

## The Canadian War on Science: A long, unexaggerated, devastating chronological indictment

Posted by Joan Russow

Wednesday, 22 May 2013 20:29 - Last Updated Thursday, 23 May 2013 07:17

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by [John Dupuis](#) on May 20, 2013

<http://scienceblogs.com/confessions/2013/05/20/the-canadian-war-on-science-a-long-unexaggerated-devastating-chronological-indictment/> This is a brief chronology of the current Conservative Canadian government's long campaign to undermine evidence-based scientific, environmental and technical decision-making. It is a government that is beholden to big business, particularly big oil, and that makes every attempt to shape public policy to that end. It is a government that fundamentally doesn't believe in science. It is a government that is more interested in keeping its corporate masters happy than in protecting the environment.

As is occasionally my habit, I have pulled together a chronology of sorts. It is a chronology of all the various cuts, insults, muzzlings and cancellations that I've been able to dig up. Each of them represents a single shot in the Canadian Conservative war on science. It should be noted that not every item in this chronology, if taken in isolation, is necessarily the end of the world. It's the accumulated evidence that is so damning.

Most of the items come from various links [I've saved over the years](#) as well as various other media articles I've dug up over the last week or so. This [series at The Huffington Post](#) has been particularly useful as has [this article at the Wasteshed Sentinal](#).

A long list of various environmental programs that the Harper government has discontinued or slashed funding to is [here](#). I haven't found individual media stories about all of them, so they aren't in the list below. If you can help me find stories about some of those programs, etc, please let me know. As well, some stories are treated multiple times, with perhaps an initial story telling the big picture or introducing a large series of cuts and later stories fleshing out details.

- Apr 2006. [One Tonne Challenge funding stopped](#)

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- Jan 2008. [Office of National Science Adviser phased out](#)
- Jan 2008. [Nuclear safety watchdog head fired for 'lack of leadership'](#);
  
- Oct 2009. [Document delivery outsourced at The Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information](#) (national science library)
- Feb 2010. [Layoffs at The Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information](#)
- Mar 2010. [Information restrictions brought in by government have severely restricted the media's access to government researchers](#)
- Jun 2010. [Statistics Canada discontinues the mandatory long form census](#)
- Mar 2011. [NRC Press privatized to Canadian Science Publishing, removing Open Access to many articles](#)
- Mar 2011. [NSERC reduces funding for basic research](#)
- Mar 2011. [Tri-Council reallocates funds from discovery to industry research](#)
- Jul 2011. [Budget cuts to Climate Change and Clean Air, Substance and Waste Management, Weather and Environmental Services, Water Resources and Internal Services, Action Plan on Clean Water, the Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan, Chemicals Management Plan, the Clean Air Agenda, the Air Quality Health Index, Species at Risk Program](#)
- Jul 2011. [NSERC Discovery Grants reduced](#)
- Oct 2011. [Canadian Environmental Network closes](#)
- Dec 2011. [Withdraw from the Kyoto Accord](#)
- Jan 2012. [Natural Resources Minister accuses foreign radical environmentalists of hijacking the system](#)
- Feb 2012. [Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Laboratory \(PEARL\) loses funding](#) (later partial reprieve)
- Feb 2012. [Closure of Kitsilano Coast Guard station](#)
- Mar 2012. [Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences closes](#)
- Mar 2012. [Gutting the Fisheries Act](#)
- Apr 2012. [Cereal Research Centre cut](#)
- Apr 2012. [Muzzling of scientists at international conferences](#)
- Apr 2012. [Repeal of Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, download to provinces](#)
- Apr 2012. [Sustainable Water Management Division cut](#)
- Apr 2012. [Transport Canada Aircraft Services cut](#)
- Apr 2012. [The Centre for Plant Health relocated](#) (later reprieve)
- Apr 2012. [Scientists monitored at polar conference](#)
- May 2012. [1000 jobs cut at Department of Fisheries and Oceans](#) (details follow)
- May 2012. [Ocean Contaminants & Marine Toxicology Program axed.](#)
- May 2012. [Centre for Offshore Oil & Gas Energy Research cut](#)
- May 2012. [Freshwater Institute cut](#)

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- May 2012. [Centre for Off-shore Oil, Gas, and Energy Research cut](#)
- May 2012. [Maurice-Lamontagne Institute cut](#)
- May 2012. [Smokestacks Emissions Monitoring Team cut](#)
- May 2012. Cuts to [NSERC Discovery, Major Resources Support and Research Tools and Instruments programs](#)
- May 2012. [Mersey Biodiversity Centre slated for closure](#)
- Jun 2012. [Eliminate Experimental Lakes Area program](#)
- Jul 2012. [Arctic Institute of North America's Kluane Research Station cut](#)
- Sep 2012. [Revamp Species-at-Risk act](#)
- Oct 2012. [DFO Habitat Management Program cut](#)
- Oct 2012. [Declining grant success rate for Post Doctoral Fellows](#)
- Nov 2012. [Bill C-45 weakens environmental laws and democracy](#) , such as [Navigable Waters Protection Act](#)
  
- Nov 2012. [Salmon research lab run by Frederick Kibenge at the Atlantic Veterinary College-University of Prince Edward Island targeted](#)
- Nov 2012. [Navigable Waters Protection Act altered to give developers more freedom to build around most Canadian rivers and lakes without obtaining permission from the federal government](#)
- Dec 2012. [Eliminating the Hazardous Materials Information Review Commission](#)
- Jan 2013. [Very long list of scientist muzzlings from Democracy Watch](#)
- Feb 2013. [Restrict how researchers can share data](#)
- Feb 2013. [Department of Fisheries & Oceans muzzles its scientists](#)
- Feb 2013. [Information commissioner investigates 'Muzzling' of federal scientists, called a threat to democracy](#)
- Feb 2013. [Prairies Regional Office: Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency closes](#)
  
- Mar 2013. [Muzzling of scientists](#)
- Mar 2013. [Experimental Lakes Area environmental research project loses funding](#)
- Mar 2013. [The government votes against public science, basic research and the free and open exchange of scientific information are essential to evidence-based policy-making](#)
  
- Mar 2013. [\\$100 million cut from Department of Fisheries & Oceans over three years](#)
  
- Mar 2013. [National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy closes](#)
- Mar 2013. [Centralizing, Slashing Federal Web Info](#)
- Mar 2013. [Quit UN anti-drought convention](#)
- Mar 2013. [Unnecessarily sabotaging ongoing research at the Experimental Lakes Area and deliberately robbing international and domestic scientist of the 2013 field season](#)
  
- Apr 2013. [Create barrier to public participation in pipeline hearings](#)
- Apr 2013. [Environment Canada name removed from its weather website, replaced with government promotional links](#)
- Apr 2013. [Closure of Department of Fisheries & Oceans libraries](#)

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- Apr 2013. [Prime Minister & cabinet take over power to dictate collective bargaining and terms for other salaries and working conditions at the CBC and three other cultural or scientific Crown corporations](#)
- Apr 2013. [Scientist at National Water Research Institute in Saskatoon muzzled](#)
- Apr 2013. [Minister blames David Suzuki, Environmental Groups To Blame For Pipeline Opposition](#)
- May 2013. [Minister of the Environment Peter Kent refuses to correct Conservative MP's crackpot views on polar bears](#)
- May 2013. [Minister of Natural Resources insults oil sands critics](#)
- May 2013. [National Research Council overhauled to do business-friendly research rather than basic science](#)
- May 2013. [Hundreds of jobs cut at Agriculture Canada](#)
- May 2013. [Agriculture Canada cuts including Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration, Semi-Arid Prairie Agricultural Research Centre and various centres for beef and dairy research](#)
- May 2013. [Free-speech report takes aim at Harper government's 'culture of secrecy'](#)

This list is no doubt incomplete. There may also be link errors or duplications.

In particular, if you have updates on any of the stories, including reversals or reprieves, I want to hear those too.

Please feel free to make suggestions and corrections in the comments or to me at [jdupuis at yorku dot ca](mailto:jdupuis@yorku.ca).