

## Three visions for the Green Party of Canada that may be operating at cross purposes

1. **A protest party** that offers a vehicle for activists to bring their cause into the national spotlight
2. **A political machine** that adopts mainstream political strategies to win seats and gain power
3. **A political paradigm shift** dedicated to reinventing how we do politics in Canada by reaching across the sociopolitical divide and building bridges to a sustainable future for all our grandchildren.

Most of us recognize that under Elizabeth May's leadership we have been making progress by migrating to #3. Some don't know how much of a hindrance #2 has been to getting there. Many are clear that if we move back to #1 they will walk away firmly clutching their wallet and shaking their head in dismay.

We owe it to ourselves, we owe it to our voters, and we owe it to the Canadian public, to build consensus around contentious issues. We need to review our internal processes to ensure that any resolutions passed as policy or entrenched in our constitution has the full support of our membership and our leadership, and meets our overall objectives of representing a Green Vision, for a sustainable future, in the House of Commons.

We've worked too hard, we've given too much, to go back to being just a party on the fringe of Canadian politics. Other Green Parties in Germany and New Zealand have matured past this point to a place where delegates represent a constituency at convention and the elected members, both local and federal, are included in the resolution development process. We don't have to reinvent the wheel but if we want to be able to participate in government, our policies have to represent our collective values and our principles, not the tactics of a protest group.

Greens are a trusting lot that prefer to build bridges instead of walls. We prefer consensus over confrontation and yet the fallout from last summer's convention has polarized our membership. We need to come together and explore the vulnerabilities in our governance model including the suspension of Green Rules which help us build consensus and the erosion of post convention ratification votes which gives the final say on policies to a very small minority with the resources to attend convention.

At a time when we are championing consensus based governance and Proportional Representation under Electoral Reform we must be careful not to allow our internal processes to slip in the other direction. In the lead-up to this December's Special General Meeting it's time to reflect on who we are so we can be clear in our support for our Leadership and our Federal Council.

[http://www.sgreenparty.ca/who\\_we\\_are](http://www.sgreenparty.ca/who_we_are)