

**Coalition Climat Montréal's submission to the BAPE on the REM**  
**Think Global, Act Local**  
**Decisions in Montréal cannot be divorced from their global consequences**

Eleven years ago, in December 2005, Montréal hosted the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Climate Change Convention. Annually since 1994, this convention has brought the brightest scientific and political minds on the planet to negotiate a solution to one of our civilization's defining challenges: how to prevent rendering some of the most densely populated areas of the earth uninhabitable. The eleventh session in Montréal marked the entry into force of the fated Kyoto Protocol, which represented the best chance our species had of stemming carbon pollution and averting global catastrophe. Canada's withdrawal from the protocol helped render it ineffectual, a decision that was met with distain in Québec as the province launched its cap and trade program. Yet, our elected officials and Quebec Inc. have proposed the largest construction project in decades without conducting a comprehensive impact assessment of its climate impact.

As with the MTQ's faint attempt to render the Turcot interchange carbon neutral<sup>1</sup>, CDPQ Infra's environmental assessments have turned a blind eye to the largest sources of carbon pollution stemming from the project: the astronomical quantities of cement required, and the effective incentivization of urban sprawl.

We stand at the eleventh hour, with record global temperatures being set for the past 16 straight months<sup>2</sup>, a mere 15 years away from surpassing the 1.5°C temperature threshold<sup>3</sup>, and many climate scientists are at a loss as to how they can better convey the gravity of the data they are observing<sup>4</sup>. It is projects like the Réseau Électrique Métropolitain that have them in disbelief. In an era where greenhouse gas reductions should be a primary decision criteria in every major investment - especially those involving public funds - such an analysis is effectively non-existent.

The Coalition Climat Montréal strongly opposes CDPQ Infra's Réseau Électrique Métropolitain as it does any project that fails to comprehensively assess climate impacts of its full life cycle. Ignorance is no longer an excuse, but a pretext for wilful blindness and calous disrespect when faced with the evidence that has taken thousands of researchers decades to mount. Conclusions of the IPCC are being brushed off as not politically consequential by the promoters of this project and by the government of Québec. Instead, they have mounted an effective public relations campaign that greenwashes the project and has even the large environmental organisations reeling. They are unable to educate their membership fast enough and thus gain the moral high ground to confidently oppose a project that will serve to facilitate urban sprawl and keep the smokestacks of Québec's cement industry bellowing. CDPQ Infra has played their cards deftly, making superficial adjustments that impact the optics but not the outcomes of the project.

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<sup>1</sup> GHG Accounting: The Case of Montréal's Turcot Project <http://conf.tac-atc.ca/english/annualconference/tac2013/session14/tanguay-e.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> August 2016 Global Temperatures Set 16th Straight Monthly Record <https://weather.com/news/climate/news/august-2016-global-temperature-record>

<sup>3</sup> Concordia University Climate Clock: <http://countdown2degrees.com>

<sup>4</sup> Climate change is 'largest science communication failure in history' <http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/climate-change-science-communication-failure-1.3345524>

Projet de réseau électrique métropolitain de transport collectif

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