



Welcome to EcoA Tips #13, bursting with *raptorous* guidance to begin your new year communications with a bang.

**Three tips based on new research:**

**Tip 1:** Build on biodiversity momentum, target laggard provinces

**Tip 2:** Affordability frames work, when carefully targeted

**Tip 3:** Address a root cause of Canada's climate knowledge gap: education

**Other resources**

- Climate narratives infiltrate Hollywood
- Making deforestation unfashionable
- Yale updates visualization of climate opinion
- UN's newest biodiversity maps empower decision-makers

**EcoA News and calendar**

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**Land back:** The proposed [T'eqt'aqtn Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area](#) in southern B.C. above, is one of many possible IPCAs that could be a key to provincial plans to set and meet Canada's conservation targets. *Credit: Kanaka Bar Indian Band*

## Three tips for engagement around biodiversity, affordability and youth

### Tip 1: Build on momentum for biodiversity by targeting laggard provinces

With, at last, a global accord at Montreal's COP 15 to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, big media coverage of the event and more public support for protective legislation, now is the time to keep the pressure up, especially on the provinces, most of whom have yet to step up.

#### What the data says

EcoA's recent [Climate of Change Survey](#) indicates that over 70% of Canadians want to see more government protection of biodiversity. Even among Conservative-voters support is high, a group that is less enthusiastic about other solutions to climate change.

Likewise, [recent polling](#) by CPAWS also found that 90% want Canada to meet its 30%-by-2030 conservation targets, while 84% are for increased

government spending to reach this level. Less than 40%, however, believe their provincial governments have a credible plan. This means, as evidenced by federal Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault's ambitious announcements at COP 15, that governments that promise serious action to protect biodiversity will enjoy the backing of voters.

When advocating for more conservation, however, be sure to strike a balance by addressing concerns and knowledge gaps, as discussed in our November [EcoA Tips](#). Remember that many people don't understand basic aspects of biodiversity, so you will want to provide practical information about matters such as how Canada can protect 30%, without worsening the housing crisis, taking jobs or displacing communities, etc.

## How to use this

Minister Guilbeault's recent support of a legal framework for sticking to biodiversity targets makes it easier to pressure provincial governments to do their fair share. Communication that draws attention to the complexity of conservation, but also holds premiers accountable, can serve to both educate audiences about how and where efforts should be focused and ratchet up pressure on laggard provinces.

Indigenous protected and conserved areas will be a key component of achieving conservation targets, yet few Canadians know much about IPCAs. [Personal storytelling from Indigenous groups and partners](#) on managing such areas and working on new ones could help fill this knowledge gap.

## Mock post

**Play up recent wins: notably the landmark Global Biodiversity Framework agreed in Montreal in December, which aims to protect 30% of the planet, including 30% of degraded ecosystems by 2030. Then call out laggard premiers for not doing their fair share. Connect importance of biodiversity to climate change and humanity's health and safety. Emphasize the importance of protecting the most *biodiverse* regions, not just remote landscapes and identify some of the complexities involved. Provide easy access to local information on potential areas for conservation and what the broader impacts of this might be.**



**EcoAnalytics**

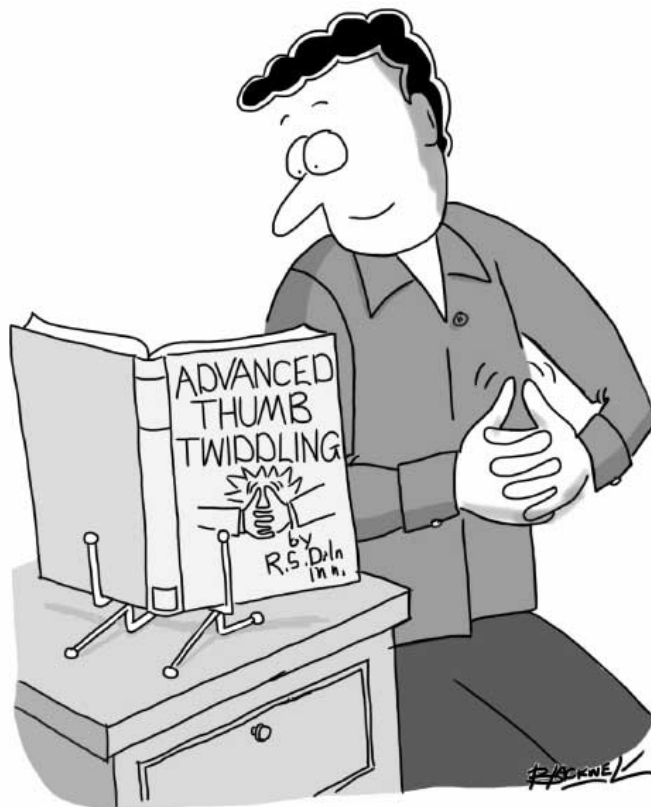
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## Protect us, Premier [X]!

Countries worldwide have just signed onto a landmark UN Global Biodiversity Framework. Canada hosted the conference where the agreement was struck and our federal government has committed to protecting 30% of Canada's land and marine areas by 2030 to fight climate change and keep nature (including ourselves) safe and healthy. But we will not achieve our targets, unless the provinces do their fair share. [Province] still needs to protect XX% of land [and or ocean] rich in biodiversity to do its part. Forests, wetlands and grasslands are the most biodiverse habitats and many are threatened by development, resource extraction and agriculture, etc.

To find out more about where [province] can make the most conservation impact and how this action would affect local communities, check out our interactive map [EMBED LINK].



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**Protect us, Premier [X]!**

[Learn more](#)



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## Tip 2: Affordability frames work, when carefully targeted

Polls suggest that concerns about climate change continue to lag behind concerns about the cost of living and health; but they also show that, as we begin another year of economic uncertainty, people remain receptive to climate messages that emphasize the affordability of transitioning to renewable energy. As you craft such messages, however, keep in mind that your different audiences demand different approaches.

### What the data says

EcoA's recent [Climate of Change Survey](#), conducted by Dr. Erick Lachapelle in November, shows that concern for climate change has dropped, as inflation and cost of living concerns to soar. Not surprisingly, many in financial difficulty (but not all, as Tip 3 advises) rank climate behind health, cost of living, economy and social issues.

However, demand for government action has rebounded and narrative frames that highlight the affordability and security of renewable energy are proving successful. In a recent Abacus poll for Clean Energy Canada, [two out of three Canadians](#) said they believe renewable energy is now more affordable than fossil-fuel energy (only Albertans were less convinced) and more secure (including Albertans). Similarly, EcoA's fall survey found Canadians are more likely to say transitioning will improve affordability when the shift is to 100% clean energy (wind, solar and hydro) rather to “fewer emissions” (using small nuclear reactors and fossil fuels like natural gas together with renewable energy sources).

### How to use this

Reinforce the affordability of clean energy, but make sure you use the right message for the right audience. [Comparing average provincial heating costs](#), based on energy source, is an eye-opening way to show how Canadians in many provinces are already reaping the benefits of clean energy. But to encourage an equitable transition, identify the specific barriers preventing each audience from adopting or supporting a clean energy transition and find ways of empowering that audience to overcome its specific barriers. For example, barriers to homeowners and renters for adopting heat pumps, solar power and

other low-carbon energy systems (LCES) are different.

Looking at barriers for a homeowner switching to an electric heat pump, try to help her or him to navigate complex government rebate programs. Are there any information or communication gaps in this process? What programs, partners, or initiatives could support the homeowner in this process? For details on communicating tangible and local affordability of EVs, see the third tip in our [November newsletter](#).

When engaging renters, and others not in a position to switch to clean energy systems, consider other ways to support these people. Are there local or provincial initiatives to amplify that might accelerate the use of LCES in new and existing housing stock? Can your group advocate for prioritizing LCES in social housing? Or do more to improve transit?

### **Mock social media post**

The two posts below offer examples of different approaches for distinct audiences (homeowners and renters) and outcomes.



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Are you interested in a heat pump, but just don't know where to start? We can help.

Watch this short [video] to find out how a heat pump

- Reduces your costs
- Provides air conditioning in the summer
- Uses clean renewable energy
- Works efficiently in most Canadian climates
- Is more affordable than ever

Here in [province] rebates of up to \$XX are available for installing a heat pump. View our step-by-step guide to accessing all your rebates, finding a contractor and installing your heat pump.



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**Find out how heat pumps can save you \$**

[Learn more](#)

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Is retrofitting rentals with clean energy on your city council's agenda? If it's not, it should be and we can help.

Municipalities across Canada are rewriting bylaws to ensure new and existing homes have healthy, energy-efficient heating and cooling. Many are prioritizing programs that support social housing and rental conversion, ensuring renewable, clean and affordable energy is accessible for all.

Check out our tool kit to see how other municipalities are switching to clean energy housing and tips for working with your city council to make this a reality where you live.



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**Advocate for retrofitting rental housing**

[Learn more](#)



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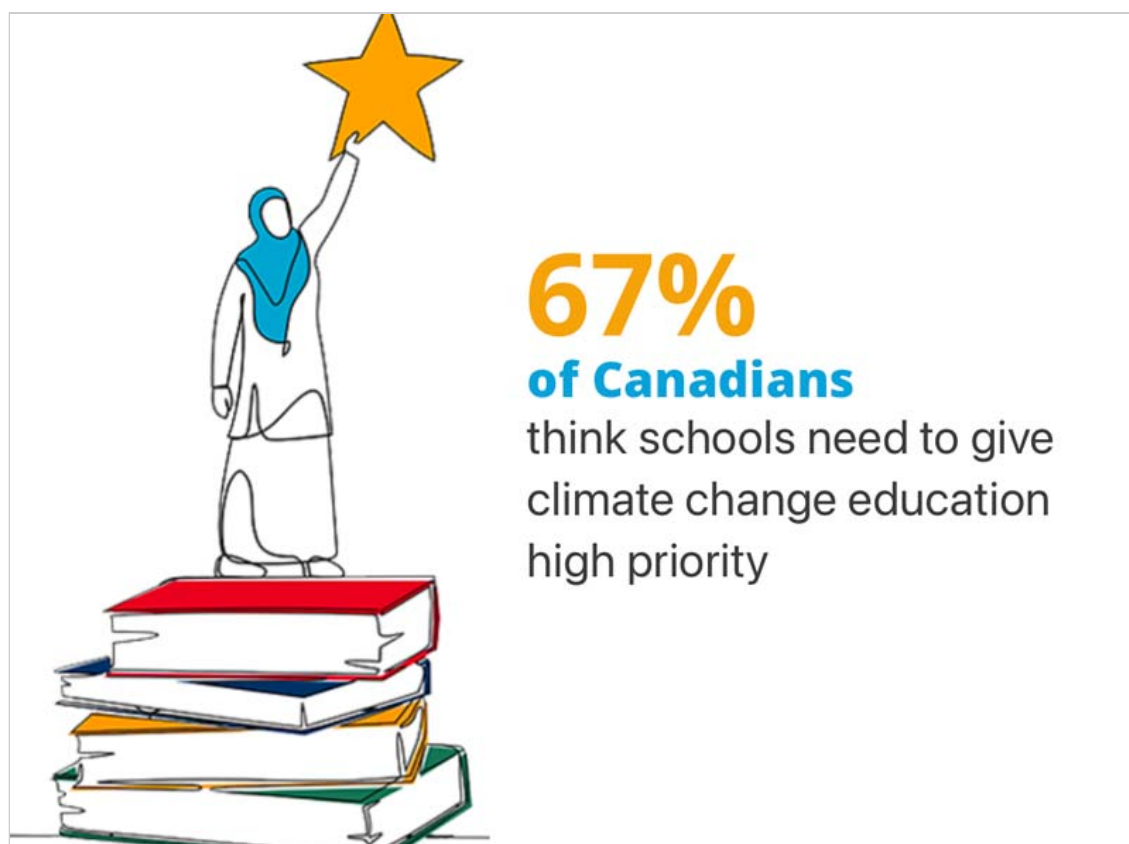


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**Tip 3: Address a cause of Canada's climate knowledge gap: education**



While concern about climate change, relative to other issues, and commitment to individual or collective behaviour have flat-lined, as concerns about heightened inflation and cost of living soar, polling indicates the opposite is true among some audiences. Youth (as well as BIPOC respondents) are often the most concerned about (and most likely to be affected by) climate change. Yet climate education in schools lacks the resources, tools and support needed to educate and empower youth about the nature of climate change and how to address it as citizens.



Credit: [LSF infographic](#)

## What the data says

Analysis of EcoA's fall [Climate of Change Survey](#) data reveals that youth (18–24) suffer far more from climate anxiety than other Canadians. This audience is also among the least prepared for climate disasters and is significantly more likely than other older audiences to rate climate as their top concern, though many of them also say they are in financial difficulty.

The survey also reveals that a significant number of Canadians are uncertain when faced with misinformation about climate solutions. A battery of questions about misinformation and accurate information shows that a majority see through the *bullshit*, but a large percentage say they are “unsure”. Some of the

knowledge gaps revealed here were examined in detail by Environics in its online [qualitative research](#) discussion groups last summer on behalf of EcoA.

What underlies this uncertainty? Fresh research suggests it is tied to the troubling [state of climate-change education](#), among other factors. National polling done by [Learning for a Sustainable Future](#) on K–12 students, educators, parents and the general public shows that barely one in three educators (34%) feel they have the resources and support to teach their students about climate change and climate solutions and only one in eight (13%) spend more than 11 hours per year on the topic. As credible information tends to empower students, this worrying data likely explains, in part, why four out of ten students (41%) suffer from climate anxiety. It's noteworthy, however, that roughly the same number of students (39%) are feeling empowered to address climate change, up from 28% in 2019.

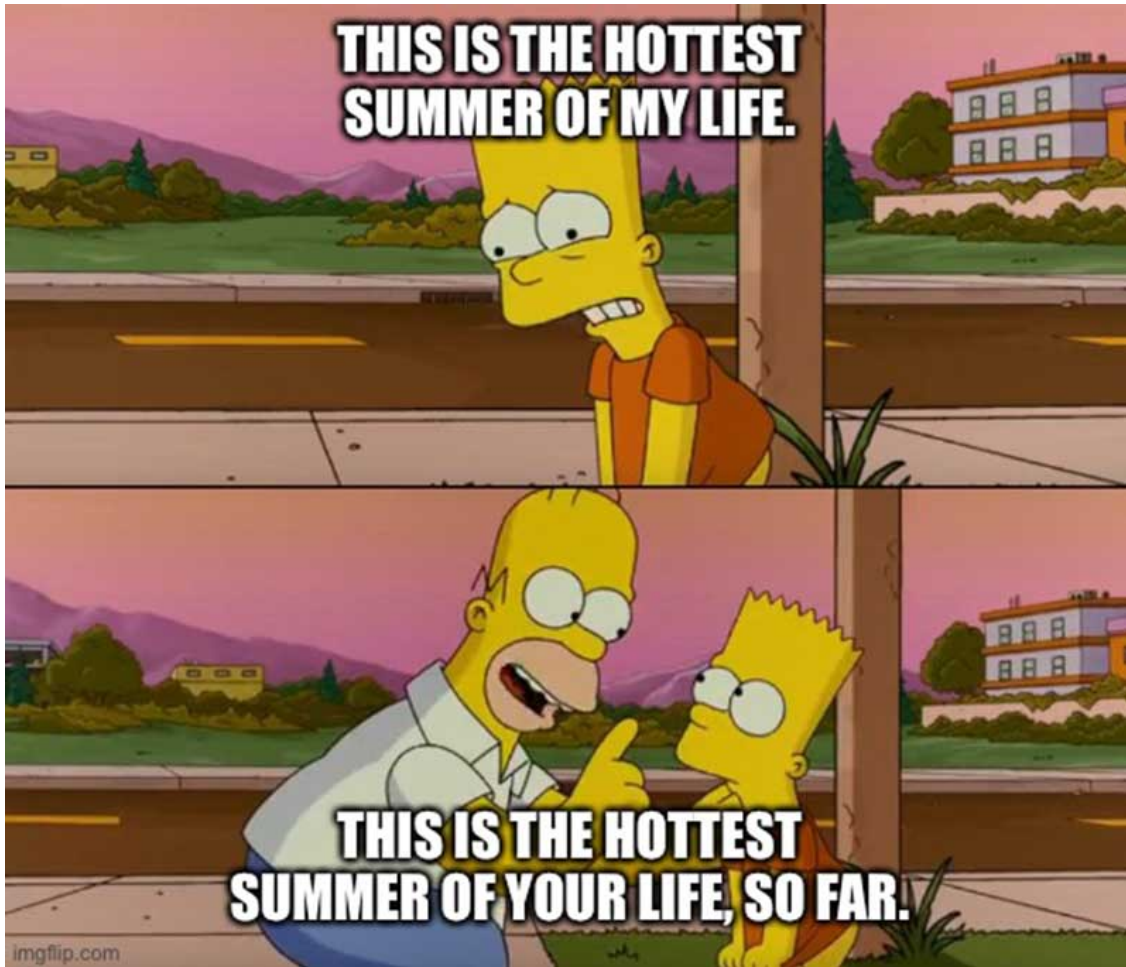
## How to use this

This tip is for the *long-game*, but could yield benefits far into the future. Educators are desperate for more resources, professional development and support in teaching students about climate change and addressing climate anxiety by empowering students with tools and knowledge. If children and youth are better supported in climate change education, uncertainty triggered by misinformation and knowledge gaps might become less significant factors. Environmental organizations have the frameworks for talking about the issues, as well as the knowledge and tools that educators need. Questions to consider include:

- How can environmental groups actually empower young people, families, educators and caregivers to act in defence of climate?
- How can NGOs leverage their skills, frameworks and resources to support formal and informal educator: hockey coaches, art teachers, camp counsellors, museum docents, etc.?
- Could NGOs partner with teacher associations and school districts?
  - Could your group offer Pro-D day workshops on how to integrate climate change empowerment into all subject matter?
- How else can NGOs improve curriculum resources?
  - Teachers find the [oil and gas industry's](#) "balanced" resources easy to grab; could more accurate resources be closer at hand?
- How can we advocate for faster integration and use of climate-change curricula at the provincial level?

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## Other resources



**Youth engagement:** Climate narratives, like this one delivered by Homer Simpson, could be coming soon to a broad range of TV shows and movies.

## Climate narratives infiltrate Hollywood

The biggest influencer of all is now, itself, being influenced. [Good Energy Stories](#) is working with Hollywood screenwriters to integrate climate narratives, issues and actions into all genres of film and television. Sample loglines (summaries) for your favourite shows can be found [here](#).

## Making deforestation unfashionable

Canopy's [forest-friendly fashion initiative](#) now has 515 top brands (H&M, Walmart, Stella McCartney, etc.) committed to transforming their supply chains to ensure we can all still feel good about looking good.

## Yale updates visualization of climate opinion

The university's Program on Climate Change has updated its [interactive visualization tool](#), "Climate Change and the American Mind", to draw on data from 2008-2022. Its [recent analysis](#) shows, for example, that public acceptance and worry about global warming has increased much faster among younger Americans (18–34) than other demographic groups.

## **Biodiversity maps empower decision makers**

The [UN Biodiversity Lab's latest maps](#) draw on vast new data about protected areas, land use, nature-based climate solutions, etc. to help decision-makers create evidence-based plans to protect nature and communities.

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## **EcoA News**

### **First webinar to test new format**

The EcoA webinar of Jan.23rd will allow more discussion among Members and researchers as part of efforts to improve the translation of results. Dr. Erick Lachapelle will begin the 90-min. session by presenting further analysis of his Climate of Change survey (Nov.–Dec. 2022) but much of the session will be devoted to break-out groups, for Members, Associates and Researchers to dig into the results and consider how best to use them.

### **Introducing our Associates**

Our former Subscribers (Nature Conservancy of Canada, re:Climate, Neighbours United, WWF-Canada) are now known as Associate Members. Their products and privileges remain essentially unchanged (the same as Members, without a seat on the Steering Committee). Organizations that simply subscribe to our newsletters, public-facing Opinionation webinars, and research reports are now known as Subscribers.

### **Expressions of interest**

EcoA will be issuing a request to Members and Associates for expressions of interest in early March about specific topics for a first round of customized research to be conducted in the spring. Details to follow.

### **Marshall plan**

George Marshall, the distinguished expert on climate communications and former founding director of Climate Outreach (UK), will present an Opinionation webinar, Feb.9 on his latest book: *Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Ignore Climate Change* and other new work.

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## Calendar (dates and eastern times)

### January

**19, 2pm** Consultant Ari Pottens presents social media pilot study results

**23, 2pm** Second Climate of Change survey workshop with Erick Lachapelle

**30, week of** Fielding begins of Environics national survey testing frames and messages about transformative policies

### February

**9, 1pm** Opinionation webinar with George Marshall (see News above)

**20 or 27, weeks of** Environics results webinar, national survey on frames and messaging to advance transformative policies.

### March

**6 or 13, week of** Request for expressions of interest in topics for first round of Customized research to be conducted in spring 2023.

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## Like this newsletter?

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