



CITIZEN DIALOGUES ON **CANADA'S** ENERGY FUTURE



REGIONAL DIALOGUES SUMMARY REPORT



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About the Citizen Dialogues on Canada's Energy Future

The Citizen Dialogues on Canada's Energy Future are independently designed and facilitated by Simon Fraser University's Centre for Dialogue and funded under a contribution agreement from Natural Resources Canada as part of the Generation Energy public consultation.

About this document

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the comparative results from the Regional Citizen Dialogues on Canada's Energy Future, held in September 2017. The contents do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Simon Fraser University, Natural Resources Canada or the authors.

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Executive summary

The Citizen Dialogues on Canada's Energy Future are the first ever cross-Canada deliberative process where randomly selected citizens advise the federal government on energy policy.

Throughout September 2017, approximately 150 Canadians attended regional dialogues in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal or Halifax. These citizens were **randomly selected to reflect the diversity of Canadians at-large**, including attitudes, demographics, and geography. Together, participants worked within their region to develop a shared path forward for Canada's energy future, informed by **evidence-based information** and the **spirit of curiosity**.

Key findings from the regional dialogues include:

- **All groups recommended steps to transition Canada's energy economy** in support of a cleaner and healthier natural environment or reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- **More than 90 per cent of participants supported** investments in clean-tech innovation and national energy infrastructure, as well as incentives to accelerate the adoption of existing green energy technologies. Emissions regulations also received strong support.
- **A recurring theme was the need to manage and address impacts on Canadians** while our energy economy changes, including such considerations as job retention and retraining, affordability, reducing impacts on vulnerable individuals, communities and sectors, and providing energy choices that can adapt to local realities.
- **A majority of participants called for new forms of governance and oversight** for energy issues, including improved cross-Canada collaboration, better accountability, reduced partisanship, or increased citizen engagement.
- **Participants discussed measures to address cost and funding implications**, raising such ideas as polluter-pays models, redirecting government revenues from natural resources, or attracting private investment. The issue of costs and trade-offs will be further explored at the pan-Canadian citizen dialogue in Winnipeg.

In their evaluation surveys from the regional dialogues, **98 per cent of participants were satisfied with their dialogue experience** and 93 per cent felt that the information provided at the dialogue was presented in a neutral way.

Thirty-five participants from the regional dialogues will attend the Pan-Canadian Citizen Dialogue on Canada's Energy Future, which will take place in Winnipeg October 11-13, 2017 in parallel to Natural Resources Canada's Generation Energy Forum. A major outcome will be for Canadians from different regions and perspectives to **develop a shared vision for our energy future that is in the best interest of Canada as a whole**.



A different kind of conversation

The Citizen Dialogues on Canada's Energy Future are an attempt to approach conversations about energy differently, and are the first ever cross-Canada deliberative dialogue process where randomly selected citizens advise the federal government on energy policy.

During September and October 2017, these dialogues are engaging approximately 150 Canadians in a deep conversation about energy. Coming from different hometowns, perspectives and backgrounds, these participants are sitting down at the same table to learn about each other's lives, ideas and aspirations.

Together, participants will seek a shared path forward in shaping Canada's energy future, informed by the best evidence-based information available and the spirit of curiosity. The result will be high-quality information about what citizens value and how they seek to balance issues such as greenhouse gas emissions, jobs, innovation and international competitiveness.



What happened at the regional dialogues?

The Regional Citizen Dialogues on Canada's Energy Future took place September 2017, with sessions in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.

Participants were recruited using random digit dialing and selected to reflect the diversity of Canadians at-large. Final selection criteria included geographic representation, demographic information, and attitudinal diversity as determined through a baseline public opinion poll¹. A minimum of two participants were recruited from each province and territory².

Dialogue location	Region covered
Vancouver	British Columbia and Yukon
Calgary	Alberta, Manitoba, Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan
Toronto	Nunavut and Ontario
Montreal	Québec
Halifax	New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Table 1: List of provinces and territories represented at each regional dialogue.

Prior to attending their regional dialogue, participants received a discussion guide in the mail to learn about energy issues. Over the course of each two-day process,³ participants:

- Explored how energy impacts their lives and the lives of other Canadians.
- Reviewed evidence-based information about Canada's energy profile and explored diverse perspectives about potential approaches to Canada's energy future⁴.
- Developed potential visions for Canada's energy future and voted on the criteria that should guide Canadians in shaping this energy future.
- Worked in small groups to recommend three key actions to create an energy future that is in the best interest of Canada as a whole.

At the conclusion of the dialogue, participants completed an exit survey to document their support for a range of potential government actions, as well as to evaluate the dialogue process. Ninety-three per cent of respondents felt that the information provided at the dialogue was presented in a neutral way. The vast majority indicated that they were able to increase their knowledge (93 per cent) and were satisfied with their experience as a participant (98 per cent).

¹ For a description of the full participant recruitment methodology, see the report by Forum Research, which is publicly available at www.canadaenergyfuture.ca

² Due to a last minute participant cancellation, only one individual from Nunavut attended the Toronto dialogue.

³ The full process design for the regional dialogues will be published in the project technical report in January 2018.

⁴ A discussion guide was provided to participants prior to attending the dialogue, and is available at www.canadaenergyfuture.ca



Criteria to guide Canadians

Participants were asked to suggest potential criteria that should guide Canadians in shaping our energy future. After sharing their own ideas and reviewing criteria provided by Natural Resources Canada,⁵ participants voted to identify the criteria that they collectively believed to be most important.

The most popular criteria across all regional dialogues are presented in Table 2. Participants clearly identified the economy and the environment as the most important types of decision criteria, including such factors as affordability/accessibility, international competitiveness, jobs, a sustainable and healthy natural environment and greenhouse gas reductions.

Regional variations in emphasis included additional weight on “affordability” at the Halifax dialogue, on “innovation” at the Toronto dialogue, and on “balancing the economy and the environment” at the Calgary dialogue. Participants at some regional dialogues proposed criteria that were popular within their region but not raised as criteria elsewhere. These included “safety” at the Montreal dialogue, the “impact on people, including Aboriginal peoples” at the Calgary dialogue, “effective and transparent government” at the Toronto dialogue, and a “Canadian first approach to energy sovereignty and security” at the Vancouver dialogue.

	Vancouver	Calgary	Montreal	Toronto	Halifax	Total Votes
Economic impact, including jobs, affordability and/or international competitiveness	21 ⁶	37 ⁷	23	18	41	140
Environmental sustainability, including a healthy natural environment and/or greenhouse gas reductions	28	25 ⁷	25	24	14	116
Innovation	7	N/A	7	20	7	41
Health	15 ⁶	N/A	9	N/A	6	30

Table 2: Most popular decision criteria as voted by regional dialogue participants.

⁵ The four criteria that had been pre-identified by Natural Resources Canada were: (1) jobs; (2) international competitiveness; (3) greenhouse gas reductions; and (4) innovation.

⁶ Vancouver participants introduced the criteria “healthy people, healthy environment”, which is included in this table both under the categories of “health” and “environmental sustainability.”

⁷ Calgary participants introduced the criteria “Balancing environment and economy”, which is included in this table both under the categories “economic impact” and “environmental sustainability.”

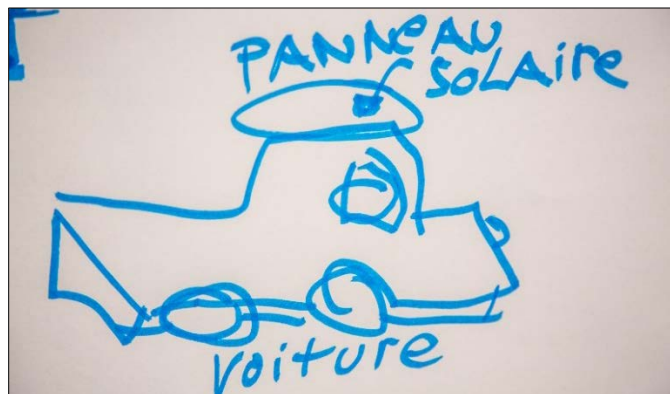
Citizen recommendations by thematic area

At each regional dialogue, participants separated into four breakout groups to develop recommendations. These recommendations were action-oriented, with the goal to create an energy future in 2050 that is in the best interest of Canada as a whole. The most popular types of actions have been grouped by thematic area in this section, combined with relevant results from the dialogue exit survey.

Most participants supported a transition in Canada's energy system that results in a cleaner and healthier natural environment or reduces greenhouse gas emissions, with all 20 breakout groups including at least one action towards this goal.⁸ Forty-two out of the 61 proposed actions explicitly supported a cleaner environment or a low-carbon future, while nine additional actions involved infrastructure or information that would likely support such a transition.

In addition, six dominant themes emerged after a detailed review of the recommendations, decision criteria, exit surveys and key messages confirmed by participants at the regional dialogues.⁹ These were:

1. **New forms of governance and oversight** for energy issues
2. **Investments in clean technology research** and innovation to build the new energy economy
3. **Incentives to accelerate the adoption** of existing green or low-carbon energy technologies
4. **Regulations to protect the environment** or reduce greenhouse gas emissions
5. **Investing in energy infrastructure** that serves Canada and its communities
6. **Addressing impacts on Canadians** during changes to our energy economy



⁸ While the dialogues were situated in the context of Canada's current commitments to reducing carbon emissions, participants were free to choose actions that did not align with those commitments when making their recommendations.

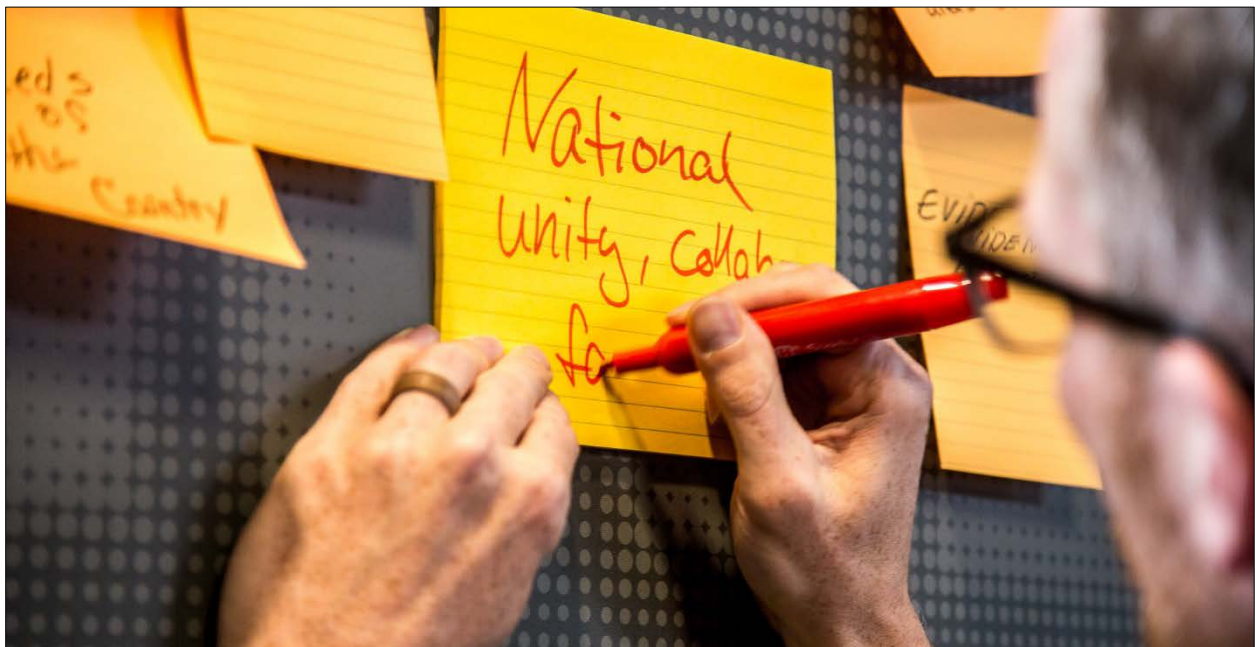
⁹ The full datasets from each regional dialogue are available at www.canadenergyfuture.ca.

Theme 1: New forms of governance and oversight for energy issues

At four out of five dialogues, participant recommendations included taking action toward more collaborative and accountable national governance on energy issues. All of these recommended actions emphasized collaboration between stakeholders and across levels of government. Examples of group recommendations include:

- The development of a pan-Canadian energy plan or policy framework
- Collaboration with Indigenous peoples
- Improved citizen engagement
- Increased accountability and oversight, including the use of neutral third parties, to ensure that government programs are effective, evidence based and efficient
- The need for national energy governance to take a long-term view that can provide consistency beyond electoral cycles (this view was particularly stressed at the Calgary dialogue)

Exit survey results show near-unanimous agreement with governance-related actions in Vancouver and Toronto, where 97 per cent and 96 per cent of respondents expressed support, respectively. Actions on national energy governance also proved popular in Calgary and Halifax, with 88 per cent of respondents expressing support at both dialogues.¹⁰



¹⁰ The actions mentioned here were added to the exit surveys in real time based on the recommendations participants made at each dialogue. Governance-related actions were not raised by participants in Montreal and are therefore not included in the survey results from that dialogue.

Theme 2: Investments in clean technology research and innovation to build the new energy economy

Supporting clean technology research and innovation was a strong theme across all five regional dialogues, with more than half of breakout groups proposing actions in this area. Individual breakout group recommendations included:

- Supporting clean tech start-ups, entrepreneurs and innovators
- Investing in research and development, such as centres for research excellence
- Refocusing education curriculums to include material on innovation and to prepare learners for careers in the sustainable energy sector

With 98 per cent support in the exit surveys, “invest in research and development of low-carbon technologies and provide incentives for innovation and low-carbon energy start-ups” was the most popular action among participants. Other actions such as investing in carbon capture and storage also received high levels of support.

Theme 3: Incentives to accelerate the adoption of existing green or low-carbon energy technologies

Many of the actions recommended by breakout groups focused on incentives to motivate industry and consumers to reduce emissions. Examples from individual groups include:

- Rebates on energy efficient or electric vehicles
- Reduced property or sales taxes for green purchases
- Providing incentives for community or household energy independence
- Low interest loans for home upgrades or building retrofits
- Manufacturer's rebates

In their exit surveys 93 per cent of participants supported financing the retrofitting of homes and buildings, while 91 per cent supported subsidies for low-carbon technologies and local power production for Indigenous communities. In two of the dialogues, the importance of using incentives to create an energy transition was highlighted in the key messages agreed upon by participants.

Theme 4: Regulations to protect the environment or reduce greenhouse gas emissions

There was considerable support among participants for using government regulations to protect the environment or reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Eleven breakout group recommendations included stricter measures for environmental protection, including groups that also called for an expansion of oil and gas infrastructure, or higher standards for energy efficiency. Some groups emphasized the need for more effective enforcement and accountability for polluters. Actions recommended by individual breakout groups included:

- Adopt higher emissions intensity standards for industry
- Implement a cap on greenhouse gas emissions
- Mandating cleaner oil and gas production technologies
- Protect species at risk
- Increase energy efficiency standards for industries and buildings
- Increase corporate accountability (e.g. caution fees, remediation funds)

Three of the of the actions that received over 80% support from participants in the exit surveys were related to curbing energy consumption and GHG emissions. This includes energy efficiency and emission intensity standards as well as hard emissions caps.

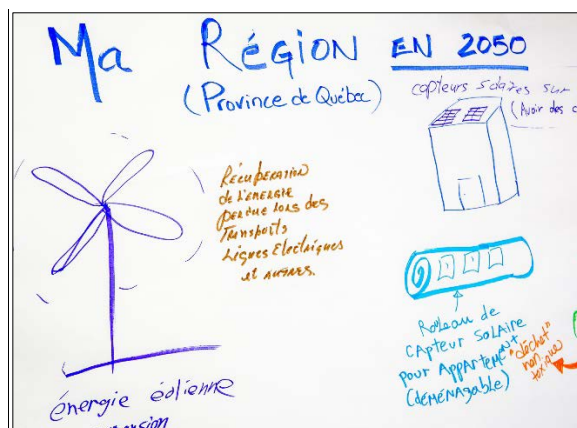


Theme 5: Investing in energy infrastructure that serves Canada and its communities

Investments in energy infrastructure were proposed at all of the regional dialogues and featured in a total of 13 recommended actions.¹¹ Many of these actions included pan-Canadian infrastructure to support energy trade within and beyond Canada's borders. Individual group recommendations included:

- An East-West electricity grid, as well as a better electricity integration with northern regions
- Expanded oil and gas infrastructure to support energy exports, such as pipelines
- Value added oil and gas infrastructure such as refineries
- Investment in clean power generation
- Improvement of rapid transit
- Electrification of freight transportation

Infrastructure investments also received strong support in the exit surveys. With 95 percent support, investing in “livable cities through expanded public transit, shared energy systems and people-centered urban planning” was one of the three most popular actions overall. Funding national infrastructure for electricity transmission and personal transportation, as well as supporting power production for Indigenous peoples and rural communities, were also among the top-ten most popular actions in the exit survey.



¹¹ In Toronto, infrastructure investments were only recommended in a minority report.

Theme 6: Managing and addressing how Canadians are impacted during changes to our energy economy

While most participants support moving to an energy system that ensures a cleaner and healthier environment, the dialogues surfaced discussion about the appropriate speed of the transition and the potential for negative impacts on Canadians. Participants ranked economic criteria as very important for guiding decisions on Canada's energy future. At the majority of dialogues, participants both expressed a desire for immediate action *and* for a measured or gradual rate of change to manage the impacts of the transition. At three of the dialogues, participants emphasized in their key messages the need to provide people with options in how they adapt to future changes in Canada's energy system.

Examples of specific actions proposed by participants include:

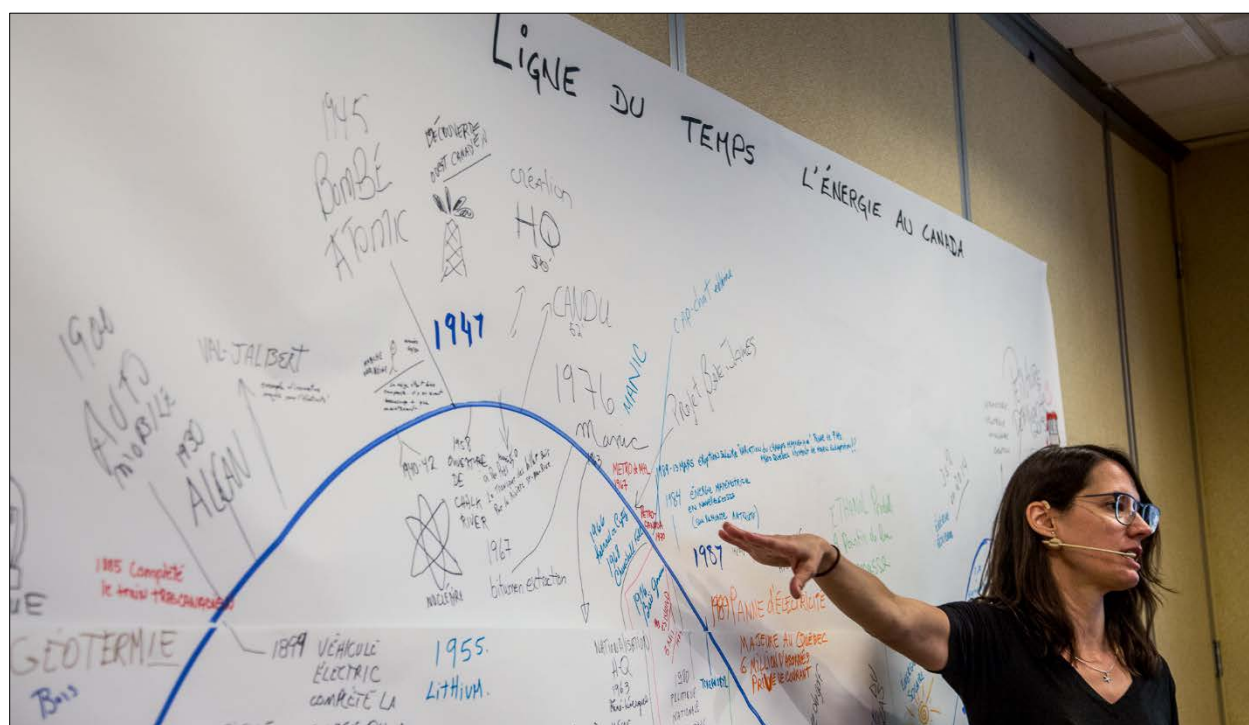
- Subsidizing northern, Indigenous, and remote communities to ensure affordable and accessible energy sources
- Exempting groups with limited energy choices (e.g. rural peoples, farmers, fishermen) from having to pay for carbon taxes or similar costs
- Replacing present-day industries in resource dependent communities
- Providing (re)training programs for clean energy jobs

Participants discussed measures to address cost and funding implications without definitive resolution, raising such ideas as polluter-pays models, redirecting government revenues from natural resources, or attracting private investment. The issue of costs and trade-offs will be further explored at the pan-Canadian citizen dialogue in Winnipeg.



What happens next?

Thirty-five participants from the regional dialogues will attend a pan-Canadian citizen dialogue, which will take place in Winnipeg October 11-13, 2017 in parallel to Natural Resources Canada's Generation Energy Forum. A major outcome will be to create opportunities for Canadians from different regions and perspectives to seek common ground and articulate a shared vision for our energy future that is in the best interest of Canada as a whole.



Appendix 1: Actions with most support among exit survey respondents

Do you support or oppose the following actions to shape the future of energy in Canada?	Percent support
Invest in research and development of low-carbon technologies and provide incentives for innovation and low-carbon energy start-ups	98%
Set progressively stronger energy efficiency standards for vehicles, appliances and buildings	95%
Invest in livable cities through expanded public transit, shared energy systems and people-centered urban planning	95%
Create a jobs program with a focus on equity and retraining for the low-carbon economy	93%
Provide financing to retrofit existing homes and buildings for energy efficiency	92%
Fund strategic national infrastructure projects such as building out the east-west electricity grid and electric vehicle charging stations	92%
Subsidize and support the early adoption of low-carbon technologies, for example, through electric vehicle rebates and green bonds	91%
Support local power production for Indigenous peoples and rural communities to promote energy sovereignty and create economic opportunities	91%
Use revenues from oil and gas to invest in a prosperity fund for future generations or to pay for the transition to a low-carbon economy	91%
Set progressively stronger greenhouse gas emissions intensity standards for the energy sector and other industrial sectors (e.g. emissions per barrel of oil produced)	89%
Finance research into potential new technologies that remove existing greenhouse gasses from the atmosphere to make products such as carbon neutral cement	88%
Mandate hard greenhouse gas emissions caps on the energy sector and other industrial sectors	86%
Invest in carbon capture and storage and other technologies that allow the use of fossil fuels to continue with far fewer emissions than we see today	83%