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CEOs see Canada taking global-leadership role on climate Reducing emissions and growing economy are not at odds

A group representing leaders of some of Canada's biggest corporations says reducing greenhouse-gas emissions and growing the economy are not at odds with each other.

The Canadian Council of Chief Executives released a declaration yesterday saying Canada should be a global leader reducing carbon and other types of gas emissions that are contributing to potentially disastrous climate change. The declaration was signed by 33 CEOs who make up the council's task force on environmental leadership.

Thomas d'Aquino, president of the council, said it's a fallacy to believe one has to choose between the economy and the environment, saying you can't improve one without the other.

"This idea that business doesn't care or all a business wants to do is blow out emissions, that's not true," d'Aquino said. "All sorts of companies have struggled to get their emissions down . . . because the more successful they are [in reducing energy usage and related costs], the more successful they're going to be as a business." Among the key points in the council's declaration was the need for a national plan of action, one that involves government, industry and consumers. The council also said that there's a technological opportunity to produce solutions that create or use energy in more environmentally sustainable ways.

"Energy is Canada's strength, and clean energy has the potential to be Canada's greatest competitive advantage," the council said. "If we make the most of this strength, Canada can become an energy and environmental superpower."

