

CANADA'S CARBON BOOTPRINT

THE PROBLEM OF MILITARY EXPENDITURES AND MILITARY EMISSIONS

Canada is in a climate emergency. Across the country, people have suffered from record-breaking heatwaves, wildfires, droughts and flooding. These extreme weather events are getting worse and leading to mass evacuations, property loss and death. Yet, according to the Climate Action Tracker, Canada's carbon reduction plan is "highly insufficient." Canada's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are increasing. Canada is not on track to meet its Paris Agreement pledge to halve emissions and has failed to meet every climate target set by the United Nations over the past three decades.

One of the biggest culprits for Canada's failure to decarbonize is costly, carbon-intensive militarism.

"Military emissions are 61% of all federal government emissions"

RISING MILITARY EMISSIONS

In Canada, among all federal departments and agencies, it is the military that has the biggest carbon footprint. **The Department of National Defence (DND)** including the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) consumes the most fossil fuel and is the largest emitter of GHGs. Carbon emissions from the military account for over 61% of all emissions by the federal government. Yet, military emission reductions are absent from Canada's reports on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the federal climate plans.

The military's energy mix is predominantly comprised of fossil fuel: aviation fuel, diesel fuel, natural gas, gasoline and heavy fuel oil. Over 70% of the energy use is for DND's fleet (mostly military vehicles) and 30% is for its infrastructure (buildings and bases). DND spends over \$500 million annually for petroleum products.

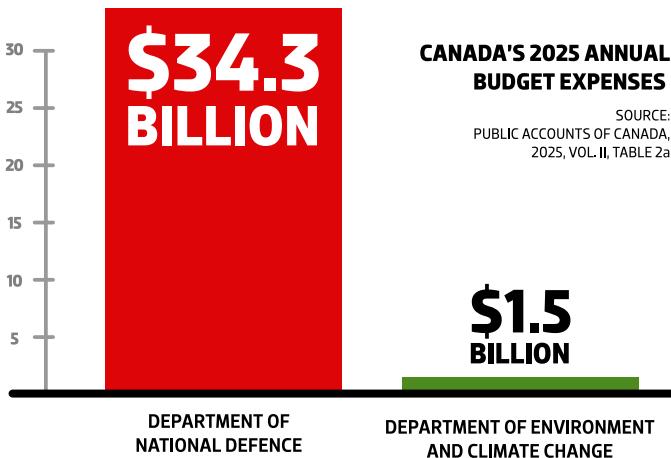
Military vehicles like fighter jets, tanks and warships are notoriously energy inefficient, have long life cycles and have locked-in energy platforms that cannot be readily replaced

by renewable energy. These tactical vehicles are very harmful to the climate, the natural environment and people.

"National Defence budget 30% of all federal departmental spending"

INCREASING MILITARY EXPENDITURES

Canada spends much more on militarism than on climate action. DND has the largest budget among all federal departments and agencies. In 2025, according to the Public Accounts of Canada, the annual budget for DND was \$34.3 billion. DND's budget accounts for 30% of all federal departmental spending. By contrast, the budget for the Department of Environment and Climate Change was only \$1.5 billion. Last year, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute ranked Canada 16th highest in the world for military spending.



Under the government's defence policy, *Strong Secure Engaged*, over \$553 billion will be spent on the military over the next twenty years to maintain "high-end warfighting." According to the defence policy update, *Our North Strong and Free*, the federal government will add an additional \$73 billion to DND.

However, the federal government's investment for the *Pan-Canadian Framework for Clean Growth and Climate Change* is only \$132 billion over 11 years.

The government's updated climate program, *A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy*, adds only \$15 billion for public investment and \$6 billion for clean infrastructure. Yet, this pales in comparison to the government's planned purchase of new fighter jets for \$19 billion and new warships for \$77 billion. Moreover, the federal government is investing \$38.6 billion to modernize NORAD that will lead to the greater militarization of the fragile Arctic environment, the fastest warming region in Canada.

Worse still, Canada has failed to adequately invest in climate finance to help developing countries adapt to the climate crisis. The federal government's climate finance commitment of \$5 billion over the next five years is equivalent to the price tag for Canada's new armed drones.

The CF-18 fighter jet consumes 4,626 litres of fuel per flying hour and has an operating cost of \$800 per flying hour.

The F-35 fighter jet burns 5,600 litres of fuel (1,480 gallons) and costs \$48,000 CAD per flying hour. This is 3X more than what an average car consumes in a year.

Canada's new investment of \$19 billion for fossil fuel-powered F-35 warplanes and \$3 billion aerial refuelers will cause carbon lock-in for three decades.

EXEMPTION FOR THE NATIONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY (NSS) FLEET

The majority of military emissions are exempt from the national reduction plan. Canada's plan to reduce GHG emissions by 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2030 and to achieve net-zero by 2050 does not apply to the National Safety and Security (NSS) fleet, which is mostly military vehicles. DND's 2017 *Defence Energy and Environmental Strategy* stated: "Given the unpredictable changes in operational tempo, the federal reduction target will not include emissions from military activities and operations." Moreover, DND

has no public plan to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

How many trees will the federal government have to plant to offset emissions from its new fighter jets that will be used to bomb other countries?

CANADA'S MILITARY IS FOR COMBAT NOT PEACEKEEPING AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

DND is the largest employer in the federal government with 90,000 personnel, but it is a highly patriarchal institution of state-sanctioned violence. The military is comprised of 84% men and 16% women. The major services of the military are the army, navy, air force and Joint Task Force 2 (JTF2) special forces. Over the past twenty years, the Canadian military has been engaged in a brutal war in Afghanistan and in the destructive bombing of Libya, Syria and Iraq. According to the latest United Nations Peacekeeping statistics, Canada is ranked very low at #73 in the world with only 27 soldiers wearing the UN blue helmet. The Canadian military is a force for combat not for peacekeeping and climate protection. To prevent and prepare for climate-induced natural disasters, Canada should invest in natural defence not national defence: renewable technologies, cooling stations, water conservation, forest firefighters, water bombers sustainable agriculture, public transit, health care and the Red Cross. Canadians don't need combat-trained soldiers to help with natural disasters, they need investment in non-militarized first responders, climate adaption and community resilience.

DECARBONIZATION IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT DEMILITARIZATION

Canada needs to demilitarize to decarbonize. The federal government must reduce and re-allocate military spending to the climate emergency and the poverty crisis. The government must not buy new expensive, environmentally-destructive weapons systems and instead invest in green jobs and a just transition. Peace and nonviolence are crucial to climate justice and gender-responsive climate action.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) Canada is a membership-led organization committed to a feminist peace, social justice, and gender equality. We oppose and challenge patriarchy, injustice, militarism and war. We take action for transformative change. WILPF Canada participates in the Canada-Wide Peace and Justice Network, the Women, Peace and Security Network-Canada, the No Fighter Jets Coalition and the Global Women United for Peace Against NATO. WILPF Canada is a national section of WILPF international, which is the world's longest standing women peace organization founded in 1915. WILPF International has the *Reaching Critical Will* disarmament program, the *Environment Working Group*, and the *Peace-Women* program to monitor the UN Security Council's agenda on Women, Peace and Security. We welcome new members.



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#WILPF #NoFighterJets
#NoToNATO #GroundTheF35
#NoWarNoWarming #ClimatePeace

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