

Canada Green Building Council – Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment – Canadian Council of Imams – Canadian Federation of Students – Citizens Advocating Use of Sustainable Energy – Citizen's Environmental Alliance of Southwestern Ontario – Climate Action Network Canada - Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment – Conservation Council of New Brunswick – Council of Canadians – David Suzuki Foundation – Ecology Action Centre – Ecology Ottawa – Edmonton Friends of the North Environmental Society – Environmental Coalition of Prince Edward Island – Environmental Defence – Équiterre – For Our Grandchildren – ForestEthics – Friends of the Earth Canada – Georgian Triangle Earth Day Celebrations – Greenpeace – Living Oceans Society – Manitoba Wildlands – Ontario Clean Air Alliance – Ontario Humanist Society – Oxfam Canada – Peace River Environmental Society – Pembina Institute – Polaris Institute – Post Carbon Toronto – Public Interest Alberta – Saskatchewan Environmental Society – Saskatchewan Eco Network – Sierra Club of Canada – Sierra Youth Coalition – Society of High Prairie Regional Environmental Action Committee – StopCoal.ca – Sustainability Solutions Group – United Church of Canada – Vegans and Vegetarians of Alberta – Voters Taking Action on Climate Change – Waterloo Public Interest Research Group – Windfall Ecology Centre – World Wildlife Fund – Yukon Conservation Society

August 10, 2011

The Honourable Peter Kent
Minister of the Environment
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington Street, 28th Floor
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0H3

Dear Minister Kent,

As representatives of Canadian First Nations, environmental, faith, labour, health, youth and international development organizations, we are writing to urge you to launch an immediate review of the appropriateness of Maxim Power's proposed coal-fired Milner expansion project, in light of the federal government's future regulations on coal-fired electricity generation.

As you know, Maxim Power Corp. recently received approval from Alberta's Utilities Commission for a 500-megawatt supercritical coal plant, which would be located north of Grande Cache, Alberta. The company plans to commission the plant just before the federal regulations on coal-fired electricity take effect.

In June 2010, former Environment Minister Jim Prentice announced that the federal government would adopt regulations specifying a performance standard for greenhouse gas emissions from certain coal-fired power plants. Though the regulations would only apply beginning in July 2015, Minister Prentice assured Canadians that the government would not allow companies to avoid the regulations by rushing new plants into service. He said: "We will guard against any rush to build non-compliant coal plants in the interim."

Unfortunately, it appears that that is exactly what Maxim Power is intending to do. Documents filed by Maxim Power with Alberta's utilities regulator show that the company is indeed attempting to rush a non-compliant coal-fired power plant into service, beginning operations before the government's July 2015 deadline.

A letter from Maxim Power's lawyers to the Alberta Utilities Commission (dated June 7, 2011), indicates that it is Maxim's intent to avoid being subject to the future federal regulations, and that Maxim officials met with you to understand how their proposal could avoid the impact of said regulations.

In our view, all coal-fired power plants need to face regulations to, at a minimum, reduce their considerable emissions of greenhouse gas pollution. Given the need to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in both the short and long term, it is simply no longer acceptable to build new conventional coal plants in Canada, period.

We are writing to you to seek your assurance that you will uphold the promise made by this government and ensure that Maxim Power's coal proposal - if it proceeds at all -is fully subject to the performance standard to be outlined in the future federal regulations for coal-fired electricity generation.

We understand that a draft of the proposed federal regulations on coal-fired electricity will likely be published soon. This announcement gives you an important opportunity to clarify to Canadians that you will indeed "guard against" proposals like Maxim's, by taking the measures needed to ensure that Maxim Power's new coal plant faces the same regulations as new plants commissioned after July 1, 2015.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Signed:

Canada Green Building Council, Saskatchewan Chapter
Ian Stewart, Chair

Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
Gideon Forman, Executive Director

Canadian Council of Imams
Habeeb Ali, Secretary

Canadian Federation of Students
Roxanne Dubois, Chair

Citizens Advocating Use of Sustainable Energy
Roger Gagne, Treasurer

Citizens' Environment Alliance of Southwestern Ontario
Derek Coronado, Coordinator

Climate Action Network Canada/ Réseau Action Climat Canada
Graham Saul, Executive Director

Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment
Robert Patrick, President

Conservation Council of New Brunswick
David Coon, Executive Director

Council of Canadians
Maude Barlow, National Chairperson

David Suzuki Foundation
Morag Carter, Program Director, Climate Change and Clean Energy

Ecology Action Centre
Brennan Vogel, Climate Change and Energy Coordinator

Ecology Ottawa
Trevor Hache, Policy Coordinator

Edmonton Friends of the North Environmental Society
David Parker, Treasurer

Environmental Coalition of Prince Edward Island
Gary Schneider, Co-chair

Environmental Defence
Matt Price, Campaigns Director

Équiterre
Steven Guilbeault, Deputy Director

For Our Grandchildren
Anthony Ketchum, President

ForestEthics
Nikki Skuce, Senior Energy Campaigner

Friends of the Earth Canada
Beatrice Olivastri, Chief Executive Officer

Georgian Triangle Earth Day
Douglas Nadler, Founder and Director

Greenpeace
Bruce Cox, Executive Director

Living Oceans Society
Jennifer Lash, Executive Director

Manitoba Wildlands
Gaile Whelan Enns, Director

Ontario Clean Air Alliance
Angela Bischoff, Outreach

Ontario Humanist Society
Mary Beaty and Dr Gail McCabe, Chaplains

Oxfam Canada
Robert Fox, Executive Director

Peace River Environmental Society
Bob Cameron, President

Pembina Institute
Ed Whittington, Executive Director

Polaris Institute
Tony Clarke, Executive Director

Post Carbon Toronto
Jeff Berg, Chair

Public Interest Alberta
Bill Moore-Kilgannon, Executive Director

Saskatchewan Environmental Society
Ann Coxworth, Research Advisor

Saskatchewan Eco Network
Paddy Tutty, Administrator

Sierra Club of Canada
John Bennet, Executive Director

Sierra Youth Coalition
Mark Hanlon, National Director

The Society of High Prairie Regional Environmental Action Committee
Jule Asterisk, Vice Chair

StopCoal.ca
Jane Kiltnei, Organizer

Sustainability Solutions Group
Rebecca Foon, Director

United Church of Canada
Jim Hodgson, Acting Executive Minister, Partners in Mission Unit

Vegans and Vegetarians of Alberta
David Parker, Director

Voters Taking Action on Climate Change
Kevin Washbrook, Director

Waterloo Public Interest Research Group
Reena Reddy, Coordinator of Projects and Organizational Development

Windfall Ecology Centre
Brent Kopperson, Executive Director

World Wildlife Fund
Josh Laughren, Climate and Energy Program Director

Yukon Conservation Society
Karen Baltgailis, Executive Director

For inquiries, please contact:

Climate Action Network Canada – Réseau Action Climat Canada
Graham Saul, Executive Director
gsaul@climateactionnetwork.ca
613-241-4413