

# Introduction

## TEN Climate Reasons to Defeat Ford

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for  
CLIMATE  
ACTION!  
NOW** !





## Introduction

In the months leading up to COP 26, a series of comprehensive reports detailed the severity of the climate emergency. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) documented the physical science basis of the crisis. The International Energy Agency shocked industry and rattled governments with its 180 degrees, about turn on fossil fuels. And the United Nations, in report after report, lamented government failings.

The conclusions of the reports were unambiguous. Governments have to act quickly and decisively to:

1. Stop fossil fuel expansion.
2. Rapidly phase-out the production and burning of fossil fuels; and
3. Invest heavily and rapidly in renewable energy.

The reports described a frightening situation, pointing to a climate crisis leading to an “unimaginable and unforgiving” world.

Perhaps the most famous quote of 2021 was from the UN General Secretary who said:

*“This is ‘code red’ for humanity. The alarm bells are deafening, and the evidence is irrefutable.”*

The documented evidence has been reinforced by the evidence of our own experience. In Ontario, tornadoes and forest fires that raged out of control. We watched in desperation at the destruction in Lytton BC and the floods, droughts and deaths.

New climate terms entered our vocabularies as we talked about heat domes, atmospheric rivers, and climate anxiety. Climate records are routinely broken and extremes have become the new normal.

## An economic model driving climate breakdown

In November, 2021, countries from around the world convened in Glasgow, at COP 26, in an effort to avert, or at least forestall, climate catastrophe. The result was the Glasgow Climate Pact, and, for all its failings, the Pact is a desperate plea.

It “expresses alarm and utmost concern” and “emphasizes the urgency of scaling up action and support”. The language is meant to galvanize action.

While negotiators from countries around the world were trying to forge a climate consensus in Glasgow, the Ford government was back home, adding fuel to the fire.



In November, 2021, the Ontario government released its Economic Outlook. In its 198 pages, the words 'climate emergency' and 'climate crisis' never appear. The word 'growth' appears 193 times.

Climate plans are often fuelled by a government's economic perspective. Behind Ford's climate failings is an economic perspective that can be expressed in three quotes.

The first is from the Premier:

*"If we had the chance to get rid of all the windmills, we would...terrible, terrible wind turbines."*

The second quote is from Ford's third environment minister:

*"This idea that the government can regulate and legislate its way to net zero, or to combat climate change, is an absolute fallacy."*

The third quote is from the finance minister in his November 2021 Finance statement:

*"We are ready to build bigger. We are ready to build faster than ever before."*

The triad of influences behind the government's climate plan are first, Ford's personal support of fossil fuels. Second, a pro-business ideology. And third, a commitment to unsustainable growth.

The Conservative government's economic model, with its fossil first, business first, and growth first priorities, is accelerating the climate crisis.

## Climate Crimes

On February 27, 2022 the IPCC delivered a stark warning about the deepening climate crisis. The report, referred to as an 'atlas of human suffering' is, according to the UN General Secretary, "a damning indictment" and a "criminal abdication" of global leadership.

That damning indictment should fall heavily on Premier's Ford's shoulders. The Ontario government is guilty of criminal abdication. The Ford government is knowingly and willfully failing to act on the climate crisis. The government's actions, through legislation and programs, are contrary to the evidence of science and our own experience of the climate emergency. The Ford government's climate crimes are contributing to climate breakdown.

The charge sheet is a long one. The government's actions:

- provide cover for vested interests who prolong the reign of climate destroying, fossil fuels.
- favour powerful land developers over citizens who are trying to protect natural ecosystems.

- reward big greenhouse gas (GHG) emitters.
- promote mega resource extraction projects over the sustainable development demands of Indigenous Peoples.
- force more Ontario seniors and families into energy poverty.
- jeopardize our health through exposure to toxic GHG pollution and,
- reinforce a legacy of environmental racism that puts racialized communities in harms way.

The Ford government promotes urban sprawl rather than sustainable communities, highways over public transit, nuclear power over renewable energy, gas pipelines and gas-fired electricity plants over solar and wind.

There is growing pressure for a green criminology. Internationally, groups are urging the International Criminal Court to add ecocide, the mass damage and destruction of ecosystems, to its list of crimes. Legal scholars and climate activists in a number of countries, are working to change national laws to ensure that individuals and governments who are responsible for acts or decisions that lead to severe environmental harm are liable to criminal prosecution.

But those changes are still in the future. The Ford government will avoid criminal prosecution. Instead, his climate crimes—criminal negligence, knowingly causing harm, ignoring irrefutable evidence-- need to be heard in the court of public opinion. In this climate emergency, governments need to be held to account through public pressure and election decisions.

Seniors for Climate Action Now, (SCAN!) has reviewed the Ford government's record on the climate emergency. We have concluded that Ford's actions are a disaster for the country. We have identified over thirty actions and decisions that contribute to climate catastrophe. The evidence we have compiled is presented as a series of individual exhibits. Each one is damning on its own, but taken together, they provide overwhelming and alarming evidence that the Ford government is aiding and abetting the breakdown of our climate. In an effort to bring the numerous climate crimes together we have grouped them in ten climate reasons to defeat Ford. In each section there are hyperlinks to separate, short documents that provide greater detail about the issues involved and how a People and Climate First plan would address them.

When Ford came to power, there were 12 years to 2030. By the time of the election, in June 2022, he will have squandered 4 of them. There are only 8 years left.

Premier Doug Ford is making the climate crisis worse. His government's arrogance, climate recklessness and willful negligence, threatens our future. His government, consisting of 68 elected Conservative MPPs - less than six dozen individuals - are putting the rest of us in peril.