



Student Christian Movement of Canada
justice, community & spirituality



SCM Solidarity Statement on Climate Justice

The Student Christian Movement of Canada (SCM) pledges our solidarity with the climate justice movement, and joins the global mobilization in support of radical climate change action.

At the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention (COP15) in Copenhagen, Denmark starting December 7, more than 200 governments are gathering to hammer out a global agreement. Canada has indicated that it has no plans to push for a stronger treaty, but it is not too late to reverse this.

SCM, a youth-led social justice movement founded in 1921, names climate change to be one of the most profound and urgent crises facing our planet and its people, and an issue of justice, anti-oppression, and ecological integrity, rooted in our faith and spiritual traditions.

We join a broad network of organizations working for social, ecological, racial and economic justice in demanding and pledging ourselves to immediate action.

We call upon the Canadian government to be part of the solution, not the problem. We call on Canada to support the strongest emission reductions and recognize the disproportionate impact of climate change on the world's poor and marginalized. Climate change has an incredibly devastating impact on communities already facing racial, gender and class oppression, with particularly harmful effects for Indigenous peoples.

We call for global action that leads to real emission reductions in a fair and equitable manner, including stronger commitments and actions by the Global North.

We express our concern that solely market-based approaches cannot fundamentally end the climate crisis without addressing the root causes of emissions. We call for a transition away from fossil fuels, and we call for strict regulation, oversight, and penalties for polluters on community, local, national, and international levels as well as support for communities adversely impacted by climate change. We call for a critical rethinking of the neoliberal capitalist economy, which is a root cause of the climate crisis, and we call for grassroots action to ensure that governments are held accountable in actually reducing emissions.

We call for the closure of the Canadian tar sands, which Environment Canada predicts will grow to make up eight per cent of this country's greenhouse gas emissions by 2015. Continuing development of this project is not only an ecological nightmare, but short-sighted in light of the climate crisis. We also call for a just transition strategy for workers impacted by the shift towards a sustainable and liberating economy.

Time is running out to make drastic changes to our culture, economic system and lifestyles here in the Global North. This crisis is at once social, political and theological. SCM's theology of justice and liberation forces us to cry out against abuse and exploitation of the Earth and of marginalized people, as well as to challenge powerful multinational corporations and governments responsible for much of the Earth's destruction.

Our Creator has blessed us with a life in harmony with the Earth. We confess that our culture has destroyed and exploited this precious gift. We commit ourselves to challenging corporate power, short-sighted government economic policies, and the destructive aspects of our lifestyles. We proclaim that another world is possible.

We invite our movement and allies into this commitment to reducing our ecological footprint, building coalitions across the diversity of the movement of social and ecological justice, and acting in solidarity to protect the Earth and help build God's kingdom, as envisioned in SCM's Living Prayer vision statement: "We seek through reflection, study and action to discern God's will for the world and to understand our role in it."

This we commit, on this global week of mobilization for climate justice.

Passed by consensus of the elected General Board of the Student Christian Movement of Canada. December 7, 2009.

