

Canada will only curb oil sector emissions when US does: PM

December 9 2014



Canada PM Stephen Harper said his country will only cut carbon emissions from its oil and gas sectors if the US does, even though ignoring them will doom all efforts to bring down Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions

Canada will only impose regulations to cut carbon emissions from its oil and gas sector—its top source of emissions—if and when the United States moves to do the same, the prime minister said Tuesday.

"We want to see oil and gas regulations on a continental basis given the integrated nature of this industry," Prime Minister Stephen Harper said in the House of Commons.

"With the current conditions in the oil and gas sector, this government will not consider unilateral regulation of that sector."

Moments later, Environment Minister Leona Aglukkaq echoed her boss in a speech at [climate talks](#) in Lima, Peru.

She touted Ottawa's "sector-by-sector regulatory approach to reduce [greenhouse gas emissions](#)," noting that Canada has so far matched lower US car emissions standards, and banned the construction of new coal-fired power plants.

The transportation and electricity sectors are two of Canada's largest sources of [carbon emissions](#). But its biggest is the oil and gas sector, representing 25 percent of emissions.

Critics say ignoring emissions from this sector, which are continuing to rise, will doom all other efforts to bring down Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions linked to global warming.

Aglukkaq countered that aligning Canadian regulations with its neighbour and largest trading partner has "allowed us to reduce our emissions while protecting the Canadian economy."

Canada's economy grew 10.6 percent from 2005 to 2012 while CO2 emissions fell 5.1 percent, she said.

Canada pledged at the last round of climate talks in Copenhagen to reduce its carbon emissions by 17 percent of 2005 levels by 2020.

But its environment commissioner reported in October that Canada would fail to reach that target.

Commissioner Julie Gelfand also criticized the government for repeatedly delaying regulations to reduce emissions from the oil and gas sector.

Canada's current CO₂ emissions are two percent of the global total.

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Citation: Canada will only curb oil sector emissions when US does: PM (2014, December 9) retrieved 20 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-12-canada-curb-oil-sector-emissions.html>

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