

Press Release  
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**Atlantic Premiers Must Cap Carbon**  
*Atlantic Coalition Calls for Climate Leadership at Premiers Meeting*

Halifax – A day before a meeting of the Atlantic Premiers, environmental organizations throughout the region are calling for climate action to be put at the top of the agenda.

The Atlantic Canada Sustainable Energy Coalition says it is important for the Premiers to move quickly to regulate global warming pollution if the region is going to join the move towards a low-carbon economy.

“Right now the world is in Bali, Indonesia discussing the need to take aggressive action to prevent 2 C of global warming. It is absolutely necessary for the Atlantic Premiers to have climate action on the top of their agenda,” said Brendan Haley, Energy Coordinator for Nova Scotia’s Ecology Action Centre.

The Coalition suggests that the pressing issue is the need for provincial premiers to show leadership by placing limits on global warming pollution. A host of experts have shown that the federal government’s proposed regulations will fail to meaningfully reduce emissions, but environmentalists say the provinces don’t have to wait for Ottawa.

“All Atlantic Premiers have agreed to reduce pollution below 1990 levels through the Governors and Premiers Climate Action Plan. BC, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec have similar targets. The Premiers can lead, where the federal government has failed,” said David Coon, Policy Director for the Conservation Council of New Brunswick.

The Coalition says placing firm caps and then a price on pollution will reduce wastes, improve efficiencies and drive innovation in a low-carbon economy. They note that the Atlantic region will need to make some of the largest GHG reductions in the country, and that this can be turned into an advantage if the Premiers move forward with a plan and a strategy sooner rather than later.

“To be competitive in this century’s economy, our provinces must reduce carbon emissions. Cutting emissions must be fully integrated within any economic discussions or the Atlantic region will be left behind,” said Brendan Haley.

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## Backgrounder: Premiers and Carbon Caps

In light of the federal government's inadequate carbon dioxide regulations many provincial Premiers are calling for carbon caps.

Below is a list of targets that have been committed to by provincial jurisdictions in comparison with the federal government's targets.

	Reductions by 2012	Reductions by 2020
Canadian Federal Government		2% <i>above</i> 1990 levels
British Columbia		10% below 1990 levels
Manitoba	6% below 1990 levels	
Ontario		15% below 1990 levels
Quebec	6% below 1990 levels	
New Brunswick	1990 levels	10% below 1990 levels
New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers		10% below 1990 levels

At the 2007 Conference of the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers, the Canadian Premiers agreed to explore *cap and trade* carbon regulations. At that meeting Quebec Premier Jean Charest stated:

"This is a sign of the times. Why should we wait for federal governments to move? We have a number of powers. We're going to use them and pressure our federal governments to adapt their policies to what people want, especially on the reduction of greenhouse gases."

(CP – No need to wait for Ottawa on environment: Charest, Jun 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007)

The New England states have recently introduced regulations through a *cap and trade* program called the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), where emissions levels are capped and pollution credits are then traded.

In November, environmental organizations throughout New England and Eastern Canada evaluated climate change policy in each state and province. The Canadian Provinces received lower marks due to the lack of regulations on greenhouse gases. (see <http://www.climateactionnetwork.ca/e/issues/ne-ec-report-card-2007.pdf>)

The grades for each Atlantic province were:

Province	2007 Climate Action Grade
New Brunswick	B
Newfoundland and Labrador	C+
Nova Scotia	C
PEI	B-