



WORKING TOGETHER ON CLIMATE
CHANGE, OCEANS AND CLEAN ENERGY

—
TRAVAILLER ENSEMBLE À L'ÉGARD
DES CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES,
DES OCÉANS ET DE L'ÉNERGIE PROPRE

CHAIR'S SUMMARY: G7 ENVIRONMENT MINISTER' MEETING



CHAIR'S SUMMARY: G7 ENVIRONMENT MINISTER' MEETING

1. Under Canada's 2018 G7 Presidency, the G7 Ministers of Environment and Energy convened in Halifax from September 18-21, 2018, under the theme of Climate Change, Oceans and Clean Energy. Ministers were charged with building from the deliberations of the June G7 Leader's Summit in Charlevoix, Quebec, including the Charlevoix Blueprint for Healthy Oceans, Seas and Resilient Coastal Communities. They were joined in Halifax by representatives from Jamaica, Kenya, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Norway, Seychelles, and Vietnam as well as other leaders from international organizations, industry and youth.
2. On September 19, Ministers discussed the links between a healthy planet and sustainable economic growth with specific focus on taking urgent action on climate change, encouraging sustainable finance, advancing a resource efficient economy, adapting to a changing climate and conserving nature. Gender equality and women's leadership were discussed across the agenda with a particular focus on the critical role of women to realize climate change goals and sustainable development. Ministers also noted the important leadership role that youth play as agents of change and recognized the urgency of taking action to protect the planet for future generations. This summary reflects the discussions on this day, as understood by the Chair.
3. G7 Ministers appreciated reports by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations Development Programme and The Nature Conservancy, the World Bank, The Climate and Clean Air Coalition and the New Climate Economy. Ministers also considered the recommendations from the Gender Equality Advisory Council¹ for Canada's G7 Presidency as well as the Call for Action from the Youth 7 (Y7).²

Long-Term Economic Transitions to a Low-Carbon Economy

4. Ministers emphasized that accelerated concrete action is needed now and that the transitions to a low emissions economy represent a global opportunity.
5. Lord Nicholas Stern noted the findings of the 2018 report of the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate that climate action represents an opportunity to create \$26 trillion in economic growth and 65 million jobs by 2030. To seize this opportunity it was recognized that businesses require certainty including clear policies, rules and consistency around pricing.
6. Several Ministers stressed that failing to act now would have tremendous economic and human impacts. Enhanced technical and financial support for developing countries was also emphasized.

¹ <https://g7.gc.ca/en/g7-presidency/gender-equality-advisory-council/recommendations/>

² <https://www.y7canada.com/halifax-ministerial>

7. Many Ministers stressed the importance of pursuing global efforts towards a sustainable and climate-resilient and carbon neutral future through ambitious action to implement the Sustainable Development Goals under Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement, and highlighted the important role of all levels of government as well as civil society, business, multilateral development banks, international organizations and others in this regard. Ministers also noted the importance of further promoting and encouraging the broad participation of women and girls.
8. Ministers identified actions their countries are taking to leverage economic opportunities while promoting a just transition for workers, companies, and communities. In this regard, some shared information on the preparation of their long term climate strategies. Ministers stressed that innovation from the private sector is key to ensuring clean growth for future generations. Ministers also emphasized that building strong public-private partnerships and putting in place the right policies is important to drive investment further along a sustainable path.
9. Many highlighted that market-based policies such as putting a price on carbon pollution at a sufficient level, developing green finance terminology (taxonomies), and the disclosure of climate-related financial risk help drive sound investment and advance solutions towards countries' long-term goals.
10. Governor Mark Carney noted that the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures represent a promising pathway and some Ministers reiterated their commitment to support the work of the Task Force. It was also noted that forums to engage business leaders such as the Strategic Dialogue of the Carbon Market Platform hosted by Canada in September 2018 and the High-Level Leadership Forum on Carbon Pricing and Competitiveness are key to understand barriers and competitiveness concerns.
11. Many Ministers noted the work of the G7 Investors Global Initiatives, under the Presidency's leadership, advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, building capacity and sharing best practices required for sustainable infrastructure projects, and bringing investors together to advance climate-related disclosure standards.
12. Some Ministers welcomed the principles for green finance taxonomy presented by the Network of Financial Centres for Sustainability, established under the 2017 Italian G7 Presidency, and the Chair encouraged further work on this topic including towards expanding the network and hosting an international workshop in Canada in 2019.
13. Some Ministers also recognized that Small Islands Developing States, in particular low and middle-income countries, face barriers in accessing financing and welcomed the Presidency's offer to study how to address such barriers.
14. Ministers emphasized their countries' efforts to leverage investments for sustainable infrastructure, as well as efforts related to clean water infrastructure, technologies for improving resource efficiency, and environmentally sound waste management.

Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency

15. Ministers emphasized that improved resource efficiency policies minimize waste and maximize economic value while offering significant business opportunities, and are a key part of the transitions to a sustainable, low carbon economy. This will require changing from use and dispose consumption to a more circular approach including behavior change.
16. Many highlighted that taking a resource efficient approach has far reaching benefits such as reducing demands on natural resources, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving air quality and reducing negative impacts on biodiversity.
17. Ministers emphasized that the transition to a circular economy is also important to address the challenge of marine litter. In this regard, taking action along the lifecycle of plastics to address plastic waste was highlighted as a critical issue, beginning at the design stage.
18. Ministers emphasized the need for more partnerships across the supply chain and with other governments and organizations such as the World Economic Forum, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank. The role played by the International Resource Panel and the Organization of Economic and Development (OECD) in deepening the knowledge base was also welcomed. Ministers encouraged continued dialogue and sharing of best practices under the G7 and G20, in particular through the G7 Alliance on Resource Efficiency and the G20 Resource Efficiency Dialogue, including working with business on innovation. They also expressed support for the Alliance to establish an e-repository for the work and best practices.
19. Ministers welcomed progress of G7 members in advancing the implementation of the Toyama Framework on Material Cycles and Bologna Roadmap and its continued implementation. Many identified areas of focus for continued work including food waste, value retention processes, resource efficiency and climate change. Many noted the potential of green public procurement as a way to drive markets towards more sustainable materials. Support for developing countries was also emphasized.
20. Discussions highlighted industry leadership in adopting new business models to improve resource efficiency, reduce environmental impact and seize circular economy opportunities including through extended producer responsibility. Ministers also observed that while the recent restrictions affecting the export on the imports of plastic and other waste presents short-term challenges, they also created an opportunity to strengthen our domestic recycling capacity and spur innovation.

Urgent Action and Reduction Opportunities

21. Most Ministers strongly emphasized that the Paris Agreement is irreversible, reaffirmed their commitment to its full and effective implementation and assured their support to the completion of the Paris Agreement work programme at COP24 that is consistent with the Agreement. The Talanoa Dialogue was also highlighted as a critical opportunity to take stock of collective efforts and to inform the preparation of updated nationally determined contributions to address the global emissions gap. Many noted that the upcoming IPCC report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels will provide valuable scientific information to inform climate action.

22. Ministers recognized the strong and compelling need for action to build resilience and empower Small Island Developing States and other vulnerable communities, as in the Sahel region including through investing in sustainable infrastructure and facilitating timely and efficient access to investment and climate finance.
23. Several Ministers also noted that significant progress is being made on the goal of jointly mobilizing US\$100 billion annually by 2020 and through to 2025 from government, business and others to support climate efforts in developing countries.
24. Ministers emphasized that air quality is one of the biggest health and environmental risks and committed to tackling air quality including through sharing best practices and lessons learned. Many Ministers also emphasized that targeted efforts focused on air pollutants and short-lived climate pollutants will have multiple benefits to climate, human health, the economy, and to ecosystems.
25. Collaboration in fora such as the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) is essential as is continuing to work with our respective bilateral and regional partners. Ministers noted the announcement of the Government of Italy regarding the opening of the African Centre for Climate and Sustainable Development.
26. Ministers emphasized that concerted action by all, including across multiple levels of government, business, industry, civil society, women and youth and international organizations, is necessary to achieve our goals. The benefits of collaborative partnerships and action alliances in driving action was also noted.

Adaptation and Conserving Nature

27. Many Ministers stressed that the impacts of climate change poses an existential threat and are adversely affecting human health, food and water security, and are having significant economic costs across the globe. Many noted that Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, Arctic and Indigenous communities, and other low-lying coastal communities are among the most vulnerable.
28. Many Ministers emphasized the need to take more ambitious action to reduce global emissions and build resilience through better integrating adaptation planning, emergency preparedness and recovery into all long-term planning based on scientific knowledge.
29. Several Ministers identified adaptation actions they are taking, both at home and abroad, and emphasized that planning strategies and processes that ensure equal participation of women, can help countries and communities enhance their capacity to plan, prepare and respond to the adverse impacts of climate change. Ecosystem-based approaches and nature-based solutions were also identified by some as effective options for example, conserving and/or restoring mangroves, wetlands and coral reefs.
30. Several Ministers also noted that the scaling up of innovative financing mechanisms, such as risk insurance, could unlock new capital for sustainable investment opportunities. Many agreed to promote economic opportunities and nature-based solutions alongside long-term low GHG emission development strategies, working with key public, private, and multilateral actors to enact commitments and take concrete action.

31. Many Ministers recognized the need to advance efforts to broaden innovative financial tools such as climate risk insurance coverage, to help reduce vulnerability, build resilience and drive sustainable investment including in Small Island Developing States and other vulnerable countries, which the Presidency agreed to support further identification of leading practices and opportunities. Many also discussed opportunities for further collaboration with industry, philanthropists, and institutional investors to explore blended finance and other innovative climate and sustainable financing solutions.
32. Several Ministers highlighted that further support for capacity building in vulnerable communities was needed, including through programs such as the Climate Risk Early Warning Systems (CREWS) initiative, the Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), the Global Climate Change Alliance, InsuResilience Global Partnership, the National Adaptation Plan Global Network, and the Global Adaptation Network.
33. Biodiversity was also emphasized by many Ministers as playing a fundamental role in the health of our planet. Eco-system based approaches to adaptation and disaster risk reduction offer multiple benefits including flood protection, habitat for biodiversity and enhanced coastal resilience. In this regard, several Ministers welcomed focus of this issue under France's G7 leadership in 2019 and agreed to intensify efforts to reverse the loss of biodiversity including through upcoming discussions under the auspices of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.