November 29 2025

Dear Prime Minister Carney, Minister of The Environment and Climate Change, Honourable Julie Dabrusin, and Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Honourable Tim Hodgson,

In a recent *What on Earth* interview, Minister Dabrusin highlighted that Canada's Climate Competitiveness Strategy (CCS) shows how taking strong climate action and growing the economy can go hand in hand. For the strategy to succeed, provinces, territories, and the federal government must work together, making climate decisions part of everyday acceptance rather than a source of division. This is no easy task. The statement made at COP30 (where Canada received the *Fossil of the Day* award) noted "the world is moving toward clean energy and low-carbon industries, and Canada is determined to lead that transition," yet we are now expanding LNG exports, signing off on new bitumen pipelines with limited methane capture currently happening, revising the zero-emissions vehicle standard, and not yet finalizing the emissions cap.

Minister Dabrusin has noted that key tools already underpin the CCS: the industrial carbon pricing framework provides credibility and a clear market signal; methane regulations target one of the most potent short-lived climate pollutants; and investments in clean electricity and a cleaner grid, as well as clean technology innovation, are laying the foundation for long-term competitiveness. With the Alberta MOU announcement, how does this marry with increased crude oil production, suspension in Alberta of key federal regulations, including the Oil & Gas Emissions Cap and the Clean Electricity Regulations, and opening the door to expanded oil production and new pipeline projects to the B.C. coast without B.C. provincial agreement or that of its First Nations? Minister Debrusin has restated Canada's commitment to 2030/35 targets but qualifies this by noting that these targets are ambitious. Of course they are ambitious if Canada makes new decisions around increasing fossil fuel production.

Prime Minister Carney's press release noted the Alberta MOU 'is built on practical solutions: stronger, more effective industrial carbon pricing, major private sector investments in clean technologies, and expanded, responsible energy development for the workers and communities who rely on it.' It appears that Canada compromises decades of affirmative, proven climate action to give Alberta yet even more time and pins hope on unprecedented growth in carbon capture. Climate Action Newmarket-Aurora supports leveraging carbon pricing, immediate methane reduction, Canada-wide clean electricity, and clean technology; we support a federal plan that draws down emissions with science-based proven, scalable technology, recaptures global leadership, and creates a resilient, net-zero economy that benefits our workers, communities, and industries.

Here follows key areas integrating emissions reductions with current economic demands, and our recommendations going forward:

1. Major Projects List

The Major Projects List identifies infrastructure and resource development initiatives critical for economic growth. To support the CCS, projects should be evaluated according to:

- Low-carbon or emissions-reducing potential
- Innovation and technology scaling
- Market competitiveness in low-carbon global markets

Key observations:

Projects already on the list that advance clean energy, electrification, and renewable integration clearly support the CCS. High-impact projects not yet included such as advanced methane capture, industrial electrification, and renewable grid integration could provide significant benefits if fast-tracked. Direct air carbon capture may be promising long-term but faces scale, cost, and uncertainty challenges; investment must reflect realistic timelines and proven outcomes.

Recommendation: Prioritize initiatives that deliver measurable emissions reductions, deploy scalable technology, and enhance competitiveness, while placing direct air carbon capture as one of several future tools rather than a central pillar.

2. Alberta MOU Agreement and Fossil Fuel Expansion

The federal Alberta memorandum of understanding raises significant climate concerns with many more questions than answers at this time. By adding millions of barrels of oil to production, Canada will significantly increase its emissions footprint - emissions that are not included in the current 300 MT CO_2e “fair share” target gap. The Prime Minister's press release implies that hopes are pinned on a prerequisite that an industry that has yet to make a reasonable effort to reduce emissions, will produce ‘some of the lowest carbon-intensity oil in the world.’ Even if that materialized, the designation “low-carbon” refers to upstream extraction & processing, not full “well-to-car tailpipe” emissions - it is the burning of the fuel that is most key and as such even low carbon is 10 to 100 times more emitting than renewable energy sources. Moreover, how does the latter make economic sense when world oil prices are dropping due to a slow down in production as the world focuses on renewables? Fossil deals with India and South Asia will be short lived given their own desire to be independent for energy needs.

Importantly therefore, it is our belief that this deal **should not take priority over sustainable, clean projects** already identified on the Major Projects List. Clean energy, electrification, and renewable integration offer far greater long-term benefits for emissions reductions, economic competitiveness, and global credibility than expanding fossil fuel production. Was there no equal conversation around Alberta lifting its moratorium on renewables or mandating they provide a pathway to energy transition to diversify their economy? It was a leader in this field until the moratorium which then saw a record increase in fossil fuel production.

The deal also relies on Alberta's promise that the Pathways Alliance will invest in 'Phase 1' carbon-capture projects and carbon-pricing solutions (prior to the bitumen pipeline proceeding); yet such commitments have been repeatedly made in the past and had no meaningful results. The plan to raise its provincial carbon-pricing, which could help with decarbonization, is still only an understanding. Carbon capture is being predominantly used to access harder to reach pockets of fossil fuels as the industry accumulates billions for foreign profit under the premise that Canada should foot the bill for decarbonization.

While decarbonization is a key component of reducing emissions, suspending key regulations — which took years to put in place and are themselves essential to emissions reductions — advancing new oil infrastructure, and relying on carbon-capture promises that have repeatedly failed, erodes credibility and undermines urgent climate action. Would the government share its modelling on how this proposal will work by 2050 if not 2040? If there is modelling, it is relying on technology that is not yet to scale when there is currently proven technology available that simply needs political support and funding intensification.

Additionally, what will be put in place to counter these emissions in the interim? Will 30 x 30 be accelerated to retain more vital carbon sinks? Will tree planting funding be reinstated or a stricter policy of deforestation ensue? Communication about these components is significant for Canadians to understand that a balanced, meaningful climate approach prevails.

Recommendation: Higher-priority clean initiatives must take priority. Canada must ensure that any fossil fuel industry is now contingent on immediate, measurable emissions reductions, transparent monitoring, and full collaboration with affected communities.

3. Methane Reductions

Methane is a short-lived but extremely potent greenhouse gas. Reducing emissions in the oil and gas sector is among the fastest ways Canada can make measurable climate progress.

Canada has drafted strong federal regulations targeting leak detection, venting, and flaring. These include quarterly inspections, third-party audits, and stricter bans on venting and flaring. But the regulations have not yet come into force, and their impact depends on adoption, enforcement, and coordination with provinces.

Internationally, the EU has implemented binding methane regulations, strengthening investor confidence. The U.S. has made comparable advances, though political shifts now threaten to reverse key methane fees and standards. Canada cannot afford regulatory hesitation.

While it is noted that the Alberta MOU deal factors in a commitment by Alberta that the Pathways Alliance will invest in carbon capture and methane reductions; however previous promises have not materialized and any little gain was with federal investment.

Recommendation: Finalize and enforce federal methane regulations aligned with EU standards, ensuring uniform application across provinces and avoiding reliance on voluntary or historically undelivered industry commitments. Methane reductions must be immediate, particularly in light of the Alberta agreement that expands production and export.

4. Investment in Offshore Energy

Offshore wind and tidal power offer rapid deployment with low lifecycle emissions. Many projects can move from approval to operation in 3–5 years, stimulating local manufacturing and building exportable expertise. Is equal investment now happening in this sector compared to commitments to nuclear and carbon capture?

Recommendation: Prioritize more offshore projects on the Major Projects List, with targeted support for rapid deployment while maintaining environmental safeguards.

5. Transition Away from LNG

LNG expansion undermines long-term CCS goals:

- LNG facilities carry high methane and lifecycle CO_2 emissions unless strict, enforced standards are applied
- Global buyers are accelerating their transition away from LNG
- Market credibility is at risk without firm phase-out timelines

Recommendation: Establish enforceable timelines for phasing out LNG, impose stringent methane limits at existing facilities, and accelerate low-carbon alternatives.

6. Clean Exports

As Canada seeks to be a reliable exporter of clean energy and low-carbon products, we wonder with the Alberta deal will it demonstrate climate leadership by attending the First International Conference on the Just Transition Away From Fossil Fuels in 2026? Canada was non-committal at COP30.

Canada still lacks a standardized carbon accounting system for exports. Its exported emissions, especially from fossil fuels, are nearly equivalent to domestic emissions. Their global impact affects:

- Climate progress
- Market access under emerging mechanisms like the EU CBAM
- Reputation and competitiveness

Recommendation: Develop a clean exports framework aligned with international standards and low-carbon certification to strengthen competitiveness and credibility and attend the Conference for the Just Transition Away From Fossil Fuels.

Conclusion

To reach under 300 MT CO_2e for Canada's fair share of climate action, and to support global partners in meeting their own targets, we must strengthen and clarify the CCS:

- **Fast, enforceable, stringent methane reductions accountability**
- **Rapid deployment of (offshore) renewables and a firm LNG/fossil fuel transition**
- **Strategic investment in scalable, high-impact clean technologies**
- **A transparent clean exports framework aligned with global standards**

Canada can still work toward measurable emissions reductions, drive innovation, safeguard jobs, and strengthen its position in a low-carbon global economy but only if action is beyond policy, immediate, and uncompromised by fossil fuel expansion.

Climate change is the defining challenge of our time. Any strategy that sidelines this science-based truth, intentionally or otherwise, cannot claim to build the nation's economy in a future-forward way. And while the Prime Minister has worked to bring Alberta along with the rest of Canada, the Alberta agreement appears to be alienating many other key allies.

Whether there are complex political strategies at play or not, we ask that the federal government now share how it will meet the Paris Agreement targets. If the Alberta deal comes to fruition, this seems a much harder task than ever before, if even possible.

Climate Action Newmarket-Aurora looks forward to responses to the questions above and future dialogue to support positive, science-based climate action.

Thank you for your service, your time, and your efforts in taking these recommendations forward.

Sincerely,

Climate Action Newmarket Aurora

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