

Motion Regarding McGill Free from Tar Sands Extraction

Amended on:

Adopted on: February 18th, 2013

Whereas, the overwhelming majority of scientific bodies agree that carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions are contributing to rising average global temperature and climate change across the planet;i

Whereas, Canada affirmed, through the 2010 Cancun agreements of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;ii

that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time . . . [and] that deep cuts in global greenhouse gas emissions are required according to science, and as documented in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, with a view to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions so as to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2 °C above preindustrial levels, and that Parties should take urgent action to meet this long-term goal, consistent with science and on the basis of equity.

Whereas, examples of global climate change from 2012 include severe droughts in the United States, flooding in Alberta, and the lowest-ever summer ice cover in the Arctic;iii

Whereas, scientists predict that if the global average temperature rises by 2oC, the planet could experience increased extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, storms, reduced agricultural output (thus, rising food prices) and increased levels of illness and disease;iv v vi

Whereas, the Tar Sands represent the fastest growing source of carbon emissions in Canada;vii viii

Whereas, McGill University has investments in 38 companies involved in producing fossil fuels and 14 in the tar sands;ix

Resolved, that the MCSS adopt a position in favor of promoting alternative energy sources other than fossil fuels.

Resolved, that the MCSS adopt a position in favour of becoming less dependent on fossil fuels.

Resolved, that the MCSS lobby McGill University to divest its holdings in companies engaged in tar sands extraction.

- i Committee on America's Climate Choices, National Resource Council. America's Climate Choices. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2011. 15.
- ii United Nations. Framework Convention on Climate Change. (United Nations, 1992) 2-3. <<http://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/background/items/1362.php>>.
- iii Gore, Al. "Climate of Denial: Can the Science and the Truth Withstand the Merchants of Poison?" Rolling Stone Jun 2011 26.
- iv 350.org. "Science". 2012. <<<http://www.350.org/en/about/science>>>.
- v Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Synthesis Report. New York: http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/syr/en/spms3.html, 2007.
- vi M.L. Parry, O.F. Canziani, J.P. Palutikof, P.J. van der Linden and C.E. Hanson (eds). Contribution of Working Group II to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2007. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- vii United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. "Report of the individual review of the annual submission of Canada submitted in 2010" 21 April 2011. <<<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/arr/can.pdf>>>
- viii Schindler, David. "Tar Sands Need Solid Science" (Nature 468, 25 Nov 2010) 499-501. <<<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v468/n7323/full/468499a.html>>>
- ix <<<http://divestmccgill.wordpress.com/mcgills-investments/>>>