

Public Engagement on Canada's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan

Deadline: January 14

[Submission portal](#)

Section 1: Achieving our 2030 Emissions Reduction Target of 40 – 45% by 2030

Q1. What opportunities do you think the Government of Canada should pursue to reduce emissions by 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2030 and position Canada to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, including in any or all of the following economic sectors? Please elaborate on your answers where appropriate, including any specific insights on policy opportunities or initiatives.

(Please refrain from using personal identifying information in your response).

Buildings

Mandate new buildings and homes be heated by sources other than fossil fuels by 2030, and provide easier and more universal incentives for retrofitting existing homes. Those least able to afford retrofitting are those most vulnerable to the impact of climate events, layers of racism and economic inequity, and job loss. Retrofitting buildings is an immense opportunity to implement training and re-training programs, support a strong small business sector and local economy, and address the lack of affordable housing, as long the focus remains on the people impacted, and not the politics.

Electricity

Proactively address sources of electricity so that additional environmental impacts aren't created. Be bold in outlining where we need to cut our energy use, not just replace fossil fuels with electricity: look at mandating local procurement and initiating right to repair legislation for example.

Heavy industry, including oil and gas

Immediately stop subsidizing the industry. Mandate an end to subsidies for oil and gas projects by Canadian banks and financial institutions by 2025.

Transportation

Tie infrastructure funding to provinces and territories to EV public transportation. Use federal authority to require credible, thorough impact assessments for projects that prioritize individual vehicle traffic, such as proposed Hwy 413 in Ontario.

Agriculture and waste

Support transition from large-scale industrial agricultural production to smaller-scale diverse operations with extensive incentive programs developed and led by farmers (not commercial farming operations). Mandate impact assessments for industrial agricultural developments. Waste should be a category on its own, as it pertains to much more than agriculture: support for food and packaging waste reduction programs by municipalities and industry would be helpful, as would legislation on packaging restrictions and the right to repair.

Nature-based climate solutions

Continue to pursue protection of as much natural area as possible, particularly habitats of species at risk and intact areas of biodiversity. Always prioritize natural areas over development. Collaboratively pursue transferring land title to Indigenous Peoples. Provide public opportunities for communities, businesses and individuals to share and collaborate on nature-based solutions.

Economy-wide (e.g. carbon pricing, climate-risk disclosure, sustainable finance, etc.)

More transparency about the actual costs of production and distribution is essential, including the health-care costs associated with air pollution from burning fossil fuels, the adaptation and restoration costs for communities prone to flooding, extreme heat and weather events, the social costs for people displaced by climate events, and so many others. Capturing those "costs" in the "price" of an item would be difficult and attempts to mandate it would be stalled by opposition. At the federal level, it should be made very clear how a reliance on fossil fuels adds costs to every aspect of our daily lives - there are very real economic impacts of which most of us may not be aware. For people who place a great deal of emphasis on the government's fiscal responsibilities, this kind of transparency could prompt engagement in the rapid transition that needs to happen to meet emissions targets.

Other, please specify

Deforestation

Please tell us more:

Old growth logging, and unrestrained logging in general, has to be addressed at the federal level. Planting new trees cannot substitute for the essential, complex role current forests have in sequestering carbon, preventing soil erosion, protecting biodiversity and moderating climate and temperature. Managing forests for extraction purposes is completely different from working in stewardship to allow forests to thrive, and the results are devastating. The federal government needs to mandate a forest management plan developed and implemented in true collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, biodiversity and climate change experts, and industry.

Q2. What do you see as the barriers or challenges to reducing emissions in these sectors? Do you have suggestions on how to overcome these barriers? (Please refrain from using personal identifying information in your response). 5000-word limit

One of the most challenging aspects of reducing emissions is that it requires facing the fact that we need to reduce our consumption and change our habits. That's a difficult ask, especially when corporate interests are intent on persuading us that we shouldn't have to suffer any inconvenience. Political competition only adds to that problem. Providing incentives and accessible alternatives partially addresses this challenge; e.g. incentives for EVs for individuals and public transportation, housing retrofits, etc. Much more is needed, however.

As we've experienced during the response to covid-19, sometimes changes in behaviour can be forced, especially if credible data and evidence is shared. That kind of sudden and dramatic change can lose momentum over time, however, as people become fatigued, leading to more anxiety and criticism. So, some mandated change can work, as long as progress can be shown toward the target.

The cost of living, inflation, job security, affordable housing and health care are consistently raised as priority issues for Canadians and issues for which the federal government is accountable. There has not been, to date, a strong, accurate, credible picture provided of how addressing climate change, especially through cutting our dependence on fossil fuels, would positively impact each of those issues, and how continuing on the path we're on will continue to exacerbate them. Even though the evidence keeps mounting - the past year in BC being a prime example - the connection is not yet clear enough for most people.

Leadership at the federal level means creating that picture of where we could go - in real terms. How many people currently working in the fossil fuel industry will be working in the alternative energy sectors by 2025, 2030, 2035? What kinds of new training programs will be offered to communities? How will new communities be healthier, safer, more convenient by incorporating the natural spaces they're in, being net-zero and food secure? How will existing urban spaces be made more livable and resilient to extreme weather? How can a family-based farming operation become sustainable environmentally and economically by 2025, and what impact will this have on communities' access to local and healthy food? How can the land titles of Indigenous Peoples be recognized and collaboratively enacted? Most importantly, how will the next generation, and generations after them, be part of creating and building this?

The strongest approach I can see to overcoming resistance and willful blindness is inclusion and collaboration. The Net-Zero Advisory Board is important, and there need to be many more opportunities for representatives from different communities, economic sectors, and life experiences to plan the way forward; it's particularly important for voices who are not typically heard to be part of the planning. That means opportunities need to take place in ways that encourage knowledge and creativity to be shared confidently, without fear of being ignored. Citizen consultation cannot be only on an individual level; we are more innovative and stronger when we work together.

Q3. What broader economic, technological, or social challenges and opportunities do you foresee resulting from efforts to reduce emissions in these sectors? For example, opportunities associated with economic diversification across sectors. Do you have suggestions on how to address these challenges and opportunities? (Please refrain from using personal identifying information in your response). 5000-word limit

- The principle of a just and fair transition is an opportunity to implement a guaranteed living wage nationally, providing stability and encouraging individuals to create meaningful, solutions-focused roles for themselves.
- Removing subsidies and support for oil and gas projects and pipelines could open the door to meaningful consultation on resource management between Indigenous Peoples and the federal government.

Q4. Looking beyond 2030, what enabling measures, strategies or technological pathways do you think the Government of Canada should put in place now to ensure that Canada is on track to net-zero emissions by 2050?

- Make the most of innovation and experience in the construction sector to develop a plan to net-zero emission regulations for home building and maintenance, public buildings, and retrofit initiatives.
- Mandate that Canada's banks and financial institutions withdraw all subsidies for fossil fuel industry.
- A consistent, credible source of tracking emissions and offsets as a set reference for reporting on progress, to minimize time spent debating statistics

Q5. What broader economic, technological, or social issues do you foresee as a result of the transition to a net-zero economy in Canada? Do you have suggestions on how to address these issues?

- Greenwashing, as a way to misrepresent actual emissions or to distract from destructive practices by focusing on investments in "green" projects and initiatives (as is currently happening in Canada's biggest banks). Having a consistent reference and credible way of tracking actual emissions, as mentioned above, would provide a way to fact-check industry and government reporting.
- It is possible that rapid transition to meet net-zero targets could exacerbate division of wealth and privilege: those able to choose housing and transportation will receive the benefits, while those unable to access options will be left behind; primary examples being First Nations and remote communities. Collaborative and inclusive planning is essential to avoid this scenario.

Q6. How would you like to be engaged on Canada's climate plans moving forward? How often should this engagement occur, and what method or format would be preferable?
(Please refrain from using personal identifying information in your response).

- Online information sessions
- Email updates
- Citizen forums (in person or online)

- Updates should be shared widely through a variety of networks: the invitation to complete this survey was not widespread, and I didn't hear about the previous consultation in 2021
- Updates should be provided monthly, and engagement opportunities should be at least prior to developing each emission reduction plan and after each plan is developed
- There should be open opportunities to engage with the government on the plan to reach net-zero: there should be an identified person or body to which we can provide input. These kinds of surveys can be intimidating for individuals to complete, meaning that most of the input you receive will come from organizations, industry, and those already involved in the issue, who likely already have a voice. Much more robust and diverse input would much better inform your plans.