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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

### **Climate action gets new teeth with accountability act**

VICTORIA – Better accountability, transparency and more detailed targets for climate action will be mandated under a new Climate Change Accountability Act.

“We’re committed to meeting our climate targets and making sure our CleanBC plan gets us to where we need to go – that means being honest and transparent about our progress to make sure people can determine we’re on the right track,” said George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. “People across this province, and especially young people, are demanding we take the climate crisis seriously and that we make sure everyone works together to secure a stronger, cleaner future. That’s why we will work with communities, people and industry to put in place targets for each sector. What’s more, we’re mandating that the steps we’re taking are reported to the public every year, by law.”

To make sure the Province is on track for long-term legislated emissions reductions, government will be required to set an interim emissions target on the path to the legislated 2030 target – which is 40% in greenhouse gas reductions below 2007 levels. Separate 2030 sectoral targets will also be established following engagement with stakeholders, Indigenous peoples and communities throughout the province. This will make sure carbon pollution is reduced effectively across B.C.’s economy, homes, workplaces and transportation choices.

The recently tabled legislation includes new reporting requirements on actions to reduce carbon pollution, their cost and how they will achieve government’s legislated emission-reduction targets. The annual reports will outline the latest emissions data and projections, as well as actions planned for future years and the effect they are expected to have.

“As a climate scientist, I know that transparent, accurate, timely and publicly accessible data is crucial to achieving our climate commitments,” said Andrew Weaver, leader of the BC Green Party. “The amendments included in this act add real credibility to our province’s efforts, and I am grateful to have been able to collaborate with Minister Heyman and his team on its development.”

Additional legislative changes will establish an independent advisory committee that will be modelled on the Climate Solutions and Clean Growth Advisory Council, now that the council has fulfilled its mandate.

“B.C. is showing what it takes to design a strong climate plan and turn it into action – and with this new accountability framework, the government is taking another important step,” said Merran Smith, former co-chair of the Climate Solutions and Clean Growth Advisory Council. “These changes will put government transparency and accountability into law and will ensure a diverse group of independent voices continue to contribute to future decisions that help meet

B.C.'s emissions goals and build a cleaner economy.”

In addition, the legislative changes give government the ability to set more detailed targets and other environmental standards for publicly owned buildings and vehicle fleets to help reduce emissions, improve environmental performance and save money in the long run.

CleanBC sets a pathway to a stronger, brighter future by reducing carbon pollution and creating opportunities throughout the province. CleanBC was developed in collaboration with the BC Green Party caucus and supports the commitment in the Confidence and Supply Agreement to implement climate action to meet B.C.'s emission targets.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Aaron Sumexheltza, former member of the Climate Solutions and Clean Growth Advisory Council –**

“Indigenous peoples are working across B.C. to respond to climate change by introducing new opportunities under CleanBC. Strengthening the Province's ability to track progress and report publicly will improve our ability to build a cleaner future for everyone.”

#### **Ian Bruce, director of science and policy, David Suzuki Foundation –**

“We welcome B.C.'s climate accountability law as one of the strongest in North America. These new measures to strengthen transparency and responsibility from every sector of our society – from the largest industrial polluters, to government, to citizens – will help make sure everyone is part of the solution to the climate crisis. For the health of our communities and the well-being of our children and grandchildren, we need more action – and more accountability – and we need it now.”

#### **Quick Facts:**

- Legislative changes to the Climate Change Accountability Act fulfil government's commitment to introduce a new climate change accountability framework under CleanBC.
- Upon passage of the amendments, interim emissions targets will be established by ministerial order by no later than Dec. 31, 2020. Sectoral targets will be established no later than March 31, 2021.
- Every fifth year, the climate change accountability report will include an updated provincial climate risk assessment, which will build on B.C.'s Preliminary Strategic Risk Assessment and work done in the interim to assess risks from climate change.
- The new independent advisory committee will consist of no more than 20 members. At least half of the members must be women.

#### **Learn More:**

To follow progress of bills in the legislature, including amendments to the Climate Change Accountability Act, visit:

[www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/legislation-debates-proceedings/41st-parliament/4th-session/bills/progress-of-bills](http://www.leg.bc.ca/parliamentary-business/legislation-debates-proceedings/41st-parliament/4th-session/bills/progress-of-bills)

To learn more about CleanBC, visit: <https://cleanbc.gov.bc.ca/>

To read B.C.'s Preliminary Strategic Climate Risk Assessment, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/climate-change/adaptation/risk-assessment>

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