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EcoA Tips

Notes & news from EcoAnalytics Research

Welcome to the second edition of our newsletter. Scroll on for the following *data-lectible* details:

Five tips on targeting your messages about nature-based solutions for climate change and a green *and just* recovery

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Tell us what you like...(survey)



For atmosphere: Canadian forest (Jasper, AB). Ezra Jeffrey-Comeau via Unsplash

Five tips on messaging about nature-based solutions and a green *and just* recovery

Two new EcoAnalytics analyses by Dr. Erick Lachapelle, based on our fall 2020 Climate of Change Survey, reveal fresh opportunities for engaging Canadians in support of nature-based solutions for climate change and a green and just recovery. (The NbS brief was shared today; the green recovery analysis will be shared by Feb. 4th.) Here are five communications tips based on what we've learned:

Tip 1: Help men help nature (-based solutions)

Reinforce beliefs about the value of nature-based solutions for climate change (NbS) among audiences that have until now been reluctant to support significant climate action: in particular, middle-aged men and supporters of the federal Conservatives. These audiences may want further information, rather than calls to action. They may also have different understandings of what NbS mean, and how these could contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation. To better understand these audiences, try testing ads on social media with arresting images of forests, grasslands, and wetlands next to surprising statements: "Real climate-change deniers: Canada's wetlands," linking to information about the huge carbon-sequestering capacity of these ecosystems. Or, next to powerful short video clips, and links to further information, play with the phrase "For atmosphere: Canadian forests (or grasslands or wetlands)." The evidence? Our Climate survey shows broad-based support for NbS in Canada. No less than 70% of respondents recognize nature protection as "very important" for fighting climate change and 25% believe protecting and restoring nature is more important than investing in green technology. This belief is highest among middle-aged respondents, men, those on the political right, and those who support the CPC.

Tip 2: Enlist lefties, women, graduates, visible minorities in cities

Those on the political left (85%) are more likely than either those at the centre (65%) or on the right (62%) to say that NbS are "very important" tools of climate policy, according to EcoAnalytics analysis. Nearly 80% of Canadians who identify as visible minorities say the same. Similarly, 81% of women indicate strong support for protecting forests, grasslands, and wetlands, compared to 71% of men. So ask these believers to do stuff: write to their MPs, sign petitions or help you block a road to an endangered grassland, demanding stronger government action in support of NbS. As many in these segments also support a green and just recovery (see tips 4 and 5), you might also ask them to point out that investments in NbS reinvigorate rural and urban communities. For example, you could try Facebook ads with evocative images of forests, grasslands, and wetlands with imperative calls such as "Tackle climate change (and kick-start local economies), naturally". Or push out inspiring video-narratives about champions—progressive ranchers in Alberta, urban foresters, volunteers at Rouge National Urban Park—and the atmospheric cooling provided by these cherished ecosystems.

Tip 3: Rewild the city

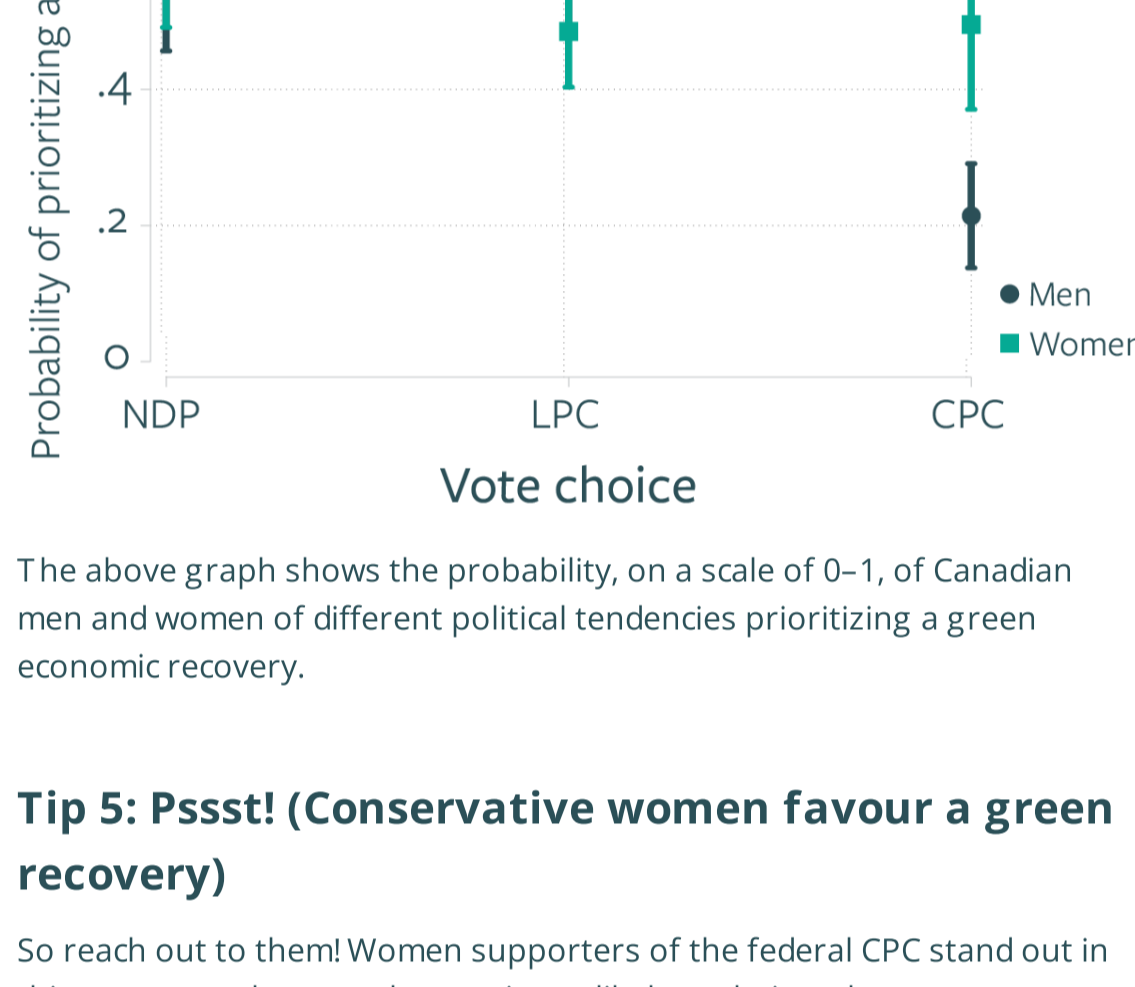
Boost advocacy at all government levels for major investments in urban measures that contribute to liveability as well as NbS. Build on the heightened appreciation of nature that accompanied COVID lockdowns (see EcoAnalytics 2020 focus groups) and go wild: demand investments in tree-planting, urban forests, daylighting of streams and restoration of wetlands, rain gardens, and green roofs to manage stormwater runoff, etc. Also test specific frames and messaging for this advocacy among visible minorities and youth in cities. Post a video on Instagram about NbS-focused urban greening projects that build leadership skills—and personal climate-action plans—of diverse youth (e.g., [Cool Hood Champs](#), led by students at UBC). Our Climate Survey indicates 76% of Canadians living in large cities are more likely than those in smaller or rural communities (64%) to recognize "protecting and restoring natural areas" as "very important" in the fight against climate change. The social impacts of such advocacy would almost certainly grow the constituency for this work nationally, as 80% of us live in these areas. Access to nature is a critical element of deepening Canadians support for environmental protection, as our values and behaviour research confirms.



Green and just infrastructure in Barcelona, Spain. Rahul Chowdhury via Unsplash

Tip 4: Target *swingers* to build support for green recovery

With the threat of an election looming this year, keep your eye on potential swing ridings. Geolocate your campaigns to swing ridings and target women in these ridings. This survey found that green spending preferences tend to be lower in swing ridings, but higher among women voters. Frame pandemic relief spending around issues of justice and fairness than around, exclusively, decarbonizing the Canadian economy or other environmental benefits. Linking environmental initiatives to concerns about building a more fair and just society could be advantageous. For example, frame the election not only in terms of the climate emergency but also as a springboard for investing in a green and just future. Be prepared for opponents aiming to exploit Canadians' financial concerns by characterizing green initiatives as detrimental to the needs of existing industries and businesses. To counter these claims, you can talk about keeping the Canadian economy competitive with the U.S. economy as this is a popular view among Canadians. More than half (73) of the respondents living in a competitive district (130) reside in the following 14 electoral districts: Cape Breton-Canso (NS), Cumberland-Colchester (NS), Miramichi-Grand Lake (NB), Saint John-Rochesay (NB); Gaspésie-Les Îles-de-la-Madeleine (QC), Quebec (QC), Brome-Missisquoi (QC), Bay of Quinte (ON), Peterborough-Kawartha (ON), Windsor West (ON); South Okanagan-West Kootenay (BC), Burnaby North-Seymour (BC) South Surrey-White Rock (BC), Victoria (BC). Our analytical brief on a green and just recovery, to be shared the week of Feb. 1, will include a full list of the swing ridings.



The above graph shows the probability, on a scale of 0-1, of Canadian men and women of different political tendencies prioritizing a green economic recovery.

Tip 5: Pssst! (Conservative women favour a green recovery)

So reach out to them! Women supporters of the federal CPC stand out in this survey, as they are about twice as likely as their male counterparts to support using the pandemic as an opportunity to diversify the economy (investing in innovation, clean energy, and more resilient communities). They are also just as likely to prioritize green economic initiatives in pandemic relief spending as women supporters of the federal NDP and LPC. If you're looking to build support among Conservatives, target conservative women and articulate the concept clearly. For example, advocate for a *green and just recovery* by linking investments in solar to long-term job creation in the energy sector. Or, talk about the benefits of investing in conservation and biodiversity protection, such as creating jobs and diversifying economies in rural and remote communities across Canada. Be careful—this survey found that skepticism about government redistribution programs and climate policy go hand in hand with an unwillingness to prioritize green initiatives in pandemic spending. If you talk about these issues, seek ways to counter or avoid triggering this skepticism.

Other research

Abacus & Nanos: We want to keep pace with Biden, Merkel, Moon...

A flurry of executive orders for climate action by incoming US President Joseph Biden has turned up the heat on the Trudeau government to deliver on its climate promises. And more heat is coming from other nations that have recently announced more ambitious climate plans: [Germany](#), [South Korea](#), the [UK](#), [Norway](#), and others.

An [Abacus poll](#) in December suggests Canadians have also taken note of these shifts, as 77% of respondents wanted Canada to "move our economy at a similar pace towards clean energy so we don't become uncompetitive with the US economy". This is the majority view across major regions, including Alberta (65%) and voting blocs, Conservatives included (59%). No less than 81% of the Abacus respondents also thought Biden's efforts to slash carbon emissions would not hurt the US economy. This may explain why Canadians have not stormed Parliament in support of the Alberta premier's criticism of Prime Minister Trudeau decision not to launch a trade war after Biden's cancellation of the KXL pipeline.

(An [Angus Reid](#) poll published Jan. 26th finds that, outside Alberta and Saskatchewan, a majority of Canadians believe its best to move on from disputes with Biden over KXL.)

A [Nanos poll](#) in November, meanwhile, found that nearly three-quarters of its respondents believed that our "oil and gas sector [is] more important to Canada's current economy" than it is to our future economy.

Nanos also found that, compared to the results of a poll in June 2020, Canadians are now increasingly likely to say that "now is the best time for Canada to be ambitious about climate change". Quebecers were most in agreement (71%), followed by residents of BC (59%) and the Prairie provinces (43%).

According to Bruce Anderson, the veteran pollster at Abacus, "public opinion has crossed a tipping point —people now believe that a economy which shifts...towards cleaner energy" will enjoy a "positive effect."



Canadians are among the angriest birds, in terms of recognizing the severity of climate change, according to a global poll.

Global poll confirms most of us think it's an emergency

A [vast and inventive opinion poll](#) by the UN in the final quarter of 2020 suggests that a large majority of people worldwide see climate change as a global emergency. The poll included 1.2 million respondents from 50 countries and gathered its answers via ads in video games and puzzles, such as Angry Birds, and Sudoku. Youth figured prominently as no fewer than 500,000 respondents were under 18.

Despite the COVID pandemic, the poll found that 59% of respondents consider climate change an "emergency" that demands we "do everything necessary and urgently" to address it. Asked about their level of support for 18 key climate policies across six areas (economy, energy, transport, food and farms, nature, and protecting people) "protecting and restoring forests" was the top priority, followed by renewable energy and climate-friendly farming. The least popular was dietary changes.

[Canadians ranked near the top](#) in terms of recognition of the gravity of climate change, but also stood out as having one of the largest gaps in opinion between genders (Canadian women and girls are more concerned than men and boys). Political partisanship also defines Canadian opinion on the issue, something seen in few other countries (except Australia and the United States).

New tools for translation

EcoAnalytics body of research reaches back to 2016, including data sets going back to 2011, and we are developing knowledge-translation tools to help you access it, more easily:

- **EcoA Tips:** our bimonthly newsletter (which you are delighting in, now) combines bite-size communications guidance, together with opinion research from other credible sources worldwide, and related news.
- **EcoA Research Nutshells:** beginning this month, these concise summaries will highlight main findings and recommendations of our reports, and bring together analysis from multiple sources on your most relevant issues (engaging youth, systemic change, framing of climate change, etc.) and sought-after demographic segments (by political affiliation, age, region, etc.).
- **Indexing:** we will be adding indexes to our research papers to serve as roadmaps to the content, including concepts, demographic indicators, political parties, etc.
- Website searches and more: later this year, we will add a search function to [ecoanalyticscanada.org](#) and improve navigation, updating and increasing access to infographics and other materials on our website.

EcoA News

Win a prize!

Be the first to send us the addresses of six or more fellow staffers in your organization who would like *EcoA Tips* to arrive directly in their mailboxes and we will send you a limited edition EcoA coaster or tea-towel (tolerable swag)! ...Or just send us some addresses for our subscription list and we'll say "Gracias!"

Comin' up

Our next few months promise to be busy. Here some dates, and date ranges, to keep mind:

February

10 First of EcoA Research Nutshells shared with Members and Subscribers.

15 Results of second omnibus poll shared (NbS, green recovery, blame for climate change, BIPOC).

15 (week of) Analytical brief, "Who is responsible for causing climate change?" shared (Date TBD)

24 Enviroincs VP Sarah Robertson presents [COVID, Canadians and the Environment: Winter 2021 EcoAnalytics Research Update](#), webinar for paying members of the Sustainability Network.

March

1 (week of) Erick Lachapelle presents Members analytical webinar on three analyses drawn from our 2020 Climate Survey (date TBD)

22 (week of) Join us for Spring Wave *Zoom-tni*: Social, and discussion of options for next wave of research, April-May (date TBD)

31 End of fiscal year; time for some Members and Subscribers to renew their EcoA subscriptions.

April

5 EcoA Tips newsletter # 3 shared

19 (week of) Finalize plans for spring research wave

May

17-31 Conduct spring research

June

7 EcoA Tips newsletter # 4 shared

Tell us what you like...

And how this newsletter could work harder for you; please, complete this [quick survey](#).

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