Canada Sweeps 1st Cancun Fossil of the Day Awards for Year of Climate Inaction

Cancun, Mexico - Canada won the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place Fossil of the Day awards at the opening of the United Nations climate negotiations. It took all three of the possible Fossils for an entire year of increasingly severe inaction on climate change since earning the Colossal Fossil at the close of last year’s negotiations in Copenhagen.

Canada receives the 3rd place Fossil for a spectacular, year-long effort to regain its title of ‘colossal fossil’ as the country making the least constructive contribution to the negotiations.

In January, Canada backed off of a weak target to adopt an even weaker one, as part of the government’s plan to outsource climate policy to the United States. Canada’s plan to meet that target is, to put it nicely, still being written. And the guy they’ve just put in charge as Environment Minister is John Baird; COP veterans might remember him as the solo holdout against science-based targets for developed countries at the end of Bali.

Canada also receives the 2nd place Fossil. We’ve already heard that Canada doesn’t have a plan to cut emissions. What it does have is a plan to cut a lot of other things, such as:

- the only major federal support program for renewable energy
- a program funding energy efficiency upgrades for homeowners
- funding for Canada’s climate science foundation
- climate change off of the G8 and G20 agendas when Canada played host this summer, and last but not least...
- clean fuels policies in other countries. Internal government documents released today reveal that Canada worked to “kill” a US federal clean fuels policy to protect its tar sands, working with allies like the Bush administration and Exxon.

With friends like that, who needs clean energy?

Finally, Canada wins the 1st place Fossil. Some might think the US Senate wasn’t too helpful on climate change. But today’s Fossil winner has a Senate that makes the US look good, and not just because these Senators aren’t elected. In this country, Conservative Senators killed a progressive climate change bill without even bothering to debate it, something that hasn’t happened for at least 70 years. This leaves their country without a science-based target or any domestic transparency program for the 2020 target the government has brought to these talks. Where can we find that fossil-worthy Senate? In a shocking twist, it’s Canada again!

So Canada is starting off with a substantial lead, taking three prizes today. Killing progressive legislation, cancelling support for clean energy and failing to have any plan to meet its target all position Canada well for another two weeks of ignominy here in Cancun.
FOSSIL OF THE DAY AWARD
Media Release

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About CAN: The Climate Action Network is a worldwide network of roughly 500 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels. www.climatenetwork.org <http://www.climatenetwork.org/>

About the fossils: The Fossil of the Day awards were first presented at the climate talks in 1999 in Bonn, initiated by the German NGO Forum. During United Nations climate change negotiations (www.unfccc.int <http://www.unfccc.int/>), members of the Climate Action Network (CAN), vote for countries judged to have done their 'best' to block progress in the negotiations in the last days of talks.