

## The Obliteration of Canada's Boondocks

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There have been extreme weather occurrences in Canada for decades. However, in the last 20 years, melting glaciers, forest fires and tremendous floods have happened even more often. In the four different main regions of Canada, namely Atlantic Canada, Central Canada, the West and the North, the impacts of climate change vary. Canada's climate is heating twice as fast as any other country in the world. The North's situation is even more alarming. There, the climate is heating three times as fast as anywhere else. Climate change results in the melting of huge quantities of sea ice and glaciers. Especially, Central Canada and the North are affected by the melting. In the West, the rising temperatures increase the risk of wildfires. Atlantic Canada faces an increase in floods, as the wave season will become stronger and stronger over time. Also, the permafrost is affected by the changes in temperature, as it is thawing vastly (cf. Connolly, 2019).

There is one more region, the prairie provinces, which this essay will focus on mainly. "(In Canada) we are looking at about 6.4C degrees of warming this century, which isn't much less than one degree per decade, which is just a terrifying rate of warming," (Qualman quoted in Jackson, 2021). With this forecast, Canada's agricultural sector will have to endure huge losses, droughts and more. If no steps are taken immediately, climate change will have a devastating effect on the Canadian prairies. Apparently, the prairies will not be farmable in the nearer future due to the fast increase in temperature. As stated by the federal government, Canada's agricultural sector accounted for more than seven percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018. It is also a sector with a huge quantity of jobs, namely 2.3 million in 2018. Also, the largest farming areas are located in the prairies, which is another shocking fact. If the prairies become infertile, Canada's economy will suffer from terrible losses, but the economy is not the only thing that will have to bear forfeitures (cf. Jackson, 2021). The wildlife is in great danger. Especially bison, coyotes, whooping cranes, bighorn sheep, the eastern bluebird, the common loon and many others are

endangered. There have always been extreme temperatures, down to  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the winter and up to  $40^{\circ}\text{C}$  in the summer. But due to climate change, in both seasons, the temperatures will be even more devastating in the future. Not only the temperature, but also the weather will become increasingly disastrous in the following decades (cf. The Royal Canadian Geographic Society, 2014).

Oil and gas production in Canada has been an enormous problem for quite a long time. Oil and gas, of course, is not environmentally friendly at all. The production of those two fossil fuels has several negative effects on the environment. Firstly, the oil pumps themselves affect the country and its wildlife drastically. The habitats of many species were and are still destroyed for the valuable commodities, which results in the extinction of many of these species. Also fracking (hydraulic fracturing) towers, which are commonly used to get the gas out of the ground, are extremely destructive. Often, underground water is strongly polluted by the chemicals that are pumped into the ground and the gas itself. The soil is often made infertile by fracking as well. Secondly, the utilisation of oil and gas is supremely harmful to the environment. The air is strongly polluted when burning fossil fuels, climate change is the result of that. Nevertheless, the Canadian government is still using billions of tax dollars to support oil and gas production. They want to be called “climate leaders”, although they still meet with oil and gas lobbyists and support them where they can. (cf. *Canada's Oil and Gas Challenge*, n.d.)

I personally think it is a shame that all these beautiful animals and plants are still being killed for no other reason than money. We have arrived in the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but a lot of people still seem to deny the problem of climate change. How can a government accept and even support such people and why do the taxpayers have to pay for fossil fuel production that destroys their own country? I simply do not get the logic behind all of that. Profit is more important than the future of our following generations. Capitalism has sealed this world's fate. Avarice is polluting people's brains and money blurs their vision. People seem to not care about anything as soon as they can make profit. It all appears to be very absurd, as a lot of jobs and money will be lost due to climate change, but money is all people care about. What meaning does our existence have if we destroy our own habitats? However, I must confess that I did not know how bad the situation in Canada really is. It is even worse than in the rest of the world, which I would have never thought. When I think about Canada, astonishing wildlife, a rich culture and beautiful landscapes come to my mind. Or rather, came to my mind, because I have a very different view about things now.

The situation in Canada is extreme and very alarming. Wildlife is dying at an alarming rate, extreme weather is becoming normality, the permafrost, glaciers and ice caps are thawing faster than ever. As mentioned, it is all mainly the government's fault, as it still continues to support oil and gas producers, who destroy the habitats of animals, pollute the water, air and the environment in general. Climate change is the result of this. Through it, Canada's prairies and all other Canadian ecosystems are about to be destroyed. The agricultural sector

might be lost completely in the next decades, which would result in huge losses of jobs and money.

(969 words)

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