

Chevron
6001 Bollinger Canyon Road
San Ramon, CA 94583
USA

Attn. CEO of Chevron

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

Re: Corporate Responsibility for Climate Impacts in BC Communities

We write on behalf of our members – all of the local governments of British Columbia, Canada – to ask your company to take financial responsibility for your fair share of the harm caused to BC communities (and to communities around the world) by your products. Our concern is that the fossil fuel industry relies on the assumption that it can make profits extracting, processing and selling fossil fuels, while our taxpayers pay for the costs of those products in our communities. Our fiscal duty to our taxpayers requires us to challenge that assumption.

Our history with fossil fuels

The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) was formed in 1905 to bring together the local governments of British Columbia. In that year, the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel pollution across the entire planet was 663 MT,¹ which is slightly less than Canada's annual fossil fuel pollution today.²

Climate change increasingly threatens our communities: from multi-year droughts and pest damage to forests, to flooding from extreme weather and intensified wildfires. These last two impacts have forced massive evacuations and significant damage to property for some residents of BC communities, and a review of the floods and wildfires of 2017 commissioned by the Province of BC made note of the “undeniable impact of climate change manifested in these events.”³

Our communities also have increased costs associated with planning and preparing for the impacts of climate change. The Province of BC estimates that municipalities in the Metro Vancouver region will need to spend \$9.5 billion between now and 2100 to prepare for a 1-metre increase in sea levels. In other parts of the province, municipalities are designing and implementing anti-flooding measures and wildfire interface areas. The cost of treating interface areas between wildlands and urban centres to

¹ Boden, T.A., Marland, G., and Andres, R.J. (2017). [Global, Regional, and National Fossil-Fuel CO2 Emissions](#). Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy, Oak Ridge, Tenn., U.S.A. doi 10.3334/CDIAC/00001_V2017.

² <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/environmental-indicators/greenhouse-gas-emissions.html>.

³ G. Abbott and M. Chapman. Addressing the New Normal: 21st Century Disaster Management in British Columbia (Victoria, 2018: Province of British Columbia), p. 14, available online at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/bc-flood-and-wildfire-review-addressing-the-new-normal-21st-century-disaster-management-in-bc-web.pdf>.

reduce wildfire risk has been estimated at \$6.7 billion.⁴ Although these measures are expected to save our communities from major disruption and costs, they represent considerable expenses.

Each community experiences climate-related costs, risks and concerns very differently. Several of our member municipalities have written to you to outline their own perspectives on what climate change means for their community and the costs they face. Others may choose to do so in the coming months and years, or may seek legal recourse related to these costs.

We are committed to doing our part to reduce our emissions and to prepare our communities for the expected impacts of climate change.

Fossil fuel companies must pay their fair share

Your company has profited from selling the products that give rise to climate change. Since the 1960s, your industry has been aware⁵ of the impacts that fossil fuel pollution would cause communities in BC and elsewhere. Rather than using its considerable influence and expertise to lead the transition away from the fossil fuel economy, your industry instead lobbied against global action on climate change. Global greenhouse gas emissions have more than tripled in the decades since then.⁶

It would be unfair and bad economics to insist that taxpayers pay all of the costs of climate change while your industry pays nothing (beyond the tax dollars paid by all businesses). There must be financial consequences to knowingly selling products that cause climate change and to prioritizing your profits over the health of the global atmosphere.

Therefore, the Union of BC Municipalities expects your company to pay your fair share of the climate costs incurred as our members work to plan for, build and modify infrastructure and services to develop more climate resilient communities. Similarly, if climate change harms our communities, we expect you to assist with the costs of rebuilding.

The work of Richard Heede calculates that the operations and products of your company have been responsible for 3.34% of the human-caused greenhouse gases in the global atmosphere today,⁷ and we suggest that this contribution corresponds to your fair share of climate change costs incurred by BC communities.

We would like a commitment from your company to negotiate in good faith with BC communities that are harmed by the impacts of climate change or by the need to prepare for those climate impacts. We ask you to further commit to a dramatic shift away from fossil fuel energy products to reduce harm to BC communities through future emissions originating from your operations or products.

⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵ <https://www.smokeandfumes.org/fumes>, last accessed 23 January 2017.

⁶ Above, note 1.

⁷ Heede, R. Tracing anthropogenic carbon dioxide and methane emissions to fossil fuel and cement producers, 1854–2010. *Climatic Change* (2014) 122: 229. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10584-013-0986-y>. Updates available at http://www.climateaccountability.org/carbon_majors_update.html.

We are committed to doing our part to avoid climate change, and to prepare for the impacts that are already upon us. From now on we expect that you will do your part, too.

Sincerely,

- cc. Hon. George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, BC
- cc. Hon. Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Canada
- cc. James Carr, Minister of Natural Resources, Canada