

ecojustice



GREENPEACE



October 29, 2024

Hon. Karina Gould
Leader of the Government in the House of Commons

Hon. Andrew Scheer
House leader of the official opposition

Mr. Alain Therrien
House leader of the Bloc Québécois

Mr. Peter Julien
House leader of the NDP

House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development

Dear House Leaders and Members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development,

Re. Bill C-73, Nature Accountability Act

We are deeply concerned that *Bill C-73, An Act respecting transparency and accountability in relation to certain commitments Canada has made under the Convention on Biological Diversity*, has not progressed since its introduction in the House of Commons on June 13, 2024. We appeal to you to allow the second reading debate on Bill C-73 to proceed at the earliest opportunity, and to refer the bill to committee for study this fall.

We further urge the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development to initiate a pre-study of the bill and amendments necessary to strengthen it. This would help make up for lost time and keep the door open for the bill to be strengthened and passed in the House of Commons before the winter recess.

Our organizations have long advocated for a legislative framework, parallel to the Net Zero Emissions Accountability Act, to provide accountability for progress towards meeting Canada's 2030 nature commitments under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by requiring robust reporting and complimentary domestic targets. While we welcomed introduction of Bill C-73 in June, amendments are needed to strengthen its accountability mechanisms and ensure the legislation delivers on its promise. The legislation must also recognize and respect Indigenous Peoples' rights to their lands and waters, and to govern and manage traditional territories in accordance with their knowledge and laws. We call on all parties to support moving this important legislation to committee where amendments can be considered.

This week, the Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP16) is taking place in Cali, Columbia. At COP 16, governments are tasked with reviewing the state of implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework agreed to at COP 15 in Montreal two years ago. We are convinced that accountability legislation will be key to ensuring successful implementation of Canada's commitments under the framework. Parliament has the opportunity to heed the call of COP 16 and the imperative to address the global biodiversity crisis by advancing Bill C-73.

People in Canada across the political spectrum share an appreciation for nature, and for the democratic principles of transparency and accountability. Close to 90,000 people in Canada have signed Greenpeace's [petition](#) calling for a strong nature law. Please don't let politics get in the way of establishing an accountability framework for Canada's nature commitments. We urge you to make time on the legislative agenda for the second reading debate of Bill C-73 and refer it to committee as soon as possible.

Ecojustice
David Suzuki Foundation
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)
The ChariTree Foundation
East Coast Environmental Law
Environmental Defence
Greenpeace Canada
Nature Canada
SeaBlue Canada
WWF-Canada

cc. *Hon. Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change*