



10 Minutes For The Planet Vancouver Shows its Green Side ©

by Pierre Vercueil

Vocabulary & pronunciation study by Catherine Balter Kendall©

Words are explained alongside the text

Stressed syllables are underlined and in bold*

Hi there and welcome back to our weekly environmental series here on EnglishWaves, Ten Minutes for the Planet. We're currently looking at the world's greenest cities by **working** our way **down** the *Economist* Intelligence Unit's Green City Index. As you'll **recall**, we **kicked off** with the Danish capital Copenhagen, **before moving on to** the canal city of Amsterdam. Last time we looked at why Stockholm takes place number 3 on the list. Today we move on to the only non-European city **to make** the top five, the Canadian beach city of Vancouver.

Canada has long **been regarded as** having the worst **climate change policies** in the industrialized world. In 2011, it refused to ratify the Kyoto Protocol on **emissions reduction targets** and has promoted the exploitation of oil from **tar sands**, which is **arguably** the most polluting **form** of oil extraction with the highest carbon dioxide emissions. However, one of the country's major cities, Vancouver has **set out** to **defy** its central government and become 100% carbon neutral.

Shortly after he was elected in 2008, Mayor Gregor Robertson set out to fundamentally **reshape** the city's economy, infrastructure, energy and transportation systems in terms of environmental sustainability. Vancouver plans to establish itself as the greenest city in the world by 2020 through a policy plan named the Greenest City Action Plan. The initiative by the city's government demonstrates economic growth and the future of its citizens depends on successfully developing renewable energy sources, public transportation systems, and **lowering** the high dependence on cars.

The 2020 plan is based on ambitious **goals** including reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 33% from 2007 levels; doubling

to work down (phrasal vb.) to go down a list of things from the top, acting on each

to recall (vb.) to remember

to kick off with (phrasal vb.) to begin with

to move on to (phrasal vb.) to go on to the next subject or item

to make (vb.) to succeed in doing sth.

to be regarded as (exp.) to be considered as

climate change policy (exp.) actions by governments to reduce carbon emissions

emissions reduction targets (exp.) objectives to reduce carbon emissions

tar sands (n.) deposits of sand impregnated with bitumen

arguably (adv.) possibly (considering all the evidence)

to set out (phrasal vb.) to start trying to do sth.

to defy (vb.) to oppose

to reshape (vb.) to reform, to change

to lower (vb.) to reduce

goal (n.) an objective

the number of 'green jobs'; requiring that **all** new buildings be carbon neutral; cutting **per capita water consumption** by 33% from 2006 levels; and reducing waste going to **landfills** by half from 2008 levels. Vancouver **also** plans to give its residents the cleanest air in the world. **So far** the city has **made** impressive **strides towards reaching these goals**. For example, Vancouver **currently** generates 93% of its electricity from renewable **sources**.

Perhaps most significantly is the way in which the city has been **lauded** for the implementation of the greenest building code in North America. This has been **a bold move** in the **tough** global economic climate in which governments have been trying to avoid regulations that might potentially **deter** investment in infrastructure. Similarly, Vancouver has **shifted** its own investment towards **walking**, cycling and transit infrastructure instead of building new roads.

In late 2015 Vancouver was **granted** the C40 Cities Award during the COP21 summit in recognition of the scope and scale of the city's Greenest Action Plan, proving that it truly **deserves** its **spot** in the top five. Join us again next time when we continue our look at the world's greenest cities. Stay tuned to Ten Minutes for the Planet on EnglishWaves.

per capita (Latin exp.) by person

consumption (n.) use

landfill (n.) large hole where waste is buried

so far (exp.) up to the present date

to make strides (exp.) to make progress

stride (n.) a (large) step forward

to reach a goal (exp.) to succeed in attaining one's objectives

currently (adv.) at the moment, now

to laud (vb.) to praise, congratulate

a bold move (exp.) an ambitious measure

tough (adj.) difficult

to deter (vb.) to discourage

to shift (vb.) to move, change

to grant (vb.) to give

to deserve (vb.) to merit

spot (n.) position

***Tip!**

The underlined letters in the following words are all pronounced like "or" (rhymes with "four" and "more")

recall, before, form, shortly, all, water, also, towards, sources, lauded, wa(l)king,