

EcoA Tips

Notes & news from EcoAnalytics Research

Welcome to *EcoA Tips* #6, another cornucopia of juicy guidance, ripe news and plum pieces of post-electoral intel:

Three tips on the energy transition and framing conversations about preparedness

- **Tip 1:** Engage *The Moveable Middle* with the specifics on climate threats and solutions
- **Tip 2:** On climate action, draw parallels to other countries (cautiously) when engaging *The Alarmed*
- **Tip 3:** Test frames for preparedness policies: “climate change,” “climate safety”, “extreme weather”

Other research

- Pollsters aren't all bad
- Government inaction linked to psychological distress among youth
- Infrastructure and budget bills fuelling support for U.S. climate action
- Nobel for climate science

EcoA News and calendar

[Ideas, suggestions, comments? \(survey\)](#)



A climate-solutions frame may help you engage *The Moveable Middle* in support of more electric trains like this one, outside Montreal. Photo credit: buzzy, iStock.

Three tips on the energy transition and framing conversations about preparedness

Tip 1: Engage the “Moveable Middle” with the specifics on climate threats and solutions.

When testing messages on the energy transition with the so-called *Moveable Middle* (Canadians, roughly 18–64, who believe in and are concerned about climate change but are not yet engaged in climate action), Climate Narratives in partnership with Climate Citizen found that the framing of climate threats and solutions performed best, while the economy and jobs, moral imperative, and interconnectedness of health and nature with climate change were less successful frames. See the full report on the message testing, conducted on social media as well as the language used, ads, and the list of regions [here](#). *The Moveable Middle*, in this research, were defined by excluding a series of indicators like higher education and the interest of respondents in sustainability/environmental issues and government. The authors recommend using specific language (“we need a plan for all workers”) rather than motivational language (“building a bridge to the clean economy”) to better engage this segment. Being specific also means including policy details, timelines, and the feasibility of targets. Climate Narratives and Climate Citizen also found that not only did the ads perform better, but *Moveables* engaged more with them by commenting on the posts and asking for more information, even when the language was more emotive or rousing. They also recommend further educating this demographic cluster on the link between climate change and the protection of nature and our health, as many *Moveables* do not connect these dots.

Tip 2: On climate action, draw parallels to other countries (cautiously) when engaging the “Alarmed”.

Like *The Moveable Middle*, Canadians who say they are alarmed about climate change, and keen to take action, respond best to specific information on climate threats and solutions (rather than general climate content). These so-called *Alarmed* Canadians make up a quarter of the population, according to the research done on the “[Six Canadas of Climate Change](#)”, [Climate Narratives](#) and [Climate Citizen](#), and include many women, as well as Canadians who are university-educated and left-leaning, BIPOC or New Canadians, 18–34 years of age. A key characteristic is that they better understood the climate crisis than do *Moveables*. For example, in recent social media testing, they engaged with the test ads more deeply and often offered criticism of inaccurate policy details or inappropriate country comparisons. (No, don't compare Canada to Sweden without understanding their differences). Like *Moveables*, however, *The Alarmed* responded better to specific language about energy transition policies and timelines. Take advantage of this opportunity to engage the nearly one-in-four Canadians in this receptive cluster, therefore, by getting specific about the energy transition and pushing them harder to advocate for policy change. But be careful, as these well-informed citizens will be quick to catch you out if you make unsubstantiated generalizations.



Smoke from wildfires shrouds Lake O'Hara in Yoho National Park, BC, last summer. Photo credit: James Gabbert, iStock.

Tip 3: Test frames for preparedness policies: “climate change”, “climate safety”, “extreme weather”.

EcoAnalytics' 2020 Climate of Change Survey found 86% of respondents supported “preparing our communities to be more resilient to climate change impacts.” But how do audiences respond to specific preparedness policies when framed as responses to “extreme weather” or “climate change”? A [recent study](#) by Yale University's Program on Climate Communication found big differences among different American audiences. For example, on policies to protect infrastructure and resources, 80% in a group exposed to the “extreme weather” frame said that protecting public water supplies should be a high priority for governments, compared to just 74% in the “climate change” group. Similarly, 62% in the “extreme weather” group expressed support for protecting transportation, roads, and bridges, compared to just 48% in the “climate change” group. Among lefties, however, the study found no such discrepancy between the different frames; in fact, the “climate change” frame may have boosted support for collective action. Among moderates, “extreme weather” and “climate change” performed equally well. The takeaway? To engage conservative U.S. audiences, the “extreme weather” frame is a safer option. Similarly, our Climate of Change Survey found that left-leaning Canadians were more likely than others to strongly agree that we should prepare our communities to be more resilient to the impacts of “climate change”. In the wake of our federal election, it might be worth testing support for climate preparedness policies among left- and right-leaning voters exposed to different frames — climate change, extreme weather, and perhaps climate safety (which has performed well in other US research — to assess their relative effectiveness among Canadian audiences.

Other research

Pollsters aren't all bad: After the 2016 and 2020 US elections, pollsters were [lambasted](#) for underestimating support for Trump. Skepticism around the accuracy of issue-polling therefore lingered: was it even worthwhile, and could it be trusted to accurately gauge support for candidates, some observers asked? Addressing these questions, [Pew Research](#) explains that despite the strong correlation between party support and issue preference, which might justify the skepticism in polling, they're not the same — because there's greater variation in opinion among partisans about issues than about candidates. Why does this matter to us? The Canadian political landscape is not as rigidly partisan as the American, but skepticism about political polling has been widespread here, too. The performance of our pollsters was in fact quite good in both 2019 and 2021. This, as summarized in the below table, and Pew's U.S. analysis, should inspire more trust in both issue-polling and surveys of voting intentions in the Canadian electorate.

	CPC	LPC	NDP	BQ	PPC	GP	Total error
Léger	33	32	19	7	6	2	4
Abacus	32	31	19	7	6	4	8
Nanos	32	31.5	19	7.3	5.1	4.6	6.9
IPSOS	32	31	21	7	4	3	9
EKOS	26.9	32.1	18.5	7.2	10	4.4	15.1
Mainstreet	30.4	33.4	18.1	6	9.3	2.1	11.5
Actual results	34	32	18	8	5	2	

Having trouble viewing the table on a phone? Rotate your device to view in landscape.

British and Canadian researchers revealing nature of eco-anxiety in youth: A new [study](#) from the University of Bath in England has found that government inaction on the climate crisis was linked to distress among youth. The survey of 10,000 youth, 16–25, across 10 countries (worldwide, but not including Canada) found that 75% believed “the future is frightening”. Most important, “it found, for the first time, that climate distress and anxiety is significantly related to perceived government inaction and associated feelings of betrayal.” Meanwhile in Canada, a team of researchers is examining the nature of eco-anxiety among youth in Quebec. Anne-Sophie Gousse Lessard, Adjunct Professor at UQAM and former EcoA Research Associate, and Dr. Maxime Boivin, a researcher at the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, are interested in the relationship between eco-anxiety in youth and their engagement in environmental causes, research which they hope to expand across Canada.

Infrastructure and budget bills fuelling support for U.S. climate action: The [Climate Change in the American Mind](#) survey conducted in September by the Yale Program on Climate Communication shows that public support for climate action has significantly increased since March. As Congress decides whether to pass two major bills that would trigger unprecedented investments in climate action, a record number of respondents “now think climate change is happening, are worried about it, and say global warming is harming people in the U.S. right now.” The share of respondents who are “very worried” has also increased 10% since March. The number of liberal and moderate/conservative Democrats as well as liberal/moderate Republicans who believe that global warming should be “a high or very high priority for the president and Congress” has also increased.

Nobel for climate science: Syukuro Manabe, Klaus Hasselmann and Giorgio Parisi [were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics](#) for their work on understanding complex systems from a microscopic to a planetary scale. As often happens, the timing of this Nobel is topical, as countries worldwide meet to agree on ways of controlling the Earth's climate, a highly complex system, at COP 26 in Glasgow. On this matter, Professor Parisi said, “We have to act now in a very fast way...”



Syukuro Manabe, one of three recipients of this year's Nobel Prize for Physics. Photo credit: Denise Applewhite/Princeton University/UPI

EcoA News

Into the Mix: EcoAnalytics has reached an agreement with *The Energy Mix* to contribute infographics and relevant data from its research as a monthly feature, beginning this month. The *Mix* is a growing digest of news worldwide on efforts to reduce carbon emissions and transition to renewable energy. Titled “Datapoints”, the succinct infographics will draw from EcoAnalytics' growing body of data and analysis reaching back to 2016, further highlighting the value of this research.

Nutshells: We've just released “[Powerful Words for Climate Action](#)”, a new EcoA Research Nutshell that updates guidance from our 2018 analytical brief of similar title, with findings from the fall 2020 Climate of Change Survey. Upcoming Nutshells will look at engaging Albertans and market research methodologies — good stuff to know. If you have suggestions for other topics, tell us! [Here are all the Nutshells](#) now available.

More talent: Missed the August webinar, introducing our distinguished new team of Research Advisors: no problem! Here are brief bios about EcoA's two latest recruits: Ingrid Waldron and Mark Purdon. Professor Waldron (pictured, top right) is Professor and HOPE Chair in Peace and Health, Global Peace and Social Justice Program in the Department of History, at McMaster University. The founder and Director of the Environmental Noxiousness, Racial Inequities Community Health Project (The [ENRICH](#) Project), she is well known as the author of *There's Something in the Water: Environmental Racism in Indigenous and Black Communities*, the book behind the 2020 Netflix documentary, which she co-produced with actor Elliot Page. With MP Leonore Zann, Waldron also spearheaded the push for a National Strategy Respecting Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice (Bill C-230). Dr. Mark Purdon (bottom right) is an Assistant Professor at l'École des sciences de la gestion, Université du Québec à Montréal. He has done postdoctoral research at the London School of Economics, and directs the SSHRC-funded Joint Clean Climate Transport Research Partnership. Expert in comparative environmental politics, he is interested in the relationship between climate change politics and political economy and has extensive research experience in developing and developed countries. (See August issue of *EcoA Tips* for details about our other new Advisors)



Comin' up
October
12 Environics draft national survey questionnaire shared with Members
18 Members' deadline for comments on Environics national survey questionnaire
20 2:30pm ET, EcoA Members' strategic planning session: Theory of Change
25 Start of fielding of Environics national survey (ends Nov.5).
31 COP 26, UN Climate Change Conference begins, Glasgow, Scotland
November
1, week of (TBC) Members' Strategic planning: EcoA business model
19 (TBC) Environics presents results of its national survey

Did you like this newsletter?

If so, what's most useful, or likeable? If not, what's missing? Submit your feedback, and suggestions for future issues and *EcoA Research Nutshells* through this [survey](#).

EcoAnalytics is a project of MakeWay

Copyright © * [CURRENT_YEAR] * * [LIST_COMPANY] *. All rights reserved.
 * [IFNOT_ARCHIVE_PAGE] * * [LIST_DESCRIPTION] *

Our mailing address is:
 * [HTMLLIST_ADDRESS_HTML] * * [END_IF] *

Was this forwarded to you? * [LIST_SUBSCRIBE] *

You can [unsubscribe from this list](#) at any time.

* [IF_REWARDS] * * [HTML_REWARDS] * * [END_IF] *