



Leaders in Environmental Management

Courtesy of www.environment.blogg.com

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Canada wants Kyoto deal scrapped – reports

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Ottawa - Canada will try to block efforts to set stricter emissions targets in the Kyoto Protocol's second phase starting in 2012 and wants the climate-change accord scrapped in favour of a separate, voluntary deal, The Globe and Mail newspaper reported on Saturday.

The report sparked outrage among environmental activists and opposition Liberals, who accused the Conservative government of trying to undermine years of international effort to counter global warming.

The newspaper said it had obtained private Foreign Affairs Department instructions to Canadian negotiators in Bonn, Germany, where an international 10-day meeting opened this week to plot the second phase of the Kyoto Protocol.

"The private instructions from the Foreign Affairs Department to the Canadian delegation show Canada will also oppose the widely held view that targets in the second phase, which begins after 2012, should be tougher than those in the first phase," the newspaper said.

According to instructions quoted by the paper, the government advised negotiators: "Canada will not support agreement on language in the work programme that commits developed countries to more stringent targets in the future."

The 22 pages of instructions "also show that Canada wants the climate-change accord phased out in favour of a separate, voluntary deal," the daily wrote.

The document reveals that Ottawa was threatening to pull out of the United Nations climate-change process unless it includes the United States and all other major polluters.

Canada, which has ratified the Kyoto pact, "does not support a continuation of the status quo beyond 2012, and has no preconceived view on how a new commitment period might be structured," it said.

Canada is serving as the chair of the Bonn conference that opened on Monday and will close on May 25.

It was one of the first countries to sign the Kyoto Protocol, and environmental advocates say Ottawa has played an important leadership role on the issue.

Environmental groups demanded that Canada immediately step down as the chair of the conference on the future of the Kyoto accord.

"This government has neither the credibility nor the right to preside over negotiations on an accord that it wants to see dead," said Steven Guilbeault, director of Greenpeace Quebec in Montreal.

The opposition Liberals called for the government to recall Canada's delegation in Bonn and for the resignation of Environment Minister Rona Ambrose "because of her covert attempts to sabotage the development of a binding international consensus on global warming", Scott Brison of the Liberal party said in a statement.

Brison accused the newly-elected Conservative government of misrepresenting the accord and applying "anti-Kyoto tactics" employed by US President George Bush.

Since the Conservatives swept to office in January, Prime Minister Stephen Harper has said repeatedly that it would be "impossible" for his country to meet its emissions reduction targets.



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The Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 163 countries that are responsible for about 61 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. The accord went into effect in 2005.

It obliges industrialised nations to reduce output of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases to 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012.

Canada's emissions are now 35 percent above its 1990 base levels. Its protocol target is to be six percent below 1990 levels by 2012.

On Thursday, Harper said Canada was interested in exploring the possibility of joining the Asia-Pacific Partnership on climate change, a non-binding alternative to the Kyoto Protocol. - Sapa-AFP