
STATEMENT

For Immediate Release
2009ENV0018-000321
September 11, 2009

Ministry of Environment
Minister of State for Climate Action

RESPONSE REGARDING: CLIMATE GOAL EASED FOR PUBLIC SECTOR The Globe and Mail, Friday, Sept. 11, 2009, Page S01

VICTORIA -As Minister of State for Climate Action, I would like to make it clear that there has been no change in the provincial government's direction that the British Columbia public sector will become carbon neutral by 2010. This commitment has been enshrined in legislation and there is absolutely no intention of amending those targets.

This commitment is the first of its kind in North America. It applies to all provincial public sector operations, including government ministries and agencies, schools, colleges, universities, health authorities and Crown corporations. As required by law, we recently released a report entitled, "Getting to Carbon Neutral" that clearly confirmed that we are well on our way to reaching the target for 2010.

Already more than 150 public sector organizations have planned and implemented a wide range of programs and initiatives to conserve energy and save money. Government has also committed \$75 million over three years to help public sector organizations with energy retrofits under the Public Sector Energy Conservation Agreement. Under this agreement, authorities are eligible for funds to improve the energy efficiency of their existing facilities. Furthermore, every school district has signed on to the Climate Action Charter committing to making themselves carbon neutral by 2010 in exchange for grants fully reimbursing their costs of carbon tax.

In addition to the 2010 target for the public sector, 176 of 188 local governments have signed on to the Climate Action Charter committing to make themselves carbon neutral by 2012 in exchange for credits reimbursing their costs of carbon tax. This is an equally significant move toward meeting our greenhouse gas reduction targets of reducing emissions by 33 per cent by 2020.

British Columbians know that global warming is the number-one challenge of our generation. That is why your government is taking decisive action and leading by example. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to meet our climate action goals and ensure they continue to enjoy the quality of life they deserve.

John Yap
Minister of State for Climate Action

Contact: Matt Gordon
Communications Director
250 387-9973

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.