

# ECONEWS

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Promoting the Vision of a Sustainable Vancouver Island

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## VOTE FOR THE EARTH – NOT HARPER

I love this Planet. I love the whole Universe, from the distant stars to the tree frogs that share my home. It gave me life: what more can I say?

I love the fact that I am the amazed recipient of 3.5 billion years of evolution, making me cousin to every living thing on the Planet. I live in awe of this existence, and the life that pulses through it in so many myriad ways.

It is for this reason that I - and so many - feel such distress at what we are doing. As humans we can be hardworking, creative, and brilliant, but we can also be brutal, insensitive, and astonishingly shortsighted when it comes to our ecological home.

We are trashing the world's oceans, destroying the major species that live there – all of them our cousins.

We are trashing the world's rainforests, depriving countless species of their homes. Also our cousins.

We are consuming everything we can lay our hands on, throwing the remains into holes in the ground.

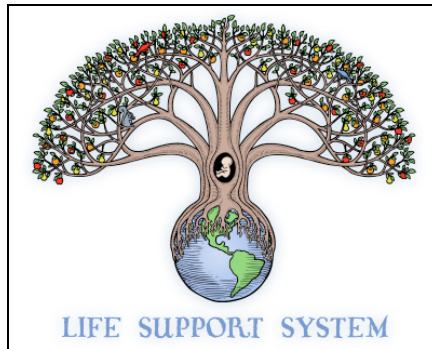
We are burning the fossilized remains of plants and creatures that lived over two hundred million years, releasing their buried carbon into the atmosphere in two hundred years, pushing Earth's temperature to a level not seen for 20 million years.

In doing so, we are causing the current and likely future meltdown of the Arctic, Greenland, West Antarctic, and Himalayan ice-sheets, raising global sea levels by maybe as much as 25 metres over the next few hundred years, and eliminating the glacier-based rivers that nourish 1.3 billion people in India, China, and south-east Asia.

Because of the rising temperature, we are also pushing a quarter of all land-based animals and plants into probable extinction - within our lifetime. These are all our cousins.

If this behaviour continues...well, we can all guess what happens next.

At the same time, we are on the cusp of the most amazing breakthrough, realizing as a species that we have more to gain by co-operating with Nature than by exploiting her, and raising our consciousness to a higher level.



All over the world, as I write these words, people are building the foundations of a sustainable, healthy, non-toxic, post-carbon world – and discovering that almost without exception, it permits our economy to continue, enabling us to overcome poverty, hunger, disease, and the many other ills we need so much to eliminate, while building hope for the future.

This is a moment of tremendous choice – and on October 14<sup>th</sup> we have the opportunity to express our choice in a democratic election for a new Canadian government.

In English-speaking Canada, we have a choice of four parties - including the Conservatives, who want to accelerate the very behaviour that got us into this hole, and have no credible plans to tackle climate change.

We also the Greens, Liberals, and NDP, whose leaders are all committed to tackle climate change, and who agree on far more than they disagree on.

For better or worse, Canada is stuck with an early version of democracy in which the party that wins the most seats rules, regardless of proportionality, or how many people oppose them.

Our party system creates loyalty, but if we allow this to govern the way we vote we will get the result we want the least: a returned Conservative government with a possible majority, against the electoral wishes of 65% of the Canadian people.

This is a truly critical moment – and there is a solution, but it means abandoning party loyalties. I am a member of the Green Party. I wrote the Party's climate platform. And I am now imploring all Green Party supporters NOT to vote Green.

With only 10% to 20% support, we are not going to elect any Greens except for Elizabeth May in Halifax, so every vote for the Greens becomes a vote for Harper.

Elizabeth May supports me in this stand: "We are too close to the edge of a global apocalypse. I'd rather have no Green seats and Stephen Harper lose, than a full caucus that stares across the floor at Stephen Harper as prime minister, because his policies are too dangerous. We sit down and say, "Who has the best chance of winning in all these ridings?" - Toronto Star, Sept 25<sup>th</sup>

Likewise, to Liberal supporters – in ridings where the NDP has a clear lead, please vote for the NDP candidate. To NDPers, I ask the same. Abandon party loyalty for the sake of our future, our planet, our children, and all our cousins on this Earth.

In Saanich/Gulf Islands, vote for Briony Penn (Liberal). In Victoria, vote for Denise Savoie (NDP). In Esquimalt June de Fuca, vote for Keith Martin (Liberal). In Nanaimo-Cowichan, vote for Jean Crowder (NDP). In Nanaimo/Alberni, vote for Zeni Maartman (NDP). In Vancouver Island North, vote for Catherine Bell (NDP).

We are close to a global apocalypse – but we are also close to a global breakthrough that will reclaim the future for young people, and the planet.

Guy Dauncey