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# A PEOPLE'S PLAN

Benchmarks for Evaluating Canada's International Climate Commitments Ahead of 2021 Summit

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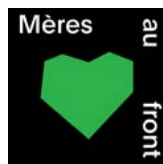
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OFFICIAL ENDORSERS







## Summary

The following report details expectations from Climate Action Network-Réseau action climat (CAN-Rac) Canada and its members concerning Canada's nationally determined contribution under the Paris Agreement. This report was completed following an extensive consultation process with CAN-Rac's extensive network of 130 diverse member organizations, many of whom are listed as official endorsers.

Canada has committed to communicate an enhanced nationally determined contribution (NDC) before the UN Climate Conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November of 2021. The report's main conclusion is that Canada needs to present a much more complete NDC than the one communicated in 2016 that genuinely connects domestic climate policy with international obligations. If Canada wishes to put forward its most ambitious NDC, it must present a comprehensive package under seven different benchmarks that we explain in the report below.

The Canadian government has already announced an emissions reduction target range of 40 – 45 percent in 2030 below 2005. However, under the Paris Agreement, it's always possible to enhance its target as a means of aligning with a 1.5°C warming limit. Canada must structure its NDC in accordance with the following seven benchmarks:

### EQUITY

- Canada is one of the top ten global emitters of greenhouse gasses, in the top ten in cumulative GHG emissions over time, and Canadians emit more per capita than most other citizens in the world. Canada is also one of the world's wealthiest nations. We have a historic and ongoing responsibility for the climate crisis and the capacity to take action on it.

- Canada's fair share of the global effort to hold warming to 1.5°C, in light of science and equity, requires a reduction of emissions at home and supporting the reduction of emissions abroad to achieve cuts equivalent of 140% below 2005 Canadian emissions levels by 2030. Canada should revise its target to cut domestic emissions by 60% below 2005 levels by 2030. Additionally, Canada should support efforts beyond our national borders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions the equivalent of 80% below Canada's 2005 emissions levels.
- Dramatically scaling up the provision of international climate finance is a crucial piece of the puzzle. Canada's fair share of the US 100 billion goal under the Paris Agreement is \$5.2 billion (or US\$4 billion) annually in total climate finance until 2025. That includes increasing bilateral climate finance to \$1.8 billion annually from Canada's Official Development Assistance Envelope, with 50% of these funds going to adaptation and aligned with the Feminist International Assistance Policy.

### UPHOLD HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

- The NDC must reaffirm the constitutional mandate and obligation to ensure all policies, measures and investments respond to the needs and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples.

- The implementation process must respect Indigenous Peoples, human rights, the right to health, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, women's rights, workers' rights, and intergenerational equity.
- Canada's NDC must respect and protect children's rights. The right to quality, safe, inclusive, and resilient education systems is critical to equip children with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate a changing climate and create a more sustainable future.

## **RAPID DECARBONIZATION**

- Canada's enhanced NDC plan must detail those sectoral policies that will help reduce real domestic emissions rapidly for the next decade. Canada's NDC must describe the direction of travel and set specific targets for important critical sectors where emissions reductions must happen to foster system change and align Canada's emissions pathways to a 1.5°C compatible future. In particular, Canada's NDC must:
  - ✓ Ensure greater consistency across provinces and territories that results in a coherent pan-Canadian increase in the carbon price. Revise the carbon pricing policy to ensure it's applied to large emitters, even those that are trade-exposed, more rigorously to incent more significant reductions.
  - ✓ Develop coherent, ambitious transport policies, standards, targets and plans to ensure a rapid, accessible, and affordable decarbonization for all types of transport: road, shipping, rail, and aviation. The plan must commit to implementing Canada's Clean Fuel Standard.
  - ✓ Include a whole-of-government and inclusive planning process that sets ambitious targets to fully decarbonize the electricity sector by 2035.
  - ✓ Include an explicit commitment to end the expansion of its oil and gas industry and a complete fossil fuels subsidies reform. Additionally, Canada's NDC must detail targets and policies to address methane emissions and align oil and gas production with a 1.5°C compatible pathway.
  - ✓ Include a commitment to synchronize Bill C-12 and Canada's NDC to provide a 2025 checkpoint to ensure emissions reductions are on the right path to meet our 2030 goals. Bill C-12 can complement Canada's international climate reporting obligations and include corrective measures in case of non-compliance.

- ✓ Include a commitment to the Minister of Finance to report annually on the government's steps to address financial risks and opportunities related to climate change.

## **SHIFTING FINANCIAL FLOWS**

- The NDC must identify how recovery spending will help Canada meet its NDC objectives and phase out fossil fuels and fossil fuel subsidies. Canada's enhanced NDC must communicate future government spending related to the implementation of the NDC and include conditions that ensure compatibility with a 1.5°C pathway.

## **NATURE-FOCUSED NDC THAT INCREASES RESILIENCE, SOCIAL AND HEALTH CO-BENEFITS**

- Canada's NDC must commit to conserve, protect, and restore nature and uphold Indigenous rights. Additionally, the NDC must be coherent with Canada's National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) and describe how the forest, agriculture and grasslands, coastal-wetlands, wildlife in urban areas fit into Canada's enhanced NDC.
- Canada's NDC planning must seek to maximize health benefits, and adaptation planning and health co-benefits. Canada must also communicate a monitoring framework for Canada's National Adaptation plan and report economic and non-economic losses associated with the climate crisis.
- Canada's NDC must include a detailed and inclusive roadmap towards implementing the Action for Climate Empowerment National Strategy and recognizing the role of children as key actors to be included in the NDC implementation process.

## **JUST TRANSITION**

- Canada's NDC must announce a Working Group on Just Transition responsible for establishing processes, mechanisms, tools, and funding adapted to just transition needs and results indicators. The recommendations of this working group should serve as a base for the Just Transition Act. Trade unions must be stakeholders of this working group.

## **WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT APPROACH**

- Canada's NDC must detail how provinces, territories, cities, and local communities contribute to implementing NDC objectives and helping Canada meet and exceed 2030 and 2050 climate targets and goals.

# Introduction

In 1953, Poet Jane Hirshfield wrote:

*Let them not say: we did not see it.*  
**We saw.**

*Let them not say: we did not hear it.*  
**We heard.**

*Let them not say: they did not taste it.*  
**We ate, we trembled.**

*Let them not say: it was not spoken, not written.*  
**We spoke,  
we witnessed with voices and hands.<sup>1</sup>**

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Last December, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on all countries to declare a global climate emergency until the world has reached net-zero CO<sub>2</sub> emissions<sup>2</sup>. Ahead of the 26<sup>th</sup> U.N. Climate Conference (COP26) in November of 2021, all countries are expected to communicate enhanced domestic climate action plans known as “Nationally determined contributions” (NDCs) as part of their obligations under the Paris Agreement (Article 4 of the Paris Agreement)<sup>3</sup>. The world is still far from closing the emissions gap to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels<sup>4</sup>. To meet our 2030 climate objectives, all countries – particularly major emitters – must align their domestic climate plans with a 1.5°C compatible future<sup>5</sup>.

People living in Canada made it clear<sup>6</sup> that climate action is an urgent non-partisan issue that requires cooperation from coast to coast to coast. On Earth Day 2021, Ottawa announced a new emissions reduction target range to reduce emissions by 40 to 45 percent in 2030 below 2005. However, the government has not yet submitted a new NDC to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention.

We make the case that the enhanced NDC must communicate a direction-oriented plan connecting domestic actions, international Paris Agreement obligations and Canada’s historical responsibility and capacity to respond to the climate crisis. Canada’s NDC must present detailed sector-by-sector pathways to 2030 and specify how all groups of the Canadian society are contributing to Canada’s climate objectives.







## Canada's NDC is more than just targets; it's about people and the planet

Canada is a wealthy country with a historical responsibility to reduce emissions and a high capacity to respond to the climate crisis. Its emissions have increased by 21% between 1990 and 2018<sup>7</sup>. In 2019, emissions decreased only by 1.1% compared to 2005 levels (but increased by 21% from 1990 levels) which is far below what others have achieved in the same period – the E.U. and the U.K. reduced emissions by 25% and 42%, respectively, below 1990 levels in the same period. Canada is also the 10<sup>th</sup> highest global emitter. That means that 185 countries, many with much larger populations, have lower emissions than Canada. Per capita, the nation's emissions are well above twice the G20 average.

During the 2015 U.N. Climate Conference in Paris, the federal government put forward its first climate plan (Intended Nationally Determined Contributions or INDC) under the Paris Agreement with a mitigation target of 30% emissions reduction below 2005 emission levels according to five principles: respecting the science, putting forward climate policies such as carbon pricing, domestic cooperation and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples, international cooperation and creating a sustainable economy<sup>8</sup>. In 2016, the federal government met with 11 provincial and territorial premiers representing 93% of the population and signed Canada's first *Pan-Canadian Framework on Climate Change and Clean Growth* (PCF)<sup>9</sup>.

In 2020, in response to increased public pressure, the federal government released the *Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economic Plan*<sup>10</sup> (HEHE) and committed to exceeding the previous target established in 2015 and land within the range of 32 to 40% of emissions reduction below 2005 levels

by 2030. HEHE is the first plan through which a Canadian government has committed to achieving specific and quantified measures towards achieving its target. Even though oil and gas production is the largest and rapidly growing source of domestic emissions, the plan lacks essential measures to achieve reductions from the oil and gas sector. It does not provide a clear pathway towards a managed decline of total oil and gas production<sup>11</sup> following science and equity<sup>12</sup>, and in line with a just transition.

Contributing to limiting global warming to 1.5°C is our best way forward to protect the health of Canadians, build resilience, and implement a just recovery from COVID-19.

Canada must communicate a new NDC every five years. The NDC is a dynamic and robust climate plan that explains Canada's highest possible ambition towards achieving the Paris Agreement long-term goals<sup>13</sup>. Contributing to limiting global warming to 1.5°C is our best way forward to protect the health of Canadians, build resilience, and implement a just recovery from COVID-19. The climate crisis comes with devastating social, economic, and cultural impacts that disproportionately



**Figure 1.** Seven benchmarks to assess Canada's climate plans

Authors, 2021

affect women, Indigenous Peoples, vulnerable communities, and socioeconomically and culturally marginalized groups. The climate crisis is particularly devastating for Indigenous Peoples because the ecological changes associated with climate change already impact their ability to maintain traditional ways of life, with rising temperatures exacerbating disparities linked to colonialism. Climate change compromises access to food security, clean water, land use, ice safety and housing stability. Climate impacts are particularly felt in the North, where the average Canadian temperature increases three times as fast as the global average (Canada is overall warming at twice the average global rate)<sup>14</sup>. Climate change contributes to rising inequality. Specific groups of the population, mainly older persons, people with marginalized socioeconomic status, and racialized people, face a more significant burden of climate change on their health<sup>15</sup>.

In 2018, countries agreed to submit descriptive and contextual information as part of the NDC package<sup>16</sup>. They agreed to a series of measures to help monitor, verify, and report progress towards achieving these plans, allowing outside experts to evaluate progress achieved during the five-year cycle and the ability of a country to forward a more ambitious NDC every five years. Canada will also participate in a global stocktake at COP29 which helps measure collective efforts towards the long-term goal of the Paris Agreement, which is to limit global warming to 1.5°C, build adaptation and resilience capacity and transform the economic systems following the long-term goals.

We offer seven benchmarks to assess Canada's ambition in its NDC.

Canada's new NDC will be judged by its ability to make the right connections between:

- **Equity:** Canada's global responsibility considering equity and science.
- **Rapid decarbonization plans, policies, and laws:** The announced targets and Canada's willingness to exceed them for all sectors of the Canadian economy.
- **Upholding human rights and Indigenous Peoples' rights.**
- **Just transition:** how Canada considers responding to the needs of people and communities as the NDC is being implemented.
- **Whole-of-country cooperation:** Canada's efforts to work with every community, city, region, province territory as it implements its NDC.
- **Resilience and interconnectedness with nature:** its explicit commitment to build resilience, save lives and protect, conserve, and restore nature.
- **The transformation of Canada's economy and shifting financial flows.**



## Benchmark: Equity

On Earth Day 2021, President Joe Biden reunited major emitters and vulnerable countries to address the impacts of the climate crisis and raise ambition to “bend the curve on global emissions to keep a 1.5°C limit on global average temperature rise within reach.”<sup>17</sup> Canada released a new climate target range of 40% to 45% in 2030 below 2005<sup>18</sup>. Increasing climate ambition is always essential. However, Canada’s new target remains low when compared with other countries. In particular, the United States and Japan committed to cut emissions by half by 2030 relative to a 2005 baseline. The United Kingdom announced that it would cut emissions by 78% below 1990 levels in 2035<sup>19</sup>.

There are no borders when it comes to tackling the climate crisis. Canada’s current response, both domestically and internationally, is insufficient because it puts us on a dangerous global warming pathway<sup>20</sup>. Canada’s emissions reduction effort only matters if it leads to contributing to a 1.5°C compatible future considering science, equity, and solidarity. Canada needs to cut emissions domestically by at least 60% below 2005 by 2030. Equally important, Canada must contribute international climate assistance to mitigate the equivalent of 80% of Canada’s 2005 emissions globally<sup>21</sup>. In 2009, industrialized countries agreed to mobilize US\$ 100 billion per year in climate finance by 2020. The Paris Agreement reaffirmed this commitment and called for a balance in adaptation and mitigation support. In 2016, Canada and other contributor countries said they were “confident [they] will meet the \$100 billion target, from a variety of sources”<sup>22</sup>. Canada promised a first down-payment of \$2.65 billion until March of 2021 and committed to reach \$800 million annually in climate finance in 2021. At the 2021 G7 Summit, Canada announced that it will double its international climate finance contribution from \$2.65 billion over five years to \$5.36 billion from 2021 until 2025, 2026. Industrialized countries divided the US\$ 100 billion annual commitment into three: US\$37.3 billion per year in bilateral public finance (including contributions to the Green Climate Fund and other multilateral funds), US \$29.5 billion in multilateral public investment attributable based on their contributions to multilateral institutions. The rest, US \$33.2 billion, would come from private co-finance mobilized attributed to developed countries and export credits.

The US \$100 billion pledge is inadequate. The Adaptation Finance Gap report indicated that adaptation costs alone could range from US \$140 to \$300 billion per year in 2030 and rise to between US \$280 and \$500 billion per year in 2050<sup>23</sup>. But meeting this insufficient pledge remains a crucial demonstration of solidarity and trust needed to implement the Paris Agreement globally. That’s why Canada must increase the quantity and enhance the quality of its climate

finance contribution. Canada’s fair share - attributable to the relative weight of Canada’s gross national income when compared to other contributor OECD countries - is equivalent to 4% of the total pledge, or a down payment of \$5.2 billion annually (or US \$4 billion annually). That includes a commitment of \$1.8 billion from Canada’s assistance envelope, with 50% of this funding going to adaptation financing. Canada’s post-2020 climate finance portfolio must align with the objectives of the Feminist International Assistance Policy. It should include an increase of grant-based funding for adaptation. It should ensure access to these funds to local organizations in recipient countries through Canadian international non-governmental organizations that are best placed to get resources into the hands of local women’s rights organizations the poorest and most vulnerable.



PHOTO BY RAY GAO ON UNSPLASH

### TO ENSURE CANADA’S NDC IS EQUITABLE, IT MUST:

- Cut domestic emissions by 60% below 2005 levels by 2030, with a view of fully decarbonizing the Canadian economy to achieve net-zero domestic GHG emissions as early as possible and by 2050 at the latest.
- Enable a reduction in developing countries’ greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to 80% of Canadian 2005 emissions through climate finance. This Canada-supported mitigation would be about 594 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2030 and would be in addition to reductions that developing countries achieve on their own or with other wealthier countries’ support.
- Contribute \$5.2 billion annually in total climate finance until 2025, which includes \$1.8 billion annually directly from Canada’s Official Development Assistance Envelope, with 50% of these funds going to adaptation and aligned with the Feminist International Assistance Policy.



## Benchmark: Uphold human rights and Indigenous People's Rights

Canada has a constitutional mandate and obligation to ensure all policies, measures and investments respond to the needs and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples<sup>24</sup>. Additionally, when implementing Canada's NDC, all actions must be rooted in human rights principles and standards and be consistent with Canada's international human rights obligations. NDCs should identify how, in the implementation process, countries respect human rights, the right to health, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, women's rights, workers' rights and intergenerational equity<sup>25</sup>.

So far, Indigenous Peoples have been structurally excluded from the decision-making tables where federal climate plans are made. Achieving core climate, economic, and social objectives requires addressing the rights violations of Indigenous women and girls, especially those who live in the fossil fuel industry's footprint and considering the realities faced by Indigenous communities and Nations<sup>26</sup>. There won't be increased ambition if NDC policies don't address structural inequalities continually reproduced through ongoing colonial relations and policies in Canada. Women and Indigenous women are often under-represented in climate-related planning and decision-making processes. Yet, women, Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous women are powerful agents of change in mitigation and adaptation. Canada should follow the example of the Marshall Islands, which have committed to a feminist implementation of their national climate plans.<sup>27</sup>

The climate and environmental crises are an intergenerational child rights crisis that threatens children's survival. Indigenous

children often face direct consequences of climate change, as many of these children rely on climate-sensitive ecosystems for livelihoods and spiritual and cultural practices. So far, children and their rights are conspicuously absent from Canada's climate commitments and previous NDC and policies. Canada's NDC must detail how it intends to respect the rights of all children, including the rights of Indigenous children. Policies and plans will ultimately determine if these and other children inherit a livable planet.

### TO ENSURE CANADA'S NDC IS ROOTED IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS, IT MUST:

- Reaffirm the constitutional mandate and obligation to ensure all policies, measures and investments respond to the needs and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples.
- Highlight priorities and support to ensure Canada's NDC implementation process respect for human rights, the right to health, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, women's rights, workers' rights, and intergenerational equity.
- Details how Canada's climate actions respect and protect children's rights and the right to quality, safe, inclusive, and resilient education systems is critical to equip children with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate a changing climate and create a more sustainable future.





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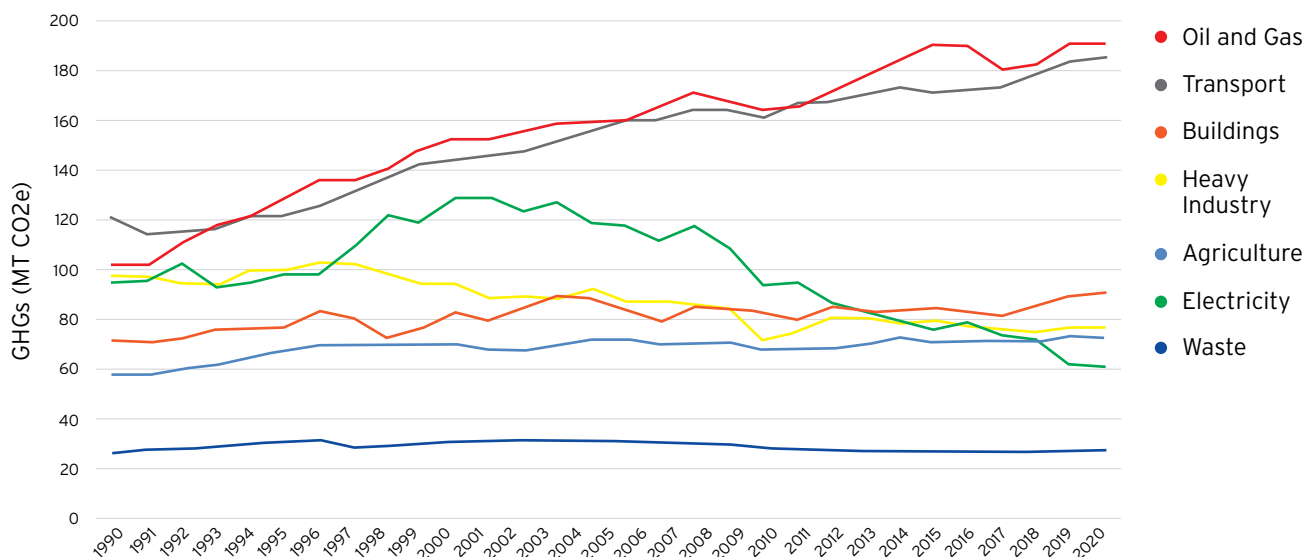
## Benchmark: Rapid Decarbonization

Limiting warming to 1.5°C requires rapid decarbonization of all parts of Canada’s economy, including, but not limited to, a managed decline of the fossil fuel industry which is Canada’s largest and most rapidly growing source of emissions. To meet the goal of zero emissions by 2050, Canada’s NDC must include the most ambitious policies to accelerate the decarbonization of the Canadian economy during this decade, followed by midterm and long-term goals. Emissions reductions must happen at home first and should not rely on unproven solutions. We already have the technology, policy and regulatory approaches, and investment capacity needed to drive deep emissions reductions in the next decade - now is the time to harness them and get to work, rather than delaying action to go down

rabbit holes of quick technological fixes. It requires identifying and communicating targets for important key sectors where emissions reductions must happen to foster system change and align Canada’s NDC to a 1.5°C compatible future.

In this benchmark, we identify these sectors and the policies, measures, and investments made through the different climate frameworks and plans since 2015 - *Canada’s first Pan-Canadian Framework (PCF) on Climate Change and Clean Growth and the Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy Plan (HEHE) in 2020*. We take stock of progress achieved so far, identify gaps and put forward expectations on what needs to be included in the enhanced NDC package.

Canada’s GHGs by Economic Sector 1990 - 2019



Source: [Data](#), Government of Canada.



## CARBON PRICING

Climate ambition at the federal level has grown since the release of the PCF<sup>28</sup>. Today carbon pricing is one of Canada's most crucial cross-cutting climate measures, particularly following the Supreme Court's historic ruling in March 2021 confirming the constitutionality of the federal carbon pricing law<sup>29</sup>. In 2018, the Canadian Parliament adopted the *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act of Canada*. The Act requires provinces and territories to either implement their carbon pricing initiative in line with the criteria outlined in the Pan-Canadian Approach to Pricing Carbon Pollution – the federal benchmark – or use the federal backstop system<sup>30</sup> implemented in their jurisdictions<sup>31</sup>. As of April 1, 2021, the carbon tax is set at \$40 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>e, rising to \$50 in 2022. The federal government has committed within the *Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy Plan* to increase the carbon price by \$15 annually from 2022 until 2030 until it reaches \$170 in 2030. Increasing the carbon price signal helps provide certainty that Canada is willing to meet its climate targets. It also contributes to scaling up innovation by increasing the incentive to invest in cleaner and cheaper technologies that can help drive down emissions before 2030<sup>32</sup>. Unfortunately, the federal government's minimum requirements for the carbon price signal faced by the industrial sector under the Output-Based Pricing System - a system created to address competitiveness concerns - weaken the incentive for industry to address GHG emissions and are inconsistent with climate ambition. The current system also lacks consistency across provinces and territories to ensure a coherent pan-Canadian increase in the carbon price.

### TO BE TRULY COMPATIBLE WITH A 1.5°C FUTURE, CARBON PRICING IN CANADA'S NDC MUST:

- Include information on Canada's carbon pricing coverage and increase and communicate what the federal government is doing to ensure consistency between the federal and provincial carbon pricing approaches.
- Consider over time increasing carbon pricing two to three times higher than the \$170 price/t during this NDC cycle while ensuring that revenue collected is recycled back to households and businesses to support emission reductions and address income impacts, emphasizing addressing low-income households and vulnerable people.
- We encourage Canada as it implements its NDC to revise its carbon pricing policy to ensure it's applied to large emitters, even those that are trade-exposed, more rigorously to incentivize more significant reductions.



PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE STOWE ON UNSPLASH

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is the second largest source of emissions in Canada - the movement of people and goods accounts for 24% of Canada's total emissions. Emissions from transportation continue to increase. Since 2016, the government has, for the most part, focused on tackling emissions from personal road mobility. With almost 24 million cars<sup>33</sup> registered in 2015 in Canada, the government's response so far has been to prioritize incentives, rather than restrictive measures, to reduce transport emissions and increase the number of zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) on Canadian roads.

Canadians drive the most polluting cars globally<sup>34</sup>, mainly due to a high preference for sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and pick-up trucks, supercharged by manufacturers' advertising campaigns<sup>35</sup>. Environment and Climate Change Canada has said that current light truck and car GHG standards would not provide good benefits than more stringent standards and would not help meet and exceed its 2030 Paris targets net-zero emission goals<sup>36</sup>. In the *Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy Plan*, Canada pledged to align with the most ambitious North American standards (California or U.S. federal rule, depending on which is strongest in 2025) for light-duty vehicles. It also pledged to increase incentives and pursue further supply-side measures to increase the availability of ZEVs across the country<sup>37</sup>. With the new US Administration, Canada has an opportunity to make substantial progress on

## Marine transport relies on the world's most polluting and hazardous fuel, Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO). Addressing emissions for shipping in Canada and globally is urgent.

road transportation by working with California to develop more ambitious post-2025 regulations; otherwise, Canada will delay a zero-carbon transportation sector transition.<sup>38</sup>

In its NDC, Canada must communicate how it intends to increase the accessibility and affordability of zero-emission vehicles in Canada to unlock deeper emissions reductions by 2030. That means committing to 100% zero-emissions light-duty vehicle sales by 2035 while making efforts to reach this objective in 2030. Canada's NDC should include how these policies substantially reduce the health impacts of traffic-related air pollution. According to the Lancet, air pollution resulted in the deaths of over 1000 Canadians in 2015 alone<sup>39</sup>. However, Medical Officers of Health in the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area estimated that traffic-related emissions in the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area resulted in over 700 premature death each year, with an economic bill of \$4.6 billion and 2,800 annual hospitalizations<sup>40</sup>.

In 2016, the government introduced the Clean Fuel Standard (CFS) - to get fuel suppliers to reduce the carbon intensities of the fuel they sell and provide incentives to switch from high-emitting fuels to cleaner fuels - with the potential to reduce emissions by 30 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030. Most provinces<sup>41</sup> designed their programs. After unjustified delays and setbacks, Ottawa has reaffirmed its commitment to implement and administer the CFS<sup>42</sup>. Canada's NDC must explain how the CFS will help Canada reduce emissions by 2030 and ensure CFS measures on biofuel production don't impact biodiversity or result in land conversion.

When it comes to heavy transportation, Canada hasn't made substantial progress since releasing its first NDC. Ottawa has not prioritized emissions reductions from marine, rail, and aviation. Canada's new climate plan released in December of 2020 announced policies under development to tackle ocean industries and shipping<sup>43</sup>. Canada's enhanced NDC must include policies and targets to decarbonize the marine transport sector and infrastructure. Marine transport relies on the world's most polluting and hazardous fuel, Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO). Addressing emissions for shipping in Canada and globally is urgent. Not doing so poses a significant risk to wildlife and communities from coast to coast<sup>44</sup>. In its NDC, Canada should specify how it plans to position the country as a modern and decarbonized maritime energy leader and include specific domestic commitments to help reduce shipping emissions from this sector and contribute to aligning global shipping emissions targets with a 1.5°C compatible future.

Canada's new plan must also include targets to reduce emissions for the aviation sector<sup>45</sup>. Since 2016, Canada hasn't gone beyond consultation processes and a Regulatory Impact Assessment for the new Carbon dioxide Standard for airplanes<sup>46</sup>.

### TO ADDRESS EMISSIONS FROM THE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR, CANADA'S NDC MUST:

- Commit to 100% zero-emissions light-duty vehicle sales by 2035 while making efforts to reach this objective in 2030. Move beyond incentives and put forward regulations that require automakers to sell cleaner vehicles and less fuel-inefficient cars.
- Align with the most ambitious LDV and HDV standards internationally.
- Commit to increasing the renewable content of fuels (at least 34% for diesel and 15% for gasoline by 2030)
- Rapid implementation of the Clean Fuel Standards (CFS) and ensure that CFS measures on biofuel production don't impact biodiversity or result in land conversion.
- Include in the NDC emissions reduction targets for Canadian shipping and aviation.
- Particularly for shipping, Canada should commit to decarbonizing all passenger ferries by 2030 and increase public investments in marine-based public transit.

## ACCESS TO CLEAN, AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTRICITY

Eighty percent of Canada's electricity already comes from non-emitting sources. Electricity generation is one of the sectors where we have seen the most critical emissions reductions in the past decade. Four years ago, Ottawa committed to phasing out coal-fired power - responsible for 77 percent of GHG emissions originating from electricity production - by 2030. Some provinces continue to burn coal for electricity. Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick have announced their intention to eliminate coal-powered electricity emissions by 2030, using a range of fuel switching options<sup>47</sup>. Some provinces are announcing an accelerated phase-out before 2030<sup>48</sup>. In addition to emissions reduced, the health co-benefits from moving away from burning coal make this a critical shift.

In 2017, Canada and the United Kingdom launched the Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA) - a coalition of national and sub-national governments, businesses and organizations working to advance the transition from unabated coal power generation to clean energy. In December 2018, the Government of Canada put forward regulations to phase out coal-fired power generation by 2030<sup>49</sup> and months later established the Just Transition Task Force for workers and communities impacted by the coal phase-out. Canada also committed \$150 million in infrastructure funds and funding for coal worker transition centres<sup>50</sup>. The Canadian Government announced at the G7 Summit that any new or expanded thermal coal project would be considered contrary to the public interest due to the severity of the environmental impacts.

In Canada's new NDC, Ottawa must communicate how it intends to work with provinces to increase energy efficiency and inter-provincial cooperation to accelerate the decarbonization of the electricity sector. Canada's NDC must reaffirm the constitutional mandate and obligation to ensure policies, measures, and investments respond to the needs and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples<sup>51</sup> and urgently prioritize supporting the transition away from diesel fuel electricity in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities<sup>52</sup>. Finally, Canada's enhanced NDC must reaffirm its commitment to phasing out coal-powered electricity in Canada by 2030, including banning mining and exporting thermal coal in Canada<sup>53</sup>.



PHOTO BY GONZ DDL ON UNSPLASH

### POLICIES MEASURES TO CHART THE DECARBONIZATION OF ELECTRICITY IN CANADA'S NDC MUST:

- Achieve the objective of 90% non-emitting electricity by 2030 and align with the U.S. administration to achieve 100% non-emitting electricity before 2035.
- Communicate how Ottawa intends to ramp up investment in clean electricity, especially grid interties between provinces and territories. Work with provinces and territories to develop ambitious diesel reduction targets for remote communities, backed by a shift in engagement practices, utility regulation and policy that encourages community participation and leadership in diesel reduction initiatives.
- Urgently prioritize supporting the transition away from diesel fuel electricity in rural, remote, and Indigenous communities.
- Reaffirm its commitment to phasing out coal-powered electricity in Canada by 2030, including by banning mining and export of thermal coal in Canada.



PHOTO BY CHITTERSNAP ON UNSPLASH

## THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

In Canada, building regulations and regulations to ensure energy efficiency fall under provincial jurisdiction. Municipalities are also responsible for labelling the energy use of buildings. The federal government has access to a limited number of tools. But, it can create, for example, a net-zero-ready model building code to encourage consistent and ambitious building codes across the country and provide funding to both consumers and provinces to support energy efficiency,<sup>54</sup> taking place in 2021.



Canada's NDC targets and policies for buildings must communicate previous commitments and identify the road map needed to decarbonize this sector. For example, Canada's plan should specify how the Greening Government Strategy will be implemented. Additionally, the NDC should identify the need for stronger regulations to fully decarbonize this sector over the coming decade. Canada's NDC should communicate how the government intends to work with provinces to phase out fossil fuel energy use in new buildings.

Canada's NDC should also highlight examples of cities<sup>55</sup> leading the way in setting annual carbon pollution limits for buildings. Finally, Canada can use the NDC as an opportunity to enhance its current heat emissions standards and announce its intention to implement a Zero-Building Heat Emissions Standard in all buildings for new installations as soon as possible.

#### CANADA'S NDC TARGETS AND REGULATIONS TO DECARBONIZE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT:

- Canada should indicate the direction of travel when it comes to working with provinces and territories to adopt net-zero building codes, including making code adoption a requirement for targeted infrastructure funding or other building-sector incentives.
- The NDC should indicate how Canada is working in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to decarbonize this sector.
- Canada should also include how it intends to support the development of a retrofit market.
- The NDC must communicate efforts in deep energy retrofits of publicly owned buildings and how Ottawa will ensure training and education for workers in the building industry.
- The NDC should identify areas that require more significant progress and increased stringency over the coming years.
- Finally, Canada's plan should identify how, in the implementation process, these policies benefit low-income households, renters, and people experiencing homelessness.



#### THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

Canada's 2021 NDC must specify how it intends to tackle emissions from the oil and gas industry over the coming decade. Canada's oil and gas industry is the largest and fastest-growing source of domestic GHG emissions, followed by emissions from the transportation sector<sup>56</sup>. Emissions from this sector are also eroding progress achieved in emissions reductions from other sectors of the Canadian economy<sup>57</sup>, as highlighted in the recent National Inventory Report<sup>58</sup>. Canada won't meet global climate goals without a clear commitment to stop expanding the oil and gas sector. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimated that global oil production needs to shrink by 37% below 2010 levels by 2030 and 87% by 2050 to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Despite these clear warnings, Canada is currently projecting more oil and gas production in 2050 than in 2019. This sector alone will, without greater efforts to constrain it, continue to emit around 200 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e the year that Canada is supposed to achieve net-zero emissions. Canada is responsible for 2% of global emissions on average. But, under current projections its oil and gas expansion are projected to exhaust up to 16% of the world's carbon budget<sup>59</sup>.

The federal government's response to combating emissions from the oil and gas sector has come in the form of incentives<sup>60</sup> (subsidies, tax credits, loans) to industry to encourage lower carbon intensity production. This approach is problematic because it continues to ask taxpayers to fund emissions reductions from the industry instead of focusing on imposing a polluter-pays principle to drive down emissions in Canada's dirtiest and least ambitious sector<sup>61</sup>. This public funding of corporate liability is also the approach that led to Canadians owning the poorly assessed Trans Mountain pipeline. Other UNFCCC countries, such as Denmark and Costa Rica, call for a cut-off date to end the expansion of fossil fuel production<sup>62</sup> once and for all. Other countries like Switzerland recognized the importance of removing fossil fuels subsidies and commit to a domestic fossil fuels subsidies reform<sup>63</sup>.

In December 2020, the federal government committed again to achieving Canada's 2025 methane reduction targets for oil and gas and committed to reviewing the efficacy of the policy in 2021 and amending the rule to establish targets for 2030 that will be based on international best practices. Canada's NDC must identify how Ottawa – in cooperation with provinces - can move beyond the 40-45 percent by 2025 emissions towards a more ambitious goal of at least a 75% reduction by 2030<sup>64</sup>.

#### TACKLING FOSSIL FUELS IN CANADA'S NDC

- Canada's NDC must explicitly communicate that it will end the expansion of its oil and gas industry and put forward a plan to help workers and communities' transition in a just manner.
- Canada's NDC must include how it plans to achieve a complete fossil fuels subsidies reform and request Export Development Canada to align its portfolio with a 1.5°C scenario and end all fossil fuel investments domestically and internationally.
- Canada's NDC must announce 2030 targets for methane emissions and production that align with a 1.5°C compatible pathway.

#### CLIMATE GOVERNANCE

Last year, the federal government tabled the Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act 2020 (Bill C-12) to fully decarbonize Canada's economy by 2050<sup>65</sup>. The bill establishes a series of interim emissions reduction targets at 5-year milestones, beginning in 2030, toward achieving this goal and creates an independent net-zero advisory body of 14 experts from across the country who advise the responsible Minister on the pathways to reach net-zero emissions by 2050<sup>66</sup>.

Synchronizing Bill C-12 and Canada's NDC will result in greater climate accountability. Bill C-12 and the NDC follow a similar ambition cycle mandating Canada to present more ambitious targets every five years. Additionally, under the Paris Agreement transparency mechanism, countries must regularly report to the UNFCCC on implementing their NDCs domestically. Reporting progress on meeting targets is not sufficient, and Bill C-12 must go further than this essential minimum international requirement. Bill C-12 must complement Canada's international NDC obligations by including corrective measures when the government is in non-compliance with its climate objectives. We also see an opportunity to include in Canada's NDC the obligation for the Minister of Finance to report on financial NDC planning and implementation annually and clarify how Canada's effort sharing (carbon budget) is being divided across provinces.

#### STRENGTHENING CLIMATE GOVERNANCE IN CANADA'S NDC:

- Synchronize Bill C-12 and Canada's NDC to provide a 2025 checkpoint to ensure emissions reductions are on the right path to meet our 2030 goals.
- Use Bill C-12 to complement Canada's international climate reporting obligations by including corrective measures in case of non-compliance.
- Minister of Finance to report annually on the government's steps to address "financial risks and opportunities related to climate change." This report can be guided by the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures on how climate change affects their financial planning and assumptions.

PHOTO BY BILLY HUYNH ON UNSPLASH





## Benchmark: Shifting financial flows

Achieving at least 60% emission reductions domestically by 2030 is a challenging endeavor. But it's not impossible. We have the policies and technologies to make it happen, and the economic implications are entirely manageable<sup>67</sup>. We can protect jobs, increase investments and overall financial performance. But it requires strong political will and conviction. Canada has a unique opportunity to ensure that COVID-19 recovery spending and NDC planning pull in the same direction by connecting immediate measures financed by stimulus spending with mid-term benefits, 2030 goals and 2050 pathways. This is critically important to close the investment gap between current climate-related fiscal commitments and Canada's need to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

The world needs to reduce the production of fossil fuels by around 6% per year to 2030 to have any chance of limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Fossil fuel subsidies work against this objective because they promote the expansion of the oil and gas industry. Shifting financial flows requires Canada to prioritize fossil fuels subsidies reform and communicate how it intends to eliminate fossil fuels subsidies immediately and at the latest by 2025. Switzerland, Costa Rica, Finland, Ethiopia, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and Uruguay are promoting, under the Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidies Reform, the removal of fossil fuels subsidies in particular in G20 countries<sup>68</sup>. Shifting financial flows also requires aligning climate and trade policies to identify rules to discipline and phase out these harmful subsidies<sup>69</sup>. Canada's efforts to shift financial flows remain unambitious. Canada ranked last among Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in the G20 to phasing out support for fossil fuels. While the low carbon economy has grown in Canada in recent years, public investments in fossil fuels still show an upward trend<sup>70</sup>. In fact, in 2020 alone, the Canadian government provided at least \$1.91 billion in fossil fuel subsidies, a massive increase of over 200% from 2019 levels<sup>71</sup>.

### ALIGNING RECOVERY SPENDING WITH NDC PLANNING AND SHIFTING FINANCIAL FLOWS:

- Canada's enhanced NDC must communicate that future government spending related to the implementation of the NDC will include conditions that ensure compatibility with a 1.5°C pathway.
- The NDC must identify how recovery spending is being used to phase out fossil fuels and fossil fuel subsidies.
- The NDC should identify how Canada is aligning trade policy with its international climate obligations in particular in the context of using trade policy to reform, to discipline and phase out fossil fuels subsidies.
- Canada's NDC should include a detailed tracker that shows how it aligns all financial flows with the Paris Agreement.
- Canada's NDC planning must detail monitoring mechanisms to ensure government spending prioritizes workers, accelerates a just transition, invests in low-carbon sectors and seeks social and health co-benefits.
- The Minister of Finance should include in the annual budget how new spending contributes to Canada's NDC implementation process to ensure transparency and accountability but also to promote co-benefits between climate and other socioeconomic priorities.

Switzerland, Costa Rica, Finland, Ethiopia, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and Uruguay are promoting, under the Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidies Reform, the removal of fossil fuels subsidies in particular in G20 countries.



# Benchmark: Nature-focused NDC that increases resilience, social and health co-benefits

## NATURE AND CANADA'S NDC

The state of the natural world is a grim picture, witnessing multiple threats, including the accelerating climate crisis. Canadian wildlife populations have declined by an average of 59%, and species categorized as being “of concern” have increased globally by 42% between 1970 and 2016<sup>72</sup>. Last year, Canada joined the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, raising a commitment to protect 30% of Canada’s lands and waters by 2030<sup>73</sup>. The federal government reaffirmed its commitment to planting two billion trees. Canada has committed funding to restore and enhance carbon sinks such as wetlands, peatlands, grasslands, and agricultural lands, and to establish a new Natural Climate Solutions for Agriculture Fund. Ottawa announced the Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) and Indigenous Guardians programs as key priority areas to reverse biodiversity loss and climate breakdown<sup>74</sup>. Canada’s NDC must explicitly link nature-focused policies and Ottawa’s efforts to uphold Indigenous rights<sup>75</sup>. Canada’s NDC must also communicate the type of support required for Indigenous-led conservation, which requires a substantial increase of sustained funding over the years<sup>76</sup>.

## AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION

Canada’s agriculture sector accounts for nearly 10% of total domestic GHG emissions, mainly from synthetic fertilizers, ruminant digestion, and livestock manure. A range of programs and activities were announced in the December 2020 climate plan, including \$25 million for the Agricultural Clean Technology Program, \$20 million for a Food Waste Challenge and \$19 million in a biomass and bioproducts research cluster and a new Nature-Based Solutions Fund.

Farmers for Climate Solutions estimate that a \$300 million federal investment in sustainable agricultural climate policy could generate 10 M.T. in emissions reductions by 2030. In its 2021 Budget, Ottawa directly responded to these demands by allocating funding to support farmers in reducing emissions by improving nitrogen management, increasing the adoption of cover cropping, and normalizing rotational grazing and power farms with clean energy<sup>77</sup>. Canada’s NDC must detail how these funds can help meet and exceed GHG targets for agriculture and scale up this kind of support until 2030 and 2050.

## PRIORITIZING NATURE IN CANADA'S NDC REQUIRES:

- Ensuring all policies to conserve, protect and restore nature uphold Indigenous rights.
- Strengthening domestic policy coherence between climate and biodiversity through the alignment of NDCs with the commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity CBD and Canada’s National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP).
- Describing how conserving, protecting, and restoring nature fit into the NDC, particularly for specific sectors such as forest, agriculture and grasslands, coastal-wetlands, wildlife in urban areas.

PHOTO BY EVI T. ON UNSPLASH



## INCREASE RESILIENCE, SOCIAL AND HEALTH CO-BENEFITS

Canada's NDC must put forward specific targets, policies and measures to increase adaptation capacity over the next decade. The climate crisis has a direct impact on our everyday lives. Catastrophic weather events like flooding, wildfires and extreme storms in Canada have increased in the last five decades. Insured losses alone totaled over \$18 billion between 2010-2019<sup>78</sup>. The increase of extreme heat is directly impacting increased drought and wildfires. Intense rainfalls are affecting urban and rural infrastructure. Because of sea-level rise, Canada's coastal flooding will also continue to rise in different parts of the country.<sup>79</sup> Floods, wildfires and other climate-related disasters have increased over the past decade, resulting in an economic impact equivalent to 6 percent of Canada's annual economic growth since 2010<sup>80</sup>. Health Canada reported 15,300 people in Canada died of air pollution in 2016,<sup>81</sup> and a Harvard study concluded 20% of premature deaths are due to fossil fuel-related air pollution<sup>82</sup>. Wildfires displaced nearly 450,000 people between 1980 and 2017, with more than half of the displacements in the latter decade<sup>83</sup>. Severe wildfire smoke exposure in Yellowknife and surrounding communities in 2014 caused negative health impacts that resulted in substantial increases in hospital visits for pneumonia and a doubling of visits to emergency rooms for asthma; children and Indigenous Peoples disproportionately experienced these impacts<sup>84</sup>. Despite these impacts, up until 2020, only 13% of federal government spending on climate change financed adaptation measures<sup>85</sup>.

Health Canada reported 15,300 people in Canada died of air pollution in 2016, and a Harvard study concluded 20% of premature deaths are due to fossil fuel-related air pollution.

Canada's NDC must detail how the National Adaptation Strategy will inform NDC implementation. Additionally, Canada's NDC should highlight how it intends to monitor and track the progress of adaptation action at the national level over the next decade. Canada's NDC planning should align direct recovery spending with public health systems and NDC goals. Finally, we expect annual impact assessments that include information on economic and non-economic losses and damages induced by climate change.

Canada has committed to building a whole-of-society approach to achieve a just and equitable low-carbon and climate-resilient future. This is possible through the domestic implementation of the Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) agenda, which seeks to advance climate literacy and action by enhancing the quality and quantity of climate change education, training, and public awareness for all in particular for young people and children<sup>86</sup>. Canada's NDC must put forward a transformational ACE agenda and set concrete and measurable programmes as part of a national strategy for climate education.

## CRITICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CANADA TO INCREASE RESILIENCE AND HEALTH CO-BENEFITS:

- Mitigation policies must maximize health benefits, and adaptation planning must include investments in healthcare and public health systems.
- Canada's NDC planning must include a monitoring framework for Canada's National Adaptation Strategy that evaluates health co-benefits of climate policies and health impacts of the climate crisis in the Canadian population.
- Canada should report on economic and non-economic losses associated with the climate crisis.
- Canada's NDC must include a detailed roadmap towards implementing an ACE National Strategy that provides for the participation of key stakeholders, including relevant ministries, regional and local authorities, workers, education and training institutions, youth organizations and Indigenous communities.
- Canada must commit to strengthening and expanding climate change education activities beyond public awareness to address the other climate change elements systematically. Canada must recognize the legitimacy and power of children's voices to be part of the solution and influence decision-makers, and actively engage children in all aspects of its climate policies and implementation plans.

## Benchmark: Just Transition

A people-led climate plan means ensuring that Canada's response to the climate crisis contributes to building an inclusive and sustainable economy. The implications of decarbonizing the Canadian economy will have dramatic impacts on people and communities, particularly for workers dependent on GHG-intensive economic sectors<sup>87</sup>.

In 2019 the Canadian government announced that it would advance legislation to support a Just Transition Act but has not yet moved forward with this legislation. When Ottawa announced a new target on Earth Day 2021, labour organizations like Unifor welcomed Canada's announcement. They called for more decisive climate action "but only if there's a plan for a "just transition" that won't leave workers behind."<sup>88</sup>

Canada's NDC policies and measures must put workers and communities at the centre and ensure economic protection, particularly for racialized workers, women and Indigenous Peoples. Canada's NDC must recognize workers' rights and encourage the participation of impacted communities and workers in implementing climate mitigation actions. NDC planning must detail how Ottawa intends to expand the social

safety net and create new and inclusive economic opportunities and workforce development across all sectors of the Canadian economy. It must connect the NDC planning process with any future Just Transition legislation presented in the context of accelerating Canada's transition to a net-zero carbon economy in a manner that protects and improves the well-being of workers and communities across the country.

### A JUST TRANSITION AS PART OF CANADA'S NDC

- Canada's NDC must announce a Working Group on Just Transition responsible for establishing the process, mechanisms, tools, and funding adapted to just transition needs and results indicators.
- The recommendations of this working group should serve as a base for the Just Transition Act. Trade unions must be stakeholders of this working group.

## Benchmark: Whole-of-country cooperation

The 2016 Vancouver Declaration<sup>89</sup>, the document that preceded the PCF, acknowledged that greater collaboration was needed among provinces, territories and Ottawa to reduce GHGs and enhance climate action. Over the years, the debate around climate action has polarized, and climate cooperation among the federal and provincial governments has not delivered much progress. In 2018, Alberta, Ontario and Saskatchewan stopped supporting the PCF and contested Canada's legislation on carbon pricing, which led to a hearing at the Supreme Court of Canada.<sup>90</sup> The Supreme Court confirmed that climate change is a matter of national concern and set a precedent for the federal government to set minimum standards for climate action. Federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments must now collaborate in a spirit of cooperative federalism to ensure that Canada as a country can increase ambition and resilience beyond COP26. The table below summarizes current commitments from provincial governments.





## PROVINCES' AND TERRITORIES' CURRENT COMMITMENTS TO REDUCE EMISSIONS

Province or territory	Current emission reduction objectives
British Columbia <sup>91</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 40% reductions below 2007 levels by 2030;</li> <li>• 60% reductions by 2040;</li> <li>• 80% reductions by 2050.</li> <li>• Sectoral targets.</li> </ul>
Alberta	<i>No overall target</i>
Saskatchewan <sup>92</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32% reduction from 2004 levels in 2020 (target was just missed);</li> <li>• 80% below 2004 levels by 2050.</li> </ul>
Manitoba <sup>93</sup>	Reducing one Mt of cumulative emissions of carbon dioxide eq. for 2018-2022.
Ontario <sup>94</sup>	30% reductions below 2005 levels in 2030.
Quebec <sup>95</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 37.5% reductions below 1990 levels in 2030;</li> <li>• 80 to 95% reductions below 1990 levels in 2050.</li> </ul>
New-Brunswick <sup>96</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30% reductions below 2005 by 2030;</li> <li>• 80% reductions below 2001 by 2050.</li> </ul>
Nova Scotia <sup>97</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce emissions by 53% below 2005 levels by 2030;</li> <li>• Be the first Canadian province to achieve carbon neutrality.</li> </ul>
Prince Edward Island <sup>98</sup>	Achieve net-zero emissions by 2030.
Newfoundland and Labrador <sup>99</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10% reductions below 1990 levels by 2020;</li> <li>• 30% reductions below 2005 levels by 2030;</li> <li>• 75 to 85% below 2001 levels by 2050.</li> </ul>
Yukon <sup>100</sup>	• 30% reduction below 2010 levels by 2030.
North West Territories <sup>101</sup>	• 30% reduction below 2005 levels by 2030.
Nunavut	<i>No overall target.</i>

### WHOLE-OF-COUNTRY COOPERATION

- Canada's NDC must include how the provinces, territories, cities, and local communities will help implement NDC objectives.
- Canada's NDC must detail how the federal government will engage provinces to ensure Canada meets and exceeds current NDC goals and does its fair share to reduce national emissions.



## Conclusion

Over the past six years, Canada has made significant steps on climate governance and the implementation of critical policies in response to the climate crisis. However, the cumulative result of these efforts remains unbalanced. Agents of the status quo have delayed climate action in Canada, putting people and communities at risk. Too often, Canada's ambitious announcements, regulations, and legislation get watered down under industry pressure, resulting in the federal government failing on climate commitments at the expense of people, health, and the planet.

In its 2020 analysis, the Climate Change Performance Index ranked Canada 58<sup>th</sup> out of 61 countries' mitigation efforts<sup>102</sup> in the context of implementing the Paris Agreement goals. One of the reasons is the lack of action aiming to stop our addiction to fossil fuels, which make up more than two-thirds of Canada's energy mix. In contrast, the share of renewable energy, which primarily consists of hydropower, has stagnated at around 15% over the last 30 years<sup>103</sup>. Canada is the only G7 country whose emissions have gone up since the Paris agreement was signed.

It's time for Canada to put behind its legacy of committing new targets and then failing to achieve them. As we highlighted above, Canada has the capacity, the tools, and the ability to increase ambition, enhance its climate governance tools and exceed current climate goals. Aligning our NDC plans with a 1.5°C compatible future is not only possible but also our best chance to contribute to building a climate-safe, more sustainable future.

Canada is the only G7 country whose emissions have gone up since the Paris agreement was signed.

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**It's time for Canada to put behind its legacy of committing new targets and then failing to achieve them.**

## ENDNOTES

- 1 [Hirshfield, 1953](#)
- 2 [Harvey, 2020](#)
- 3 [UN Paris Agreement, 2015](#)
- 4 [UNEP Emissions Gap Report, 2020](#)
- 5 [UNFCCC, 2021](#)
- 6 [CBC News, 2020](#)
- 7 [Climate Transparency, 2020](#)
- 8 [Government of Canada, 2015](#)
- 9 [ECCC, 2016](#)
- 10 [Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2020](#)
- 11 [Lee & Mertins-Kirkwood, 2020](#)
- 12 [SEI, IISD, ODI, E3G, and UNEP, 2020](#)
- 13 Under the UNFCCC, all countries to the Paris Agreement have agreed to communicate robust climate plans. The Paris Agreement mandates that countries communicate climate plans every five years. Each NDC represents a progression beyond the previous. Each NDC must reflect the country's highest possible ambition. Each NDC is seen as a dynamic process toward achieving the Paris Agreement long-term goals ([UNFCCC, n.d](#))
- 14 [Canada's Changing Climate Report, 2019](#)
- 15 [Canadian Medical Association, 2020](#)
- 16 [FCCC/PA/CMA/2018/3/Add.1](#)
- 17 [The White House, 2021](#)
- 18 In 2016 Canada had an emissions reduction target of 30% below 2005 levels in 2030. In 2020, the federal government announced a new range between 32% to 40%. During the 2021 federal budget, the Minister of Finance said that Canada could reduce emissions by 36% in 2030 below the same baseline. On Earth Day of 40% to 45% in 2030 below 2005 levels.
- 19 [Forster, 2021](#)
- 20 [Climate Action Tracker, 2020](#)
- 21 [Climate Action Network, 2019](#)
- 22 [OECD, n.d.](#)
- 23 [UNFCCC Adaptation Committee, 2019](#)
- 24 [Corkal et al., 2021](#)
- 25 [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2017](#)
- 26 [Indigenous Climate Action, 2021](#)
- 27 [CARE International & WEDO, 2020](#)
- 28 [Canada's Ecofiscal Commission, 2019, 4](#)
- 29 [Supreme Court of Canada, 2021](#)
- 30 This system consists of two components for provinces under the federal backstop: a consumer-level pollution price on fossil fuels; and a pollution price for industry, known as the Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS)
- 31 [Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2020](#)
- 32 [Canada's Ecofiscal Commission, 2016](#)
- 33 [Government of Canada, No date](#)
- 34 [IEA as cited by Clean Energy Canada, 2020](#)
- 35 [Équiterre, Limitless: Card Advertising in Canada, 2021](#)
- 36 [Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2021](#)
- 37 The federal government has committed \$295 million for electric vehicle (E.V.) production ([Corkal et al., 2021](#))
- 38 [International Council on Clean Transportation, 2020](#)
- 39 [The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change, 2019](#)
- 40 [Medical Officer of Health in the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area, 2014](#)
- 41 British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec and Nunavut
- 42 [Government of Canada, 2021](#)
- 43 [Ocean North, 2021](#)
- 44 [WWF Canada, 2020](#)
- 45 When it comes to airplanes, recently, the Canadian government committed \$5.9 billion to Air Canada, including \$500 million in equity investment, allowing the federal government to own 6% of the country's biggest airline. This funding was announced with no green conditions attached.
- 46 [Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2020](#)
- 47 Alberta's phase-out was moved forward to 2023 through a combination of renewable energy alternatives and switching existing coal plants to natural gas combined cycle units that can incorporate hydrogen blends. Almost all of Saskatchewan's coal facilities are slated for closure during this decade. One coal unit, Boundary Dam 3, is equipped with a carbon capture and storage facility that will remain operational after 2030. In the Atlantic region, Nova Scotia negotiated an equivalency agreement with the federal government to delay its coal phase-out to 2040.
- 48 [Gorman, 2021](#)
- 49 [Government of Canada, n.d.](#)
- 50 [IISD, 2019](#)
- 51 [Corkal et al., 2021](#)
- 52 [Government of Canada, 2021](#)



- 53 [Khan, 2021](#)
- 54 Support from the federal government can translate into investments that encourage fuel switching, deep energy retrofits and net-zero energy-ready new buildings. In fact, in December, the federal government announced measures that focus on efficiency gains for buildings. Canada pledged a \$1.5 billion commitment to invest in community buildings, with 10% of funding earmarked for Indigenous communities. In the 2021 Budget, the federal government committed funding to incentivize homeowners to complete retrofits and increasing energy efficiency. This year, the government announced its first-ever assessment of national infrastructure ([Government of Canada, n.d.](#))
- 55 The city of Vancouver has shown leadership in its Climate Emergency Action Plan in announcing it will set annual carbon pollution limits for most existing buildings that decrease over time.
- 56 [Government of Canada, 2021](#)
- 57 [Stand.Earth & Environmental Defence, 2018](#)
- 58 [Government of Canada, 2021](#)
- 59 [Carter & Dordi, 2021](#)
- 60 Our tax dollars support corporations like Export Development Canada, a Crown corporation that has provided up to \$13 billion annually in the public financing of fossil fuels.
- 61 During the last budget, the federal government announced billions of dollars for the new Strategic Innovation Fund's Net-Zero Accelerator to help high emitting industries achieve net-zero goals quickly. It also pledged \$1.5 billion for the new Low Carbon Fuels Fund to support hydrogen and biofuels production under the Clean Fuel Standard, while \$3 billion was earmarked for the automotive, aerospace and oil & gas sectors.
- 62 [Meza Murillo & Jørgensen, 2020](#)
- 63 [Switzerland, 2020](#)
- 64 [Environmental Defence et al., 2021](#)
- 65 [ECCC, 2020](#)
- 66 [Government of Canada, 2021](#)
- 67 [Environmental Defence et al., 2021](#)
- 68 [Switzerland, 2020](#)
- 69 [New Zealand Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.](#)
- 70 [Enerdata, n.d.](#)
- 71 [Corkal, 2021](#)
- 72 [WWF Canada, 2020](#)
- 73 [WWF Canada, 2020](#)
- 74 [Environment and Climate Change Canada, 2020](#)
- 75 Indigenous Peoples represent about 4% of the total Canadian population and hold a strong connection with nature for subsistence, livelihood and culture, which Canada's extractives economic model has particularly impacted.
- 76 [Many authors, 2021](#)
- 77 [Farmers for Climate Solutions, 2021](#)
- 78 [CICC Report, 2020](#)
- 79 [Bush & Lemmen, 2019](#)
- 80 [CICC Report, 2020](#)
- 81 [Government of Canada, n.d.](#)
- 82 [Vohra et al., 2021](#)
- 83 [Christianson, 2017](#)
- 84 [Howard et al., 2021](#)
- 85 [Canadian Institute for Climate Choices, 2020](#)
- 86 The six elements of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) under Article 6 of the Convention and reiterated in Article 12 of the Paris Agreement – education, training, public awareness, public access to information, public participation and international cooperation – must be integrated into Canada's NDC to build a whole-of-society approach to achieve a just and equitable low-carbon and climate-resilient future.
- 87 In Canada, between 150,000 and 200,000 people work directly in fossil fuel production, and hundreds of thousands more depend on the sector ([Mertins-Kirkwood & Duncalfe, 2021](#))
- 88 [Singh & Hopton, 2021](#)
- 89 [Canada's First Ministers, 2016](#)
- 90 [O21 SCC 11](#)
- 91 [Government British Columbia, n.d.](#)
- 92 [Government of Saskatchewan, n.d.](#)
- 93 [The Manitoba government, 2017](#)
- 94 [Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, 2018](#)
- 95 [Gouvernement du Québec, n.d.](#)
- 96 [Province of New Brunswick, n.d.](#)
- 97 [Province of Nova Scotia, n.d.](#)
- 98 [Prince Edward Island, 2020](#)
- 99 [Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.](#)
- 100 [Government of Yukon, 2020](#)
- 101 [Government of Northwest Territories, n.d.](#)
- 102 [Burck, Hagen, Höhne, Nascimento, & Christoph, 2021](#)
- 103 [Climate Transparency, 2020](#)

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## A PEOPLE'S PLAN: BENCHMARKS FOR EVALUATING CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE COMMITMENTS AHEAD OF 2021 SUMMIT

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