

**Trans Mountain pipeline expansion (TMX)
and Trudeau's national climate plan:
is the *Grand Bargain* workable?**

by Andrew Conradi, ofs (former National JPIC Animator)

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau maintains that the Kinder Morgan TMX was the price Canada has to pay for his Government's climate plan based on a carbon tax; in other words his position is that we need both. Trudeau's Liberals have staked much of their legacy on forging a grand bargain on resources.

What is the *Grand Bargain*'s national climate change plan?

In 2016, Trudeau put together a climate change agreement with all the provinces - minus Saskatchewan - that aimed at lowering the country's carbon footprint.

The national plan laid out guidelines for how provinces can reach the goals, such as implementing a carbon tax with prices starting at C\$10 a tonne and increasing to \$50 a tonne by 2022.

At present British Columbia has a carbon tax of \$35 a tonne. Alberta has one at \$30 a tonne and Quebec has a cap-and-trade system. Ontario had a cap-and-trade system but Doug Ford's PCs cancelled its cap-and-trade and renewable energy contracts. At time of writing (in this 2018 Season of Caring for Creation!) that means that Saskatchewan, Ontario, and now Alberta (after the 30 August 2018 Federal Court of Appeal ruling), are *not* supporting the *Grand Bargain* plan.

Trudeau's plan met with opposition from both those who oppose the pipeline and those who oppose the tax.

The Federal Court of Appeal (which was only one of more than a dozen outstanding legal challenges) ruled 30 August 2018 that the regulatory review (the National Energy Board) of the pipeline expansion was "impermissibly flawed" because it excluded project-related tanker traffic. In addition the court said Canada "fell well short of the minimum requirements imposed by the case law of the Supreme Court" at the last stage of the consultations with indigenous people. The Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh FNs led the Protect the Inlet indigenous and people-powered movements in the fight against TMX. (N.B. over 40 FNs do support the pipeline but a majority do not).

If not effectively stopping construction the ruling has definitively delayed it. Finance Minister Bill Morneau, speaking after the ruling, said the government remains committed to getting the pipeline built, arguing it's needed to diversify exports and ease the price discount that comes from being so reliant on the U.S. market. "We are going to be here as long as it takes to make sure the project gets done," Morneau said. He declined to comment on how much of a delay the court ruling would cause. Morneau had no immediate answer on whether Ottawa would appeal the decision to the Supreme Court of Canada or adhere to its finding and begin consultations and re-examine the effects of tanker traffic, which could involve new regulatory hearings hence delay.

It is worth noting that after Alberta Premier Notley announced the province was leaving the national climate change strategy, because of the Federal Court of Appeal ruling, she also said Alberta will still keep its provincial climate plan, including its current carbon tax of \$30 a tonne, which was implemented before Trudeau imposed a national price.

Where do Canadian Secular Franciscan stand on these issues? All over the place!

We all agree jobs are crucial and that the future generations' livelihoods and environment are at stake but we do not agree on how this can best be achieved or how quickly.

First we can say that Pope Francis in his 2015 *Laudato Si'* (n 165) wrote: "*We know that technology based on the use of highly polluting fossil fuels – especially coal, but also oil and, to a lesser degree, gas – needs to be progressively replaced without delay.*"

This calls into question the impact on the global climate of tripling Canadian oil sands bitumen exports and to lowering Canada's carbon footprint to which Canada is committed by the 2016 Paris Agreement. This is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, dealing with greenhouse-gas-emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance, starting in the year 2020 by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Do climate leaders buy an existing pipeline and then build a twin pipeline costing \$9.3B or do they invest the money instead in alternative energy infrastructure which is coming anyway and which will create jobs? And do they continue to pay subsidies to the Canadian fossil fuel industry which the following report puts at \$3.3B per year?

<https://www.iisd.org/faq/unpacking-canadas-fossil-fuel-subsidies/>

Other questions:

Jobs: how many jobs would the construction create and then how many would remain to operate/maintain it. The jobs in building, according to Kinder Morgan's own evidence, is 2,500 jobs a year for two years. And then it's 90 permanent jobs.

<https://westview-heights.com/blogs/what-is-the-truth-on-the-jobs-impact-from-kinder-morgans-pipeline-expansion/>

<https://www.corporatemapping.ca/kinder-morgan-costs-and-benefits-unbalanced-not-in-the-national-interest/>

Environmental Safety: Would the oil spill safety measures be adequate? How would they be monitored and who would pay? N.B. at the present time in Alberta bankrupt companies' leaking abandoned oil wells have to be cleaned up at taxpayer expense. And there's more: e.g. despite turning a \$2 billion profit in 2017, Canadian Natural Resources Limited (CNRL) which owns the most inactive oil and gas wells in Alberta — roughly 15,000 — has no plans or funds set aside to clean them up.

What you can do is sign this petition to make polluters pay:

<https://take.theleap.org/page/29740/subscribe/1?ea.url.id=1500894&forwarded=true>

Here is something to consider: “The next 10-15 years are a unique ‘use it or lose it’ moment in economic history. We expect to invest about US\$90 trillion in infrastructure to 2030, more than the total current stock. Ensuring that this infrastructure is sustainable will be a critical determinant of future growth and prosperity. The next 10-15 years are also essential in terms of climate: unless we make a decisive shift, by 2030 we will pass the point by which we can keep global average temperature rise to well below 2°C. We know that we are grossly under-estimating the benefits of this new growth story. Current economic models are deeply inadequate in capturing the opportunities of such a transformational shift, or the grave dangers of climate inaction.”

Source: <https://newclimateeconomy.report/2018/>