

# WILL CANADA FINALLY TACKLE THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE?

## An updated comparison of federal parties' positions on climate change



équiterre

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It's clear that we need strong action on climate change. Here in Canada, we've experienced extreme weather, including floods, ice storms and forest fires. As the world heats up, we can expect more of this here and around the world.

Only six weeks after Canada's federal election, national governments will gather in Paris for United Nations talks to finalize a global climate change agreement. This further elevates the importance of climate change in Canada's upcoming federal election since Canada's positions at the negotiations could help the world come to a meaningful global agreement or hinder the process.

Recent polls show that Canadians are looking for greater leadership from the federal government on climate change.<sup>1</sup> **This primer lays out each federal political party's main climate change policies, including key policies required to reduce Canada's carbon emissions. These key policies include renewable energy development, energy efficiency programs, strategies on public transit and the electrification of our transportation system.**

**Only six weeks after the federal election, national governments will gather in Paris for United Nations talks to finalize a global climate change agreement. This further elevates the importance of climate change in this election since Canada's positions at the negotiations could help the world come to a meaningful global agreement or hinder the process.**

The primer is an expanded update of a document published by Environmental Defence in July.

The information in this updated version was compiled by using responses from federal parties to a recent questionnaire sent by Équiterre and Environmental Defence and, where required, supplemented by information from campaign materials published by the parties.

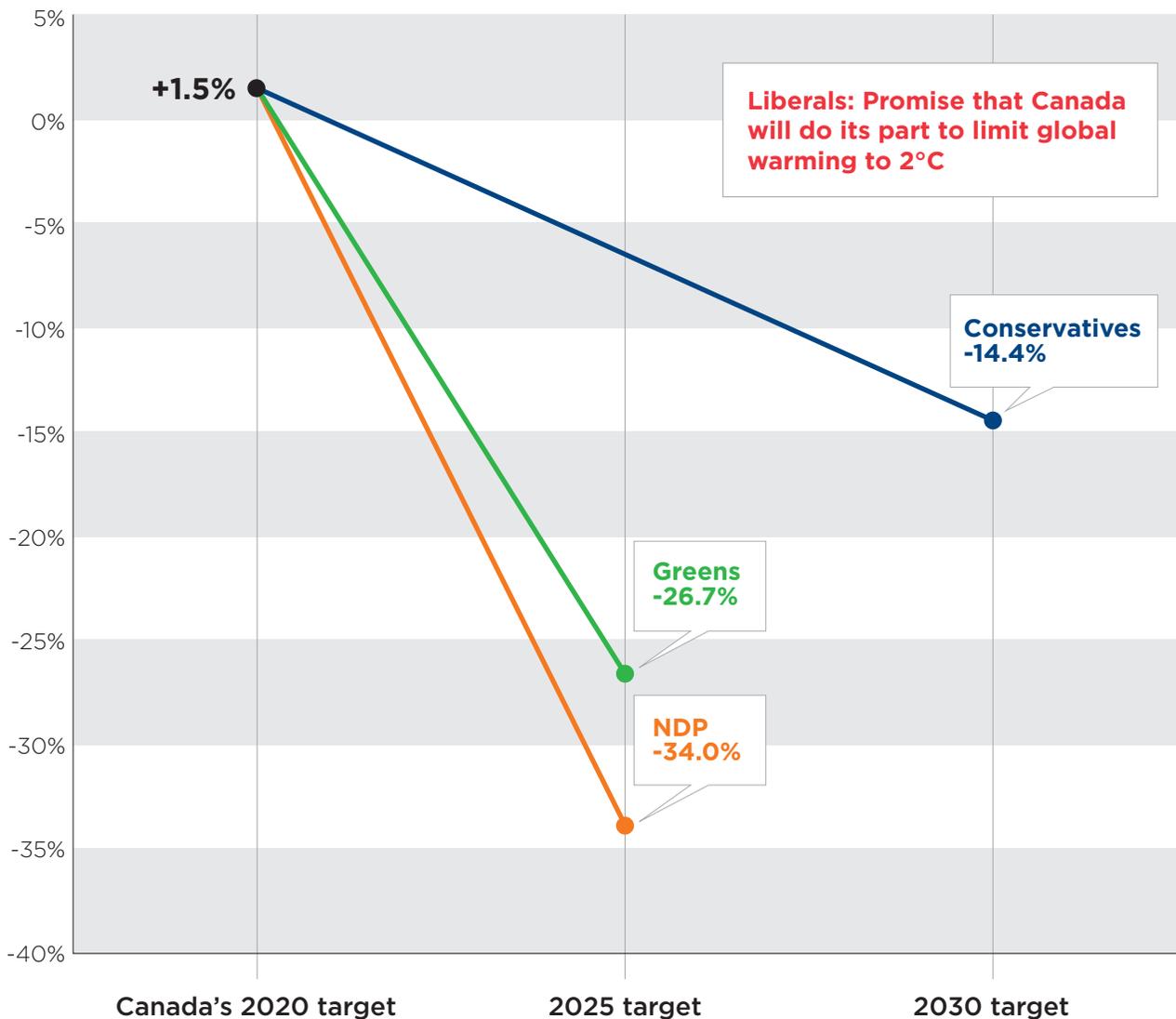
### In this analysis, we compare:

- The parties' post-2020 carbon pollution reduction target
- The parties' positions on providing financial assistance to developing countries to help them adapt to climate change
- Each party's domestic policy proposals for reaching carbon targets, including:
  - The main mechanism for reducing carbon pollution across the economy
  - How soaring carbon emissions from the tar sands will be addressed. The tar sands represent the biggest barrier to climate leadership in Canada since little progress can be made on climate change without cutting carbon pollution from the tar sands.
- Whether parties support new tar sands pipelines like the proposed Energy East pipeline
- Renewable energy targets
- Energy efficiency goals and strategy
- Public transit strategy, and the electrification of transportation more generally

To compare the parties' post-2020 carbon reduction target, it is assumed that the starting point is Canada's existing 2020 target, which government data shows is not on track to be met. However, a federal government that takes strong, immediate action could make a lot of progress towards the 2020 target in the next five years.

Each party's target is depicted in Figure 1 and the party's positions are discussed in greater detail below.

**Figure 1: GHG reduction commitments (per cent below 1990)**



The government's Paris pledge and other federal party positions are laid out in Table 1.

**Table 1: Positions of federal parties on Paris climate action pledge**

	<b>Conservative Party</b>	<b>New Democratic Party</b>	<b>Liberal Party</b>	<b>Green Party</b>
2025 target* (relative to 1990)	-6.5 per cent	-34 per cent	Proposes to do its part to limit average global warming to 2 degrees Celsius	-26.7 per cent
Main policy mechanism	Sector-by sector regulations	Cap-and-trade	Set principles that provinces must meet	Fee-and-dividend
Main mechanism includes tar sands sector?	No	Yes	Depends on Alberta policies	Yes
Commitment to adaptation financing?	No	Yes, but no amount cited	No, but critical of government for not committing	Yes: \$500 million/year
Includes life-cycle GHGs in environmental assessment process for tar sands/ pipeline projects?	No	States that environmental reviews must be meaningful, take into account a project's impact on the climate, and be coherent with Canada's international climate obligations	Proposes to revamp the regulatory approval process for energy projects to make them "comprehensive, timely, and fair" and include in environmental assessments "an analysis of upstream impacts and the greenhouse gas emissions" from a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, pledges to incorporate life-cycle GHGs into assessments of all proposed fossil fuel infrastructure projects and to ensure projects conform with Canada's goals to transition to a low-carbon economy.</li> <li>• Proposes to strengthen the assessment process to reverse recent weakening</li> <li>• States that most of the bitumen in the Alberta tar sands must remain in the ground, while increasing refining in Canada rather than exporting raw bitumen</li> <li>• Proposes to cancel \$1.3 billion in fossil fuel subsidies</li> </ul>

\*The Conservatives have set a 2030 target. The 2025 target is the midway point between Canada's 2020 target set in Copenhagen and the Conservative Party's 2030 target.

**Table 1: Positions of federal parties on Paris climate action pledge (continued)**

	Conservative Party	New Democratic Party
Supports construction of Energy East pipeline?	Yes	Not clear. Supports a west-to-east pipeline, but “it is not responsible to go ahead with any project unless there is a strong environmental review regime in place.”
Target and strategy for renewable energy deployment	Unknown	No target, but proposes to work with provinces to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a target</li> <li>• Create Green Bonds, allowing Canadians to invest up to \$4.5 billion over four years in clean energy, climate resilient infrastructure, commercial and industrial energy retrofits, and other sustainable development projects</li> <li>• Invest \$1.5 billion of federal money over four years in green programs, including in local, clean energy development in northern and remote communities</li> </ul>
Energy efficiency goals and strategy	Unknown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• States that energy efficiency is a priority for energy costs and GHGs, so proposes to work with provinces to set goals</li> <li>• Proposes that part of the \$1.5 billion program (see above) would fund a home energy retrofit program that retrofits 50,000 homes and 50 apartment buildings over first four years and invest in innovative sustainable development projects through the Green Municipal Fund</li> </ul>
Position on public transit development	In last budget, created Public Transit Fund to finance public transit in 2017-2018 (\$750 million), 2018-2019 (\$750 million), and thereafter (\$1 billion/year)	Proposes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a Better Transit Plan that invests over \$1.3 billion annually over 20 years</li> <li>• By end of first mandate, increase Gas Tax Fund transfers by additional \$1.5 billion per year, which cities can choose to use for transit</li> <li>• Restore funding to passenger rail services and invest in passenger rail infrastructure</li> </ul>

	Liberal Party	Green Party
	Not clear. Supports getting oil to markets, but states that all pipeline projects need social licence, which Energy East does not have; Also not clear whether Energy East would face the revamped regulatory approval proposed by the Liberals	No, opposed to “all new raw bitumen export schemes,” including the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion and the proposed Energy East pipeline
	No target, but proposes a number of measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop North American clean energy/environment agreement</li> <li>• Invest \$100 million more per year in organizations that help to develop emerging clean technologies</li> <li>• Supports research, commercialization, and worker training in clean tech</li> <li>• Develop a Canadian energy strategy to increase renewables on the grid, including through federal spending on infrastructure</li> <li>• Shift subsidies from fossil fuels to “new and clean technology”</li> <li>• Create Canada Green Investment Bonds to invest in large- and community-scale renewable energy projects</li> <li>• Increase federal government’s use of clean technology in energy, buildings, and procurement</li> </ul>	No target, but proposes a number of measures as part of national energy strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake 10-year program to invest in improvements in the power grid to increase renewable power inputs and in R&amp;D funding for electricity storage technologies</li> <li>• Invest \$180 million per year in national solar roof program</li> <li>• Other funding support for wind, solar, geothermal and tidal power</li> <li>• Allocate \$1 billion/year to get emerging clean energy technologies to market through Green Technology Commercialization Grants</li> <li>• Invest in infrastructure that promotes renewable energy and a more robust east-west electricity grid</li> </ul>
	Proposes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve energy efficiency standards of consumer/commercial products</li> <li>• Create financing instruments to boost investment in distributed energy and building retrofits</li> <li>• Include energy conservation in a national energy strategy</li> </ul>	Proposes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Canadian Sustainable Generations Fund that will invest in, among other things, energy efficiency</li> <li>• Reintroduce and expand home renovation tax credit and fund program to increase energy efficiency of public buildings such as schools, universities and hospitals</li> <li>• Set a goal to retrofit all Canadian homes by 2030 and reduce emissions from buildings by 80 per cent by 2040</li> </ul>
	Proposes to provide “almost \$20 billion more” over 10 years in “flexible” transit funding for cities	Proposes to develop a national transportation strategy and a national transit strategy that would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate funding with other governments to build and operate public transit</li> <li>• Increased funding for Via Rail (\$600 million in 2016-2017, building to \$764 million by 2020)</li> <li>• Re-invest in national rail systems: building more train cars in Canada, increasing train speeds, phasing in high-speed rail, creating green transportation and energy infrastructure corridors</li> </ul>

**Table 1: Positions of federal parties on Paris climate action pledge (continued)**

	<b>Conservative Party</b>	<b>New Democratic Party</b>	<b>Liberal Party</b>	<b>Green Party</b>
Strategy for electrification of transportation	Unknown	<p>Proposes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support R&amp;D in electrification of transport</li> <li>• Facilitate adoption of electric transportation options</li> <li>• Establish targets for the electrification of federal fleets</li> <li>• Strengthen Canada’s green procurement policy to reduce long-term fuel costs and maintenance</li> <li>• Install 150 new recharging stations for electric vehicles across Canada by 2017</li> </ul>	<p>Proposes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend subsidies (in the form of accelerated capital cost allowance) to electricity-storage technologies like batteries and electrical car charging stations</li> <li>• Add electric vehicle charging facilities at federal parking lots</li> <li>• “Rapidly” add electric vehicles to the federal fleet</li> </ul>	<p>Proposes a sustainable vehicle strategy with provinces and auto industry to encourage electric cars and other green vehicles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give tax incentives for electricity storage to benefit renewable energy development</li> <li>• Create incentives for Canadian manufacturers of electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles</li> <li>• Give a \$1,000 rebate on the purchase of an electric vehicle</li> </ul>



**CONSERVATIVE PARTY**

Represented by the Conservative Party, the Government of Canada in June put

forward its Paris pledge, a 30 per cent reduction below 2005 levels by 2030, or 14 per cent below 1990 levels by 2030 (see Figure 1).<sup>2</sup>

To reach this target, the government announced new initiatives in its pledge for Paris as part of its sector-by-sector approach.

Additional sectors to be regulated include:

- Natural gas-fired electricity
- The chemical industry, including nitrogen fertilizer manufacturers
- Methane emissions in the oil and gas sector
- Sources of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)<sup>3</sup>

A North American initiative on reducing emissions of HFCs has been in the works for several years already.<sup>4</sup>

**The government’s pledge did not contain any commitment to adaptation financing, though in November 2014 the Canadian government did commit \$300 million to kickstart the Green Climate Fund.**

This issue is the lynchpin in the global climate negotiations. Developing countries, especially least developed countries and vulnerable countries like small island states, have long held the view that rich, industrialized countries are largely responsible for the problem of climate change. Therefore, they should assist poor, developing countries who are already facing impacts, who are most vulnerable now and in the future, and who are largely not responsible for filling the atmosphere with carbon pollution. In Copenhagen, industrialized countries committed to mobilizing US\$100 billion per year in climate assistance by 2020. The Green Climate Fund was subsequently set up to receive and administer those funds.

### ***Analysis of Canadian government's Paris pledge***

**Canada's post-2020 target is the weakest in the G7.**<sup>5</sup> The United States is aiming to achieve essentially the same reduction target in 2025, or five years earlier, putting our closest trading neighbour on track for deeper pollution reductions in the medium to long-term, with Canada trailing behind.<sup>6</sup>

Climate Action Tracker, an initiative of four research institutions (Climate Analytics, Ecofys, NewClimate Institute, and Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research), assessed Canada's pledge as inadequate, meaning **if Canada adopts this pledge the country will not be doing its fair share to avoid dangerous climate change impacts.**<sup>7</sup>

Climate Action Tracker also pointed out that Canada's pledge is even weaker than the target would indicate

because Canada proposes to use dubious carbon accounting rules. For example, it will include processes that take carbon out of the atmosphere (in the form of wood products from forestry) but not take into account processes that add carbon to the atmosphere (e.g. forest fires, insect infestations). This would weaken Canada's target to an estimated 21 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030 (9 per cent below 1990).<sup>8</sup>

**The federal government has neglected to regulate emissions from Canada's fastest growing source of carbon pollution – the tar sands.**

**Further, the federal government has neglected to regulate emissions from Canada's fastest growing source of carbon pollution – the tar sands.** The list of sectors that will be regulated to attain the 2030 target does not include the oil industry, despite many years of government promises that carbon pollution from the oil and gas sector will be regulated.

A government document obtained by the CBC stated that the tar sands posed a unique challenge in that there are no options for reducing emissions from the sector.<sup>9</sup> This would suggest that a government that wanted to address climate change would have to impose a moratorium on new development in the short term and,

in the longer term, put into place policies to transition away from this uniquely dirty source of energy. But the governing Conservatives have never suggested such an approach, and neither have the federal NDP or Liberals. Only the Greens have.

## Canada's post-2020 target is the weakest in the G7.

### Other key climate policies

The Conservative Party's other policies related to climate change and

clean energy are relatively unknown, since, as of this writing, the party platform has not been fully released and the party did not respond to our questionnaire.

There are commitments to investment in public transit but not right away. In the last budget, the federal government created a Public Transit Fund but funding to that program will commence in 2017-2018. For that fiscal year and the next, the government promised \$750 million in federal funding for public transit. Annual funding rises to \$1 billion/year thereafter.<sup>10</sup> Conservative plans to electrify transportation are unknown.



### NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

In 2014 the NDP put forward a private member's bill called the Climate Change

Accountability Act (CCAA)<sup>11</sup>, and the party's positions on climate change continue to be guided by its details. The Act's target is to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas pollution to 34 per cent below 1990 levels by 2025 (see Figure 1). **This target is in line with keeping average global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius**, a level of warming that is often cited by the scientific community as the threshold at which climate change impacts become dangerous. The target would also put Canada on track for reducing its carbon pollution by 80 per cent by 2050, a target that would also be legislated if the NDP's Climate Change Accountability Act were passed.<sup>12</sup>

**According to the NDP, the cap-and-trade system would include all major emitting sectors in Canada, including the tar sands and, more generally, the oil and gas sector.**

Also part of a package that an NDP government would bring to the Paris climate summit, **the NDP has committed to providing adaptation financing.** Though the amount was not disclosed, the NDP platform states that the party believes in "[h]elping developing countries build energy security and green technologies, and to protect their natural resources and ecosystems."<sup>13</sup>

The federal NDP, most recently in a speech by leader Thomas Mulcair, has also put forward the main mechanism it would use to reach these targets – a cap-and-trade system. According to the NDP, the cap-and-trade system would include all major emitting sectors in Canada, including the tar sands and, more generally, the oil and gas sector.<sup>14</sup> The NDP has said that provinces will be able to opt out of the federal system if they have carbon pricing that at least meets the federal one.<sup>15</sup>

**The NDP has committed to creating a Better Transit Plan that will invest over \$1.3 billion annually over 20 years.**

### ***Other key climate policies***

The NDP's position on Energy East pipeline is not clear. The party supports a west-to-east pipeline but says that "it is not responsible to go ahead with any project unless there is a strong environmental review regime in place."<sup>16</sup> The NDP has also stated that it will modify the existing federal National Energy Board process in a manner that "will ensure that these reviews are meaningful and that they account for a project's impact on our climate and its coherence with our new international obligation to reduce Canada's greenhouse gas emissions."<sup>17</sup> The federal NDP states that it will work with lower levels of government on other issues related to clean energy. For example,

in collaboration with the provinces, the NDP "will establish a target for the development and deployment of renewable energy," and "establish goals for achieving energy efficiency in buildings, homes, and more."<sup>18</sup>

The NDP will also create Green Bonds, allowing Canadians to invest up to \$4.5 billion over four years in "clean energy, climate resilient infrastructure, commercial and industrial energy retrofits, and other sustainable development projects."<sup>19</sup>

The NDP also proposes to invest \$1.5 billion of federal money over four years in green programs, including:

- Introduce a home energy retrofit program and retrofit 50,000 homes and 50 apartment buildings over the first four years,
- Invest in local, clean energy development in northern and remote communities,
- Invest in innovative sustainable development projects through the Green Municipal Fund, and
- Restore funding to passenger rail services and invest in passenger rail infrastructure.<sup>20</sup>

On sustainable transportation, the NDP has committed to **"creating a Better Transit Plan that will invest over \$1.3 billion annually over 20 years."**<sup>21</sup> The party also pledged to increase the transfer to municipalities through the existing Gas Tax Fund by an additional \$1.5 billion per year by the end of its first mandate. Municipalities can choose to invest these transfers as they please, including for public transit. The NDP also promises to support research and development (R&D) in the electrification of transport, facilitate

the adoption of electric transportation options across Canada, establish federal targets for the electrification of federal fleets and strengthen Canada's green procurement policy to reduce long-term fuel costs and maintenance.<sup>22</sup> **The party has set as**

**a goal to install 150 new recharging stations for electric vehicles across the country by 2017.**<sup>23</sup> Though the NDP should be praised for having a target for charging stations, Quebec alone already has roughly 700 stations.<sup>24</sup>



### **LIBERAL PARTY**

The federal Liberals' positions on the U.N. climate summit in Paris are less definitive than those of the

Conservatives, NDP, or Greens, although the Liberal Party has put out a number of proposals on climate change and energy. **Environment critic John McKay supported the NDP's private member's bill on behalf of the Liberals, but the party has not unveiled its carbon reduction target.**<sup>25</sup>

Leader Justin Trudeau has said that as Prime Minister he will work with the provinces to develop a pan-Canadian framework to address climate change.<sup>26</sup> Canada's carbon reduction target will be informed by "the best economic and scientific analysis" and recognize the necessity of Canada doing its part to limit average global warming to 2 degrees Celsius, but that target will only be developed in the 90-day period after the Paris climate summit.<sup>27</sup> It remains to be seen how a Liberal-led Canadian government would engage in the Paris negotiations without putting forward a climate target or framework.

The Liberals' main mechanism for reducing carbon emissions also relies

heavily on the provinces, setting standards or principles for the provinces to commit to and meet, much like the *Canada Health Act* sets healthcare principles.<sup>28</sup> As part of the agreement with willing provinces, a Liberal government would "ensure that the provinces and territories have adequate tools to design their own policies to meet these commitments" and would "provide targeted federal funding to help them achieve these goals."<sup>29</sup> Carbon pricing policies would be part of the needed commitments from the provinces,<sup>30</sup> though the level of the carbon price that would have to be met by the provinces has not been disclosed.

The final element of the Liberals' platform for the Paris summit, international adaptation financing, has not yet been revealed. Though John McKay was critical of the government's Paris pledge because it did not receive adaptation financing,<sup>31</sup> the Liberals have yet to commit to adaptation financing or state what the level of financial assistance should be to help developing countries to adapt to climate change.

### **Other key climate policies**

The Liberal Party has promised to revamp the regulatory approval process for energy projects to make them "comprehensive, timely, and

fair” and with “robust oversight.”<sup>32</sup> **Most important is a promise that environmental assessments include “an analysis of upstream impacts and the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the projects,”**<sup>33</sup> though how this analysis will factor into the decision or whether projects like the Energy East pipeline proposal will have to go through the new assessment is still not known. Also not clear is the Liberal position on Energy East. Trudeau has said that tar sands oil needs to get to market but also that pipelines need to have a social licence to proceed, something he has said that Energy East does not have.<sup>34</sup>

**Most important is a promise that environmental assessments include an analysis of upstream impacts and the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the projects.**

**Like other parties, the Liberals have not set a target for the deployment of clean, renewable energy, but they have put forward a number of proposals to both improve clean energy technologies and increase their prominence in Canada’s energy portfolio,** including:

- Develop an “ambitious” clean energy and environment agreement with the U.S. and Mexico

- Invest \$100 million more per year in organizations like Sustainable Development Technology Canada that work on emerging clean technologies
- Support research (through Canada Research Chairs in sustainable technology), commercialization, and worker training in clean technologies
- Develop a Canadian energy strategy to get more renewables onto the power grid, including through federal investments in infrastructure (grid, power storage, and transmission upgrades to allow more clean energy, and energy efficient buildings equipped with renewable energy)<sup>35</sup>
- Phase out subsidies for the fossil fuel industry and shift them to investments in “new and clean technology”
- Create Canada Green Investment Bonds to support large- and community-scale renewable energy projects
- “Dramatically increase” the federal government’s use of clean technology in energy, buildings, and procurement<sup>36</sup>

The Liberal Party has also put forward pledges to improve energy efficiency in Canada. It proposes to improve the energy efficiency standards for consumer products so they reflect the best available technology and create financing instruments to stimulate investment in distributed energy systems and building retrofits for industry, commercial businesses and residential homes.<sup>37</sup> The Liberal-proposed Canadian energy strategy

will also include energy conservation as a focus.<sup>38</sup>

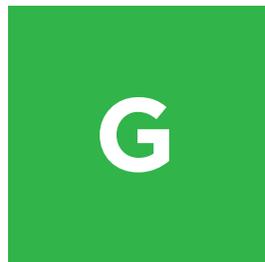
On public transportation, the federal Liberals promised to provide “almost \$20 billion more” in transit funding for cities over the next 10 years.<sup>39</sup> These would be additional to commitments made by the federal government in their 2015 budget (see above).<sup>40</sup> The Liberals state that this funding would be “flexible to municipalities’ priorities” and implemented through bilateral agreements with the provinces.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, the Liberals have proposed a number of measures related to the electrification of transportation. They pledge to extend subsidies (in the form of accelerated capital cost allowance) to electricity-storage

technologies like batteries and electrical car charging stations.<sup>42</sup>

The Liberals would also add electric vehicle charging facilities at federal parking lots, and “rapidly” add electric vehicles to the federal fleet.<sup>43</sup>

**On public transportation, the federal Liberals promised to provide almost \$20 billion more in transit funding for cities over the next 10 years.**



## GREEN PARTY

The Green Party’s position, first laid out in a background paper on climate change<sup>44</sup> and reiterated in its

campaign platform<sup>45</sup> is to reduce Canada’s carbon pollution to at least 40 per cent below 2005 levels by 2025 (about 27 per cent below 1990). The Green target is almost twice as strong as the Conservative one (and would be achieved in half the time) but it is slightly less ambitious than the NDP target (Figure 1). The Greens also set the goal of reducing Canada’s greenhouse gas pollution by at least 80 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050.<sup>46</sup>

In terms of the main mechanism for reducing emissions, the federal

Greens would implement a fee-and-dividend policy, which is a price on carbon for all fossil fuels used in Canada, with the money returned in its entirety to Canadians in the form of an equal dividend for every adult.<sup>47</sup> The fee-and-dividend system would include industrial polluters, such as conventional oil and gas producers and tar sands companies. **The Green party’s background paper on climate change suggests that the carbon price could begin at \$50 per tonne of carbon dioxide and increase to \$200/tonne by 2030,**<sup>48</sup> but these suggested carbon price levels are not included in the official platform.

Finally, as part of its positions for the Paris climate summit, the Green Party would commit Canada to contributing \$500 million per year to the Green

Climate Fund to assist developing countries to address climate change.<sup>49</sup>

### **Other key climate policies**

The Green Party proposes to “incorporate life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions into all assessments of future fossil fuel infrastructure projects and ensure any projects conform with our long-term goals of transitioning to a low-carbon economy.”<sup>50</sup> The party also proposes to amend environmental assessment legislation to strengthen the assessment process and reverse the weakened changes made by the current government.<sup>51</sup>

On the issue of tar sands expansion, **the Green Party platform states that most of the bitumen in the Alberta tar sands must remain in the ground, and is proposing for Canada to stop the growth in production from the tar sands and rapidly phase out coal usage.**<sup>52</sup> For the bitumen that is extracted from the tar sands, the Green Party is opposed to “all new raw bitumen export schemes,” including the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion and the proposed Energy East pipeline, and instead proposes increased refining in Canada rather than the export of raw bitumen.<sup>53</sup> The Greens would also cancel subsidies to fossil fuel companies, which they estimate at \$1.3 billion per year.<sup>54</sup>

The Green Party proposes a national energy strategy to ensure energy security, promote value-added jobs from all energy sources, diversify the energy sector, increase renewable energy production, and help transition Canada away from fossil fuels.<sup>55</sup> The party would undertake a 10-year program to invest in

improvements in the power grid to increase renewable power inputs and in R&D funding for electricity storage technologies.<sup>56</sup> Additional investments of \$180 million per year would go towards a national solar roof program, and federal funding would also support the deployment of wind turbines, solar photovoltaics, an increased geothermal capacity, and tidal energy.<sup>57</sup> To get emerging clean energy technologies to market and create jobs and economic opportunities in Canada, the Greens are proposing federally-funded, \$1 billion per year Green Technology Commercialization Grants.<sup>58</sup>

**The Green Party platform states that most of the bitumen in the Alberta tar sands must remain in the ground, and is proposing for Canada to stop the growth in production from the tar sands and rapidly phase out coal usage.**

Other pledges in their platform include the creation of **a Canadian Sustainable Generations Fund that would “[i]nvest in infrastructure that promotes renewable energy and a more robust east-west electricity grid.”**<sup>59</sup> The party would also invest in energy efficiency by reintroducing and expanding the home renovation tax credit to increase

the energy efficiency of homes and businesses and by funding a program to increase the energy efficiency of public buildings such as schools, universities and hospitals.<sup>60</sup> The Green Party has set goals to retrofit all Canadian homes by 2030 and to reduce the carbon emissions from buildings by 80 per cent by 2040.<sup>61</sup>

**The party would undertake a 10-year program to invest in improvements in the power grid to increase renewable power inputs and in R&D funding for electricity storage technologies.**

Finally, the Green Party proposes a national transportation strategy. Part of that would entail bringing together provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous governments to create a

national transit strategy and coordinate funding to build and operate public transit.<sup>62</sup> It also proposes increased funding for Via Rail (\$600 million in 2016-2017, building to \$764 million by 2020) and to “re-invest in our national rail systems, building more train cars in Canada, increasing train speeds, phasing in high-speed rail where feasible, and creating green transportation and energy infrastructure corridors in key regions.”<sup>63</sup>

The Green Party is also proposing a sustainable vehicle strategy, working with provinces and the vehicle industry to encourage electric cars and other green vehicles by:

- Giving tax incentives for electricity storage to benefit renewable energy development
- Creating incentives for Canadian manufacturers of electric and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles
- Giving a \$1000 rebate on the purchase of an electric vehicle<sup>64</sup>

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## CONCLUSION

The pledges and positions of Canada’s federal parties are important. How federal parties promise to address climate change may play a role in October’s election and the outcome of that election will determine Canada’s international position going into the UN climate talks in Paris in December.

**Canadians want our country to do our fair share to tackle climate change and join leading nations in this fight. The question is: Are the federal parties ready to listen?**



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