

# NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
October 7, 2008

## **120+ TOP SCIENTISTS URGE CANADIANS TO VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

VANCOUVER – More than 120 of Canada’s top climate scientists are urging Canadians to vote strategically for the environment in the upcoming federal election.

“Global warming is the defining issue of our time,” says Dr. Andrew Weaver, a Lead Author with the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). “Our current federal government has yet to get engaged in the innovative and urgent policies that we need to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada.”

“This is shaping up to be the rare election in which the environment is the issue,” added Dr. John Stone, past Vice Chair of Working Group II of the IPCC. “And never has the attention been more necessary, with both our environment and economy at risk. Sadly, the opportunity for an informed national debate on Canada’s response to global warming is slipping away. We cannot let this happen. Dealing with the economy has to mean addressing the environment in a sustainable way.”

The scientists who signed the letter are a who’s who of top climate experts in the country, including many who were lead authors or major contributors to the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

They are, on one hand, the backbone of the Canadian climate science community. But signing such a letter in the middle of an election is both risky and courageous in the current circumstances, says Simon Fraser University ethicist Dr. Mark Wexler.

“It’s always risky to be pro-climate change when the government in power is pro-fossil fuel,” Dr. Wexler said. And given that many of the signatories are research scientists who depend on the federal granting agencies for the bulk of their funding, these whistleblowers could face serious cutbacks if the Conservative party were to get back into power, Dr. Wexler said.

Dr. David Schindler, winner of the 2001 Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering, Canada’s top prize in science, said that he and his colleagues are confident that the Canadian granting agencies would continue to support good science on its merits – on the basis of professional peer-review rather than politics. “And regardless, this is not a moment for any Canadian to be timid. This is an urgent issue and I am proud to side with so many scientists who are willing to stand up for what they believe in,” Dr. Schindler said.

A full Opinion Page submission setting out the scientists’ position has been sent to Canada’s major newspapers, and signatories in most of Canada’s major centres have agreed to make themselves available for further comment. For more information or to arrange interviews with one of these spokespeople, contact. The entire letter and the list of scientists can be found at [www.site.climateletter.org](http://www.site.climateletter.org)

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