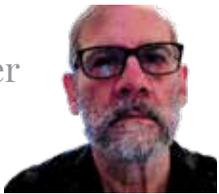


# Canada needs to demonstrate sincerity in its climate adaptation actions

It is not too late. Canada can still pledge to increase its contribution, by doubling it again to \$2-billion a year. That would still amount to less than half its fair share, but would reflect much greater sincerity in its commitment to reach the \$100-billion target.

Roy  
Culpeper

Opinion



The world climate conference soon taking place in Glasgow (COP-26) has huge challenges on its agenda. Principal among them are, first, securing the global goal of reaching net zero carbon emissions, along with keeping global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees, by mid-century. Second, adapting to protect communities and natural habitats from increasingly devastating extreme weather events. And third, to reach these goals, mobilizing at least \$100-billion per year in climate financing for developing countries.

The second of these goals, adaptation, is something of a late bloomer in the climate change discourse. It aims to strengthen the resilience of communities and habitats, faced with hotter temperatures, violent storms, flooding, and wildfires that promise to become ever more frequent and intensive. Adaptation aims at living with the reality of climate change, but also limiting the damage. In the competition for policy attention and resources, mitigation, or reducing man-made carbon emissions, has until recently been given priority since it is aimed at the root causes of climate change, rather than the consequences.

Today, there is an emerging consensus that the war against climate change must be fought on two fronts: with mitigation in

the offence against the perpetrators, and adaptation in the role of homeland defence. They are both essential, and complementary, elements of a comprehensive climate strategy.

At the 2009 climate conference in Copenhagen, developed countries agreed to jointly mobilize US\$100-billion a year by 2020 to meet the climate finance needs of developing countries. In the decade from 2010 to 2019, this target has never been remotely met. Preliminary data for 2020 indicate that the amount raised was close to \$80-billion, falling short of the target by \$20-billion. Financing for the climate crisis has undoubtedly been made more challenging by the pandemic, and its economic fallout.

Moreover, in developing countries, a lot more financing is required for adaptation, which has garnered only about 20 per cent of the climate funds. Recently UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for 50 per cent to go to adaptation. However, most developing countries are low greenhouse gas emitters, so they don't need as much funding for mitigation. They are the least responsible for climate change, yet they suffer some of the worst

extreme weather events, and a case can be made that much more than 50 per cent of the funding should be allocated to adaptation.

Going into COP-26, Canada has agreed to co-lead, with Germany, the process of mobilizing the \$100-billion per year. This puts Canada in a somewhat embarrassing position. If Canada were a generous contributor among the donors, it would set an example for other donors to match. Unfortunately, that is not the case: Canada, according to one reputable source, is far from paying its fair share of climate financing.

Calculating a donor's "fair share" on the basis of an index combining its gross national income, its average level of greenhouse gas emissions, and its population, Canada should be contributing US\$4.2-billion toward the \$100-billion target. Instead, even though Canada has just announced a doubling of its commitment to US\$0.8-billion a year, it is still only contributing only one-fifth of what it should be, and is listed among the most ungenerous group of climate donors, including the United States.

In contrast, using the same composite index to calculate its

fair share, Germany is contributing 112 per cent—more than its fair share. Sweden is contributing 151 per cent, and Norway 188 percent. Canada would have more credibility in persuading other donors to increase their contributions if it were also among this most generous group of donors. It is particularly noteworthy that Germany, which is co-leading the campaign with Canada to raise \$100-billion, has a population slightly more than twice Canada's, yet spends more than 10 times as much on climate finance. It is more able than Canada to say to other donors "Do as we do."

It is not too late. Canada can still pledge to increase its contribution, by doubling it again to \$2-billion a year. That would still amount to less than half its fair share, but would reflect much greater sincerity in its commitment to reach the \$100-billion target.

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The Hill Times

# Trudeau, O'Toole, Singh have some soul-searching to do in light of election outcome

Voters delivered a Parliament that was virtually unchanged from the 2019 contest. As such, all the parties and their leaders, Liberals included, experienced at least some degree of disappointment.

Wyatt James  
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Opinion



Despite all their fervent campaigning, all the beseeching policy pledges to persuade undecided voters, all the millions of dollars poured into advertising, the electorate largely opted out of rewarding any of Canada's political parties this

election. Instead, voters delivered a Parliament that was virtually unchanged from the 2019 contest. As such, all the parties and their leaders, Liberals included, experienced at least some degree of disappointment.

After receiving such disheartening results, party leaders must be asking themselves some tough questions about their campaign strategies, their platforms, even their own leadership. Well, at least they should be if they are to have any hope of not repeating their previous mistakes, come the next election.

But just in case their pride has gotten in the way of any reflection time, let me offer each of Canada's three main federal leaders some questions to ponder.

Let's begin with Justin Trudeau.

Arguably more than any other political leader, Trudeau can claim to be the biggest winner from the 2021 election. Under his leadership, the Liberals succeeded in picking up more seats than they had won in the previous election, with Trudeau himself securing a third consecutive term in office.

Historically, that is no small thing. Only seven other prime ministers have succeeded with

three back-to-back election victories.

Nonetheless, Trudeau should be far from elated with the election results.

For starters, the Liberals decreased their percentage of the vote. In 2019, it fell to 33.12 per cent (from 39.47 per cent in 2015). In 2021, it dropped even lower to 32.62 per cent.

Former top Trudeau adviser Gerald Butts can crow all he like about the efficiency of the Liberal vote. But if the Grits keep on bleeding support the way they have been, they'll soon find themselves back in opposition.

Secondly, this election was called for one reason, and one reason alone: for Trudeau to recover the majority government he lost back in 2019; something he of course, failed to do. That mellow whatever celebration the Liberals can muster after the vote.

As Trudeau considers his party's increasing loss of support and its failure to win another majority, he should ruminate on the following questions:

- Was his inability to win a majority government a result of his own leadership flaws, or is it because his government's record in office is not as remarkable as

he thinks it is?

- If it's the former, how is he going to curb the worst excesses of his arrogance and ego?

- And, if it's the latter, shouldn't his government stop breaking campaign promises (implementing pharmacare, reforming Canada's electoral system, etc.) and speed up progress on others (eliminating boil water advisories on First Nations reserves, etc.)?

Next on the hot seat—Erin O'Toole.

Under O'Toole's leadership, the Conservatives won a higher percentage of the vote in this election than in 2019, yet they secured less seats than they did under his hapless predecessor, Andrew Scheer. As O'Toole ponders the reasons for this loss, he should consider the following questions:

- Why weren't his efforts at modernizing the Conservative Party on issues like climate, labour, and the LGBTQ+ community enough to sway over more urban Canadian voters?

- Is it because his party lacked (and continues to lack) credibility on these issues?

- Or is it he who lacks credibility, after pitching himself to voters

as both a "true blue Conservative" and a progressive, labour-friendly Red Tory?

Finally, that leaves us with the NDP's Jagmeet Singh.

- After spending \$24-million on a nation-wide campaign, why were the gains he made in the election so small and why did his party not get as much consideration as the tainted Liberals?

- Was it his party's platform? Could it have been more progressive and therefore more distinguishable from the Liberals?

- Or did Singh spend too much time criticizing his opponents instead of promoting his own commendable credentials?

If Trudeau, O'Toole, and Singh have any hope of improving their standing amongst the Canadian public, they best not waste the opportunity at hand to reflect on what could have been improved in each of their respective campaigns. Failing to do so risks even more disappointing election results next time around.

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The Hill Times