

Libertarian Party Response: submitted by Brandon Kirby, candidate in Fredericton – Open Letter to NB Candidates, Federal Party Leaders, on Nature Protection and Climate Change

**1. What will you do to protect wetlands, mature forests, and coastal habitats, which are essential to protecting our communities from flooding, ice storms, sea level rise and other adverse effects of climate change and rising carbon emissions?**

Libertarians believe in legal reforms. Rather than a corporation being permitted to cause ecological catastrophes, having the decision-makers cut themselves a huge bonus, quitting the company, and leaving them with severe liabilities to the point where they can declare bankruptcy, we believe in individual responsibility.

Our primary reform is to eliminate public good legislation that allows for companies allowances in environmental degradation without financial penalty. This tort reform is desperately needed.

For the penalties that are imposed, rather than companies facing consequences, it is our party's belief that incorporation allows for too many protections of individual decision-makers. Similarly to health and safety reforms that took place in response to a mining collapse in Nova Scotia, rather than companies being held liable individuals can now be held criminally responsible. We believe in these legal reforms to cause not only polluting companies to pay for environmental degradation in the absence of public good protections, but also, individual decision-makers to be held personally responsible.

**2. What will you do to ensure the federal government achieves its commitment to protect 25 percent of land by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030?**

Libertarians believe in legal reforms to punish people who pollute our land, air, and water to the point where it becomes detrimental to our flourishing. We don't commit to targets that are gleefully ignored by the governments that make them and by subsequent governments; we commit to punishing ecological devastation.

My underlying concern is that governments make targets to assuage environmentally conscious voters as little more than virtue signalling, but the substance of the concerns go unaddressed. The underlying substance is eliminating public good legislation that protects polluters in the first place from judicial challenges, not commitments without consequences for failure.

**3. What will you do to ensure the federal government achieves its commitment to protect 25 percent of oceans by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030?**

Plastic producers receive these same protections. Rather than those who use very little plastics, and recycle those they do use, plastic producers and consumers share absorb the cost of plastic cleanups in our oceans. The current paradigm needs to be reversed. The current paradigm is

one where the government collects massive tax revenue and spends it on plastic cleanups in the oceans and landfills. We must leave aside the ethical ramifications of forcing those who do not use plastic to pay for plastic cleanup. There are incentives within this specific sphere to internalize the external costs of pollution to mitigate slothful plastic usage.

**4. How will you support environmental organizations to help you achieve Canada's commitments to land and ocean protection?**

We believe the volunteer hours should be a tax write-off just as charitable contributions are.

**5. What will you do to empower and incentivize New Brunswick landowners to become involved in advocating and managing for conservation and protected areas as a part of community climate response?**

Through tort reforms for failures to complete due diligence on impacts to the environment – landowners must be held accountable for their impact on those around them.

**6. What will you do to further the Canada Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly the empowerment of Indigenous Nations in environmental conservation?**

We know, scientifically, how to eliminate poverty. We saw the economic reforms in India, in China, and we can measure infant mortalities, starvation, dehydration, rates of spread of malaria, even architecture that can withstand natural disasters, and they all point to success with their reforms. Meanwhile, we saw the opposite of these capitalist measures in Venezuela and Nicaragua and saw catastrophic failures.

Too many within academia and the public sector are advocating for the policies that inculcate poverty rather than economic self-sufficiency. Thankfully there are members of the community like Chief Michael Lebourdais and Chief Willie Sellars that are using capitalism to enrich their communities, and it's paying off. They said no to failed policies, and now their bands are net economic contributors.

They demand consultation for things such as economic development of their communities while simultaneously upholding environmental protections. Consultation is not a rhetorical buzzword for them, as it has become with so many government bureaucrats. It's a matter of success or failure of their communities and their health and they've managed to transcend the current rhetoric and turn it into a positive for their communities in terms of health and the economy.

**7. What will you do to invest in Indigenous-led land-use planning in New Brunswick, including the establishment of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas and their stewardship by Indigenous Guardians, Indigenous-led efforts to restore and steward species-at-risk and habitat, and recognize and respect Indigenous knowledge in all aspects of nature conservation?**

Consultation has to be elevated above that which is a rhetorical device, meant for the purpose of career-advancement, vote-grabbing, and virtue signalling, into a legitimate practice. Consider the most catastrophic failure in economic development – diamond mining in Sierra Leone. This has led to wars and human trafficking. Elsewhere it led to the development of health care and education within communities that were properly consulted. The differentiating factor was consultation such that local communities knew how it benefited their communities. Consultation is the distinction between phenomenal success and indescribable failure. Indigenous consultation with economic development develops both economies and protects the environment.