

Blah, blah, blah



By Nate Smelle

For nearly three decades, governments around the world have been meeting annually with the alleged intention of hammering out a meaningful response to the climate crisis. Technically, according to the international environmental treaty established and signed by 154 countries at the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 every country on Earth is obligated to do everything possible to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and, prevent "dangerous anthropogenic interference with Earth's climate system."

Bringing together the world's most powerful and influential leaders to share and discuss critical scientific facts established and proven by the overwhelming majority of the world's greatest minds, should be a good reason to feel hopeful for our shared future. However, instead, with every global climate summit that comes to pass without seriously meaningful action to address the climate crisis, we squander our best chance for survival on this planet.

So far, the world leaders gathered at the 26th Conference of the Parties currently underway in Glasgow, Scotland ? a.k.a. COP26 ? seem to be content with ignoring the severity of the paramount life or death situation we will inevitably be forced to deal with.

All the right words have been said by nearly every world leader to attend these annual summits over the years. Still, for the most part, as Swedish environmentalist Greta Thunberg pointed out in her pre-COP26 speech at the Youth4Climate Summit in Milan, Italy those with the power to implement the changes that are needed seem to prefer the right words opposed to the right actions.

?There is no planet-B,? Thunberg reminded the world. ?There is no planet blah. Blah, blah, blah, blah blah blah. This is not about some expensive politically correct green act of bunny hugging, or blah, blah, blah. Build back better, blah, blah, blah. Green economy, blah, blah, blah. Net zero by 2050 blah, blah, blah. Net zero, blah, blah, blah. Climate neutral, blah blah blah. Our hopes and dreams drown in their empty words and promises. Of course we need constructive dialogue, but they've now had 30 years of blah, blah, blah, and where has that led us.?

Nailing home her point that world leaders ? including our ?progressive? Prime Minister Justin Trudeau ? are content with continuing to promote our species' suicidal tendencies, Thunberg continued, ?Over 50 per cent of all our co2 emissions have occurred since 1990, and a third since 2005. If this is what they consider to be climate action, then we don't want it. They invite cherry-picked young people to meetings like this to pretend that they are listening to us. But they are not. They are clearly not listening to us, and they never have. Just look at the numbers, look at the statistics, the emissions are still rising. The science doesn't lie!?

During his address, Prime Minister Trudeau put on the usual show, doing a mediocre job of convincing those in attendance that he genuinely cares about the climate crisis. Proving Thunberg's point, our Prime Minister offered up what everyone wants to hear.

?In Canada, there was a town called Lytton,? Trudeau told the crowd of elbow-rubbers. ?I say 'was' because on June 30 it burned to the ground. The day before the temperature had hit 49.6 degrees celsius ? the hottest ever recorded in our country. Canada is warming on average twice as quickly as the rest of the world; and in our north, it's three times quicker. The science is clear ? we must do more and faster.?

Almost every word that came out of his mouth was true. Humans have heated the planet to the point that the town of Lytton, B.C. was incinerated this past summer. Canada's climate is heating up twice as quick as the rest of the world, while the Canadian arctic is melting three times faster. He hit the nail on the head, echoing Thunberg when he noted that the science is clear, and more must be done to address the climate crisis faster.

The reason I say ?almost? every word our PM spoke was true is because he again promised meaningful action. We have heard the right words without seeing any real action long enough.

As I have said in this column a few hundred times before, if there is one valuable lesson to take away from our global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is that we can as a species collaboratively focus our attention and resources on solving a potentially catastrophic crisis.

By ignoring this global threat to our existence, we are inviting our own demise. As world-renowned environmentalist and scientist Dr. David Suzuki told the CBC earlier this year, ?The planet is not in danger. We are in danger.?

Offering up a few words of hope that could, if absorbed by the right ears, be transformed into action, he added, ?And there are hundreds of ways that we can begin to reduce our emissions.?