



Expert statement in support of Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs (British Columbia, Canada) January, 2020 eviction of Coastal Gaslink (CGL) employees from Unist'ot'en and Gidimt'en territories and their opposition to fossil fuel pipelines on their traditional unceded territories

Peter Carter, 9th. January 2010

This statement is also in support of all opposition to new fossil fuel extraction and/or distribution projects by indigenous people with respect to their long inhabited lands and their Mother Earth spiritual beliefs and practices (equivalent to religious in English language), rights to food and medicine harvesting, and traditional customary law and long standing governance with profound respect of the land and waters and wildlife.

This statement is also in support of the recorded and self-evident rights of all today's children and youth (1.8 billion) to a livable planet Earth, with security to life, water and food.

Extraction and distribution of fossil fuels on indigenous lands is an extreme form of racial discrimination, because, by its direct impact and its global climate and oceans disruption impact, it is destructive of their relationship with the land and waters, applying to all indigenous people (370 million).

This is a statement of climate change science, because the opposition of indigenous peoples to fossil fuel extraction and/or distribution is in fact vital to the survival of most life on Earth particularly Humanity.

The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has warned that global climate change is now a threat to the survival of most life on Earth and to the human race. 15 May 2018 UN Sec. General said climate change is an 'existential threat to most life on the planet, including and especially humankind', UN chief warns at Austria World Summit, and the age of fossil fuels must be ended.

Incidentally, with respect to western law we note that fossil fuel extraction and/or distribution is an abuse of the public trust doctrine against all today's children and youth in the world (1.8 billion) and is totally unacceptable under the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Today all the world is a state of global climate planetary emergency (World Scientists' Warning of a Climate Emergency November 2019 <https://static.secure.website/wscfus/8154141/25635626/sc-warning-climate-emerg.pdf>).

Today the global average temperature increase is 1.2°C. The global average land temperature increase is 1.57°C. According to the universal agreement of science greenhouse gas emissions have to be declining rapidly now (2020) (IPCC 2018 1.5°C Special Report). Clearly that means more fossil fuel projects cannot be permitted and current high emitting fossil fuel projects phased out.

The fossil fuel oil industry is the cause of the vast majority of CO₂ emissions. The fossil fuel natural gas (mainly methane) industry is the cause of extremely large emissions of CO₂ and of methane, which is 86 times as powerful in global heating as CO₂. Some of emitted natural gas methane is converted in the atmosphere to CO₂ prolonging its heating effect. CO₂ is a highly persistent and cumulative greenhouse gas when emitted to the atmosphere. It lasts hundreds of years and it will take a hundred thousand years for all the fossil fuel emitted to be removed by Earth systems from the atmosphere (IPCC 2014 5th Assessment). This makes all fossil fuel CO₂ emissions a locked in commitment to hundreds of years of global heating and climate disruption and far more for ocean heating and acidification.

Fossil fuel emissions are the main cause of global surface and ocean heating (leading to ocean deoxygenation and, as carbon dioxide (CO₂), the sole cause of ocean acidification).

The author monitors atmospheric greenhouse pollution on the site stateofourclimate.com. Atmospheric CO₂ level, atmospheric methane level, global surface heating, ocean heating, ocean deoxygenation and ocean acidification are currently at all time recorded highs and increasing at accelerating rates (2019 global surface temperature increase is virtually as high as the 2016 record).

In particular accelerating atmospheric CO2 has never increased as fast as it is now in the past 40 million years (WMO Greenhouse Gas Bulletin 2017).

It is universally agreed by science that global surface heating must be limited long term to 1.5°C, though 1.5°C is far from safe and will be disastrous for billions of people

(Peter Carter Oxford University 1.5°C Conference, 2016

https://www.climateemergencyinstitute.com/oxford_1point5degreesc.html),

(IPCC 2018 1.5°C Special Report).

Like for many indigenous populations Wet'suwet'en territory is forest. The IPCC 2014 5th assessment reported "Extensive tree mortality and widespread forest die-back (high mortality rates at a regional scale) linked to drought and temperature stress have been documented recently on all vegetated continents" (IPCC 2014 5th assessment Figure 4.7). This will increase forest fires. At 1.8°C the IPCC (2014 5th assessment WG2 Figure 4.6) projects huge increases in forest fires. The Amazon had by far the worst ever recorded forest fires in 2019. Unprecedented dramatic wild-fires are burning up Australia (at the time of writing). Forest fires deprive indigenous peoples of their traditional, legally protected sustenance.

Brought on by industrial land clearing and deforestation the world is in the sixth mass extinction event, which is accelerating (Biological annihilation via the ongoing sixth mass extinction signaled by vertebrate population losses and declines, 2017). Global climate disruption will further greatly accelerate this mass extinction. This results in the annihilation of indigenous livelihoods and life sustaining culture.

Finally at 2°C there is an extreme high risk of multiple amplifying feedback Hothouse Earth, and then runaway global heating and climate chaos (Trajectories of the Earth System in the Anthropocene, 2018). This risk starts at 1.5°C and if triggered would be the end of almost all life, judging by the worst mass extinction of the distant past, the End Permian.

Conclusion

The opposition by indigenous peoples (such as the Wet'suwet'en) to fossil fuel extraction and /or distribution is in the security and human rights interests of all nations and all populations. The support of more fossil fuel extraction and /or distribution by the Canadian government and others, is an unprecedented crime of all time against all humanity (a sin against Creation and God Pope Francis, 2016)

It is vital for our future that the First Nations leaders be respected. In today's situation, with governments forcing ahead with more fossil fuels. these noble people are presently all that stands between us and global climate extinction. It is these governments that are the arch offenders. Leading the world to indescribable suffering and oblivion. These First Nations leaders should honored.

An edited more comprehensive document will follow

With respect

Peter Carter

4708 Captains Crescent, Pender Island, British Columbia, Canada

For information petercarter46@shaw.ca