



Press release

Premiers' Meeting and COP24

Business, Financial and Environmental Leaders Across the Country Urge Premiers to Respond to the Climate Crisis and Foster the Development of a Green Economy

MONTREAL, December 7, 2018 - Alliance SWITCH and its partners from the business, finance and environment sectors across Canada — *Clean Energy Canada, the McConnell Foundation, the Pembina Institute, the Trottier Family Foundation, the Aluminium Association of Canada, Conseil du patronat du Québec, the David Suzuki Foundation, Cycle Capital Management, Enerkem, Desjardins Group, Énergir, Écotech Québec, Équiterre, Regroupement national des conseils régionaux de l'environnement du Québec and Réseau Environnement* — are calling on the Premiers' Meeting today in Montreal to foster the development of a greener economy, for the benefit of the country's workers, industries and communities.

"The transition to a green economy is picking up speed around the world. It's up to us to take advantage of the economic opportunities that come out of it. We are asking our decision-makers to support us in making this new economy a real driver of prosperity in this country," said **SWITCH co-chairs Catherine Bérubé, Head of Communications and Public Relations at Cycle Capital Management, and Karel Mayrand, Executive Director, Quebec and Atlantic Canada at the David Suzuki Foundation.**

On the occasion of the 24th United Nations Climate Change Conference, they are calling on the Premiers to rise to the challenge of the climate crisis by continuing to foster the development of a prosperous and inclusive low-carbon economy in all of Canada's regions and industries. "The scientific consensus on the need to act quickly means that we must move into high gear to pass on a clean, resilient and equitable society to future generations. We will fully cooperate with the Premiers to accelerate this shift towards greater sustainability," said the co-chairs.

Quotes from organizations

"Taking action on climate change is not just about the environment. It's about positioning our economy to be competitive as global markets decarbonize. We need all provinces to be pulling in the same direction to ensure that Canada doesn't get left behind. Now is not the time to gamble with our future but to make clear commitments and provide clear direction to build a clean economy for Canada." **Simon Dyer, Interim Executive Director, Pembina Institute**

"Making the transition to an equitable, low-carbon economy is the greatest and most necessary undertaking of our era, and premiers have the responsibility and authority to ensure all sectors - - public, private and civil society -- collaborate in making it happen." **Stephen Huddart, President**

and CEO, The McConnell Foundation, and Éric St-Pierre, Executive Director, Trottier Family Foundation

“Fighting Climate change is the most serious challenge of our time, but there is much to be gained from doing so: a cleaner future for our children and a stronger economy based on cleaner technologies, industries, and services. Our first ministers must come together and find ways to collaborate—to help Canada lead in the 21st century.” **Merran Smith, Executive Director, Clean Energy Canada**

“The fight against global warming is not a matter of principle—it is an unavoidable reality that requires all leaders to lead responsibly. This unprecedented challenge provides us with an opportunity to diversify the economy and become more competitive on a global scale, in order to create wealth and growth for all.” **Jean Simard, President and Chief Executive Officer, Aluminium Association of Canada**

“We are no longer at the thinking stage—it’s time to act. Quebec and Canada have a range of innovative energy solutions available now. We must implement them quickly to accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy.” **Frédéric Krikorian, Vice President, Sustainability, Public & Government Affairs, Énergir**

“As 195 countries come together in Poland to accelerate the energy transition, Canada is ideally positioned to benefit from this shift, particularly with its tremendous potential for renewable energy production and exportation. Our premiers must work together to unleash this potential, both domestically and in export markets, to reduce electricity sector greenhouse gases while creating jobs here.” **Sidney Ribaux, Executive Director, Équiterre**

“The federal government must continue its efforts to strengthen collaboration between the provinces and municipalities on climate issues. We must take advantage of the solutions and opportunities offered to us by science and technology. If we develop the right tools in a fair and predictable manner, we will have everything we need to make it happen.” **Yves-Thomas Dorval, President and CEO, Conseil du patronat du Québec**

“Desjardins is firmly committed to a fair energy transition and is gradually incorporating environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors into the services it provides as a financial institution dedicated to its members and clients, in order to support the prosperity of their communities. Factoring in climate risk is now unavoidable and we are convinced that it will also create opportunities for Quebec and Canada to seize. For this to happen, governments have a responsibility to create the right conditions for this transition.” **Pauline D’Amboise, Secretary General and Vice-President, Governance and Sustainable Development, Desjardins Group**

“Quebec and Canada have innovative technology that can further reduce greenhouse gases and build a circular economy. Governments must set the example by tangibly supporting the sector and expediting the adoption of clean technology.” **Pierre Boisseau, Senior Director, Communications and Marketing, Enkern**

“Major actions and ambitious policy are required now to address the magnitude of climate challenges. The COP 24 is an opportunity to show our commitment to a fair ecological transition through sustained stimulation of an innovative green economy. Quebec and Canada have the

potential to assume strong leadership and make clear commitments in the fight against climate change.” **Vincent Moreau, Executive Director, Regroupement national des conseils régionaux de l’environnement du Québec**

“The recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change confirms that we have all the tools we need to flight global warming. One of the main ways we can do this is by fast-tracking the adoption of clean technology, and we should be able to look to governments as examples. High-level coordination is critical to ensuring better coherence between the actions of all levels of government.” **Denis Leclerc, President and CEO, Écotech Québec**

“We have the technology and financial tools to make the energy transition in Quebec and Canada. Our governments must be bold and lead by example through effective, concerted and systematic action.” **Jean Lacroix, President and CEO, Réseau Environnement**

About SWITCH

SWITCH, the Alliance for a Green Economy in Quebec, hopes to accelerate the shift towards a green economy in order to build an innovative, resilient and competitive society that balances social equality, the environment and quality of life. SWITCH works towards greater consistency in government policies and actions, and the convergence of initiatives for a green economy in the public, private, non-profit, cooperative/mutual and civil society sectors.

SWITCH includes the following organizations: the Aluminium Association of Canada, Conseil du patronat du Québec (CPQ), Cycle Capital Management, Ecofuel, Écotech Québec, Énergir, Enerkem, Équiterre, the David Suzuki Foundation, Desjardins Group, Regroupement national des conseils régionaux de l’environnement du Québec (RNCREQ) and Réseau Environnement.

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