
4. Combating Excess [Selective de-growth]	F	F	F
5. Organic Community Agriculture [No GMOs; Phase out industrial agriculture]	D+	F	F
6. Government Integrity [Bring accountability back to government]	D-	F	F
7. Better Business Models [Cooperatives over corporations; New employment strategies]	C	C	F
ECOLOGY			
8. Forests and Biological Diversity [Halt destruction of world resources; End deforestation]	D	F	F
9. Restoration: Reforestation and Dam Removal [Preserve biodiversity and water quality for all Earth's creatures]	F+	F	F
10. Renewable Energy [End dependence on oil; Avoid biofuels]	F	C-	F
11. Ecological Literacy [Earth-centered educational curriculum]	B-	N/A	F
EQUITY			
12. Rights of Nature [Respecting nature in a legal context]	F	F	F
13. Happiness Index [Government is measuring deeper values]	B	C-	N/A
14. Indigenous Rights [Regard for local communities]	F	F	F
15. Empowerment of Women and Population [Participation in government; Equal opportunity]	N/A	N/A	F
16. Income Equality [Rich/poor gap and concentration of power]	D	D	F

Explanations begin on page 2.

For more information on our data sources, please visit www.FDNearth.org.

THE ECONOMIC RETHINK: Who Does It Well?

	Grade	Global Leader	Why
1.	A-	Sweden	Reducing greenhouse gas emissions significantly via a Carbon Tax while maintaining economic vitality
2.	N/A	NONE	
3.	B+	North Dakota (USA)	The Bank of North Dakota reinvesting large sums into the state's general fund and financing student loans
4.	N/A	NONE	
5.	B	Cuba	Loss of subsidized oil, fossil fuel fertilizers, and pesticides led to more local and sustainable food
	B	Bhutan	First country to fully commit to organic agriculture by banning the sale of pesticides in 2013
6.	C+	New Zealand	Least corrupt country as measured by the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)
7.	B-	Spain	Mondragon network of cooperatives is seventh largest company in Spain and comprises 256 businesses
	C+	Denmark	Rethinking the value of time with reduced work hours
8.	B-	Dominican Republic	Increased forest cover from 32% to nearly 40% since 2003
9.	B-	Ethiopia	Planted over 1.7 billion trees utilizing largely native species
	C+	USA	Removed more than 1,000 dams and placed over 250 rivers into protected status
	C+	China	Erosion control and restoration of Loess Plateau
10.	A	Germany	Over 26% of electricity supply now renewably generated
11.	C+	Mexico	Water schools educate students about water conservation and its connection to ecology, gender, and climate
12.	B-	Ecuador	First country to enshrine a Rights of Nature provision in its constitution in 2008
	B-	Bolivia	Rights of Nature law implemented
	C+	Communities (USA)	Similar ordinances passed in 3 dozen small communities
13.	B-	Bhutan	Gross National Happiness Index used to help ensure that national policies benefit citizens beyond material wealth gain
14.	C+	Peru	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) law to protect Indigenous peoples' rights
15.	A-	Iceland	Leader on the Global Gender Gap Index
16.	B+	Sweden	Strong government policies that distribute the wealth in the form of a social safety net with social services, insurance, welfare programs, and equitable wages

[NOTE: Have an addition? Send us powerful examples of the Big Rethink for our next publication: info@FDNearth.org]

Harper: Canada's Organic Agriculture sector, while supported by many grassroots groups across the country, lacks organization, public exposure, and accountability. The majority of organic food is imported. The Harper government "does not explicitly endorse organic as a farming system that can advance environmental sustainability." Meanwhile, the Canadian General Standards Board governs the Committee on Organic Agriculture, which is comprised of industry representatives. Harper is continuing to promote industrial agriculture with the very same deregulatory menu that led to a major food poisoning incident in a Toronto meat packing plant in 2008, killing 23 people. The result in 2012 was another food scandal that occurred at the XL Lakeside packing plant (AB) with the same virulent strain of *E. coli*.

6

GOVERNMENT INTEGRITY:

Why: Corporate control serves primarily one interest group: industry. Transparent and honest governments better represent the wishes of the people, the needs of other species, and use natural systems more sensibly. We need to put the public back into "public governance."

Who does it well: New Zealand is the least corrupt country as measured by the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) due to its extensive Official Information Act and its legislative frameworks that require fiscal transparency and accountability.

British Columbia: The standard deregulatory philosophy is undermining good governance and allowing destructive projects to proceed on public lands without mitigation.

Alberta: The Provincial government has lost its integrity by not protecting indigenous people from the terrible pollution caused by tar sands mining. This past winter people were forced to flee their homes as a result of dangerous gas leaks that provincial officials failed to regulate.

Harper: The annual report of Ontario's Environment Commissioner cited the Harper government's contempt for environmental rules and Canada's Environmental Bill of Rights. The Canadian-owned Cascabel Mine in Chiapas, Mexico did nothing to address the murder of two activists that had previously been beaten by mine employees. Further, Harper has pushed the Enbridge project, which would enable supertankers to transport tar sands oil out of Kitimat through narrow channels, despite the moratorium enacted in 1972 on supertanker oil traffic on the northern coast of BC. Finally, Harper has led an outright assault on environmental groups, allocating millions to the charitable tax agency harassing environmental groups. The entire 80-member scientist national programme on Contaminants in Marine Mammals has been cancelled. Key institutions underpinning the science have been cancelled and shuttered, including the Polar Environmental Atmospheric Research Laboratory in the High Arctic (Eureka on Ellesmere Island), and the Experimental Lakes Area (an extraordinary 58-lake area in western Ontario that has allowed for decades of "whole lake ecosystem" research).

7

BETTER BUSINESS MODELS:

Why: Transnational corporations can operate virtual monopolies

and often buy off political parties. Business cooperatives in which the workers own the corporation are less-hierarchical and can lead to more community-minded businesses and more equal distribution of wealth among the workers.

Who does it well: The Mondragon network of cooperatives, centered in the Basque region, is the seventh largest company in Spain, comprising 256 businesses. The workers own the corporation, and each has a vote in company decision-making. Additionally, a rethink of time via reduced work hours, as Denmark and the Netherlands have done, is a way to ensure full employment in a prosperous no-growth economy.

British Columbia and Alberta: Credit Unions are popular across Canada and provide a meaningful banking alternative with customers sharing profits via a dividend.

Harper: The Harper government is pursuing an aggressive plan to eliminate health, safety, and environmental rules that protect workers and support small business.

8

FORESTS & BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY:

Why: The sixth greatest species extinction crisis on Earth is happening now. Forests are a critical part of wildlife habitat, ecosystem health and weather stabilization. Maintaining biological diversity and the web of life by preserving pristine habitat is key to life on this planet. Nature nourishes all things.

Who does it well: Unlike deforested Haiti, the Dominican Republic has conserved its forests and increased its forest cover from 32% to nearly 40% since 2003.

British Columbia: See *The Sacred Headwaters* on page 8 for examples of all-out assaults in the province on forests and biological diversity.

Alberta: In the energy sector, the massive impacts of tar sands extraction include major damage to forests, migratory birds, and other wildlife in addition to the disastrous consequences for the earth's climate.

Harper: By removing protections from 99% of Canada's natural water bodies, Harper has eschewed Canada's great water legacy of over 30,000 lakes and rivers. Far from seeking cleanup and restoration, Harper has sought to weaken pollution standards, removed protections in the Fisheries Act and the Navigable Waters Protection Act, and given permission to use more lakes as dumpsites. Due to budget cuts, all scientific research in the National Parks has been terminated, all funding for the Canadian Foundation for Atmospheric and Climate Sciences has been eliminated, the scientific work on climate adaptation in Environment Canada has been cancelled and all eighteen scientists have been laid off.

9

RESTORATION: REFORESTATION & DAM REMOVAL

Why: Damaged natural systems worldwide function less and less to stabilize soil as well as to purify and distribute water. Humanity must reduce its collective footprint and allow natural processes to restore healthy watersheds and other ecological systems.

Who does it well: Ethiopia, as part of UNEP's One Billion Tree campaign, has planted over 1.7 billion trees utilizing largely native species—more than any other country. While the U.S. was a leading river-destroyer up to the 1970s, it is now a global

leader in restoring free-flowing rivers. Over the past 60 years, the U.S. has removed more than 1,000 dams and placed over 250 rivers into protected status. China earns mention for the extraordinary restoration of part of the once desertified Loess Plateau into a lush landscape that has increased food security, biodiversity and local income.

British Columbia: Some important steps have been taken over the decades to establish parks and wilderness areas to protect extraordinary natural areas such as Clayoquot Sound. However, the overall picture over the last decade has decayed with the introduction of huge extraction and pipeline projects. Since 2002, the deregulatory policy for hydropower has led to an all-out assault on BC rivers and streams and over a 1000% increase in hydro-projects.

Alberta: Exploitation of the tar sands stands out as possibly the most environmentally destructive energy project in the Western Hemisphere. Complete restoration of surface areas is essentially impossible.

Harper: Before Harper, Canada established a system of Heritage Rivers that now includes over 36 rivers but lacks key prohibitions against dam building. Under Harper, destructive dams have been initiated nationwide. Dams have blocked migration for the American eel—an important fishery staple and protein source for native peoples in Ontario. The result is a 90% reduction of this eel population. Further, two recent omnibus bills have gutted the environmental assessment process, the Fisheries Act, the Navigable Waters Protection Act. All of these changes have been in the interest of rapidly expanding toxic oil sands. Harper promotes drilling in the Arctic and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and ultimately the coast of British Columbia.

IO RENEWABLE ENERGY:

Why: Renewable energy systems, along with a shift to low-impact lifestyles, provide the precautionary and less vulnerable approach that is required to live within the earth's carrying capacity.

Who does it well: Germany leads the world with over 25% of its electricity supply now renewably generated. When German Greens demanded the shutdown of nuclear power plants, the government complied by shutting down half its plants and pledging to be nuclear-free by 2022. Via the Feed-in Tariff policy, many believe Germany will achieve 100% renewable energy perhaps as soon as 2035. China has also made a credible start in wind and solar, but continues damaging energy policies with respect to coal, nuclear reactors and large dams.

British Columbia: About 90% of BC electricity comes from hydroelectric power. BC has installed only about 400 MW of wind.

Alberta: Abundant wind and solar are underutilized. Alberta has only about 1150 MW of wind installed. Edmonton and Calgary have solar potential similar to Rome, Italy.

Harper: Provinces such as Manitoba, Quebec, and BC built large dams (prior to Harper) in part for export to support guzzling electricity use in the U.S. Apart from the farsighted actions of some Provinces such as Nova Scotia, where the German-style Feed-in Tariff renewable energy policy is employed, Canada has not emphasized the shift from highly polluting fossil fuel projects to renewables. Under Harper, Canada ranked 58th out

of 61 countries analyzed for their climate policies, preceding only Saudi Arabia, Iran and Kazakhstan. Canada rated VERY POOR on renewable energy and climate policy and POOR on energy efficiency. (For details, see GermanWatch & European Climate Action Network.) Canada is the only industrialized country NOT to be a member of the International Renewable Energy Agency.

II ECOLOGICAL LITERACY:

Why: Ignorance of the immutable laws of physics and nature contributes to destructive economies. An ecologically literate democracy understands the basic principles of biosphere ecology. Every subsequent generation must be ecologically literate if we are to survive on this planet.

Who does it well: Mexico's water schools located in dry regions educate students about water conservation and its connection to ecology, gender and climate. Broader programmes are needed in every country.

British Columbia and Alberta: From elementary schools to universities, there are good basic environmental programmes, especially in urban areas. However, these noteworthy education efforts have faced ten years of provincial governmental hostility toward environmental awareness.

Harper: Harper has gotten rid of the Science Advisor to the Prime Minister and other scientific experts. For example, in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, top experts on ocean pollutants, marine mammals, contaminants in the St. Lawrence River, toxic flame retardants and endocrine disruptors in fish have been dismissed. Harper is adding to the ecological literacy deficit of Canadians by gagging scientists.

12 RIGHTS OF NATURE & EARTH JURISPRUDENCE:

Why: Killing the planet's living systems is not illegal—but it should be, given that such destruction could spell doom for our own and many other species. We must shoulder our responsibilities to the web of life.

Who does it well: Ecuador became the first country to enshrine a Rights of Nature provision in its constitution in 2008. Bolivia passed a similar law shortly thereafter. Nearly three dozen U.S. communities have passed similar ordinances.

British Columbia and Alberta: Neither province has any Rights of Nature provisions. Both provinces are proceeding with some of the most nature-disrespecting projects on the earth.

Harper: The Harper government is waging a war on the Rights of Nature. It watered down the Endangered Species legislation, which, with its dearth of scientists, is based on politics instead of fact.

13 HAPPINESS INDEX:

Why: High consumption lifestyles and happiness do not run parallel. To fix our addiction to GDP, we must look at other measures of well-being that do not rely on material growth.

Who does it well: The Gross National Happiness Index in Bhutan is used to help ensure that national policies benefit citizens beyond material wealth gain. Conservation and spiritual development are two indicators that Bhutan sees as adding to happiness, resulting in the ban of plastic bags, tobacco

The Sacred Headwaters

The Iskut River meanders through the forests of British Columbia



“It’s not only the salmon. It’s the ravens, the eagles, the bears [that] will be gone, the beavers will be gone. You can go to the [expletive] grocery store, but we can’t. Our people, we gotta get our moose from up there. That is our grocery store. And you [the oil/mining companies] are dumping your garbage in our grocery store. You’ll take your profits off our land and go back to Calgary to your house. Do you want us to bring the tailings pond and put it in your backyard so that you have to live with it and deal with it for the rest of your life and the lives of your descendants? You’ll just move, but we can’t. We stay right here. We are Tahltan. We have a traditional right to our land and resources, and we have not been consulted.”

-Dempsey Bob, Tahltan tribal elder



Map courtesy of the Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition

IN NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA, many major fossil fuel and mining projects are planned for the epicenter of one of the most extraordinary landscapes on earth. Here, in a region of majestic mountains, sparkling rivers, and pristine lakes, are the headwaters of three of the world’s greatest salmon rivers—the Stikine, the Nass and the Skeena. In this very region, some of the dirtiest projects ever conceived by modern civilization would be undertaken. We highlight two of the worst: a massive open-pit copper and gold mine and a huge mining project to export anthracite coal. Thanks to strong, persistent opposition by native people and a variety of environmental organizations, a third mega-project has just been halted. In 2012, Royal Dutch Shell announced that it would drop plans for a million-acre coalbed methane extraction scheme in the Sacred Headwaters.

The Sacred Headwaters is teeming with thousands of species of wildlife, including populations of mountain goat and stone sheep. These extraction projects would rip the guts out of Canada’s equivalent of Africa’s famous Serengeti. How can any government allow such a spectacular “world heritage” caliber natural area to be sacrificed to big industrial profits? How do projects ever get so harmful that they flunk environmental assessments? The fights on these projects have been ongoing for years in an attempt to wear down the resistance of the native people.

See page 10 for a description of these projects.

and commercial advertising in the capital's streets. Denmark, Finland, Norway and Fiji also rank high in happiness on various global reports.

British Columbia: Victorians surveyed via the Bhutan methods rated their happiness at 7.6 on a scale of 10.

Alberta: In 2011, Alberta ranked the least happy province in Canada in the Global Barometer of Happiness conducted by Leger Marketing.

Harper: In spite of Harper administration policies previously mentioned, Canada consistently scores well on happiness, coming in 5th place worldwide according to a 2012 Columbia University study. However, unlike Bhutan, Harper has no interest in revising GDP calculations so as to provide a better index of ecologically sustainable production or happiness.

14 INDIGENOUS RIGHTS:

Why: Without romanticizing the situation, indigenous tribes have a more earth-centered worldview and spiritual relationship with nature. Industrial peoples should learn from that approach rather than marginalize and exploit.

Who does it well: In 2011, Peru passed the long-awaited law of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) with Indigenous peoples. While indigenous leaders see loopholes in the law and implementation is unproven, this is a step in the right direction.

British Columbia: Three major pipelines—the Enbridge Northern Gateway, Pacific Trails, and Kider Morgan Transmountain—would violate First Nations rights to hunt, trap, and fish on their land. First Nation groups have taken actions to fight these and other harmful energy, mining, and pipeline projects. Over 130 First Nations groups have signed the “Save the Fraser Declaration” against the import of tar sands oil across their lands and waters.

Alberta: One example of harm from shipment of tar sands oil can be seen in the April 2011 rupture of the Rainbow Pipeline, which dumped 28,000 barrels of crude oil (1,176,000 gallons) into wetlands—one of the largest spills in Alberta's history. In the words of Chief Allan Adam, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation: “The government holds little stock in our rights and title and are creating more loopholes for industry to continue annihilating our lands... We hope there will be a public outcry that echoes our sentiment. After all, we all share the responsibility to protect mother earth.”

Harper: In the fall of 2005, an historic agreement was reached between all provinces, territories, federal government and First Nations people, called the Kelowna Accord. The Accord called for spending \$5 billion over 10 years to clean up some of the problems. In January 2006, Harper cancelled the Accord. The Harper government, along with some provincial governments, has systematically failed to respect indigenous rights and has cheered energy projects that leave the health of native people as well as the land and water that supports them devastated. Canada is rivaling the U.S. and China in its sponsorship of horrendous fossil fuel and hard rock mineral mining projects. Such extraction projects in other nations would constitute a flagrant violation of Canadian indigenous rights laws if they were implemented domestically. At particular risk are native women; currently, the UN Investigator for missing and murdered aboriginal women is examining Canada's record.

15 EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN & POPULATION:

Why: The skyrocketing of today's global population of seven billion to nine or ten billion by 2050 places incalculable stress on the planet's systems. Patriarchy remains a pervasive barrier to population control. Women's empowerment can address many societal problems, including lack of women's education, domestic abuse, and population management.

Who does it well: Iceland leads the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI), which ranks 135 countries. Women in Iceland make up the majority in university education and are nearing equal representation in politics. Iceland's leadership is attributed to strong governmental legislation promoting gender equality.

British Columbia and Alberta: N/A

Harper: Under Harper's government, Canada fell three places from 2011 and now ranks #21 on the Global Gender Gap Index. The Canadian government has touted its “Status of Women Canada” (SWC) department and a gender-based analysis programme that uses gender research to make policy decisions in the context of promoting and maintaining gender equality, but Harper cut funding for the SWC by 38% and closed 12 of its 16 regional offices. Furthermore, the word “equality” was removed from the SWC mandate in the first year of Harper's term. It is also significant that Harper has adopted Bush administration's policy of not funding international assistance in reproductive health that could include abortion provisions. However, Canada remains a powerful player in promoting gender equality both domestically and worldwide via the UN and other international bodies, despite Harper's efforts otherwise.

16 INCOME EQUALITY:

Why: Inequality leads to social upheaval and ecological degradation, and it is morally reprehensible.

Who does it well: According to the Gini Index of income equality, Sweden is the country with the highest wealth distribution equality. Sweden's rating is due to strong government policies that distribute the wealth in the form of a social safety net with social services, insurance, welfare programmes and equitable wages.

British Columbia and Alberta: Of all Canadian provinces, depending on the parameters in various studies, BC and AB boast the largest wealth gaps in the nation.

Harper: The Center for Policy Alternatives reports that income inequality in Canada is on the rise, especially in the largest cities—Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal—where the bottom 90% earn less today than in 1982. Inequality is already well above the OECD average, and the top 20% of Canada's earners own 70% of the country's net worth. To make things worse, Harper recently cut funding for income statistics, virtually eliminating the Survey of Labour Income Dynamics, which has helped guide economic policies for decades. Regarding the Survey's demise, MP Helene Leblanc commented: “The Conservatives have waged a full scale war against independent information. Eliminating this survey rivals the abolishment of the mandatory long form census, which pushed Canada's chief statistician to resign in protest. This short-sighted decision will deprive economists and researchers of crucial data needed for measuring the well-being and quality of life of Canadians.”

GOLD AND COPPER MINE ON TODAGIN MOUNTAIN

Canada's 75th largest mining company, Imperial Metals, secured permission to locate a gigantic gold and copper mine on top of Todagin Mountain, "a wildlife sanctuary in the sky" and home to the largest number of stone sheep in the world.

The Red Chris Mine on Todagin Mountain would be like drilling for oil in the Sistine Chapel. Its unique character and beauty is such that were this place to exist anywhere else on earth, it would have been declared a World Heritage Site or protected as a national park.

Unfortunately, Imperial Metals is already bulldozing part of the area and polluting the revered watershed in the absence of a financial feasibility study. The company's approach is tantamount to a "destroy first, do an economic feasibility assessment later."



Preliminary excavation of Todagin Mountain is already damaging this sacred area.

MOUNT KLAPPAN ANTHRACITE COAL MINE

The Fortune Minerals project at Mount Klappan is aimed at extracting 1.5-3 million tons of anthracite for export annually. The mining will produce 180 million tons of toxic waste tailings that will be dumped into the magnificent Black Lake. The tailings will leach acid for over 200 years and pollute eight more lakes downstream.



Canadian taxpayers have contributed over \$400 million to subsidize a 287 kilovolt transmission line to enable the Fortune Minerals project to proceed. Ironically, the money came from a "green" fund. Since when does a project that obliterates Canada's Serengeti qualify for a green label? Murray Edwards, owner of the Calgary Flames and one of PM Harper's biggest supporters, is the originator of this horrifically destructive project.

Mount Klappan is home to many unique species that will be devastated by the Fortune Minerals Project.

A thing is **right** when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is **wrong** when it tends otherwise.

-Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*



FOUNDATION EARTH calls attention to the deeper shifts that groups and nations around the world are employing to stop the biological diversity extinction crisis. Our team works for an earth-centered human order that brings our lives in sync with the laws of nature. We promote responsible True Cost economic systems that account for pollution impacts or costs and respect carrying capacities. To counter our failed global economic system, we call for selective de-growth in over-consuming lifestyles and problematic technologies. We promote stronger bioregional economies. We call for earth jurisprudence to shift communities, governments and businesses to respect the needs of nature and work for biodiversity protection and restoration. This work requires ecological literacy in the biology and life support systems of the planet. It requires addressing poverty, corruption, empowerment of women and respect for indigenous peoples.

This holistic perspective and an earth-appreciative worldview are key to achieving a cleaner earth and a healthier economy. Please join us in this important work.



Acknowledgements

Principle Authors:
Randy Hayes—Executive Director
Brent Blackwelder, Ph.D.—Vice-Chair, Professor

Principle Researcher:
Sharon Perrone—Program Assistant

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Paul Colangelo—Cover (grizzly bear, Todagin Mountain), 8 (Iskuit River), 10 (Todagin Mountain)
Wade Davis—Cover (moose head, indigenous woman)
Ian McAllister—Cover (valley),12 (bears)
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URGENT—Canada Is Not Harper

The return of visionary leadership is urgently needed from Canada. Given the collapse of leadership in the U.S. on cutting edge issues, Canada has the potential to show the world that a nation with abundant natural systems can shift to clean energy and refrain from mega-extraction projects that obliterate or poison people, forests and grasslands, rivers and lakes, mountains and valleys.

From 1900 to 1970, violent weather events worldwide remained below 100 per year. Today, such events average over 300 annually. The melting of the Arctic is just one example of the destabilization of ecosystems worldwide. Canada's energy and forest policies are worsening the problem. While deforestation contributes to nearly 20% of climate disruption annually, the Harper government is abetting the extermination of boreal and other forests.

We are the last generation on Earth to have a chance to save a livable planet for future generations. Survival is at hand. Self-defense of our planet and our species is real. Shoulder your responsibilities. Genuine hope emanates from implementing bold, holistic, cooperative plans for a healthy planet teeming with a diversity of plant and animal life. Fight for more earth-centered policies and orchestrate the economic rethink! Fight and we can obtain far more justice for all people and all species in this great web of life.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Council of Canadians Offices

National Office

700-170 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON, K1P 5V5 Canada
Tel: (613) 233-2773 or 1-800-387-7177
Fax: (613) 233-6776 www.canadians.org
General information: inquiries@canadians.org
Media inquiries:
Tel: (613) 233-4487, ext. 249

Regional Offices

British Columbia and Yukon
700-207 West Hastings St.
Vancouver, BC, V6B 1H7
(604) 688-8846, 1-888-566-3888
bc-yukon@canadians.org

Prairies

3rd floor, 10512-122nd St
Edmonton AB T5N 1M6
(780) 429-4500, 1-877-729-4500
prairies@canadians.org

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LE
CONSEIL
DES CANADIENS

Ontario, Quebec and Nunavut
210-116 Spadina Avenue
Toronto, ON, M5V 2K6
(416) 979-5554, 1-800-208-7156
ontario-quebec@canadians.org

Atlantic

211-2099 Gottingen Street
Halifax, NS B3K 3B2
(902) 422-7811, 1-877-772-7811
atlantic@canadians.org

VOTE FOR AN ECONOMIC RETHINK

People who care about the future of civilization and who want a healthier planet need to keep deepening their analysis and participate in every election at every level: local, provincial and national. Foundation Earth is non-partisan. Ecologically informed governmental leadership is needed from all elected officials to meet the formidable challenges ahead. Trend is not destiny and Canada is not Harper.

