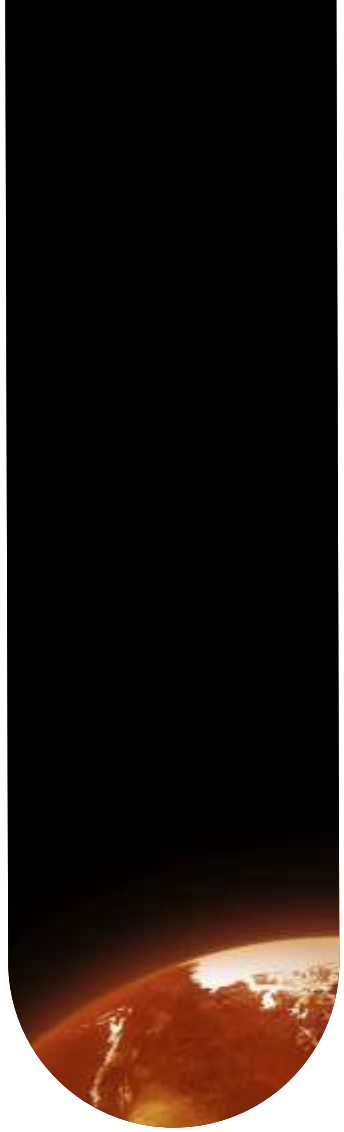
Starting to Talk: CUPE Climate Change Conversations

CUPE National Environment Committee

Presentation overview

- Why talk about climate change?
- Climate change in a nutshell
- Let’s talk solutions
- How to start the conversation



Why talk about climate change?

Climate change is the defining issue of this generation

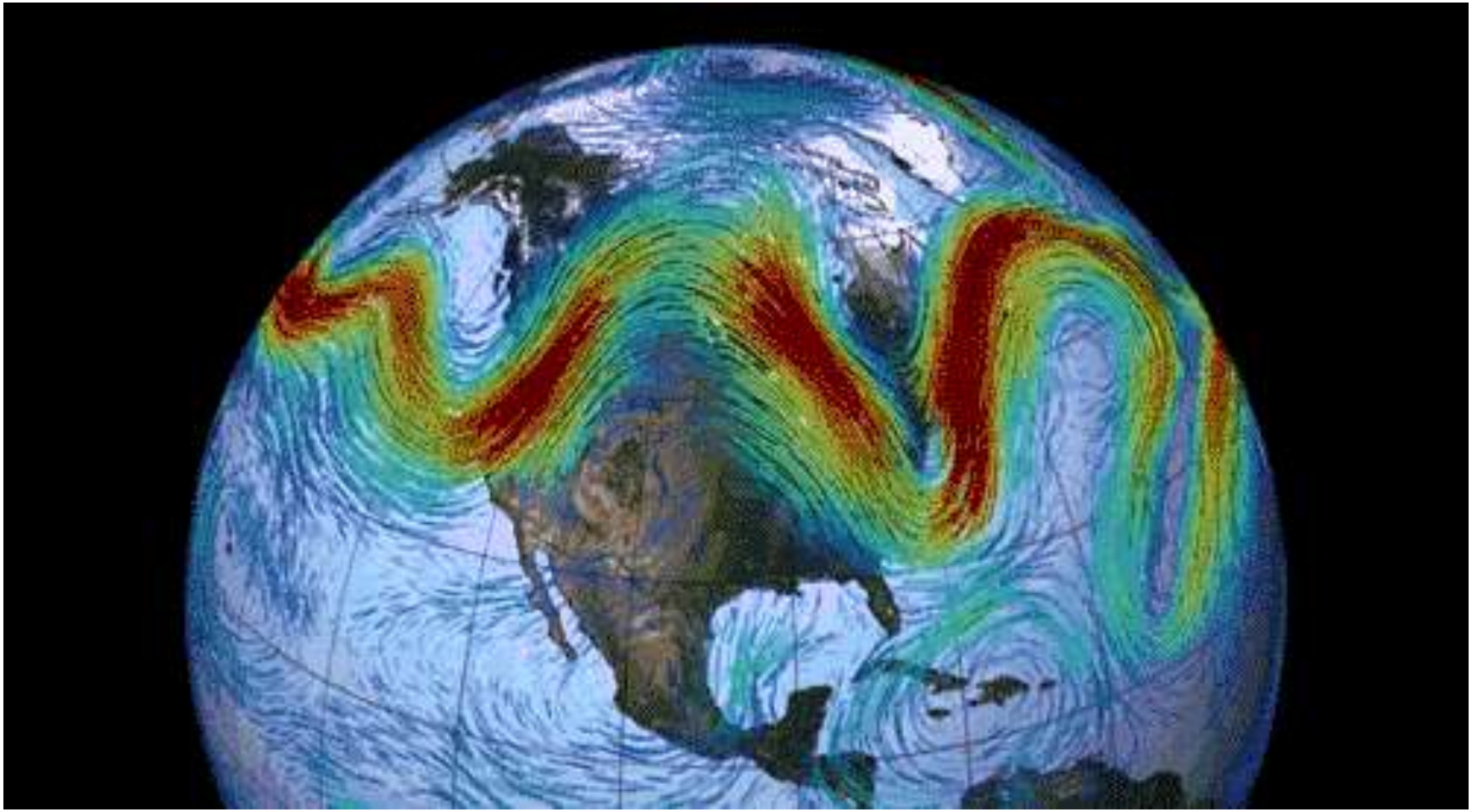
- Scientists agree that we need urgent action
- Unions must be leaders in the fight against climate change while decision makers keep ignoring the evidence

And the first step is…

- Learn about the issue
- Talk about it with colleagues and friends!
- Presenter’s story

How will it impact us?

1- wacky weather patterns



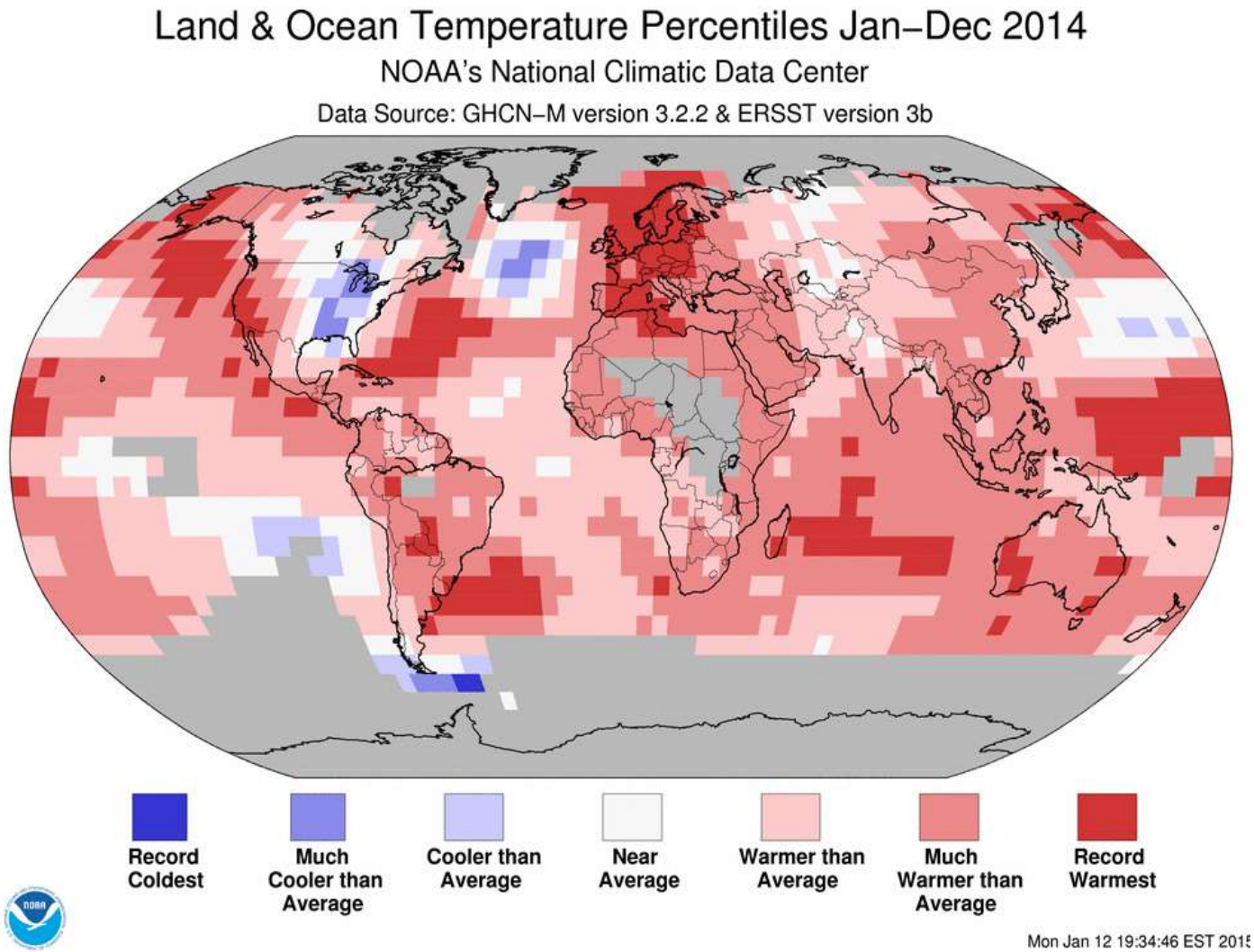
Arctic air in Southern US

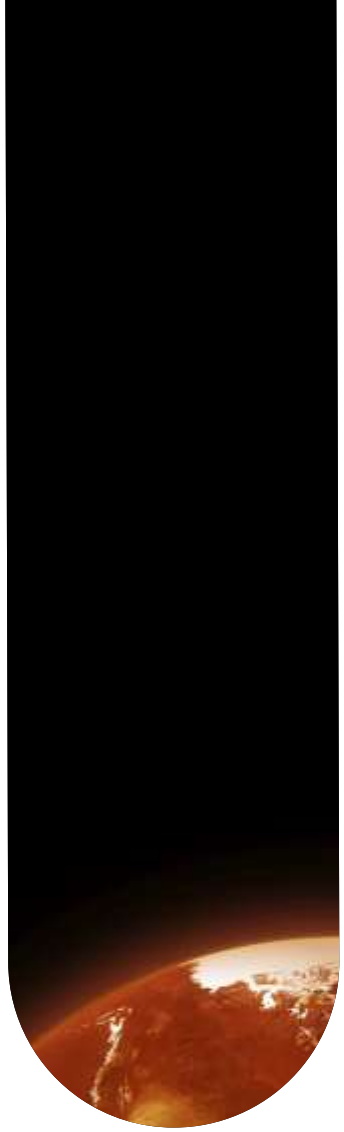
While it was really cold here…

2014 was the hottest year on record:

- 0.63^{o}C above 20th century average
- 0.27^{o}C above 1981-2010 average
- Five hottest years on record: 2014, 1998, 2013, 2010 and 2005.

Colder in Canada…warmer everywhere else





How will it impact us?

2- More extreme weather

Calgary, June 22, 2013

High River, Alberta, June 2013

Alberta Flood

Photo taken by CUPE member working on clean-up

Toronto, July 8th 2013

Time to share your stories…

- What are your thoughts on climate change?
- Why do you think it’s important to act?

Climate change around the world

Hurricane Sandy, October 2012

Climate change around the world

Manhattan, New York City

Climate change around the world

Athens, Greece, February 2013

Climate change around the world

Pakistan, August 2012

Climate change around the world

Poyang Lake, China, May 2011

Climate change around the world

Loire River, Ancenis, France

Climate change around the world

Folsom Lake, California, 2011

Climate change around the world

Folsom Lake, California, 2014

Climate change around the world

California, September 2012

Climate change around the world

Jaguari Reservoir, Sao Paulo, Brazil, 2015

Climate change around the world

Shishmaref, Alaska, 2014

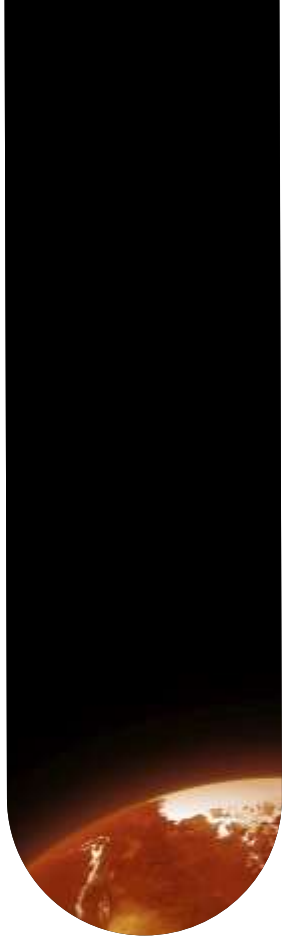
Systems vulnerable to climate

Water

Food

Global Health

What are you thinking so far?



Facts, stats, graphs & figures …

- We know the facts. Climate change is happening now and is only going to get worse.
- We're not here to argue.
- Let's look at some of the science.

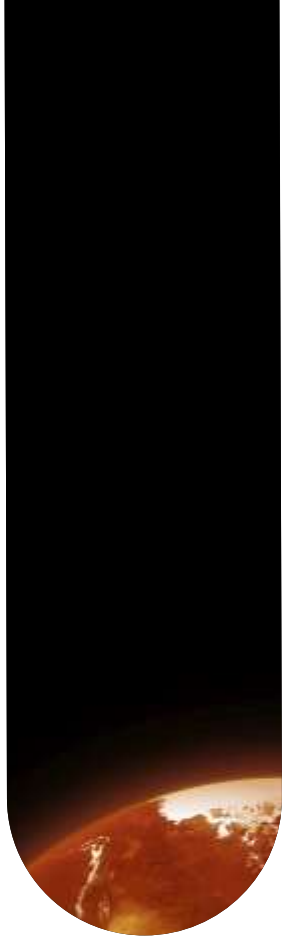
Burning Fossil Fuels Releases Greenhouse Gases into the Atmosphere

What are GHGs?

- Carbon Dioxide (CO2).
- Methane
- Water vapour

These greenhouse gases are very good at trapping the heat in the atmosphere.

Where Do Greenhouse Gases Come From?



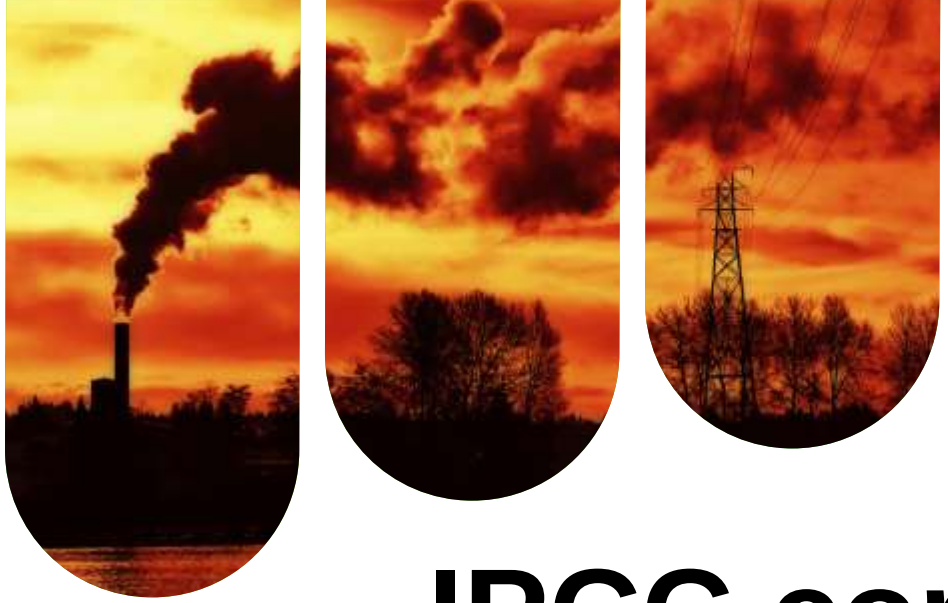
Stats & impacts:

- Average rate of global climate, water and weather disasters has more than doubled over the past ten years to **306 disasters per year.**
- These disasters cost, on average, **$131 billion per year.**
- Average global temperatures are **up 0.4°C** in just the last ten years.
- From 1992-2011, Greenland **lost 3.35 trillion tonnes of ice.**
- **39.8 billion tonnes** of CO2 were emitted in 2013, versus 24.9 billion tonnes in 1992.

The science of climate change

- The IPCC (**Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change) is leading the way**

- **Largest scientific collaboration in human history**



IPCC conclusion:

Humans are the dominant cause of Global Warming

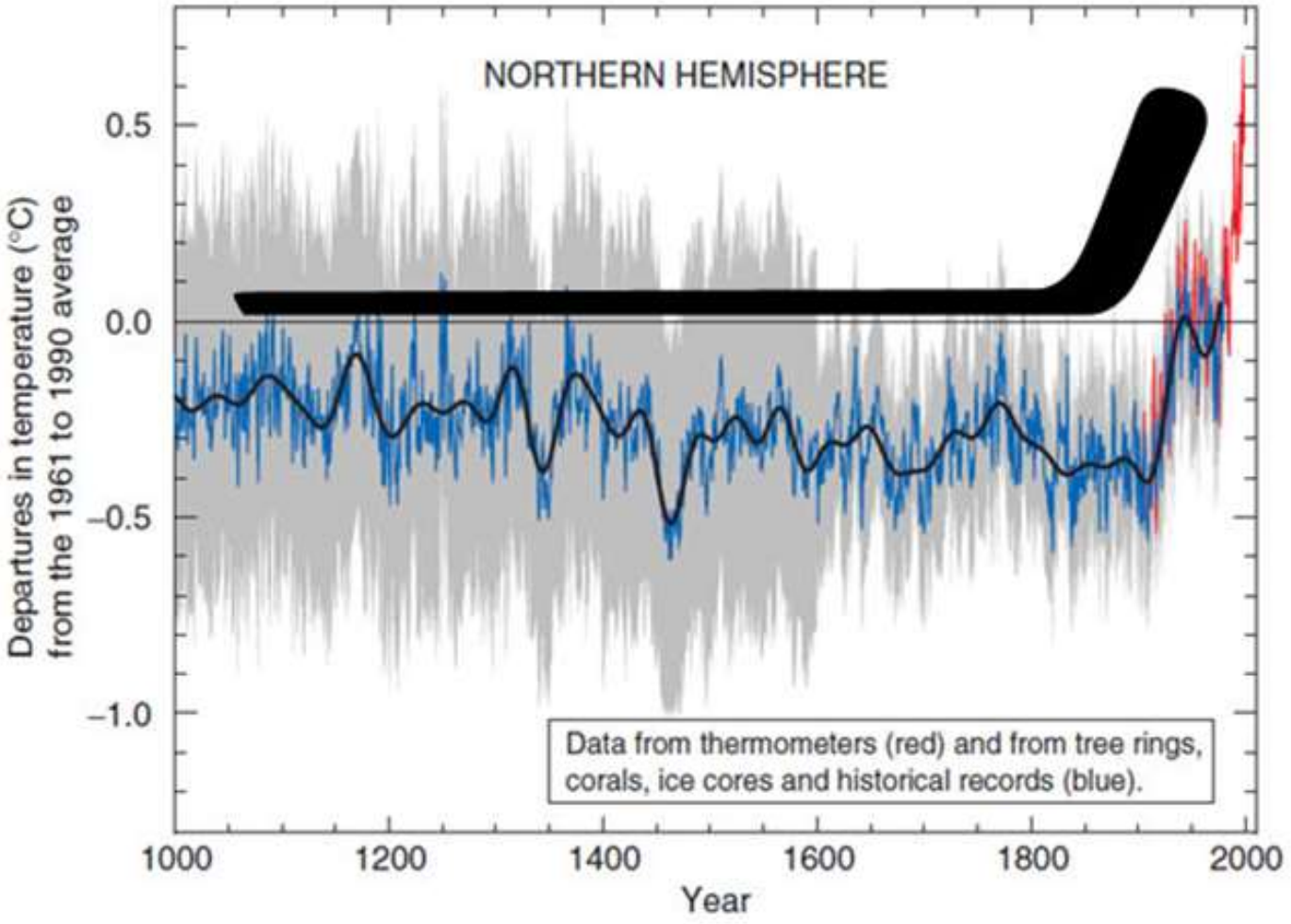
"It is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century."

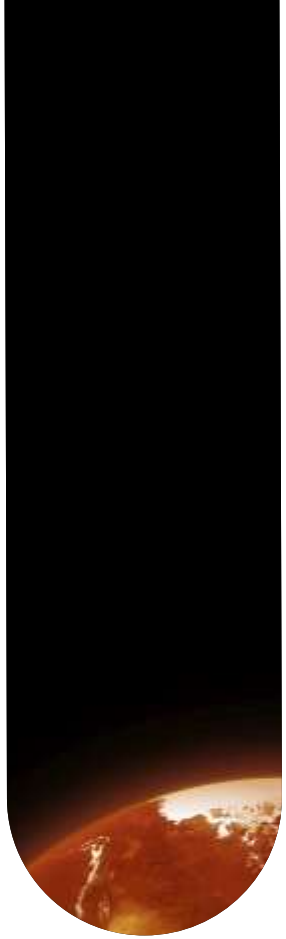
IPCC conclusion:

GHG emissions must be cut

“Continued emissions of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and changes in all components of the climate system. Limiting climate change will require substantial and sustained reductions of greenhouse gas emissions.”

Historic Fossil Fuel Emissions (the “hockey stick” graph)





This is what you call a warming trend:

2014 was the **38th consecutive year** with a global temperature above the 20th century average.

What do you think after looking at these facts and figures?

There are solutions!

- ✓Renewable energy
- ✓Jobs
- ✓Workplace environmental action
- ✓Legislation and regulation

Legislation and regulation

- Provincial
- Federal
- International agreements

In 2010, Renewable Investments Exceeded Those in Fossil Energy for the First Time

$ 157 B

$187 B

Labour activists in New York at climate march, Sept 2014

Green workplace actions:

- Environmental committees
- Workplace green audits
- Green bargaining
- Member to member conversations

What do you think about the solutions?

- What do you think about these solutions?
- Do you feel like doing anything about climate change? If so, what?
- What questions about climate change could we be asking our employers?

Remembering our purpose

- CUPE members talking to CUPE members about climate change.
- Can we talk with:
  - Other CUPE members, family, friends?
- How would you start?
- What key points would you make?

A simple pledge

Talk to three other CUPE members about climate change.

- What effect could this have?
- How would you do it?

CUPE and the climate

Want to talk more?

There are other resources here:

- The National Environment Committee.
- Your division CUPE environment committee.
- National office (mfirth@cupe.ca).