

## Submission to House of Commons Finance Committee

### ***Assisting the Federal Government in its Mandate to Ensure Canada is a Climate Resilient Nation with Safe and Prosperous Communities***

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***Submitted Friday August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 by the Canadian Climate Forum:  
Thomas F. Pedersen, PhD, FRSC, FAGU, CEO and Chair  
Deirdre Laframboise, Executive Director and COO***

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The federal government has committed domestically and internationally to ambitious, but critically needed greenhouse gas emissions reductions, to supporting the green and clean economy, and to long term sustainability goals for future generations. New policies, such as those addressing a national price on carbon, will be announced in early fall 2016 and billions will be distributed to provinces, territories (and indirectly municipalities) for much needed infrastructure spending.

These commitments are essential for Canada's readiness to face the risks from hydro/meteorological disasters, such as fires and floods that continue to set records in frequency, intensity, and the huge costs incurred to Canadians. The government will need assistance to address best adaptation and mitigation strategies and policies, while employing an approach based upon integration, evidence-based knowledge sharing, and multi-stakeholder collaboration and outreach. The Canadian Climate Forum is the only national independent climate change, not for profit agency in Canada that offers world class, climate science expertise and services on all issues, and we stand ready to provide such assistance.

This submission identifies two critical areas the Forum can provide its services to the government of Canada:

- 1. Climate science expertise:** Knowledge mobilization, convening and dissemination services for the federal government so it can successfully meet its domestic and international climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and commitments (\$1M-\$2M); and
- 2. Engaging the business community:** Engage industry leaders to support the government and help drive **best public policy** for safer, more sustainable and climate resilient communities (\$500k-\$750k).

## *I. Overview*

Canada, under the leadership of the Liberal government, is on a progressive path to address climate change, embrace a greener and cleaner economy, and uphold several international initiatives and agreements to reduce greenhouse gases emissions including: The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR 2015-2030); the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (September, 2015) and the UN's Conference of the Parties, Framework Convention on Climate Change (December 2015).

Since the First Ministers' meeting this past March, the federal/provincial/territorial (F/P/T) governments have been hard at work to address national and subnational climate-change management strategies. From this meeting, Canadians will learn in early fall of the recommendations made by the four F/P/T working groups tasked with determining the best climate change adaptation and mitigation (carbon pricing) strategies for Canada. The work to implement such policies thereafter will be monumental, and will require integrated knowledge mobilization and outreach that embraces a multi-sector and multi-stakeholder approach.

Today in Canada there is only one independent, national agency that represents all climate change issues, across all jurisdictions, for all Canadians:

### **the Canadian Climate Forum (the Forum)**

This submission highlights how the Forum can play an integral role with the federal government in tackling the climate change strategies and policies ahead that we are certain will drive the need for: application of evidence; development of pragmatic options; effective education and broad dissemination. The recommendations draw from months of dialogue that the Forum has held with stakeholders from federal, provincial and territorial governments, business community, academia, and Indigenous peoples through our events, consultations, symposia, meetings and other outreach activities.

With the Fort McMurray and other wildfires, and now floods in BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan, still making headlines, and record setting years for other natural, and climate related disasters the need for concerted, collaborative action has never been greater. The Forum is very well positioned to provide experience and an extensive, qualified network of world class climate science experts (covering all aspects such as the social and health sciences) as well as engaged stakeholders from Canada's private and public sectors.

The Forum's mandate is to ensure the best evidence is sourced, that the processes are integrated and holistic, and very importantly, that policy makers understand how to best apply the evidence to address a changing climate.

## ***II. RECOMMENDATIONS: Serving the GOVERNMENT of CANADA***

In support of this mission, and in an effort to assist the federal government in advancing on this important national priority, we put forth our request for funding for the following initiatives and services.

### **1. EXPERTISE to SUPPORT BEST CLIMATE POLICY**

#### ***a. INTERNAL to the Government of Canada***

We know from over ten months of meetings with bureaucrats in multiple federal ministries and departments that there is a very strong need within, between and among departments for help in addressing adaptation and mitigation strategies and policies. Under the new principles of business set by the Trudeau government, we understand that this is to be accomplished in an integrated manner, engaging key stakeholders, working with Indigenous peoples, and supporting Canada's national clean energy and sustainable development goals.

We also see the strong need for support with other levels of government, most of which are struggling on many levels to meet climate challenges such as rising sea levels, unprecedented flooding, droughts, wildfires, and massive infrastructure needs appropriate for a different climatic future.

Discussions with industry leaders and academics across the country have also highlighted the need for a broad-based platform—a triumvirate of government, industry and academia—that can help advise and support the implementation of Canada's climate-change actions.

The concept of integration of a climate strategy across ministries, while excellent in theory, is a very challenging goal in practice. The Forum will undertake to help departments with both the knowledge integration and dissemination to achieve that goal within and between departments and governments. We will do this by convening and drawing on our experts and the work of top organizations in the climate science and social sciences arenas to produce an *integrated* one-stop shop for the best available climate mitigation and adaptation information. There is no agent today providing this service to the government, and it is vitally needed.

Lastly, the Forum can also be an independent source of knowledge and advice for the new Chief Science Officer, as well as Canada's Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. The latter aligns with other internationally linked commitments for which the Forum could provide insights, including the upcoming Convention of the Parties (November 2016), and the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction conference (March 2017), that Canada will be hosting.



We expect that our assistance in all these areas will help shape the best climate and energy policies while yielding significant economies of scale, and millions in cost savings for the government of Canada, and ultimately Canadians.

***b. EXTERNAL - Key Audiences and the Public***

Federal departments will soon be sharing climate and energy related information and policies with a wide range of interest groups, national associations, provinces, territories and the general public.

The Forum can help to ensure that the government will deliver the best information in the best manner possible. We would provide independent verification and objectivity as knowledge mobilization efforts are developed. This would include convening experts, key stakeholders and Indigenous groups to ensure that information is balanced and easy to comprehend and that it reaches the right audiences in the right manner. We can also assist with developing communications strategies and materials as well as outreach services.

**Budget Range: \$1M-\$2M/year (pending scope)**

**2. PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT to DRIVE BETTER CLIMATE POLICY**

***a. BUSINESS Roundtable & 'Arise Canada' Secretariat***

Enhancing the role of the private sector in climate change and disaster risk reduction is another need that has been consistently conveyed to us by government bureaucrats, as well as business representatives and leaders. This is why the Forum has developed a programming stream dedicated to the private sector called the:

**'Business Roundtable on Climate Resilience'**

The mandate for this Business Roundtable is to engage industry to ultimately drive better *public policy* for safer and more climate resilient communities across Canada.

With the loss of the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) an important vehicle for direct engagement with leaders from the private sector is missing from the landscape. While there are a few climate-related business initiatives operating today in Canada, not one of them addresses all climate and energy issues, across the entire country. The Forum's Business Roundtable is designed to offer this, and be a forum for multi-sector industry and business leaders to engage on the many climate change and energy issues and threats.

We have been told by many senior government officials that the Business Roundtable would be greatly valued, noting, "we can only go so far in our dealings with the private sector". By

bringing key business leaders from the financial, insurance, telecom, first responders, national business associations, unions and many more to collectively influence climate and energy policies, we will be offering Canadians the best possible solutions to address climate hazards, and support sustainable management practices into the future.

#### ***b. ARISE Canada***

**ARISE**, the United Nations ‘Private Alliance for Resilient Societies’, was launched in 2015 at the UNISDR Tokyo meetings. It involves over 140 private sector entities, and supports the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* seven targets. It has four main priorities including:

1. Understand Disaster Risk
2. Manage Disaster Risk
3. Invest in Disaster Risk Reduction, and
4. Enhance Disaster Preparedness



PwC co-chairs the ARISE International head office with UNISDR. ARISE Canada will launch in a public media event in Fall 2016. We are pleased to report that the PwC has identified the Forum as the ideal Secretariat to host ARISE Canada, which would complement the work of our Business Roundtable mandate in several ways. It will also provide the federal government with the vehicle to engage the business leaders in advance of the Regional Platform conference next March and assist Public Safety Canada in its mandate to fulfill our commitments to the Sendai Framework on disaster risk reduction. PwC and the Forum have invited the Government of Canada to participate in this launch.

This Secretariat, and the Forum’s work with the Business Roundtable together provide a coordinated, accessible, professionally entity that can be accessed by all levels of government for national and international climate and disaster risk related issues. For this reason, we believe the federal government should be a financially contributing partner.

**Budget Range for Secretariat Operations: \$500k - \$750k/annum** (includes private sector contributions)

### ***III. CLOSING***

The Forum thanks the Government of Canada for its commitment to driving forward on its national priority to reduce greenhouse gases, price carbon, and meet its sustainability goals.

The Forum stands ready to contribute and assist Canada in this great challenge.

Thank you,

Thomas and Deirdre

## ***Additional Information***

### ***I. The Canadian Climate Forum***

The Forum's mission is to

***Broker, disseminate and apply evidence-based climate science knowledge to advance decision-making for a safer and more sustainable Canada.***

Managed by a small secretariat staff, it is governed by a nationally representative, blue-ribbon Board of Directors that includes senior representation from the financial, natural resources and agricultural sectors as well as from the worlds of meteorology, oceanography, finance, climate policy and renewable energy.

For more information please visit: [www.climateforum.ca](http://www.climateforum.ca)

### ***Network & Partnerships***

Our network includes many distinguished organizations including, but not limited to, the following:

- ACT-Adaptation Climate Team (Simon Fraser University)
- ArcticNet – National Centre of Excellence
- Canadian Federation of Agriculture
- Canadian Forest Products Association
- Climate Action Network Canada
- Clean Energy Canada
- Ecofiscal Commission
- Engineers Canada
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- Insurance Bureau of Canada
- Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction
- International Council of Scientific Unions
- Institute for Science, Society and Policy (ISSP, University of Ottawa)
- Ontario Climate Consortium
- Ouranos
- Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions
- POLAR Knowledge Canada
- Post-secondary institutions and academics across Canada and internationally
- Price Waterhouse Cooper (PwC)
- Risk Sciences International
- Sustainable Prosperity & Environment Institute (University of Ottawa)
- Water Institute, University of Saskatchewan