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Canada Comes Out of Fossil Retirement to Take Home a Surprise Second Rio Fossil - Recognized for gutting the text in Rio and rolling back environmental regulations at home

Canada was awarded the second ever Rio Fossil of the Day today in a surprise move that brought them out of Fossil of the Day retirement with a real bang. The combined impact of their moves to delete and undermine many key pieces of the Rio texts, while pushing through a budget bill that guts environmental and climate policies at home, has earned them a top spot once again.

Today’s Rio Fossil was chosen through a vote by representatives of hundreds of global NGOs and youth based on Canada’s opposition to funding for a Green Economy, their obstruction of key initiatives to protect oceans and sustainable fisheries, their constant watering down of strong commitments on the phase out of Fossil Fuel Subsidies, and their request to remove the recognition of Common But Differentiated Responsibility in the Rio text.

The Fossil presentation text read as follows:

This evening’s recipient of the Rio Fossil may come as a surprise to some of you. That’s because at the UNFCCC negotiations in Durban last December, the international community gave Canada a lifetime achievement award, vowing never again to waste a fossil on a country that has made itself irrelevant when it comes to combating climate change.

But just when we think Canada has hit the bottom of the barrel, they always seem to find more bitumen – so to speak – moving from conventional forms of obstruction to dirtier, darker and more intensive forms.

(over)
Yesterday Canadian negotiators continued weakening the language around fossil fuel subsidies along with oceans and fisheries, coming out in favour of continuing billions in handouts to big polluters and against protecting the high seas, the low seas, and any other seas. They also hit the delete button on green economy funding and stayed true to form calling for removal the principle of common but differentiated responsibility…sorry – what they consider to be “guilt payments” to the global south…Not content just being a perpetual thorn in the side of progress here in Rio, the Government surprised us all by flipping the proverbial bird to nature. They turned back the clock on decades of environmental regulations, protections, review processes, most things related to protecting the climate, and generally anything green and or nature-related by pushing through a 400 page budget bill that guts Canada’s environmental review and regulatory processes.

For coming out of retirement with a bigger bang than any of us could have imagined, CANADA this FOSSIL is truly for you…you have earned it!!

The Rio Fossil was presented at a mock award ceremony at the RioCentro space where Canada “cut out” environmental protections. This Fossil of the Day is another in a long history of Fossil Awards for Canada, the all-time champion who has taken home more fossils at United Nations climate talks than any other nation.

“At home and here in Rio, Canada has really earned this Fossil award for undermining a just and sustainable future,” said Amara Possian, a young woman from Canada who accepted the award. “Canada had to go pretty far to get back on this list, and they’ve managed to do it by fighting against the bare minimum of commitments, like ending $1.4 billion in handouts to the fossil fuel industry.”

The Rio Fossil Awards will be presented daily throughout the negotiations highlighting the country or countries who do the least to support progress (or the most to block it) on issues relevant to climate change, such as energy, forests, and the green economy.

About CAN: The Climate Action Network (CAN) is a worldwide network of over 700 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels. www.climatenetwork.org
About the Fossils: The Fossil of the Day awards were first presented at the climate talks in 1999, in Bonn, initiated by the German NGO Forum. During United Nations climate change negotiations (www.unfccc.int), members of the Climate Action Network (CAN), vote for countries judged to have done their 'best' to block progress in the negotiations in the last days of talks. This tradition now continues at the Rio+20 Summit.

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