



# 2019 Conference & Gala Presentation



# Four conference themes

## ENERGY & TRANSPORTATION

Relates to the use of energy commodities for transportation, as well as space and water heating and energy for buildings and industry. These closely coupled sectors are the two biggest contributors of GHG emissions in Canada.

## CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Focuses on the need to facilitate the transition from a linear “take-make-waste” economy to one that focuses on minimizing waste by ensuring materials and products are kept in use as long as possible, and shifting away from the production of those that are not easily reused, recycled, or recovered.

## CLIMATE & ECOLOGY

Broad areas related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as enhanced conservation efforts, with a focus on roles that can be played by healthy and vibrant natural and built environments.

## SOCIETY & POLITICS

Recognizing that local level behaviours can mitigate environmental stressors, this section encompasses human rights, health, and education, as well as government policy at all levels through meaningful engagement across demographic lines.

# 1. Energy & Transportation

- Main focus is to decarbonize everything!
- There are viable alternatives to fossil fuels for most energy and transport applications today.
- Long-term, Canada should increase uptake of ZEVs and become a leader in low-carbon freight transportation.
- Short-term, we need to look at sustainable energy planning, community planning, and national strategy.



## 2. Climate & Ecology

- Long-term initiatives must zero-in on protecting ecosystem integrity, especially water resources.
- Must also focus on adaptation through the use of available technology to enhance community design e.g., naturalizing flood-prone areas.
- This can be done through near-term actions focused on community planning, green development, and water protection.
  - Incentivising green space, reversing wetland loss through re-naturalization, and naturalizing stormwater treatment.



# 3. Circular Economy

- Revisiting the three Rs and giving more focus to reducing the use of non-renewable materials, including fossil fuel derived plastics.
- Decreasing production of single-use plastic and increased research and investment into alternatives—no single-use by 2040.
- Enforcing recycling rates and standards at a national level—closing the loop with recyclable materials.
- To do this, we need to focus on targeting producers, targeting consumers, and harmonizing government policies.



# 4. Society & Politics

- Main focus on education, equity and accountability.
- Incorporating concepts like circular economy, climate change and energy transition into curriculums.
- Engage Canadians on environmentally sound policies.
- Many initiatives can benefit vulnerable populations while benefiting the environment.
- Can be achieved through short-term actions that focus on education, engagement, and national strategy.



# Summary of Recommendations

Conference Theme	Primary 2050 Goal	Actions to help us get there
Energy and Transportation	Emissions-free transportation and energy systems by 2050	Accelerate the adoption of low-emission vehicles through actions such as purchase rebates, increased funding to public transit agencies, support for the installation of EV charging stations at publicly accessible locations, workplaces, and multi-unit residential buildings (MURBs)
		Leverage Canada's abundance of natural resources to achieve net zero energy nationally
		Make public transit and active transportation more viable mobility options by increasing accessibility, reliability, and safety
		Examine all options to decarbonize the high-emitting hard to decarbonize sectors, such as heating and industry
		Reduce energy poverty and increase opportunities for everyone to benefit from the shift to low-carbon energy sources
Climate and Ecology	Ensure that natural systems can contribute to climate change mitigation and that the built environment is well-adapted to increased weather and climatic variability	Municipal planning initiatives should prioritize: Community Energy Plans, incentives and targets for green spaces, the re-naturalization of riparian zones and vulnerable ecosystems, and the densification of suburbs
		Ensure that new development is sustainability-oriented through incentives, subsidies, updates to the national building code, more stringent measures to protect ecosystems and wildlife and minimum natural infrastructure requirements
		Re-naturalize wetlands, floodplains, shorelines, and reservoirs to prevent freshwater contamination and protect aquatic ecosystems
		Expand Canada's protected area networks by resolving conflicting stakeholder interests and prioritizing ecosystem services
		Preserve and enhance native biodiversity because it's the humane thing to do

# Summary of Recommendations

Conference Theme	Primary 2050 Goal	Actions to help us get there
Circular Economy	Incorporate the Four R's into local and corporate practices and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill	Streamline and harmonize recycling programs across the country, and implement extended producer responsibility (EPR)
		Focus on educating the public to reorient behaviours and lifestyles to encourage sustainable consumption
		Phase-in bans on organics in landfills while supporting localized organics treatment/handling facilities
		Reduce food waste and aim to increase the use of biomass and biogas as a fuel in energy-intensive industries
		Explore the requirement of environmental product declarations (EPDs) on consumer products Significantly reduce the production, sale and use of single-use plastics
Society and Politics	Increase environmental education and awareness in Canada so the public demands meaningful action from decision-makers	Address the highly partisan and polarized nature of environmental decision-making in Canada (perhaps through a scientific advisory council with veto powers over climate-related legislation)
		Ensure that First Nations communities are provided with the same fundamental rights and privileges that all Canadians should expect, including safe drinking water
		Ensure that vulnerable communities can participate in and benefit from sustainable development through subsidies and/or tax rebates that make low-carbon mobility and consumer products more affordable
		Updated school curriculums from provinces and territories to incorporate more climate change and environmental science content
		Establish a national youth climate council including representatives from Canada's provinces, territories, and First Nations communities
		Amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to extend refugee protections to climate migrants



# Social Justice Parallels

A key element of the conference discussions was the extent to which pollution and climate change disproportionately affect the vulnerable and marginalized, and how vital it is that we make equity and social justice a cornerstone of our work.

## Transit Accessibility

Enhanced transit and active transportation access and affordability could help lower-income communities.

## Vulnerable Populations

Access to affordable clean energy for low-income consumers, off-grid communities, climate refugees, First Nations (boil water advisories).

## Community Energy

Local energy systems implemented in a way where benefits are captured by local communities.



# Social Justice Terminology



## Energy Security ● ● ●

Security of supply and production, as well as emergent insecurities, such as pricing.

## Fuel Poverty ● ● ●

Scrutinizes energy vulnerabilities to shed light on distributional unfairness and to reduce such inequity, especially for off-grid communities.

## Energy Justice ● ● ●

Addresses issues related to social inequity and injustice in the context of energy systems. Broadly, considering the following: Where do injustices emerge? Which affected sections of society are ignored? What processes exist for their remediation?

# Social Justice Terminology



## Intersectionality . . .

The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, and how they may overlap towards discrimination and disadvantage.

## Distributional justice . . .

Physically unequal allocation of environmental benefits and ills and the distribution of associated responsibilities

## Intersectional Environmentalism . . .

Incorporating the needs of vulnerable populations into environmental policy.



# Some projects that encompass environmental justice



## Energy Futures

Older homes are often in need of retrofits. Efficient solutions like hybrid heating systems can be implemented to help these customers save money.

[\[here\]](#)



## Energy Exchange

Aspires to a future where Canadians are united in their energy prosperity rather than divided by their energy options.

[\[here\]](#)



## Climate Change Primer

Primer highlights that climate change-related human health impacts will be disproportionately borne by those with low and fixed incomes.

[\[here\]](#)

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# Thanks!



## Do you have any questions?

[pprobe@pollutionprobe.org](mailto:pprobe@pollutionprobe.org)

416-926-1907

[pollutionprobe.org](http://pollutionprobe.org)

