

FOR RELEASE
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A statement from Canada's territorial premiers on climate change and the North

VANCOUVER—The premiers of Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut are bringing the interests of northerners to the First Ministers' Meeting in Vancouver on March 3.

Yukon Premier Darrell Pasloski, N.W.T. Premier Bob McLeod and Nunavut Premier Peter Taptuna look forward to working collaboratively with all first ministers, and acknowledge the imperative to address climate change.

Recognizing the significant effect it is having on northern communities, territorial premiers wish to ensure that efforts to address their climate change goals are also informed by the realities faced by the territories.

"I believe a carbon tax would have a negative impact on quality of life in the North. Canada's climate change goals must be conducted in a way that does not significantly impact northern costs of living, undermine food security or threaten emerging economies," Yukon Premier Darrell Pasloski said. "At a time when the economy is at a critical point, we as territorial premiers must ensure the economic impacts of any proposed federal climate change measures do not unintentionally further marginalize the territorial economies."

The territories' small but important regional economies and sparse populations in rural and remote areas are a minor portion of Canada's overall greenhouse gas emissions. Conversely, climate change is having a disproportionate effect on northern communities. It is with this understanding that premiers noted that all three territories are doing their part and have taken active measures towards emissions reduction, cleaner energy production, technology and innovation.

Northern premiers want to ensure that detailed economic assessments are completed on any new national initiatives on climate change, including analysis specifically on possible impacts to territorial economies.

"The territories are leaders in climate change adaptation because of the front line impacts we are already experiencing," N.W.T. Premier Bob McLeod said. "We are looking forward to working with the federal government to ensure Canada's national approach to climate change complements our territorial strategies."

The territorial premiers are looking forward to discussions with provincial colleagues and the prime minister to further advance work that is underway across all jurisdictions to address climate change challenges.

"Northern Canada's combined greenhouse gas emissions are minute, and yet the impacts that we face as a result of climate change are a direct correlation to activities in the industrialized world," Nunavut Premier Peter Taptuna said. "This is why we place a heavy emphasis on mitigation and adaptation, and we need other jurisdictions to understand the unique circumstances in the North and the impacts it could place on our limited economy by remaining especially flexible in any action plan on climate change."

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Contact:

Dan Macdonald
Cabinet Communications
Government of Yukon
867-393-6470
dan.macdonald@gov.yk.ca

Cate Macleod
Director of Communications
Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs
Government of Nunavut
867-222-0305
cmacleod@gov.nu.ca

Andrew Livingston
Government of the Northwest Territories
867-767-9140 ext. 11091

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