FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New survey finds Canadians nationwide support government action to spur clean energy

Benefits include cleaner air, improved public health and innovation, respondents say

(MONTREAL, DEC.5, 2016) -- A strong majority of Canadians support specific government actions to cut global warming pollution by boosting energy-efficient vehicles and products, and developing more clean energy, according to a new national survey conducted by researchers at the University of Montreal.

The representative poll of 1,200 Canadians conducted in October shows 73% want their governments to do more to limit further climate change from happening.

Specifically, a strong majority want governments at all levels to put less emphasis on fossil fuels such as coal (73% want less emphasis) and oil (60% want less emphasis) and more emphasis on developing clean energy, such as solar (85% want more emphasis) and wind (71% want more emphasis).

Canadians believe a shift toward clean energy would bring a broad range of benefits, including cleaner air and improved public health (38% of respondents), reduced carbon pollution (20%), increased technological innovation (17%), enhanced energy security and stable energy prices (11%) and new green jobs (9%).

The poll also found that a majority of Canadians (72%) support a price on carbon, though support declines somewhat when associated with a cost of 2 cents (60%) and 11 cents (46%) per litre at the gas pump. These are the approximate additional costs per litre associated with carbon being priced at $10/tonne and $50/tonne, as proposed by the federal government for 2018 and 2022, respectively.

“After years of appearing to put all our eggs in the same energy basket, this survey reveals Canadians are open to a shift in how we produce energy” said principal investigator Erick Lachapelle, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Montreal.. “Canadians are aware of the many benefits of moving toward clean energy. However, we still need governments to lead this effort, as many Canadians are still reluctant to pay more to help spur this transition.”

The survey found greater support for a range of other policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Canada. The vast majority of Canadians are in favour of new policies to support renewable energy (87% support), electric vehicles (81%) and energy efficiency (over 90% support).

“Additional regulations on fuel economy and energy efficiency standards in buildings are likely required if Canada wants to meet its international commitments, and would garner support with Canadians regardless of their political tendencies. From Green Party supporters and New Democrats to Liberals and Conservatives, there is cross-partisan support for specific energy efficiency regulations,” said Erick Lachapelle.

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The survey was conducted on behalf of EcoAnalytics, a new, cooperative research initiative led by university researchers and environmental charities and non-profit organizations. A second major survey, to be conducted early in the new year, will examine Canadian attitudes on environmental issues such as air and water quality, marine, land and species conservation, greenbelts, environmental regulation, toxics and other issues.

EcoAnalytics aims to broaden access to rich sources of data in support of better informed public policies and discourse on important environmental issues

The Climate of Change survey used random digit dialling (RDD) of landline and mobile phones to reach a stratified representative sample of 1,200 Canadians aged 18 years and older, from Oct. 5-Oct. 18. Results are considered accurate to within ±2.83%, 19 times out of 20.

For more information, see the website of EcoAnalytics or contact:
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The University of Montreal is officially known as Université de Montréal

BACKGROUNDER
Climate of Change Survey, Fall 2016

Timely research reveals appetite for change

As Canada's First Ministers prepare to meet to hammer out the details of a national plan that would allow the country to honour its commitments to reduce carbon pollution under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, a comprehensive opinion research survey by the University of Montreal indicates that a strong majority of Canadians support new regulations on energy efficiency and fuel economy, that are likely required for Canada to meet its international obligations under the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The national survey of a representative sample of 1,200, conducted between Oct. 5 and Oct. 18th, which included 40 questions, offers a comprehensive picture, including regional variances, of shifting beliefs regarding the nature and origins of climate change, the role of governments and individuals in addressing carbon emissions and the energy sources that Canadians would prefer decision-makers to invest in and develop.

Key findings include that Canadians believe their governments have a powerful role to play in tackling climate change and solutions are at hand. These include placing more emphasis on hydro, wind and solar energy, while putting less emphasis fossil fuels. Canadians also see a genuine upside in serious climate action, citing a host of benefits not limited to a reduction in greenhouse gases.

Results of the following three questions are presented in graphic form in Figures 1-3 on the next two pages:

Figure 1 Question: Now I´d like to hear your views on a number of ideas to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stabilize the climate. For each idea that I mention, please tell me if you strongly support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or strongly oppose the following government policies: First, Putting a price on carbon pollution

Figure 2 Question: Now thinking about the way energy is generated in the country, do you think Canada should put more emphasis, less emphasis, or about the same emphasis as it does now on producing domestic energy from each of the following sources.

Figure 3 Question wording: Which of the following do you believe is the primary benefit of producing more clean energy in Canada?

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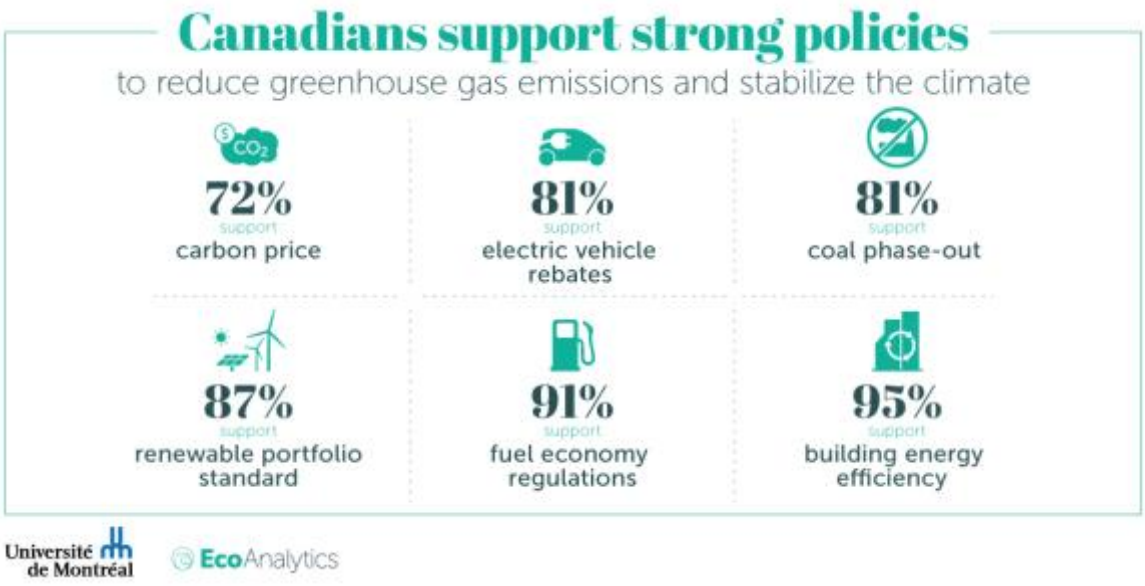

Figure 1

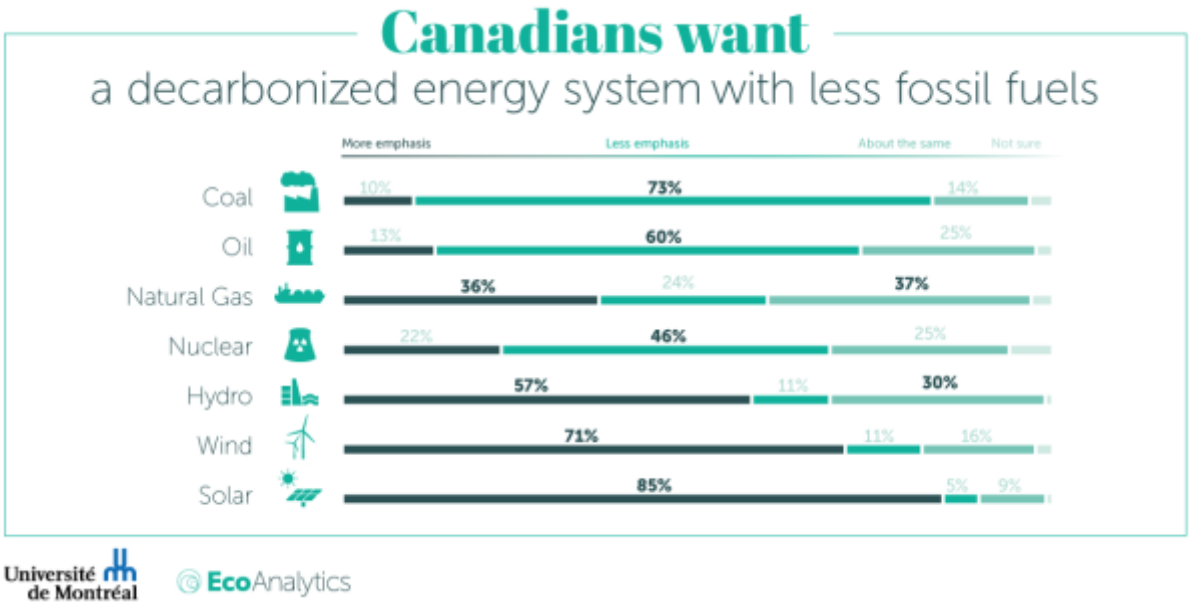

Figure 2

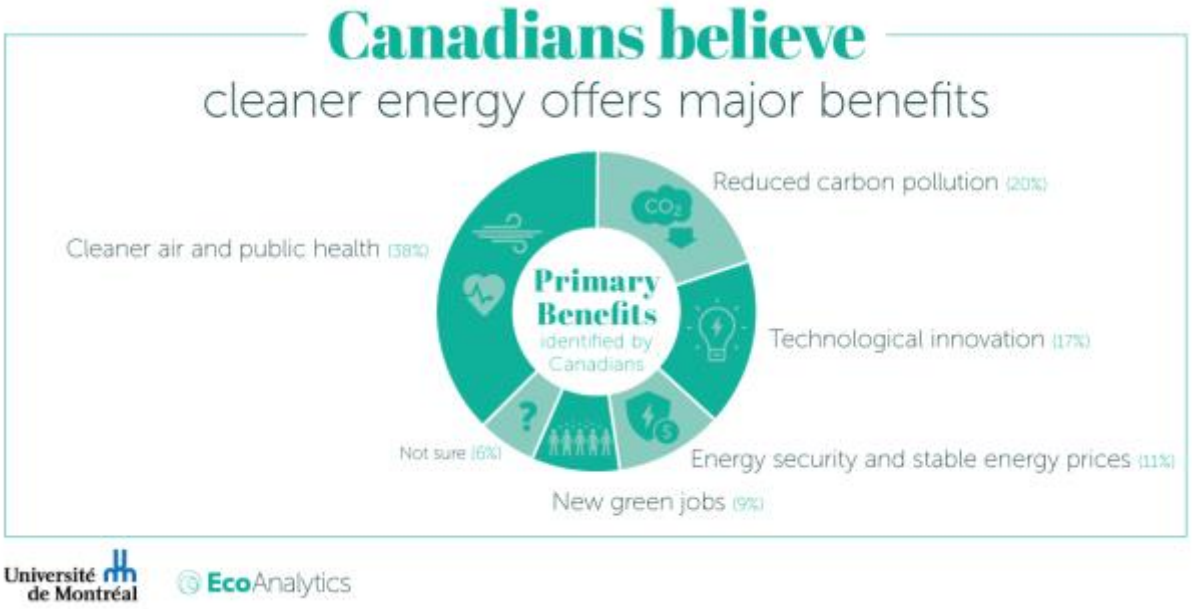

Figure 3

EcoAnalytics: Shared Intelligence for Canada's environment

The Climate of Change Survey was developed and conducted by researchers at the University of Montreal, led by Associate Professor of Political Science Erick Lachapelle.

As well as teaching environmental politics and research methods, Erick Lachapelle is the lead researcher for several major international and Canadian public opinion surveys addressing climate, energy and environmental issues. The focus of his research is on public attitudes toward risk and environmental issues, political communication, and the way in which public attitudes influence the development of public policy.

His research has appeared in such journals as Environmental Politics, Climate Policy, Energy Policy, Global Environmental Politics and the Policy Studies Journal.

Methodology

The data in EcoAnalytics Climate of Change survey were gathered using rigorous methods to ensure they are of the highest quality.

A random digit dialling (RDD) telephone survey was used to field the survey to a stratified sample of 1,200 Canadians aged 18 years and older. To maximize coverage, an

overlapping dual-frame (land line and cell phone) sample was used, with 481 surveys (40%) completed via cell phone and 719 (60%) completed via land line listings. Interviews were conducted from Oct. 5 2016 to Oct. 2016 in English and French. Based on a sample of this size, the results can be considered accurate to within ±2.83%, 19 times out of 20 (i.e. at a 95% level of confidence). Note that the margin of error will be different for each sub-group.

The dual-frame sample methodology (combining land line and cell phone surveys) is a standard methodology in the survey research industry for minimizing non-coverage bias and maximizing sample representativeness (Fahimi, 2014; Levine & Harter, 2015).

To ensure that the data collected are representative of the Canadian population, a weighting factor based on region, age and gender was employed to all estimates.

END