

# Federal Election 2025 Voter Toolkit



Prepared by the  
Ecology Action Centre



Ecology Action Centre

## About this toolkit

Canada is holding a federal election on April 28, 2025 – one that will impact environmental action for the next four years. While tariffs, the economy and our very sovereignty are on the minds of Canadians this election, the ties that bind us together as a country run deeper: our unique and iconic landscapes, forests and coastlines, clean air and water, fairness for everyone and hope for future generations.

The many crises facing our world – from the rise of authoritarianism and polarization to the high cost of living to environmental degradation – are interconnected, and we need solutions that recognize how they can be addressed together.

It is critical that our political leadership has the courage, clear plans and resolve to respond to these crises in a way that prioritizes care for all our communities and the ecosystems that sustain us.

In a moment where it feels like the very foundations of democracy are at risk, elections are even more important. Elections, along with a strong civil society, independent media and government transparency, are key to a healthy and functioning democracy. This election is an opportunity for you, as a community member or representative of a community organization, to help shape the priorities of our country. One of the best ways to do this is by using your voice: talk to your friends and family and engage with your political candidates on the issues that you care about.

The Ecology Action Centre has developed this toolkit to help you have some of those important conversations. The topics in the following pages are areas where the EAC has ongoing work and where we have identified clear federal actions that could be done quickly and that would have meaningful impacts on our communities.



## About this toolkit (continued)

Given current political polarization, we have also included a section ([Talking across the divide – p. 3](#)) to help you have those difficult conversations with people who may not share your viewpoint. One thing is for certain: without dialogue, we will go nowhere!

Together, we can put climate, nature and environmental justice in the election conversation and call for leaders who will protect us and future generations.

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# Talking across the divide: Tips for having difficult conversations with people who don't agree with you

## 1. Know WHY you're having the conversation.

Too often, political discussions turn into shouting matches. People feel angry and defensive and get further entrenched in their thinking. Focus instead on creating a conversational space where you can share your perspectives honestly and with mutual respect. When people feel respected, they are more likely to listen to other points of view.

*"Hey, do you have a few minutes to chat about something important?"*

## 2. Let them know they matter.

Express your basic care and respect for your fellow human being. We can disagree without dehumanizing.

*"Before we discuss this, I want to let you know that I care about you/value your perspective/respect you as a colleague."*

## 3. Stay curious.

Ask questions that encourage perspective sharing. The aim should be understanding, not creating "gotcha" moments.

*"How did you come to believe that? What has your experience shown you? Is that a source you trust? What was that like for you?"*

## 4. Practice active listening.

Be attentive to what the other person is saying and don't just focus on what you want to say in return. Show that you're listening by repeating back what was said and checking that you've understood.

*"So, what I think what I'm hearing you say is that\_\_\_\_\_. Is that right?"*



# Talking across the divide (continued)

## 5. Share your story.

Research tells us that flinging facts at people does not change minds – but our personal stories do. Share your concerns in a relatable way, and don't be afraid to be a bit vulnerable.

*“Climate change really hit home for me when my family had to evacuate during the wildfires last year” is more relatable than facts and figures about carbon emissions.*

## 6. Offer information.

People are more receptive to information when it is offered instead of aimed like a weapon. Talk about why this information affected your perspective.

*“I'd love to share a source with you that, in my opinion, looks at this issue in a helpful way. It really impacted how I look at this issue because it's based on the experiences of real people living with this problem every day.”*

## 7. Practice humility.

Speak with confidence, but don't be condescending. Don't interrupt, roll your eyes or imply that the other person is stupid for not agreeing with you. Use I-statements like “In my experience...” Even if you have a lot of information and experience, acknowledge that there may be more to learn.

## 8. Look for points of connection.

Listen for the concerns you might have in common. Let the other person know that you can understand their perspective, even if you don't share it.

*“It sounds like we're both concerned about cost-of-living issues but favour different solutions. If I had experienced what you have, I could imagine thinking \_\_\_\_\_ was the solution. Can you see why I might think \_\_\_\_\_ is a good idea, given what I've shared?”*



## Talking across the divide (continued)

### 9. Pay attention to your body.

Difficult conversations can be stressful! Try to keep yourself centered and calm by breathing deeply and regularly from your belly, noticing (and releasing) tension as it builds up in your body, keeping your hands open and relaxed and pausing briefly to process what you're hearing.

*"Give me a minute to think about what you just said."*

### 10. Thank them for the conversation.

Let the other person know that you appreciate their time and perspective. Acknowledge if something they've said has affected your perspective, but don't be afraid to remain grounded in your values.

*"Thank you for talking with me about this. Although I still believe \_\_\_\_\_, your story about \_\_\_\_\_ made me understand this issue in a different way."*

**Remember...** perspectives don't often change completely in one conversation. The aim isn't to "win" an argument – it's to invite dialogue and open the door to different points of view.

Learn more:

- Talking climate handbook - how to have a climate change conversation: [climateoutreach.org/reports/how-to-have-a-climate-change-conversation-talking-climate](https://climateoutreach.org/reports/how-to-have-a-climate-change-conversation-talking-climate)
- Eight Keys to Bridging Our Differences: [greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/eight-keys-to-bridging-our-differences](https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/eight-keys-to-bridging-our-differences)
- 11 Tips for Talking To Someone You Disagree With: [bravetalkproject.com/how-to-talk-to-someone-you-disagree-with](https://bravetalkproject.com/how-to-talk-to-someone-you-disagree-with)
- Local Kitchen Table Facilitation Guide: [canadians.org/wp-content/uploads/Local-KTC-Facilitation-Guide-.pdf](https://canadians.org/wp-content/uploads/Local-KTC-Facilitation-Guide-.pdf)



# Sustainable agriculture & resilient food systems

Canadian farmers, workers and consumers need initiatives that strengthen our food sovereignty and reduce our vulnerability to climate change, supply chain disruption, income loss, price increases and food shortages. Climate change is one of the top challenges facing Canadian agriculture, with 76 per cent of farmers and ranchers reporting being impacted by severe weather in the past five years.

In November 2021, federal, provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture identified “tackling climate change and environmental protection to support GHG emission reductions and the long-term vitality of the sector” as the number one priority for future policy frameworks. Launched in April 2023, the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) brings together federal, provincial, and territorial governments with a \$3.5-billion, five-year agreement to strengthen and grow Canada’s agricultural sector. The Sustainable CAP lays out a path to advance five priorities that will increase the competitiveness, innovation and resilience of Canada’s agricultural sector: building sector capacity; growth and competitiveness; climate change and environment; science, research and innovation; market development and trade; and resiliency and public trust.

Strengthening Canadian food sovereignty is a key strategy to withstand international economic pressure tactics, like tariffs. With a deepening food insecurity crisis and a looming trade war, now is the time for bold action from every political party.



# Sustainable agriculture & resilient food systems

Top priorities for action should include defending supply management, diversifying export markets, promoting and building regional and local markets, protecting agricultural workers and temporary foreign workers and preventing corporate profiteering.

## Questions to ask your candidates:

- **How will you work to support a healthy, just and sustainable food system?**
- **What actions will you take to bolster Canadian food sovereignty and the resilience of our agricultural sector?**
- **What income-based interventions will your party implement to address the growing food affordability issue?**
- **Our food system is increasingly relying on temporary foreign workers. Will you provide resident status for farm workers and improve employment inspection regimes?**
- **Will you extend the Local Food Infrastructure Fund beyond 2027? This is a valuable funding stream that allows food organizations to increase their capacities and resources.**

## A good answer may...

- Acknowledge and accept climate change as the top priority concern for the agriculture sector.
- Commit funding and resources to climate change adaptation and resilience.
- Acknowledge that a resilient food system requires a collaborative, holistic, systems-based approach, including policy interventions across sectors.





# Sustainable agriculture & resilient food systems

## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Use of the “carbon tax” as a red herring for why farmers are struggling.
- An overemphasis on traditional food charity models that do not achieve systems change.

### Learn more:

- Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership: [agriculture.canada.ca/en/departement/initiatives/sustainable-canadian-agricultural-partnership](https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/departement/initiatives/sustainable-canadian-agricultural-partnership)
- Bolster Canadian Food Sovereignty during Tariff “Pause”, says National Farmers Union (Media Release): [nfu.ca/bolster-canadian-food-sovereignty-during-tariff-pause-says-national-farmers-union/](https://nfu.ca/bolster-canadian-food-sovereignty-during-tariff-pause-says-national-farmers-union/)
- Producer perceptions of environmental sustainability and climate change: 2024 National Poll of Farmers and Ranchers (Farmers for Climate Solutions): [farmersforclimatesolutions.ca/2024-poll](https://farmersforclimatesolutions.ca/2024-poll)



## Keeping Canada's seafood competitive

As rising tariffs and trade tensions with the U.S. drive more Canadians to buy local, when it comes to seafood, the information needed to make informed choices is often not on the label. Consumers can't distinguish between imported and local fish.

Canadian laws require seafood to be labelled according to where it was processed, not where it was caught or even what species it is. For example, fish caught in Canada, processed in China and shipped back to Canada will appear on the shelf with a 'Product of China' label. At the fresh counter there can be several types of white fish or tunas sold without indicating which are caught by Canadian fishers, which are caught overseas or even what species they are. The local industry loses out and consumers are left in the dark.

The federal government should act swiftly to require seafood labels to include three key details: the ocean region where it was caught or farmed, the species name (both common and scientific) to prevent misrepresentation and the fishing or farming method to ensure transparency about impacts on the ocean ecosystem.

Stronger import controls are also needed. Unlike our major trading partners that require extensive data on Canadian seafood exports, Canada demands minimal information for imports. This lax oversight is allowing seafood products linked to illegal practices or human rights violations to make their way into Canadian stores. Not only does this undermine Canada's own fishing and seafarming industries, but it also puts consumers at risk and sends profits to exploitative companies.



## Keeping Canada's seafood competitive

Canada must implement stronger traceability regulations on all seafood in our market, including import control measures that will level the playing field with our trade partners and protect our coastal communities, seafood industry and consumers.

### Questions to ask your candidates:

- **Will you commit to changing Canada's labelling and traceability laws to require where fish are caught, the fishing/farming method, and species name?**
- **Canada's seafood industry faces competition from countries with stricter regulations on traceability. Will you introduce seafood import control rules in line with the EU, Japan, the US, and Australia?**
- **Canadian seafood companies, processors, and retailers have been found in recent investigations to carry seafood products linked to human rights abuses and illegal fishing. How will you address these issues in our seafood supply chain?**

### A good answer may...

- Clearly support implementation of stronger traceability and labeling regulations for all domestic seafood as well as imports.
- Recognize the need to implement strong import control regulations that are similar to major trading countries such as the U.S. and the EU to level the playing field with other countries.
- Agree that consumers should know where their seafood is from and how it was caught or farmed and be sure that what they are buying does not support human rights abuses.
- Encourage the use of sustainable fishing methods and investing in technologies that monitor compliance to help ensure that our seafood industry remains viable in the long term.



# Keeping Canada's seafood competitive



## A good answer may... (continued)

- Encourage the use of sustainable fishing methods and investing in technologies that monitor compliance to help ensure that our seafood industry remains viable in the long term.

## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Claiming there is no need for changes in regulation or policy – that the system is working fine.
- Claiming that improvements are the responsibility of industry alone and government should not have any involvement.
- Claiming that the technology is too expensive or that regulations would be too burdensome on industry.
- Disregard for sustainability and a focus on growing the seafood industry with little oversight. A prioritization of the economy, above all else.
- Claiming consumers don't care about transparency or sustainability of their seafood as a reason not to invest in these solutions.

### Learn more:

- Consumers demand retailer action in wake of exposés: [seachoice.org/consumers-demand-retailer-action-in-wake-of-outlaw-ocean-exposes/](https://seachoice.org/consumers-demand-retailer-action-in-wake-of-outlaw-ocean-exposes/)
- Is your seafood Canadian? Making sense of origin labels: [seachoice.org/is-your-seafood-canadian-making-sense-of-origin-labels/](https://seachoice.org/is-your-seafood-canadian-making-sense-of-origin-labels/)
- Exposé connects seafood on North American shelves to atrocities found in China's seafood operations: [seachoice.org/expose-connects-seafood-on-north-american-shelves-to-atrocities-found-in-chinas-seafood-operations/](https://seachoice.org/expose-connects-seafood-on-north-american-shelves-to-atrocities-found-in-chinas-seafood-operations/)
- Seafood traceability is critical to strengthening sustainable fisheries management, deterring illegal practices, verifying environmental and social responsibility claims and allowing Canadians to support local, sustainable seafood producers: [seachoice.org/our-work/labelling-and-traceability/traceability/](https://seachoice.org/our-work/labelling-and-traceability/traceability/)



## Sustainable seafarming: A boon to local economies

Growing oysters, mussels, scallops and seaweeds on small-scale seafarms creates jobs in coastal economies and provides sustainable local food and products. With the right regulations and supports, this green sector could bring upwards of \$80 million more into Nova Scotia's rural communities.

However, independent and family sea farmers face too many hurdles when trying to get started. The complex regulations, lack of required federal testing of coastal waters, and insufficient support for local hatcheries make it very difficult to foster a strong network of sustainable family sea farms – something many young aspiring farmers and communities are keen to develop.

Meanwhile, the negative environmental impacts of sea-cage salmon aquaculture have been well documented in Canada. While the federal government stepped in to ban sea-cage industrial aquaculture in B.C. by 2029 and the transition out of the water is underway in the west, there has been no move to ban this polluting practice in Atlantic Canada. The federal government is responsible for the protection of fish and fish habitat in the ocean. Coastal communities in Nova Scotia are frustrated that the federal government is abdicating their responsibility here and allowing polluting industries to be relocated from the Pacific to Atlantic waters. The federal government must uphold its duty to protect wild salmon, marine ecosystems and commercial fisheries from the risks of open-net pens in Atlantic Canada, just as they have been doing in B.C.



# Sustainable seafarming

## Questions to ask your candidates:

- Will you work with the province to right-size regulations so low-impact shellfish and seaweed farms can be approved and established within a year?
- Will you commit federal funding to establish hatcheries and support hubs in coastal communities, particularly to address the swiftly moving MSX disease, which threatens to wipe out both wild and farmed oysters?
- Will you commit to fully fund the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program (CSSP) so that coastal waters across Atlantic Canada will be regularly tested for toxins, classified, and reopened for shellfish farmers and food harvesters?
- Will you support a full transition away from sea-cage salmon aquaculture in Atlantic Canada?

## A good answer may...

- Clearly support a transition away from sea-cage salmon farming in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada.
- Support small-scale shellfish and seaweed farms by offering federal financial support, easing federal regulatory burdens, and developing markets.
- Recognize that shellfish and seaweed farmers are small business owners and families in our coastal communities who are poised to bring value to Nova Scotia and need the right support and strong ecosystem safeguards in place.
- Show concern about the impacts of salmon farming on ecosystems, wild Atlantic salmon and the fish populations taken to feed farmed salmon.
- Demonstrate familiarity with the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program and commit to addressing identified problems.



# Sustainable seafarming

## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Claiming that sea-cage salmon farming is part of the solution to feeding the world and reducing carbon impact.
- Claiming that sea-cage salmon farming on the east coast is different from the west coast and justified in Nova Scotia.
- Claiming that sea cage salmon farming provides revenue and good jobs for coastal communities in Nova Scotia.
- Blanket support for all types of shellfish and seaweed development, regardless of ownership, size, scale, or impact.
- Claiming that Nova Scotia has “gold standard” or “world class” regulations for aquaculture that do not need any more reform.
- Failing to distinguish between sustainable (e.g., shellfish and seaweed) and unsustainable (e.g., salmon farming).

### Learn more:

- Roadmap for Nova Scotia Kelp Farming: [ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2023-05/Nova\\_Scotia\\_Kelp\\_Roadmap.pdf](https://ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2023-05/Nova_Scotia_Kelp_Roadmap.pdf)
- Beyond Open Net-Pen Aquaculture: [seachoice.org/beyond-open-net-pen-aquaculture/](https://seachoice.org/beyond-open-net-pen-aquaculture/)



# Climate adaptation & resilience

In 2023, the federal government released the [National Adaptation Strategy](#) in an effort to build and maintain strong climate-resilient communities across the country. The Strategy discusses climate change resilience in five interconnected systems of society in Canada: disaster resilience; health and well-being; nature and biodiversity; infrastructure; and the economy and workers.

The federal government's strategy appropriately centres the most at-risk populations, and the commitment to continuously review objectives and evaluate progress is commendable. There is no better time than today to invest in adaptation plans and infrastructure. We are already seeing billions of dollars' worth of damage and further billions spent on mitigating the worst effects of climate change in Canada. The future costs to be borne by communities and governments are recognized in the Strategy to be significantly higher than current adaptation spending commitments. These spending commitments must be significantly increased in order to meet the Strategy's targets.

The Strategy lacks commitment to inventory critical and at-risk infrastructure, which should be the first step in setting project priorities. It also fails to address preventing rebuilding in high-risk areas or managing retreat before disasters. While it supports nature-based solutions, it doesn't require their inclusion in federal projects. Including these aspects would help achieve a more climate-resilient future.





# Climate adaptation & resilience

## Questions to ask your candidates:

- How will you support the National Adaptation Strategy?
- How will you ensure that the National Adaptation Strategy delivers the results needed for adapting to our changing climate?
- How will you ensure strong national coordination on proactive adaptation?

## A good answer may...

- Indicate support for the National Adaptation Strategy.
- Show evidence of supporting provinces and municipalities in building capacity around climate resilience (e.g., funding opportunities).
- Discuss the importance of nature in adaptation, and support harnessing the power of nature and nature-based solutions (e.g., protecting wetlands, naturalization of shorelines, tree canopy in urban spaces, rain gardens, etc.).
- Show leadership in or support for opportunities to develop policies that integrate climate adaptation in many different sectors.
- Discuss plans to foster partnerships with Indigenous communities to integrate traditional knowledge into climate adaptation planning, and to support Indigenous-led solutions.
- Discuss how they will build resiliency within their own constituency by raising public awareness regarding climate adaptation and empowering community members to take action.
- Advocate for global collaboration on climate change adaptation initiatives and follow-through on commitments made by Canada in global discussions.



# Climate adaptation & resilience

## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Lack of belief in the need for Canada to have a National Adaptation Strategy or intent to reverse course on the Strategy.
- Not prioritizing or seeing value in climate change adaptation policy; in support of scaling back on ambition targets and plans in the National Adaptation Strategy.
- Supporting “hard” adaptation approaches (e.g., sea walls) and not prioritizing natural adaptation solutions (e.g., living shorelines).
- Siloing discussions around adaptation or indicating that adaptation planning is an after-thought; not valuing the importance of integrating adaptation policy into all sectors.
- Ignoring the role of Indigenous communities in climate change adaptation or not supporting Indigenous-led solutions.
- Disregarding or sidelining scientific data and climate models that show the urgency of adaptation needs, preventing meaningful policy development and action.
- Showing desire to focus on short term goals (e.g., funding the immediate hot-topic political issues) rather than long term climate resilience.

### Learn more:

- Canada's National Adaptation Strategy:  
[canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/climate-plan/national-adaptation-strategy.html](https://canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/climate-plan/national-adaptation-strategy.html)



# Affordable energy & energy efficiency for all

When a household struggles to afford to heat or cool their home to a safe, healthy and comfortable level, or if it sacrifices other essentials to do so, that household lives in energy poverty, which affects one in five Canadian households. Energy poverty is even more prevalent in rural areas and Atlantic provinces where many households are still dependent on oil heat. In Nova Scotia nearly one in two households struggles to afford energy. A comfortable, safe, healthy home should not be a luxury. It is a universal human right.

Households struggling to afford energy bills often sacrifice other necessities, like food and prescription medicines, to catch up on energy bills, or suffer sleepless cold nights with the heat turned off. This is a serious mental and physical health risk. Canada should make funding available for all provinces and territories to create localized Universal Service Programs that offer bill discounts, arrearage-management and forgiveness programs, crisis-intervention funding and energy efficiency and electrification programming for low to moderate-income households.

## Questions to ask your candidates:

- **Will you support the creation of a federal pot of money for provinces and territories that commit to creating Universal Service Programs to protect Canadians' rights to home comfort, health and safety?**
- **What steps will you take to ensure renters have access to energy efficiency upgrades that create more affordable, comfortable and dignified living conditions while safeguarding or improving tenant rights and protections?**



# Affordable energy & energy efficiency for all



## Questions to ask your candidates (continued):

- Will you support the creation of funding for municipally-run energy navigator programs to help low-income households access free or low-cost efficiency upgrades and technology?

## A good answer may...

- Demonstrate an awareness of current federal funds (Greener Homes, Oil to Heat Pump Affordability) and examples of provincial and/or municipal programs that address energy poverty and access to affordable energy, and their strengths and limitations.
- Recognize that energy poverty is a justice, economic, health and safety and environmental issue.
- Show understanding and empathy for people in energy poverty, and the impossible choices they live with between home heating and cooling, food, medicines and other essentials.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the barriers preventing households from accessing efficiency programs. Barriers may include having to pay for programs upfront, ongoing high maintenance costs, the language that services are offered in, lack of information, time, clarity, support, land title/registration or lacking ownership or power over household infrastructural decisions/investments.
- An ideal answer is "yes, we will create a fund for provincial and territorial universal service programs."
- Demonstrate an understanding that the many options and supports for improving household efficiency, while excellent, can be overwhelming and confusing for many. And that a 'navigator' (paid local staff person to help individuals find affordable options) is an effective way to prevent energy poverty going forward.



# Affordable energy & energy efficiency for all



## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Too much faith in Greener Homes without acknowledging recent funding cuts and administrative barriers.
- Dismissing energy poverty as purely a social (non-environmental) issue without recognizing the link between affordability, climate change and energy efficiency.
- Solely focusing on job creation as an alleviation strategy.
- Touting leadership in low-income efficiency programs without acknowledging the scale and depth of the issue, or the fact that, despite some good programs, this is a significant challenge across Canada.
- Equivocations about cost (a dedicated fund can be created for little more than the cost of Greener Homes).

### Learn more:

- Energy poverty in Canada: An overlooked health and equity issue: [mcgill.ca/newsroom/channels/news/energy-poverty-canada-355502](https://mcgill.ca/newsroom/channels/news/energy-poverty-canada-355502)
- End Use and Energy Poverty Report: [ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2024-05/AWayForward\\_FullReport\\_May2024.pdf](https://ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2024-05/AWayForward_FullReport_May2024.pdf)
- A four-part program to ensure low-income households can afford the home energy they need to be safe and comfortable year-round: [ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2023-08/UniversalServiceProgram\\_Dec2022.pdf](https://ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2023-08/UniversalServiceProgram_Dec2022.pdf)
- Energy Poverty Cross-Canada Mapping: [public.tableau.com/app/profile/efficiency.canada/viz/EnergyPovertyVulnerabilityMapping/Dashboard#1](https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/efficiency.canada/viz/EnergyPovertyVulnerabilityMapping/Dashboard#1)
- Policy Mixes for Efficient, Affordable and Secure Rental Housing: [efficiencycanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/energy\\_efficiency\\_in\\_rental\\_housing-1.pdf](https://efficiencycanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/energy_efficiency_in_rental_housing-1.pdf)
- Polling shows strong national support for energy supports: [efficiencycanada.org/polling-canadians-support-low-income-energy-efficiency/](https://efficiencycanada.org/polling-canadians-support-low-income-energy-efficiency/)
- Archetypes of Experiences with Energy Poverty in Canada: [efficiencycanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Archetypes-of-Experiences-with-Energy-Poverty-in-Canada-Report.pdf](https://efficiencycanada.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Archetypes-of-Experiences-with-Energy-Poverty-in-Canada-Report.pdf)



## Renewable energy & the electricity grid

Canada has committed to creating a [net-zero energy grid by 2035](#). This means that, by 2035, the electricity generation process in Canada will not emit additional greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. In Nova Scotia, coal, a high greenhouse gas emitting source, accounts for 36 per cent of our electricity supply. Investment in lower-cost wind and solar resources is both an economic opportunity and a way to shift to lower-emitting electricity generation in the province. Federal support will be required to ensure we are developing these wind and solar projects as quickly as possible. Historically isolated from the rest of Canada, Nova Scotia's grid must be connected to other provinces to lower interprovincial barriers to electricity trade.

The good news is that our province has some of the [best wind resources in the world](#), with enough offshore wind energy to provide power for a population seven times the size of Nova Scotia. Our province could become a clean energy superpower, creating tens of thousands of jobs and exporting extra energy generated from offshore wind turbines to the rest of the country. But first, transmission and power lines must be improved to make that possible.

A cheaper and more sustainable future for Nova Scotia will require increased federal funding for renewable energy projects, as well as increased support and funding for power line upgrades and grid interconnections to other provinces. The federal government has a key role to play in facilitating planning for these efforts, and can use tax incentives or other policy tools to encourage provinces to jointly invest in a connected, regional grid.



## Renewable energy & the electricity grid

The federal government should focus its effort on facilitating competition and design a framework for sharing transmission benefits and cost equitably amongst Atlantic and Eastern Canadian provinces to ensure we are working together to move away from fossil fuels.

A renewable energy grid in Canada means a cleaner, healthier and more affordable energy future for Canadians. But we must ensure that renewable energy projects minimize environmental impact, foster community and fishing industry support and are based in Indigenous consultation. Furthermore, using renewables, phasing out fossil fuels and supporting interprovincial transmission lines will give us access to cheaper and more reliable electricity, while increasing our potential to export renewable energy to the rest of the country, and creating economic stability and prosperity for Canada.

### Questions to ask your candidates:

- **Will you facilitate a complete phaseout of coal and other fossil fuels from Nova Scotia's energy grid?**
- **Will you support providing funding for an interconnected grid that will unlock Nova Scotia's renewable energy potential?**
- **What part do you think Nova Scotia – and Atlantic Canada more broadly – must play in decarbonizing Canada's energy grid?**
- **What will your party do to help train Nova Scotia's next generation of workers in the clean economy?**

### A good answer may...

- Indicate a belief in climate change, recognize the importance of decarbonizing.
- Indicate a willingness or interest to support grid regionalization initiatives.
- Support the investment and development of renewable energy and energy storage.



# Renewable energy & the electricity grid

## A good answer may... (continued)

- Support the investment and development of renewable energy and energy storage.
- Promote opportunities for economic growth in the energy sector such as battery recycling.

## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Denying the existence of climate change and the need to decarbonize our grid.
- Promoting the reliance on so-called “transition” fuels such as natural gas.
- Calling for further investment in fossil fuel infrastructure such as pipelines.
- Supporting energy exports over national grid greening and security.

Learn more:

- Achieving a net-zero Canadian electricity grid by 2035: [pembina.org/reports/achieving-a-net-zero-canadian-power-grid-by-2035.pdf](https://pembina.org/reports/achieving-a-net-zero-canadian-power-grid-by-2035.pdf)
- Shifting power: Zero emission electricity across Canada by 2035: [davidsuzuki.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Shifting-Power-Zero-Emissions-Across-Canada-By-2035-Report.pdf](https://davidsuzuki.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Shifting-Power-Zero-Emissions-Across-Canada-By-2035-Report.pdf)
- Canada's clean electricity future: [canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/climate-plan/clean-electricity.html](https://canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/climate-plan/clean-electricity.html)





# Sustainable transportation



Nova Scotians need safer roads and access to viable alternatives to personal vehicles. Nova Scotia is far behind other provinces and countries in providing safe, affordable and accessible transportation options. Better investments of public money can save lives, reduce cost of living, improve public health and increase accessibility.

The current cost of personal vehicle ownership in Canada is \$18,000 annually (including purchase/lease, gas, parking and maintenance). This constitutes over one-quarter of the average household's income of \$69,000. By failing to restrict urban sprawl and invest in alternatives like public transit, cycling or walking infrastructure, many Canadians are car dependent.

If we want to meaningfully become car independent – for our financial, physical and global health – we need to invest aggressively in attractive alternatives to personal vehicles. All Canadians deserve access to reliable, clean transportation, including e-bikes, electric transit and electric school buses. EAC hopes to see more funding allocated to electrifying transportation, including programs like the Zero Emission Transit Funding (ZETF), which can help accelerate this transition.

If we took the billions spent on transportation infrastructure and applied it differently, it would drastically change transportation in Nova Scotia and across the country.

Learn more:

- Nova Scotia highway fatalities in 2024 have already exceeded all of last year's total: [saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/nova-scotia-highway-fatalities-in-2024-have-already-exceeded-all-of-last-years-total-100988611](https://saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/nova-scotia-highway-fatalities-in-2024-have-already-exceeded-all-of-last-years-total-100988611)
- Active Transportation Myth Busting: [activeatlantic.ca/resources/mythbusting](https://activeatlantic.ca/resources/mythbusting)



## Questions to ask your candidates:

- Will you aggressively fund public transit? This includes funding to purchase new public transit vehicles and to expand and build infrastructure, as well as funding that can be used to improve transit service frequency, reliability and convenience for riders.
- How will you ensure that funding for public transit meets urban, suburban and rural needs?
- How will you ensure that the allocation of transportation funding reduces road fatalities and improves the movement of people and goods?
- For regions with public transit options: Funding is a barrier to providing a reliable transit system. How will you ensure that transit remains an investment priority?
- For regions with community transit options or no transit options: How can we increase or develop transit options available to our community, especially for those with high priority needs, such as accessing medical support?
- There are currently no electric school buses on the roads in Nova Scotia. Will you advocate for dedicated federal funding to support school bus electrification?

## A good answer may...

- Recognize that inexpensive methods exist for increasing road safety like lowering speed limits; enforcement for speeding, distracted driving and impairment (including photo radar); and other infrastructure pieces like recessed reflectors, rumble strips and animal fencing.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the Canada Public Transit Fund and the Active Transportation Fund.
- Commit to investing in municipal public transit systems and NGO/community transit dial-a-ride, and increasing the size of transit fleets over the next four years.
- Commit to ensuring federal funding for active transportation plans and projects.

## A good answer may... (continued)

- Specifically commit to increasing investment in the Active Transportation Fund within a short timeframe such as within the first 100 days.
- Recognize that many Nova Scotia residents do not walk or ride a bicycle because they do not feel safe.
- Consider social equity as an essential part of transportation planning. This means recognizing that some planning practices have affected certain communities more than others, prioritizing certain neighbourhoods to make sure all community members' needs are met and using equity maps (showing income, visible minorities, disability, education levels and other factors) in decision-making.

## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Arguing that twinning highways is the only way to improve road safety.
- Failing to commit to enacting photo radar or lowering speed limits.
- Promising new solutions rather than increasing investment in the existing streams.
- Thinking the need for transit is not proven or feasible. With an aging population that may not have access to vehicles, our communities need sustainable transport options.
- Focusing only on long-term fixes like trains without acknowledging that buses are a more immediate solution and can be done in tandem.
- Myths that there are not enough people walking or cycling to invest in sidewalks, bike lanes, multi-use trails, and that this infrastructure is too expensive.
- Framing transportation as a personal responsibility, rather than government responsibility.
- Suggesting that people who can't afford to drive just need to work harder, and that social isolation among people unable to drive is acceptable.



## Protecting nature: Marine & terrestrial protected areas

Protected areas, like National Parks, National Wildlife Areas, Migratory Bird Sanctuaries, Marine Protected Areas and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas are cornerstones of biodiverse and resilient ecosystems. From old-growth forests to stunning coastal ecosystems, protected areas clean our water and air, serve as refuges for wildlife and species at risk, provide unforgettable recreation opportunities, and make our communities more resilient in the face of climate change.

Canada — along with 195 other countries — has committed to conserving 30 per cent of our land and oceans by 2030 as part of the [Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), under the [United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity](#). This is our part in a global multilateral treaty adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 to help stem the precipitous decline of the world's biodiversity.

As of the end of 2023 ([the most recent data we have available](#)), Canada had conserved 13.7 per cent of the country's terrestrial area (land and freshwater), including 12.8 per cent in legally protected areas, and 15.5 per cent of the country's oceans with further areas moving slowly to legal protection. Currently, Nova Scotia is at 13.6 per cent protection. Canada's 2030 Nature Strategy provides a roadmap for achieving further commitments, but protecting 30 per cent of Canada will require political will and more funding. For areas in the process of being designated as protected, interim measures of protection and legally binding establishment agreements should be in place to count in Canada's target reporting to the UN for the 25 per cent by 2025 commitment.



# Protecting nature

Future generations will never look back and think that we protected too much nature, but to reach our goals, Canada needs to keep investing in nature conservation on a national scale, working with the provinces and territories.

## Questions to ask your candidates:

- **How will you support and collaborate with other levels of government to protect 30 per cent of Canada's land by 2030?**
- **Will you advocate for increased funding to ensure establishment agreements for the 25 per cent by 2025 conservation target is met?**
- **Will you advocate for expanding the boundaries of the proposed Blue Mountain Birch Cove Lakes National Urban Park in HRM?**
- **Will you advance more protection opportunities with the province?**
- **How will you support Indigenous-led leadership on conservation and biodiversity protection?**

## A good answer may...

- Speak to the urgent action and funding required to protect our remaining wild places.
- Include both short- and long-term actions that will help protect 30 per cent of Canada by 2030. These actions should include creating more National Urban Parks, supporting provincial protected areas with more funding and reintroducing the Nature Accountability Act in Parliament.
- Take a “think global, act local” approach. Canada's protected areas commitments are an important piece of the bigger puzzle.
- Understand that not only will more protected areas benefit our municipalities, provinces and country, and but they will also strengthen the global effort to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.



## A good answer may... (continued)

- Understand that which land and ocean ecosystems we protect matters.
- Demonstrate a willingness to work with municipalities, provinces, Indigenous partners and environmental organizations to advance the protection of our natural and cultural heritage.
- Recognize that protected areas are beneficial for people and for nature.

## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Suggesting that Canada already has enough protected areas.
- Alleging that provinces can protect enough land without additional federal funding.
- Claiming that nature conservation isn't a priority or that we can't afford to invest in nature conservation.
- Suggesting that Canada will somehow protect enough land without having any clear paths, objectives or funding.
- Suggesting that Canada wouldn't benefit from laws designed to advance the conservation of nature.
- Claiming that conservation efforts in Canada won't matter in the face of the biodiversity and climate crises.
- Suggesting that taking action on nature loss should be another country's responsibility.
- Claiming that protecting any "unused land" or "vacant land" or "unfished ocean" will help us to stem biodiversity loss and enhance our communities.



# Protecting nature

## Caution tape; what to look out for

- Not understanding that protected areas are established through in-depth consultations with rights holders, partners and stakeholders.
- Falsely claiming that protected areas are off-limits to residents, sustainable use, or that protected areas are bad for the economy.

Learn more:

- Conserving 30 per cent of Canada by 2030:  
[canada.ca/en/services/environment/conservation/conserving-30-by-2030.html](https://canada.ca/en/services/environment/conservation/conserving-30-by-2030.html)
- Protected Areas in Nova Scotia:  
[novascotia.ca/nse/protectedareas/](https://novascotia.ca/nse/protectedareas/)

