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January 10, 2020

File Number: 6000-30

Via Email: ClimateReadyBC@gov.bc.ca

The Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Room 112 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Heyman:

Re: Input to Help B.C. Prepare for Climate Change

Please accept this letter as part of the Islands Trust's contribution to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change's call for input into developing a new strategy that will better prepare B.C. communities for the impacts of climate change.

On March 25th, 2019, the Islands Trust Council declared a climate emergency. (<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/media/347410/2019-09-it-climatechageemergencydeclaredfinal.pdf>).

The declaration is rooted in deep concern for the future of the islands and waters of the Salish Sea. Climate change in the Salish Sea can be seen through more extreme and unpredictable weather patterns, sea level rise, increasingly acidic oceans, and drier summers characterized by smoke-filled air due to forest-fires in nearby jurisdictions. These shifting aspects of the environment have contributed to seaside erosion, poor air quality, reduced water supply, saltwater intrusion, power outages, trees dying and being uprooted, changes in growing and harvesting seasons and other changes directly influencing the natural environment and the lives of Island residents.

With respect to the natural environment, we are deeply concerned about increasing pressures on species at risk. The loss of habitat and migration of species at risk to new changing environments will likely create greater loss of those listed species and add many more flora, fauna, marine species and terrestrial wildlife to the already significant list of lost species and species at risk.

The Islands Trust is playing an important role in climate mitigation for the Province and is turning our mind toward strengthening our climate change resilience. Through the Islands Trust Conservancy, we are protecting forest contributing to the sequestration of 190,506 tonnes of carbon per year, which equates to emissions from 40,240 passenger vehicles per year. On the adaptation side, water sustainability is a big challenge for the Islands Trust. We are currently engaged in a study of the water quantity and quality on a number of islands in an effort to make more informed land use decisions around water collection, storage, and use.

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Preserving **Island** communities, culture and environment

Bowen Denman Hornby Gabriola Galiano Gambier Lasqueti Mayne North Pender Salt Spring Saturna South Pender Thetis

There is only so much we can do on our own. We need the Province to:

Provide data. We need help collecting the data needed to effectively assess our adaptation needs over time. This could involve the Province providing us with access to updated data, such as sea level rise mapping, or supporting us to develop our own data sets.

Provide tools to help us understand our risks and vulnerabilities and how to address them. An easy to use risk and vulnerability assessment tool could help individual islands, and the Islands Trust as a whole, develop a clearer sense of where to focus climate adaptation efforts. An updated online reference guide to planning processes and case studies would enhance the ability to address risks and vulnerabilities.

Create funding programs. While addressing the climate emergency is becoming top of mind for the Islands Trust it will require us to go above and beyond our day to day business. We need funding to help us effectively gather and update data, undertake risk and vulnerability assessments and integrate adaptation strategies into our policies and regulations. It would be beneficial if some of this funding could be directed at solutions-centered work emerging from communities themselves.

Provide training for staff and elected officials. Regionally-focused training can help orient both staff and elected officials to the challenges we are faced with and the opportunities that exist to address these challenges. We would like to learn from other rural, coastal jurisdictions that face similar challenges. Training could be both web-based and in person.

Integrate Indigenous knowledge into climate action. The Islands Trust, through its Reconciliation Declaration and local trust committees' standing resolutions on First Nations Engagement, has committed to the implementation of UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action. This commitment means that we are working to strengthen understanding and collaborate with Indigenous community and First Nations governments to integrate our commitment to "preserve and protect" the Trust Area with these guiding principles. We expect the Province to support these efforts.

Take an integrated climate change resilience approach to addressing the climate emergency. The Islands Trust will continue climate mitigation efforts while addressing climate impacts. We encourage the Province to strengthen mitigation support for local government and build on existing greenhouse gas reduction programs while providing new programs, funding and training to address adaptation.

Take a leadership role in convening annual intergovernmental forums. These forums could be designed to enable elected officials and their staff to work through emerging climate change related issues in local contexts. Such regionally organized secretariats could provide a way to be proactive about an integrated climate change resilience approach.

Ten years have passed since the Province published its first adaptation strategy "Preparing for Climate Change". It appears that very little has been done to support the visions of: building a foundation of knowledge and tools; making adaptation a core part of provincial business; or assessing risks and implementing priority adaptation actions in key climate sensitive sectors. Addressing climate change needs to be done collaboratively and in an integrated way. The Islands Trust looks forward to working with the Province to strengthen our collective climate resilience.

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The Honourable George Heyman
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Thank you for considering our recommendations.

Sincerely,



Peter Luckham
Chair, Islands Trust Council
pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca

cc: BOKÉCEN (Pauquachin) First Nation
Cowichan Tribes
Halalt First Nation
Homalco First Nation
Klahoose First Nation
K'ómoks First Nation
Lake Cowichan First Nation
Lekwungen (Songhees) Nation
Lyackson First Nation
MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat) Nation
Penelakut Tribe
Qualicum First Nation
Scia'new (Beecher Bay) First Nation
SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nation
shíshálh First Nation
Snuneymuxw First Nation
Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation
Snaw-naw-as (Nanoose) First Nation
SĀÁUTW (Tsawout) First Nation
Stz'uminus First Nation

SXIMEŁEŁ (Esquimalt) Nation
Tla'amin (Sliammon) Nation
Tsawwassen First Nation
Tsleil-Waututh Nation
T'Sou-ke Nation
Wei Wai Kum (Campbell River) First Nation
We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge) First Nation
WJOLEŁP (Tsartlip) First Nation
WŚIKEM (Tseycum) First Nation
x^wməθk^wəyəm Musqueam
First Nations Leadership Council
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group
Laich-kwil-tach Treaty Society
Nanwakolas Council
Naut'sa mawt Tribal
Te'mexw Treaty Association
Bowen Island Municipal Council
Islands Trust Council
Islands Trust website