

# News Release

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For Immediate Release

**Lung Association urges Canadian leadership at Climate Change meeting in Copenhagen**  
*Association applauds Prime Minister for his determination to act at international summit*

**(Ottawa)** – The Canadian Lung Association today urged the Canadian government to play a leadership role at the upcoming United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change meeting in Copenhagen in order to protect the health of Canada’s most vulnerable populations.

“We are pleased that Prime Minister Harper has indicated that the federal government plans to play an active role in the Copenhagen conference,” said Tony Hudson, Chair of Environmental Policy for The Lung Association, “We support the development of a new treaty to reduce greenhouse gases as a critical step to limiting the effects of climate change on human health.”

Health scientists are concerned that climate change could significantly increase risks to Canadians with chronic health problems. Higher temperatures and changed weather patterns are expected to increase concentrations of certain allergenic pollutants and smog conditions in urban centres. This could lead to a greater incidence in asthma attacks and breathing difficulties for people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Days with high temperatures and poor air quality will increase emergency room visits and mortalities in people having pre-existing respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses.

“These health consequences will have large economic and societal impacts, which will continue to increase as the world warms,” said Dr. Barbara MacKinnon, Vice Chair of Environmental Policy for The Lung Association, “It is critical for our governments to take action soon to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.”

The Lung Association also urged the Government of Canada to take a lead role in developing adaptive measures to reduce the health consequences of climate change. These measures should take into account the special vulnerabilities of developing nations and our own populations with chronic health challenges. Since the earth’s climate will continue to warm even as we take action to reduce emissions, proactive adaptation policies will be important in reducing negative health outcomes in Canada and around the world.

## **About The Lung Association**

Established in 1900, The Lung Association is one of Canada's oldest and most respected health charities, and the leading national organization for science-based information, research, education, support programs and advocacy on lung health issues.

### **For more information, media representatives may contact:**

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