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Laurier conference lays out challenges for climate change meeting between Trudeau and premiers

WATERLOO - Wilfrid Laurier University will be hosting a climate change conference titled, "[Climate Choices Canada: Economics and Policy](#)" from **Feb. 18 to 20** at the Balsillie School of International Affairs (BSIA). The conference brings together policy experts and scholars from economics, politics and other academic disciplines to examine the challenges facing Ottawa and the provinces in creating a national climate change strategy following the United Nations (UN) climate change conference in Paris this past December.

"Provinces have already taken the lead on climate initiatives," said **Tracy Snoddon**, associate professor of Economics at Laurier and the conference co-organizer. "The challenge for Canada and the prime minister will be to link these various provincial programs together into a coherent, fair and effective national plan that allows Canada to meet its Paris commitments."

British Columbia's carbon tax has been in place since 2008, Quebec launched a cap-and-trade program in 2013, and Alberta introduced the Specified Gas Emitters Regulation, a regulatory approach combining both tax and permit trading elements, in 2007.

The Premiers and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will confront this challenge when they meet in the first week of March to craft a pan-Canadian strategy.

"This conference is uniquely positioned to inform these deliberations," said **Randall Wigle**, professor of Economics at Laurier and co-organizer of the event. "Our objective is to develop climate change policy approaches that recognize Canada's intergovernmental and economic realities."

Keynote speakers include **David McLaughlin**, former head of the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy and a leading public policy expert on environmental issues and frequent commentator in the national media. He will share his observations on the complexities of the current climate policy landscape, setting the stage for the conference sessions that follow. **Mark Jaccard**, internationally renowned climate change policy expert from Simon Fraser University, will discuss the key attributes of climate policy that can achieve a workable balance between policy effectiveness and political acceptability.

The conference sessions will cover key challenges and potential solutions for Ottawa and the provinces in coordinating and linking new and existing climate change policies.

To find out more, visit www.climatechoicescanada.ca.

For questions, please contact Tracy Snoddon, associate professor in Laurier's Department of Economics at 519-884-0710 ext. 2673 or tsnoddon@wlu.ca or Randall Wigle, Economics professor at 226-772-3164 or rwigle@wlu.ca.