

Green Party Climate Plan: A New Energy Revolution to Avert Climate Catastrophe

BACKGROUND

Climate change is the number one issue on Canadians' minds and the biggest crisis facing our planet. It is not just an environmental issue. It is an economic, social and global security issue.

Action on climate change will be good for our economy. Countries that improve their energy efficiency and reduce their demand for fossil fuels by utilizing renewable sources of energy will be the least negatively impacted by a future energy crunch. It makes sense for Canada, with our wealth of renewable energy sources, to be in the lead, not a laggard, in a low-carbon future.

Principles for a Green Low-Carbon Future:

- 1) For Low and Middle Income Canadians: *Progressive Tax Shift* to offset regressive aspects of carbon taxes
- 2) For Workers: Programs to support a *Just Transition*
- 3) For Industry: Reward the leaders through *Credit for Early Action*

A Green Party government would:

1. Reaffirm Canada's commitment to Kyoto and further medium and long term targets:

- 6% below 1990 by 2012 = 570 MT = 30% below today's 800 MT of CO_{2e}
- 30% below 1990 by 2020 = 425 MT = 47% below today's 800 MT of CO_{2e}
- 50% below 1990 by 2030 = 304 MT = 62% below today's 800 MT of CO_{2e}
- 80% below 1990 by 2040 = 121 MT = 85% below today's 800 MT of CO_{2e}
- 5-yearly interim targets

2. Shift to carbon taxes, with an immediate price of \$50/tonne of CO₂, equivalent (CO_{2e}), then measure the impact and if required to achieve target reductions, increase the tax up to \$100/tonne of CO_{2e} (the price the Stern Review put on the cost of climate change) by 2020. Given that 1 litre of gas produces 2.34kg of CO₂, a \$50 per tonne tax adds 12 cents to the cost of gas per litre. Carbon tax revenue will be used to reduce other taxes, including income and payroll taxes and tax incentives to reduce CO₂ emissions.

3. Adopt carbon cap and trade and a carbon market. Establish a cap and trade CO_{2e} ceiling for Large Final Emitters (large industry), with a market price for carbon as soon as possible. Large Final Emitters produce around 50% of Canada's total emissions. They include companies in mining, manufacturing, oil, gas, and thermal electricity. Auction and trading of CO_{2e} allocations will be overseen by a non-governmental body.

4. Support global verification and certification standards for carbon credits. Establish a Canadian Carbon Bank and create a federal framework for local and provincial carbon banks to encourage the purchase of local offsets.

5. Negotiate the expansion and greater creativity in Kyoto beyond 2012 to meet these reduction goals, include international aviation and shipping, and include commitments to ramp up solar energy, electric vehicles and other low carbon technologies.

6. Make up any shortfall in meeting our first phase Kyoto target in international credits from Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism. Both of these Kyoto mechanisms assist other countries, particularly in the developing world, in re-orienting their economies and energy systems to a low-

carbon future. Because the problem is global, reductions in carbon emissions from developing countries are just as valuable in reducing the threat of climate change.

7. Prepare adaptation strategies to cope with climatic disruption that is no longer avoidable. Establish special task forces to prepare area-specific climate change adaptive strategies involving all stakeholders. Set up a Climate Change Adaptation fund to assist those areas hard hit by “natural” disasters linked to global warming to enable, for example, municipalities to upgrade infrastructure affected by changing water regimes or raise dykes in areas now more prone to flooding.

8. Government: Apply the same GHG reduction goals to all its own operations. Apply a “carbon conditionality clauses” to all federal funding to provinces, cities and institutions, requiring evidence of carbon reduction as a condition of payment.

9. Buildings: Retrofit 100% of Canada’s buildings to a high level of energy efficiency by 2025 and zero net energy after 2025 using a variety of measures including refundable tax credits, tax-deductible Green Mortgages, 100% Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance and revolving federal loans. Work with provinces to revise Building Codes to include energy efficiency measures including mandatory installation of solar hot water systems and pre-wiring for solar PV on all new buildings.

10. Appliances: Require all appliances to meet Energy Star rating by 2015. Phase out inefficient appliances and light bulbs to be phased out, some by 2010.

11. Renewable Energy: Develop Canada’s renewable energy sources through policies such as carbon conditionality clauses requiring provincial adoption of Advanced Renewables Tariffs so that by 2040, wind energy production reaches 40,000 MW, solar PV 20,000 MW, ocean energy 10,000 MW, geothermal 50,000 MW.

12. Transport: Regulate vehicle carbon emissions to fall by 30% by 2015 and 85% by 2040, using tax incentives and regulatory standards. Provide tax breaks and funds that support cycling, transit, coaches, rail, teleworking, walking and videoconferencing. Offer tax incentives for Canadian manufacturers of super-efficient vehicles, Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles and Electric Vehicles. Require commercial carriers to charge a federally set fuel surcharge to decrease cut-throat competition and hardship for small businesses.

13. Landfills: Require all landfills to pay a methane tax, based on emissions with regulatory mandatory methane capture after 2015. Adopt Germany’s system of mandatory recycling and “design for recycling”.

14. Forestry: Require all forest companies to pay a carbon tax that reflects the net loss of carbon storage from their lands or receive a carbon rebate to reflect the net gain of carbon sinks. All FSC certified companies will get a 5-year tax break.

15. Agriculture: Pay farmers for carbon sequestration in soils within a domestic carbon market. Apply carbon taxes to methane production. Plan the transition to 100% organic farming which does not use fossil-fuel-based fertilizers.

16. Fossil Fuels: Remove immediately all subsidies to coal, oil, gas and coalbed methane. Phase out coal, oil, gas and nuclear electrical generation. Oil and gas extraction companies will be required to capture and sequester an increasing percentage of released CO₂.

17. Nuclear Energy: Given that uranium processing produces substantial carbon emissions and given the risks of nuclear energy and lack of strategies to effectively deal with nuclear waste, withdraw all government funding supports and guarantees for new nuclear plants.

What the Experts say about a Carbon Tax

"I fully understand that this [taxing the carbon content of fuels] is considered politically impossible, but part of our challenge is to expand the limits of what is possible."

Al Gore, former US Vice President, March 21, 2007

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2007/03/22/MNGDROP7I1.DTL>

"Pollution must have a price tag. Currently it is too cheap to pollute, and too expensive not to."

Don Drummond, Chief Economist, TD Bank, March 7, 2007

<http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/govrel/news.cfm?story=57676>

"[The argument that taxes on oil or carbon emissions would ruin an economy is] fundamentally false. First of all, I don't think it is going to have that much of an impact on the economy overall. Second of all, if you don't do it, you can be sure that the economy will go down the drain in the next 30 years."

Paul Volcker, former Chairman, US Federal Reserve, February 6, 2007

<http://www.ihf.com/articles/ap/2007/02/06/news/FIN-GEN-Egypt-Volcker-Global-Warming.php>

"Ideally, politicians would choose the more efficient carbon tax, which implies a relatively stable price that producer can building into their investment plans"

Editorial, The Economist, September 9, 2006

http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=7884738

"Putting a price on carbon is less rousing than abolition of slavery or universal suffrage, but doing it will take no less courage."

Toby A.A. Heaps, Editor-in-Chief, Corporate Knights, March 21, 2007

http://www.corporateknights.ca/content/page.asp?name=carbon_price_oped

"If your objective is to cut greenhouse gas emissions, a carbon tax is definitely one of the most effective ways of doing that."

Doug Porter, Deputy Chief Economist, BMO

<http://corporateknightsforum.com/index.php/CKtemplates/CKcomments/100/>

"Two things are needed to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations: you need a price on carbon, preferably through a carbon tax, to induce firms and individuals to cut back on their emissions; and you need an energy technology race."

Chris Green, Professor of Economics, McGill University

<http://corporateknightsforum.com/index.php/CKtemplates/CKcomments/100/>

"A carbon tax is the best, cheapest and most efficient way to combat cataclysmic climate change." [*Time to tax carbon*](#), *Los Angeles Times* editorial, May 28, 2007

"What's needed is a carbon tax — a tax on all fossil-based fuels that reflects their true social, political, and environmental costs."

Robert Reich, Professor of Public Policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley, former U.S. Secretary of Labor. (American Prospect Online Edition, [Inherit the Windfall](#) Feb. 7, 2007)