

Guide for Fossil Fuel Divestment Conversations with Financial Institutions

By the Prairie to Pine Climate Finance Task Group, the United Church of Canada

Dear friends in our Regional Council and beyond,

In the fight against climate change, it is vital that all financial institutions become aware that their members are concerned about continuing investments in the fossil industry and particularly in fossil fuel expansion (ie. building pipelines that are a huge upfront investment and will depend on many years of fossil fuel extraction to pay off investors!)

For that reason, we are hoping you will initiate a conversation with your financial institution about their priorities when it comes to investing your money. Be clear that you or your congregation will consider moving your investments away from support for fossil fuels. We provide you with some basic questions below to help guide your conversation.

Before approaching your financial institution, we encourage you to read [The United Church of Canada's Responsible Investing Guiding Principles](#) and have a discussion about what these mean for you or your congregation when it comes to the environment/climate. You may also want to familiarize yourself with [Banking on Climate Chaos](#) so you are aware of the extent of the money being poured into a variety of non-sustainable activities. Further resources are available [here, on our web page](#).

While information about banks and their investments in fossil fuels is more readily available, less is known about the various credit unions' practices. It is our hope to gather more details about the banks, and credit unions in particular, as well as to have an indication of how many churches and individuals are taking part in this action.

We invite you to contribute to the research. Here is a [PDF you can print out](#), so that you have the questions and a space for note taking in front of you and aren't relying on your screen. And, we would appreciate receiving information and your personal thoughts after the conversation. Please use the PDF and send us a photocopy or photo to prairietopine@united-church.ca, or [you can use this online form](#). This will help all of us evaluate our approach and learn as we go. Finally, we hope you might be part of an ongoing community of support and action on the questions of how financial resources hinder or help our common efforts to take climate change and climate justice seriously, for the love of God's creation. Contact the committee anytime through Lynda Trono, lyndatrono@gmail.com

Questions to ask of your financial institution

- 1. Do you have transparent reporting on Environmental, Social and Governance issues? (ESG). Can you explain? We'd like some further print or online materials to take away.**
- 2. Do you invest in the fossil fuel industry? If so, can you give us details on how and what?**
- 3. Do you invest in clean energy? Can you give us some examples? Again, materials to take away and study are appreciated.**