

Most Canadians support carbon pricing; but less consensus on effectiveness of such measures

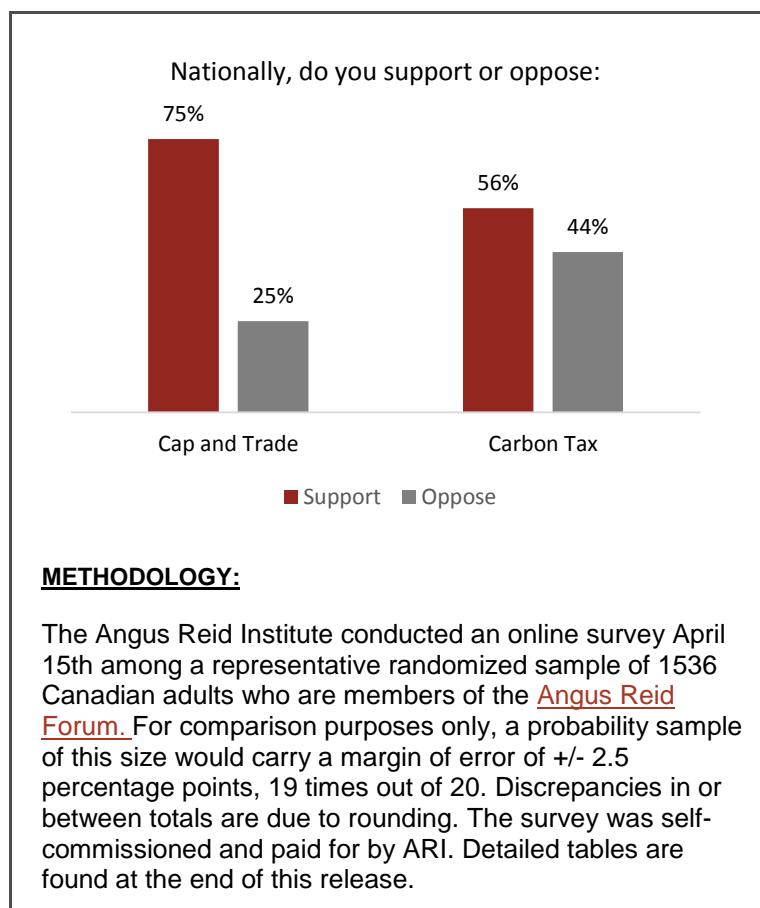
Just over half say federal government isn't paying enough attention to climate change

April 22, 2015 – As Ontario develops plans to join Quebec and California's cap and trade carbon pricing framework, and as British Columbia is featured on the world stage for its carbon tax, a new poll from the Angus Reid Institute shows a majority of Canadians are supportive of carbon pricing programs, even if they're not as convinced of the efficacy of such measures in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The opinion poll results also reflect a desire of just over half of Canadians surveyed to see their federal government focus more on climate policy issues. While one-in-five say these questions will be a deciding factor in how they cast their ballots when an expected election is called this fall, nearly one-third say they don't know which federal leader is best on these issues. Those with an opinion put the current prime minister at the head of the pack; mostly due to endorsement from those who oppose carbon pricing policies.

Key Findings:

- Three-quarters (75%) of surveyed Canadians voiced support for a cap and trade system in their own province (74%) and in Canada as a whole (75%). More than half express support for a carbon tax either in their province (54%) or nationally (56%)
- As for the perceived effectiveness of these approaches in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, just over one-in-ten (12%) say cap and trade is "very effective", one-third (35%) see it as "quite effective", another third (35%) say it's "not very effective" and almost one-in-five (18%) see it as "not effective at all". Opinions are similarly split on the effectiveness of carbon taxation



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Public support for carbon pricing approaches

In the wake of the provincial premiers meeting in Quebec City to discuss climate policy last week, the Canadians participating in this national Angus Reid Institute poll were provided with a brief description of the two main carbon pricing approaches – cap and trade and carbon taxing – and were asked to indicate their support for adopting either system, both in their province, and nationally.

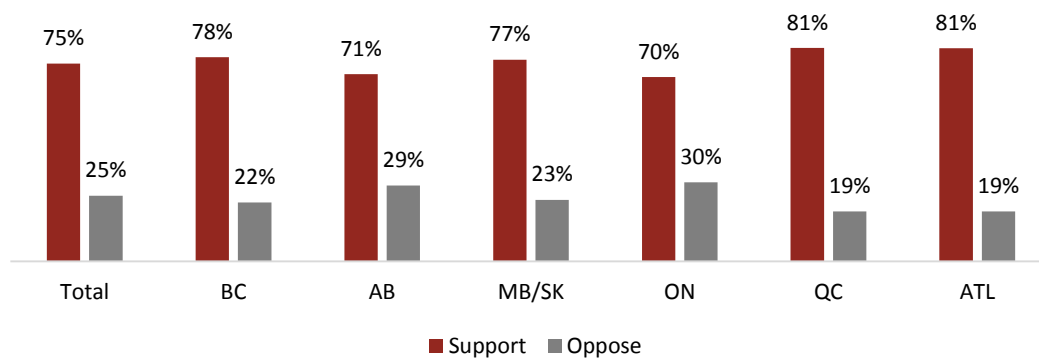
Cap and trade

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne’s announcement last week on cap and trade is aimed at fulfilling the commitment made by that province in 2008 when it signed the [Western Climate Initiative](#) with California and Quebec. The latter jurisdictions have since created a joint cap and trade system.

Three quarters of surveyed Canadians voiced overall support for a cap and trade system for their own province (74%) or Canada as a whole (75%):

- Support for cap and trade programs at both the provincial and federal level is fairly consistent across the provinces, ranging from a “low” of 68 per cent support for a provincial cap and trade program in Ontario to a “high” of 83 per cent support for the same program in Quebec
- Support for cap and trade programs is stronger among women (80% provincial, 81% federal) than men (69% for both provincial and federal)
- It’s also stronger among younger Canadians under 35 years of age (83% provincial, 84% federal) than among those aged 55 and older (68% for either system)
- Support is higher for both provincial and national cap and trade systems among those who voted for the Liberal Party, NDP, Green Party or Bloc Quebecois in the last election (above 80%) and lower – though notably still a majority opinion (57%) – among past Conservative Party of Canada voters

National Cap and Trade - support by region



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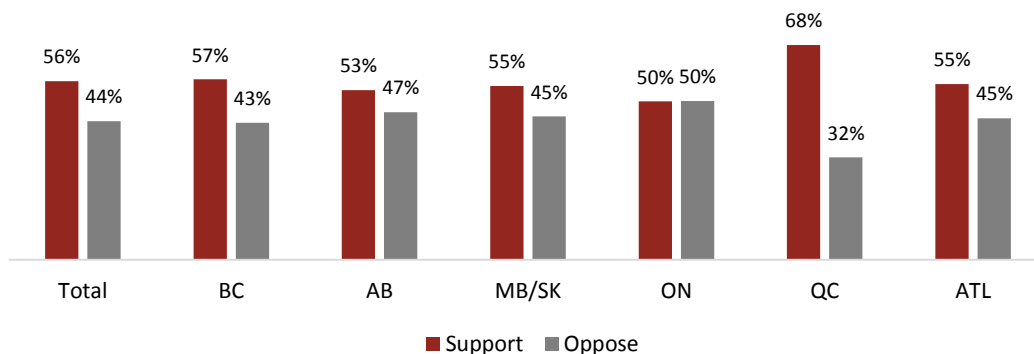
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Carbon Tax

British Columbia introduced its carbon tax in 2008 at a rate of \$10 per tonne, with incremental increases to \$30 per tonne in 2012. \$30 per tonne equates to roughly seven cents per litre of gasoline. It has been at that level ever since. In recent days, BC Premier Christy Clark said an increase to the tax rate won't happen when a current five-year rate freeze expires in 2018.

This poll also finds majority support for carbon taxing, though not quite as high as for cap and trade, at 54 per cent in one's own province and 56 per cent nationally. As with cap and trade, Quebecers voice the most enthusiasm for carbon taxing while Ontarians are most lukewarm about it (47% support at the provincial level). In British Columbia, the poll finds 54 per cent support their provincial carbon tax while 57 per cent voice support for a national carbon tax system.

National Carbon Tax - Support by Region



The effectiveness of carbon pricing policies

Canadians may express broad support for carbon pricing systems, but aren't overwhelmingly convinced of their effectiveness in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

In the case of cap and trade, slightly fewer than half (47%) of Canadians surveyed said they believe this would be an effective approach to reducing emissions:

- Only 12 per cent thought it would be "very effective"
- 35 per cent chose the more tepid "quite effective" option
- Another 35 per cent say they think cap and trade would be "not very effective" at reducing emissions
- Almost one-in-five (18%) dismiss it outright as "not effective at all" (rising to 23% in Ontario and dropping to 10% in Quebec)

The overall pattern of response is very consistent though slightly more negative in the case of carbon taxation:

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- One-in-ten say this approach would be “very effective” at reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- About a third (30%) say a carbon tax is “quite effective”
- Fully two-in-five (39%) say carbon taxes are “not very effective” (rising to 44 per cent in BC, the only province where a carbon tax is currently levied)
- More than one-in-five (22%) say taxing carbon is “not at all effective at all”

Views on efficacy are strongly related to overall support for carbon pricing. Among those indicating support for a national cap and trade system, fully six-in-ten (61%) say they believe it would be very or quite effective at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Looking more closely by degree of support, the results show fully three-quarters (78%) of strong supporters believe a cap and trade system would be “very” or “quite” effective at reducing emissions, and this view drops off to roughly half (47%) among those only moderately supportive of national cap and trade.

Likewise, among opponents, those most strongly opposed dismiss cap and trade as not at all effective (three-quarters (78%) do so), but this proportion drops off to only one-in-four (27%) of those moderately opposed who are much more likely to anticipate cap and trade would be “not very” effective.

Is climate change real?

Previous studies from the Angus Reid Institute have underlined considerable public concern about climate change. Indeed, a national survey last fall found three-quarters (75%) of Canadians say climate change is a serious threat to the planet, although a smaller majority (62%) believe it is a fact, and caused by man-made pollution.

Is government paying enough attention to climate change?

Opinion on this question varies depending on demographics and the political proclivities of survey respondents. There are also differences depending on whether the question relates to the performance of *provincial or federal* governments. At the provincial level, 43 per cent of Canadians believe their *own province* is not paying enough attention to the issue, while 40 per cent are satisfied their province is doing “the right amount” and 17 per cent say “too much”.

Results from province to province on this question are fairly consistent, however, it’s important to note that province-to-province data on this question is not necessarily “apples-to-apples”. Each provincial government has its own approach to addressing climate policy. Respondents in each province or region, therefore, are judging the individual actions (or lack thereof) of the provincial government in which they live.

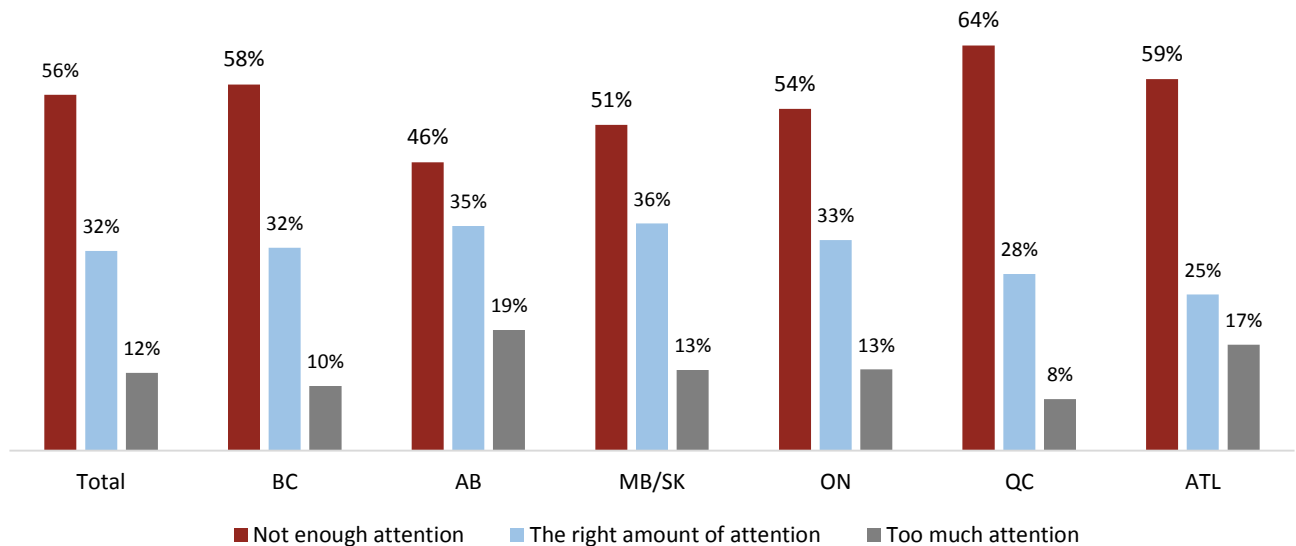
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How do Canadians judge the federal government’s attention to climate change? The Angus Reid Institute found that:

- More than half (56%) say the federal government is not doing enough on climate change, including two-thirds (64%) in Quebec
- One-third (32%) see the Harper government’s consideration to the issue as the “right amount”
- On the other end of the spectrum, just over one-in-ten (12%) say the federal government is paying “too much” attention, including nearly one-in-five (19%) in Alberta

Opinion on amount of attention the federal government is paying to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change



Election Factor?

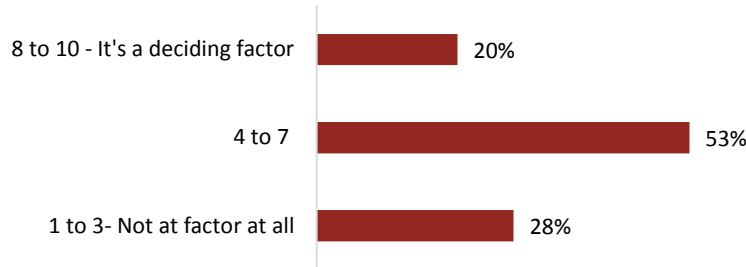
To what extent could climate change be expected to figure in the coming federal election? Those surveyed were asked to describe how much of a voting factor the issue will likely be for them using a 10-point scale where one represented “not a factor at all” and ten represented “it’s the deciding factor”.

Overall, one-in-five (20%) surveyed chose an 8, 9 or 10 on this scale: carbon pricing supporters are most likely to say this is a voting issue for them. About half (53%) chose somewhere in the middle range (4-7 on the scale) and the remaining quarter (28%) indicated it would be, at best, a minor issue in their vote formation process.

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How much will climate change and/or climate policy be a factor for you in this year's federal election?

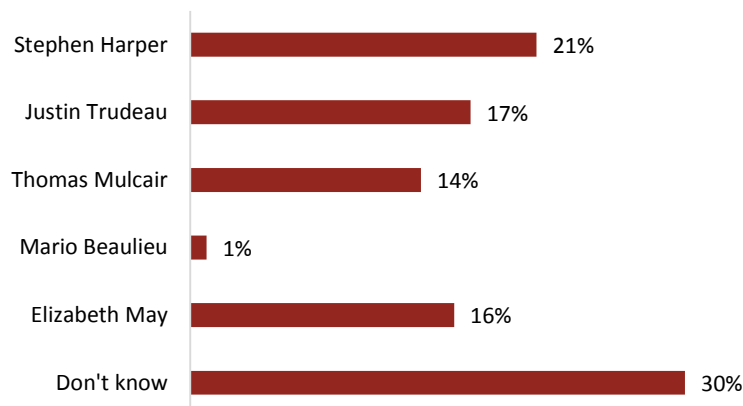


To put this into context with other national issues: the 20 per cent who put this high on the vote factor scale is slightly more than the 16 per cent who said the same in the case of two other high profile topics in the news lately: the action against ISIS and the Senate scandal.

Political Leadership:

The Angus Reid Institute poll results offer some noteworthy angles on the question of which federal leader is best to deal with climate policy, should it become a defining issue of the upcoming federal campaign. The largest number of Canadians – 30 per cent say they don't know which leader would be best to handle this issue.

Of the main federal party leaders,
who would you say is best to deal with this issue?

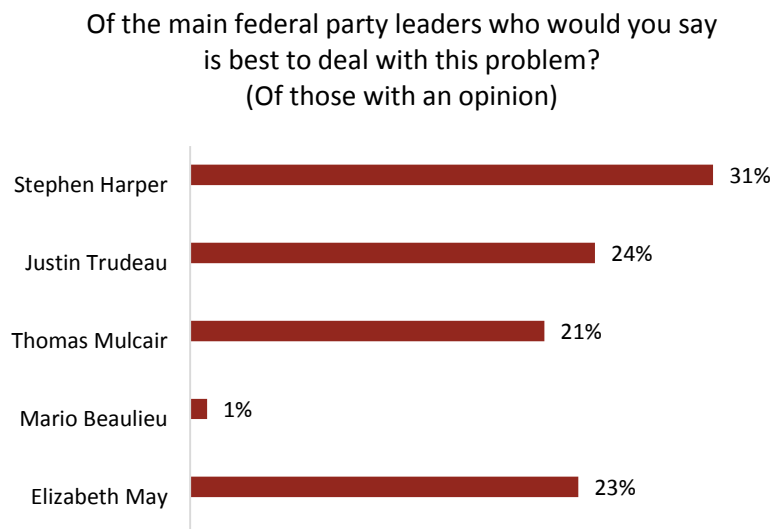


Among those with an opinion, Conservative Party Leader, Stephen Harper, was selected as the best choice to handle this issue by 31 per cent of respondents who named a leader in this survey. Among those with an opinion, the rest of the party leaders are split evenly on high-ground regarding leadership

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on climate change. Liberal Party of Canada Leader Justin Trudeau is the choice of roughly one-quarter (24%), Green Party Leader Elizabeth May garners about the same amount of support (23%), followed closely by Opposition Leader Thomas Mulcair (21%)



Much of Harper's support on this issue comes from those opposed to carbon pricing; while the opposition leaders are left to contest support among the proponents of these policies. We see broad-based support for both carbon pricing systems, but opponents of these gravitate to Conservative party leader Stephen Harper as the best choice on the file (six-in-ten (60%) in the case of cap and trade and half (52%) of carbon tax opponents).

The Conservative Leader also received more support from his own party than other leaders. Three-quarters (75%) of 2011 CPC voters surveyed chose Stephen Harper as best to deal with climate change issues. Among the other leaders, only the Green Party's Elizabeth May comes close with two-thirds of her 2011 supporters choosing her. That said, May also does well with past Liberal (25%) and NDP (28%) voters surveyed. Trudeau was the choice of six-in-ten (59%) past Liberal voters. Just over two-in-five past NDP voters selected Mulcair as best to deal with climate change.

Finally, the survey results show Harper is the solid choice of Canadians who say this issue is not an important vote factor for them while those who put it highest on the vote factor scale are far more likely to choose an opposition party leader. However, Elizabeth May has the edge with this latter group.

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The **Angus Reid Institute (ARI)** was founded in October 2014 by pollster and sociologist, Dr. Angus Reid. ARI is a national, not-for-profit, non-partisan public opinion research organization established to advance education by commissioning, conducting and disseminating to the public accessible and impartial statistical data, research and policy analysis on economics, political science, philanthropy, public administration, domestic and international affairs and other socio-economic issues of importance to Canada and its world.

Do you support or oppose Canada as a whole joining or forming a cap and trade system? [Canada as a whole]							
Regional sample size is unweighted	Total (1536)	Region					
		BC (203)	AB (164)	MB/SK (102)	ON (604)	PQ (331)	ATL (130)
Strongly Support	33%	32%	27%	32%	31%	40%	36%
Moderately Support	42%	46%	44%	45%	39%	41%	45%
Moderately Oppose	12%	13%	9%	9%	12%	12%	9%
Strongly Oppose	13%	10%	19%	14%	18%	7%	10%

Do you support or oppose Canada as a whole joining or forming a cap and trade system? [Canada as a whole]						
Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Gender		Age		
		Men (750)	Women (786)	18 – 34 (439)	35 – 54 (575)	55+ (522)
Strongly Support	33%	32%	34%	40%	29%	32%
Moderately Support	42%	37%	47%	44%	46%	36%
Moderately Oppose	12%	12%	11%	10%	12%	13%
Strongly Oppose	13%	19%	8%	6%	14%	19%

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Do you support or oppose Canada as a whole adopting carbon tax?							
Regional sample size is unweighted	Total (1536)	Region					
		BC (203)	AB (164)	MB/SK (102)	ON (604)	PQ (331)	ATL (130)
Strongly Support	24%	24%	19%	17%	22%	30%	24%
Moderately Support	33%	33%	35%	37%	28%	38%	32%
Moderately Oppose	18%	19%	17%	21%	20%	15%	20%
Strongly Oppose	25%	24%	30%	24%	30%	17%	25%

Do you support or oppose Canada as a whole adopting carbon tax?						
Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Gender		Age		
		Men (750)	Women (786)	18 – 34 (439)	35 – 54 (575)	55+ (522)
Strongly Support	24%	26%	22%	29%	23%	20%
Moderately Support	33%	29%	36%	40%	30%	29%
Moderately Oppose	18%	17%	20%	16%	20%	19%
Strongly Oppose	25%	29%	22%	14%	27%	33%

How effective do you think these policy approaches would be in reducing greenhouse gas emissions? [Cap and trade system]							
Regional sample size is unweighted	Total (1536)	Region					
		BC (203)	AB (164)	MB/SK (102)	ON (604)	PQ (331)	ATL (130)
Very effective	12%	9%	8%	12%	13%	15%	13%
Quite effective	35%	35%	32%	33%	31%	41%	39%
Not very effective	35%	39%	38%	39%	34%	34%	28%
Not effective at all	18%	16%	22%	16%	23%	10%	20%

How effective do you think these policy approaches would be in reducing greenhouse gas emissions? [Cap and trade system]

Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Gender		Age		
		Men (750)	Women (786)	18 – 34 (439)	35 – 54 (575)	55+ (522)
Very effective	12%	13%	11%	20%	11%	7%
Quite effective	35%	31%	38%	42%	33%	31%
Not very effective	35%	31%	39%	29%	36%	39%
Not effective at all	18%	25%	12%	9%	20%	23%

How effective do you think these policy approaches would be in reducing greenhouse gas emissions? [Cap and trade system]

Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Federal Cap and Trade			
		Strongly support (510)	Moderately support (644)	Moderately oppose (178)	Strongly oppose (205)
Very effective	12%	31%	4%	1%	1%
Quite effective	35%	47%	43%	8%	2%
Not very effective	35%	19%	45%	63%	19%
Not effective at all	18%	3%	8%	27%	78%

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How effective do you think these policy approaches would be in reducing greenhouse gas emissions? [Carbon Tax]

Regional sample size is unweighted	Total (1536)	Region					
		BC (203)	AB (164)	MB/SK (102)	ON (604)	PQ (331)	ATL (130)
Very effective	10%	7%	10%	10%	10%	11%	12%
Quite effective	30%	27%	27%	24%	28%	36%	33%
Not very effective	39%	44%	38%	43%	38%	39%	33%
Not effective at all	22%	23%	25%	23%	24%	15%	23%

How effective do you think these policy approaches would be in reducing greenhouse gas emissions? [Carbon Tax]

Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Gender		Age		
		Men (750)	Women (786)	18 – 34 (439)	35 – 54 (575)	55+ (522)
Very effective	10%	13%	7%	15%	8%	7%
Quite effective	30%	26%	33%	36%	28%	27%
Not very effective	39%	33%	44%	37%	41%	39%
Not effective at all	22%	28%	16%	13%	23%	27%

What is your overall opinion of the amount of attention the federal government is paying to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change?

Regional sample size is unweighted	Total (1536)	Region					
		BC (203)	AB (164)	MB/SK (102)	ON (604)	PQ (331)	ATL (130)
Not enough attention	56%	58%	46%	51%	54%	64%	59%
The right amount of attention	32%	32%	35%	36%	33%	28%	25%
Too much attention	12%	10%	19%	13%	13%	8%	17%

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Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Gender		Age		
		Men (750)	Women (786)	18 – 34 (439)	35 – 54 (575)	55+ (522)
Not enough attention	56%	53%	59%	60%	52%	57%
The right amount of attention	32%	31%	32%	34%	33%	28%
Too much attention	12%	16%	9%	6%	15%	15%

What is your overall opinion of the amount of attention the provincial government is paying to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change?

Regional sample size is unweighted	Total (1536)	Region					
		BC (203)	AB (164)	MB/SK (102)	ON (604)	PQ (331)	ATL (130)
Not enough attention	43%	47%	49%	45%	39%	41%	55%
The right amount of attention	40%	38%	36%	43%	38%	48%	30%
Too much attention	17%	15%	15%	12%	23%	11%	15%

What is your overall opinion of the amount of attention the provincial government is paying to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change?

Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Gender		Age		
		Men (750)	Women (786)	18 – 34 (439)	35 – 54 (575)	55+ (522)
Not enough attention	43%	34%	51%	49%	44%	37%
The right amount of attention	40%	42%	38%	42%	36%	42%
Too much attention	17%	23%	11%	9%	19%	21%

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How much will climate change and/or climate policy be a factor for you in this year's federal election?							
Regional sample size is unweighted	Total (1536)	Region					
		BC (203)	AB (164)	MB/SK (102)	ON (604)	PQ (331)	ATL (130)
1 to 3 – Not a factor at all	28%	22%	38%	35%	28%	23%	30%
4 to 7	53%	57%	47%	42%	53%	56%	48%
8 to 10 – It's a deciding factor	20%	21%	15%	23%	19%	21%	22%

How much will climate change and/or climate policy be a factor for you in this year's federal election?						
Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Gender		Age		
		Men (750)	Women (786)	18 – 34 (439)	35 – 54 (575)	55+ (522)
1 to 3 – Not a factor at all	28%	34%	22%	19%	29%	34%
4 to 7	53%	47%	58%	55%	53%	50%
8 to 10 – It's a deciding factor	20%	19%	21%	26%	18%	16%

How much will climate change and/or climate policy be a factor for you in this year's federal election?					
Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Federal Cap and Trade			
		Strongly support (510)	Moderately support (644)	Moderately oppose (178)	Strongly oppose (205)
1 to 3 – Not a factor at all	28%	15%	25%	38%	58%
4 to 7	53%	51%	62%	48%	30%
8 to 10 – It's a deciding factor	20%	33%	13%	13%	11%

How much will climate change and/or climate policy be a factor for you in this year's federal election?

Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Federal Carbon Tax			
		Strongly support (364)	Moderately support (501)	Moderately oppose (283)	Strongly oppose (388)
1 to 3 – Not a factor at all	28%	10%	19%	33%	52%
4 to 7	53%	50%	65%	55%	38%
8 to 10 – It's a deciding factor	20%	40%	16%	12%	10%

Regardless of how important it is to you personally, if climate policy were to become a defining issue of the upcoming federal campaign, which of the main federal party leaders would you say is best to deal with this issue?

Regional sample size is unweighted	Total (1536)	Region					
		BC (203)	AB (164)	MB/SK (102)	ON (604)	PQ (331)	ATL (130)
Stephen Harper	21%	19%	34%	36%	25%	11%	12%
Justin Trudeau	17%	14%	13%	15%	20%	16%	20%
Thomas Mulcair	14%	12%	8%	7%	8%	30%	13%
Mario Beaulieu	1%	1%	1%	-	0%	3%	-
Elizabeth May	16%	27%	12%	15%	16%	11%	22%
Don't know	30%	28%	32%	27%	31%	30%	32%

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Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Gender		Age		
		Men (750)	Women (786)	18 – 34 (439)	35 – 54 (575)	55+ (522)
Stephen Harper	21%	27%	17%	16%	21%	27%
Justin Trudeau	17%	20%	14%	17%	16%	18%
Thomas Mulcair	14%	17%	12%	14%	15%	14%
Mario Beaulieu	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Elizabeth May	16%	15%	17%	21%	15%	13%
Don't know	30%	21%	39%	31%	33%	27%

Regardless of how important it is to you personally, if climate policy were to become a defining issue of the upcoming federal campaign, which of the main federal party leaders would you say is best to deal with this issue?

Weighted sample size	Total (1536)	Federal Vote Last		
		CPC (479)	Liberal Party (268)	NDP (367)
Stephen Harper	21%	55%	3%	4%
Justin Trudeau	17%	4%	44%	17%
Thomas Mulcair	14%	5%	10%	31%
Mario Beaulieu	1%	-	-	1%
Elizabeth May	16%	9%	19%	20%
Don't know	30%	27%	24%	27%

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