

British Columbia News

Minister's statement on Office of the Auditor General climate action report

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Victoria - Environment and Climate Change Strategy Minister George Heyman has issued the following statement in response to the Office of the Auditor General's report on managing and adapting to climate change risks:

“We agree with the auditor general's report that stronger action must be taken to both adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. We accept the recommendations in the report and will work to ensure their intent is achieved.

“Our government has been clear that we will provide real climate leadership in B.C. This includes reducing emissions and taking advantage of new opportunities to grow our economy through technical innovation and reducing emissions in our resource industries. We have already taken a significant step to move ahead on our climate goals by naming a new Climate Solutions and Clean Growth Advisory Council. This council will provide strategic advice to government so we can implement a clear, comprehensive climate action strategy.

“We agree with the auditor general that the legislated 2020 emissions reduction target won't be met. This is why our government will introduce a new legislated target for 2030 of a 40% reduction in carbon emissions below 2007 levels. We are also increasing B.C.'s carbon tax by \$5 per tonne per year, beginning April 1, 2018. The higher price on carbon will help put us on a path to meet both the new 2030 target and the 2050 target of 80% below 2007 levels. It will also incent cleaner technologies and alternative energy sources, moving us away from fossil fuels and closer to a low-carbon economy.

“We plan to bring in a comprehensive clean-growth strategy to put people to work and grow our economy. By investing in transit, clean technology and energy efficiency, we can reduce emissions while helping to make life more affordable for families.

“Our government understands that B.C. needs to prepare for, and adapt to, climate change. In 2017, B.C. experienced the worst wildfire season in our history. We expect to see more impacts from extreme weather in the future and we must do whatever we can to prepare for the effects of climate change.

“Climate change is a serious issue. Our government is focused on ensuring B.C.'s economic, environmental and social interests are protected now and for future generations, and we have asked the new council to hold us accountable by reporting to the public on our progress.”

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