

# Cleaner air, land and water

NDP **BACKGROUNDER**

**When it comes to our environment**, you and your family want a Prime Minister who will stand up to the big polluters—to protect our natural heritage, tackle global warming, and secure a healthy future for coming generations.

Yet today, biodiversity is gravely threatened, 1,700 communities are facing boil water alerts, blue-green algae are choking our waterways, and dirty air is a leading cause of hospitalization for kids and seniors. Meanwhile, climate-changing carbon emissions threaten ecological and economic devastation on a scale we've never seen.

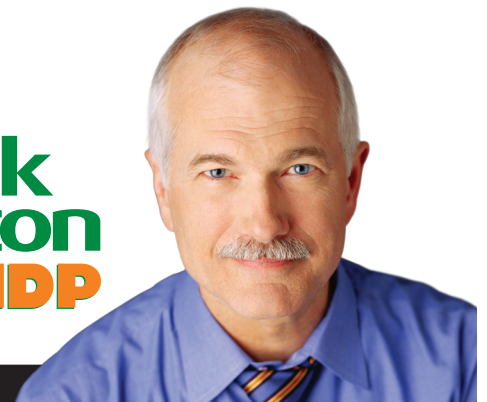
For 25 years, Canadian Prime Ministers have told you and your family that they'd cut pollution and ensure a cleaner environment. They didn't. And Stephen Harper has only added to Liberal failure by adopting phony targets with artificial timelines to get the job done. But it doesn't have to be this way.

It's time for leadership to clean up the air we breathe, the water we drink and the land that sustains us. It's time for a Prime Minister who will build on his proven track record of implementing environmental solutions that get the job done.

Jack Layton will be that Prime Minister

**Don't let them tell you it can't be done.**

**Jack  
Layton**  
NDP



## Stephen Harper can't be trusted.

- He abandoned Canada's Kyoto targets and tabled three failed "clean air" plans of his own—each one exposed for ensuring more climate-changing pollution for years to come, and more breaks for big polluters.
- He cut spending on energy conservation programs but renewed a \$1.4-billion annual subsidy for companies developing the polluting tar sands—then added \$50-billion in corporate tax giveaways that disproportionately go to oil companies.
- The tar sands development that he subsidizes is a looming disaster: related pollution is causing acid rain in Saskatchewan and beyond; toxic tailing ponds visible from space are seeping into rivers; and Harper's plan would let tar sands-based greenhouse gas emissions double by 2020.
- He opposed the global consensus to protect the sea floor from bottom trawling; developed no plan to protect 99% of species at risk; developed no standards for safe drinking water; and allowed healthy lakes to be used as dumping grounds for toxic mining waste.

## Stephane Dion is not the change we need.

- By instructing his Liberal MPs to skip key votes, he rubber-stamped Harper's plan to abandon Canada's Kyoto commitments and squander \$50-billion on tax cuts for big banks and oil companies.
- With Dion at the cabinet table, Liberal governments left Canada with one of the worst pollution records in the industrial world: emissions soared 25% over 1990 levels—33% above Canada's Kyoto target. That's not the change we need.

## Jack Layton's New Democrats: Putting you and your family first.

This election, Jack Layton and his team of New Democrats have a better plan to crack down on big polluters, combat climate change, and protect our natural heritage. Layton's team has already led the way in Parliament:

- Passed **Layton's Kyoto-Plus Bill** (C-377) making Canada's House of Commons the world's first legislature to adopt science-based targets to cut carbon emissions—committing to an 80% reduction from 1990 levels by 2050, with interim targets every five years.
- Forced the Conservatives to strike an all-party committee to re-write their weak "clean air" legislation—and the resulting **Clean Air and Climate Change Act**, based on the NDP's polluter-pay plan, was hailed by environmentalists as a breakthrough.
- **Targeted toxic contaminants**—passing NDP legislation to control phthalates used in toys, tabling a motion banning cosmetic-use pesticides, and committing to ban asbestos.
- Tabled a **Clean Water Act** proposing national standards ensuring safe drinking water for all Canadians, urban and rural, on First Nations reserves and off.
- Stood up for our **waterways and oceans**—proposing a sustainable marine policy; exposing loopholes that let mining companies use healthy lakes as tailing ponds; moving to ban bottom trawling; and opposing Conservative legislation that seeks to further privatize fish resources.
- Earlier, when Layton **rewrote the 2005 Liberal budget**, he cancelled \$4.6-billion in pointless corporate tax cuts to invest in better priorities—including \$900-million for green public transit and a home energy retrofit program.

See related issue sheet:

[Putting the Brakes on Global Warming](#)