

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL WEDNESDAY, September 20, 2017 AT 10 AM



It's Time for Government to Invest in Nature, say 19 National Environmental Organizations

OTTAWA, ON (September 20, 2017) – Nineteen leading Canadian environmental and conservation organizations delivered a clear message to the federal government this week: “The time has come for serious federal investment in Canada’s ecosystems and species, which are central to Canadians’ well-being and prosperity.”

Within their newly-released annual budgetary recommendations to the federal government, members of the Green Budget Coalition urged the federal government to invest substantial new funds towards protecting and restoring Canada’s land, inland waters and oceans.

“All ecosystem types in Canada are declining, and the number of species at risk continues to grow, year after year,” the Green Budget Coalition states in its [Recommendations for Budget 2018](#) document.

The Coalition notes that despite the promises of successive governments to meet Canada’s international commitments to protect at least 17% of land and inland waters and 10% of ocean by 2020, Canada still has a long way to go, having protected only 10.6% of land and freshwater and 1% of its ocean, and currently lags well-behind most other countries in the world by these measures.

“The federal government has already made important commitments towards tackling climate change,” said James Brennan, Green Budget Coalition Co-Chair and Director of Government Affairs for Ducks Unlimited Canada. “We believe that the government must now address the urgent crisis unfolding in Canada’s natural environment with sizable new investments to safeguard Canada’s vast and relatively intact natural areas, to restore lost or degraded habitats in highly threatened landscapes, and to uphold the Pan-Canadian framework on Climate Change and Clean Growth.”

The Coalition’s specific recommendations include new investments in protected areas, developing a nationwide strategy on ecologically connected landscapes and waterscapes, and supporting Indigenous governments’ efforts to establish protected areas.

In addition to protecting natural ecosystems, the Coalition is recommending that the federal government invest in environmentally sustainable agriculture and sustainable fisheries. Agriculture and fisheries are leading industries in Canada, and substantial environmental investments are required to ensure their future sustainability while conserving biodiversity and preventing habitat loss.

The Green Budget Coalition is also recommending that the federal government scale up its efforts on international climate finance in order to pay its fair share, committing more funds to mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries and providing certainty on funding beyond 2020.

About the Green Budget Coalition:

The Green Budget Coalition, founded in 1999, brings together nineteen leading Canadian environmental and conservation organizations, which collectively represent over 600,000 Canadians, to present an analysis of the most pressing issues regarding environmental sustainability in Canada and to make recommendations to the federal government regarding strategic fiscal and budgetary opportunities.

The Coalition's members include Bird Studies Canada, Canadian Environmental Law Association, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Canadian Wildlife Federation, David Suzuki Foundation, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Ecojustice Canada, Ecology Action Centre, Environmental Defence, Friends of the Earth Canada, Greenpeace Canada, International Institute for Sustainable Development, Nature Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Sierra Club Canada, Trout Unlimited Canada, Wildlife Habitat Canada, West Coast Environmental Law, and WWF-Canada.

For more information, please see the detailed *Recommendations for Budget 2018* document at http://bit.ly/gbc_2018, or contact:

James Brennan, Co-Chair, Green Budget Coalition; and Director, Government Affairs, Ducks Unlimited Canada; 613-612-4469, j_brennan@ducks.ca;

Amin Asadollahi, Co-Chair, Green Budget Coalition; and North American Lead, Climate Mitigation, International Institute for Sustainable Development, 613-282-3128, aasadollahi@iisd.ca;

Alison Woodley, Lead Author, Green Budget Coalition protected areas recommendation; and National Director, Parks Program, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society; 613-203-1172; awoodley@cpaws.org;

Andrew Van Iterson, Manager, Green Budget Coalition; 613-562-8208, ext. 243, avaniterson@naturecanada.ca.

Media Contact;

Andrew Holland, National Media Relations Director, Nature Conservancy of Canada 1-506-260-0469 (cell) Andrew.Holland@natureconservancy.ca