



Letter from GPO Deputy Leader, Dianne Saxe

CODE RED.

We may not feel ready, but the planetary crisis has arrived. The planetary crisis is no longer an “issue” - it defines the era in which we live.

“The life of every child born today will be profoundly affected by climate change... Without accelerated intervention, this new era will come to define the health of people at every stage of their lives.”

Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change, 2019

The truth is that we still have a safe way forward to a better life, but its window is closing fast. That path is laid out in this climate and environmental plan.

We don't have a choice any more to do nothing. Climate change is widespread, rapid, and intensifying; and some trends are already irreversible¹. Biodiversity is collapsing. The threats and opportunities of

¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/08/1097362>

the planetary crisis get bigger, faster and more uncontrollable the longer we drag our feet. Human and natural systems are becoming explosively brittle. Our world is drifting terrifyingly close to irreversible tipping points. When sliding towards catastrophe, the pragmatic, reasonable thing to do is to get up and get out of the way.

For most people, especially the young and the vulnerable, it is no longer possible to act too fast to protect planetary health. Every day's delay in getting off fossil fuels is dangerous for those alive today. Every additional tonne of climate pollution means more and faster damage. For all of us, once we count human health, swift action to crush climate pollution is an opportunity, not a cost. And rebuilding a cleaner economy is already creating trillions of dollars of financial opportunity. So much will be better in a greener world.

But the hour is very late. If we do not slash climate pollution, climate chaos will cause enormous disruption. At the same time, it has become too late for climate action to be orderly, gradual and incremental, while everything else stays the same. By now, preserving even a 50/50 chance of a stable climate requires an unprecedented fifty percent emissions reduction per decade. And at the same time, we must prepare everything we depend on to withstand the massive human and natural disturbances we have already set in motion.

Fifty percent a decade means a radically different world, within the lifetimes of most people now alive – a better world, if we fight hard enough, but new and strange, with logics and patterns few of us yet fully understand. – Alex Steffen²

Everyone I know wants to keep their family safe, especially the young people that we love. But what is “safe” has changed. There is no safety any more in delay, or in the past. The fossil fuel economy was never safe for everyone; now it is dangerous for everyone. The only safety available to us now is to build a bridge to a better future, together.

Around the world, individuals, companies and countries are turning away from fossil decline and competing to win in the new economy. Ontario has the innovative businesses, the natural wealth, the privileged geography and the educated people to be among those winners. It's time to start now. This plan shows how.

Dianne Saxe
Deputy Leader, Green Party of Ontario

² <https://thenearlynow.com/on-climate-speed-is-everything-5bc47203bc7a>