

# COP29 Media Backgrounder

## Expectations for Canada at COP29

**MEDIA  
BACKGROUNDER**  
November 2024



This year's UN climate negotiations are taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan, from November 11 to 22, in a context of geopolitical tension, mounting climate caused disasters and a fossil fuel driven affordability crisis. COP29 will bring together delegates from every national government to advance global efforts to prevent dangerous climate change.

This has been another disastrous year for climate-related events in almost every part of our planet. When countries signed the Paris Agreement in 2015 they agreed to work together to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees and avoid catastrophic and irreversible climate change. Yet, according to a recent report from the UN, [Emissions Gap Report 2024](#), we are still far off track and we're running out of time to keep the 1.5 goal within reach. This decade is critical. The necessity for global collaboration has never been higher.

Last year at COP28, for the first time, countries agreed to transition away from fossil fuels. The COP28 outcome sends an important signal about the future of fossil fuels. After 30 years of international negotiations failing to mention the root cause of the climate crisis, the acknowledgement that we must phase out all fossil fuels in order to effectively tackle the climate crisis is both long overdue and extremely significant.

As the end of the fossil fuel era continues to accelerate, so do efforts by oil and gas companies to delay climate action and the energy transition. [At least 2456 fossil fuel lobbyists](#) were granted access to the COP28 summit in Dubai and [35 lobbyists with ties to the fossil fuel sector were given Party badges by Canada](#). Oil and gas CEOs have shown that their only interest is to prolong business as usual for as long as possible, to protect their profits. This includes promoting dangerous distractions, including carbon capture, which have much more to do with justifying new fossil fuel infrastructure than effectively reducing emissions. Even with a massive expansion of CCS – itself extremely unlikely, expensive and risky – a rapid phase out of fossil fuels is still necessary.

Amidst energy security and affordability concerns, countries must stick to their commitments and accelerate the shift towards affordable, reliable and clean energy. Global conflicts and the surging price of fossil fuels, driven in large part by corporate profiteering, have laid bare the risks of relying on fossil fuels, as well as the benefits of transitioning to renewable energy.

## Building off of COP28: What was Secured

- The final outcome from COP28, [dubbed the UAE Consensus](#), calls on countries to:
  - “transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade”
  - “tripling renewable energy capacity globally and double the global average of annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030.”
- Countries agreed to the establishment of a fund for loss and damage, which is now in operation. Several countries made small initial contributions, including \$16 million from Canada. Loss and damage refers to the climate-related impacts experienced in the Global South that cannot be avoided or adapted to, for example the loss of lives, livelihoods and species, the damage to vital infrastructure that needs to be repaired after climate disasters, the costs of unavoidable relocation.
- Canada joined eight other countries in signing a [Joint Ministerial Statement on Fossil Fuel Subsidies](#), to address inaction on a 14 year old commitment to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies.
- Export Development Canada helped [launch a new Net Zero Export Credit Agencies Alliances](#), which commits them to ending support for fossil fuels by the end of 2024.

## What COP29 must deliver: finance, equity and ambition

- **Climate finance is the litmus test for COP29:** COP29 has been dubbed the “climate finance COP”. To deliver on the trajectory of action needed, wealthy countries like Canada need to provide finance for climate action in developing countries - to assist developing countries to reduce their own emissions and address the climate impacts they face. COP29 is the deadline for the adoption of a new collective quantified goal (NCQG), after a 3-year development process, as mandated by the Paris Agreement. This new framework aims to replace the existing 2009 commitment from developed countries to provide \$100 billion annually between 2020 and 2025 — a target missed by years. It is essential that developed countries rebuild trust. [There’s still much to settle](#), including the scale of funding, allocations, as well as an effort-sharing framework. There’s a pressing need for scaled-up climate finance far beyond \$100 billion annually. [Some estimates point to at least \\$1 trillion per year](#) — 1 per cent of global GDP — to meet the immediate climate needs of developing countries. The core of the new goal must be the provision of public, grant-based climate finance that considers the needs and priorities of developing countries. This is a matter of justice, not charity.
- **Stronger national climate commitments:** Countries agreed under the Paris Agreement to submit stronger national climate commitments (known as “nationally determined contributions,” or NDCs) every five years. The next round is due in February 2025. This makes COP29 the last major opportunity to set clear expectations for what this next generation of NDCs should aspire to. The latest UN Emissions Gap Report shows that current NDCs are wholly inadequate. The UAE Consensus, agreed at COP28, made clear that new national climate pledges must align with keeping global average temperatures below 1.5°C.
- **Uphold a fossil fuel phaseout:** Fossil fuels are causing the climate crisis. [Over 75 per cent](#) of global greenhouse gas emissions are from fossil fuels. The COP28 outcome saw unprecedented global commitments to transition away from fossil fuels, triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency. At COP29, countries must uphold the commitments made at

COP28 and must hold themselves accountable for making progress on those aims. There must have an honest assessment about how countries are doing, including Canada.

- **Kick Big Polluters Out:** The fossil fuel industry has sabotaged efforts to take action for decades. Just as tobacco companies are not allowed to influence health policy and arms dealers are kept out of peace talks, fossil fuel lobbyists should not be allowed at climate negotiations. The UNFCCC should introduce new rules to address this conflict of interest and restrict industry access.

## The Canadian Context

Canada continues to be one of the largest contributors to the climate crisis.

- [Canada ranks last](#) in the G7 in terms of progress on emissions reductions.
- Canada has amongst the [worst emissions per capita](#) in the G20.
- Canada is on track to be the [world's second largest developer](#) of new oil and gas extraction from 2023 to 2050. Canada alone could be responsible for 10 percent of planned expansion globally.
- Canada continues to add [less solar and wind generation](#) than other countries in the G7, G20 or OECD.
- The Government of Canada's current commitment to reduce emissions by 40 - 45 per cent from 2005 levels by 2030 falls far short of what Canada's fair share target: a 60 per cent reduction. Yet [the Government of Canada is still not on track](#) to meet even its current insufficient climate targets.
- Canadian banks are [the largest financiers](#) of fossil fuels globally, financing fossil fuel production and expansion both at home and abroad.

## What Canada needs to deliver at COP29

### 1. Deliver on climate finance and loss and damage

As a wealthy country and one of the largest contributors to the climate crisis, Canada must pay its climate debt and contribute its fair share of the new collective quantified goal. The Canadian Coalition on Climate Change and Development is calling for a tripling of Canada's climate finances to [\\$15.9 billion over the next five years](#), accompanied by a solid commitment to increasing the annual International Assistance Envelope by an equal amount, at a minimum. This likely won't cover Canada's fair share under the new target, depending on what is negotiated at COP29, but it would demonstrate a good faith contribution towards the required ambition.

### 2. A national climate target and plan that includes a plan to transition away from fossil fuels and scale up renewable energy and energy efficiency in line with global targets

Canada must submit its next nationally determined contributions, or NDC, before the February 2025 deadline.

In addition to including a 2035 emissions target, the climate plan must include strategies to achieve that target.

Emissions from oil and gas production and combustion make up the bulk of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions. A credible climate plan for Canada needs to include a timeline for phasing out our dependence on these fossil fuels. Additionally, by proactively planning for the energy transition, Canada will minimize negative impacts on employment and revenue while maximizing economic benefits.

Canada must do its fair share in achieving the global goal of tripling renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency by 2030. In fact, for Canada to meet its energy needs and climate goals, it will need to multiply its [renewable capacity by 4](#) by 2030, and by 14 by 2050 compared to today's levels. Despite vast potential for wind and solar, Canada has been slow to the race. In 2023 alone, [global renewable energy installations](#) grew by 50%, with [Germany installing 17 GW](#) of renewables and the [UK installing 14 GW](#). [Canada](#) installed just 2.3 GW.

When it comes to energy efficiency, Canada has [considerable room for improvement](#). Canadians are the second highest energy consumers per capita, while commercial buildings rank third in energy use per square metre.

### 3. An End all Fossil Fuel Subsidies and Public Financing

The Government of Canada has taken important steps to eliminate some forms of financial support provided to the oil and gas sector, including ending international public financing for fossil fuels and some fossil fuel subsidies. However, the bulk of Canada's support to the fossil fuel sector is domestic public financing delivered through Export Development Canada. Furthermore, the government must close loopholes that allow oil and gas companies to continue receiving massive subsidies for speculative technology, including carbon capture and storage and fossil-derived hydrogen. The government must finally deliver on its long-standing promise and end all forms of financial support for fossil fuels before the end of the year.

When COP29 ends, the Canadian public will want to know: did Canada's contribution help ensure a safe future - or did politicians add to the delay on climate action?

### Canadian Presence at COP29

In addition to the Government of Canada's negotiating team, high level politicians - including Ministers and Members of Parliament from across the political spectrum - will be attending. Prime Minister Trudeau and members of his Cabinet have not yet confirmed whether they will attend.

There will also be representatives from provincial governments, including Minister Schulz from the Government of Alberta. Given Alberta's disappointing track record on climate action – [including disastrous policy restrictions on renewable energy](#) and a lack of a 2030 emissions reduction target – it is clear that the Government of Alberta is attending in order to promote oil and gas, rather than bolster climate action. Alberta accounts for [nearly 40 per cent of Canada's emissions](#) – more than any other province – and is the only province where emissions have gone up significantly over the past two decades.



environmental  
defence

ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENCE: Environmental Defence is a leading Canadian environmental advocacy organization that works with government, industry and individuals to defend clean water, a safe climate and healthy communities. Visit [environmentaldefence.ca](https://www.environmentaldefence.ca) for more information.

For more information or to request an interview, please contact:  
[media@environmentaldefence.ca](mailto:media@environmentaldefence.ca)