

Summary

This report presents the findings of the Youth Climate Values Survey, which provides the most in-depth picture of the beliefs of members of the **Canadian youth climate movement (CYCM)** to date.

Most of the existing research analyzing the youth climate movement focuses on the attributes separating youth that participate in climate strikes and adopt pro-climate behaviours from youth that do not. In this study we take a different tack by focusing on the diversity of attitudes, priorities, and beliefs *within* the movement. Specifically, the study aims to map out areas of solid “common ground,” as well as areas of belief divergence within the CYCM to help youth and youth-led organizations collaborate more effectively with one another and with other climate actors to accelerate the **just transition**.

This report shows that the CYCM is in the process of “levelling up”—shifting from strikes and general awareness-raising to more strategic interventions with key climate actors.

Key findings:

A strong majority of Canadian youth engaged in climate action believe it is unlikely Canada will meet its 2030 and 2050 climate targets (81 percent and 77 percent, respectively) and that the world will limit global warming to 1.5 degrees or even 2 degrees (80 percent and 63 percent, respectively).

But they refuse to give up hope. Only a small minority of respondents believe it is “extremely unlikely” that Canada achieves its 2030 and 2050 targets (15 percent and 10 percent, respectively).

Youth consider *supply-side* actions that constrain the production of fossil fuels and increase the production of renewable energy to be the most impactful climate actions.

The three most impactful climate actions according to respondents are:



Preventing the construction of new pipelines and other fossil fuel infrastructure;



Decreasing or eliminating investment in the fossil fuel sector; and



Increasing investment in renewable energy and creating green jobs.



CYCM members widely acknowledge the key role financial actors play in financing the fossil fuel sector—but only some youth link financial actors to investments in renewable energy and other climate solutions.

CYCM members distrust financial actors and see them as inaccessible—and believe governments are responsible for changing their behaviour.

Many youth have complicated beliefs about capitalism and the role of private companies in the just transition.

- 91 percent of respondents believe that we must *significantly transform capitalism as we know it*. But 62 percent of those same respondents also believe we must *unleash the market* to produce climate solutions.
- Some respondents with mixed feelings about capitalism believe that private companies can be a force for good—but only if they are constrained by governments and have strong environmental and social values.

Youth widely support increasing investment in renewable energy—but have mixed feelings about negative-emissions technologies (NETs) like carbon capture and storage.

- Only 36 percent of respondents selected NETs as one of their top-six most impactful climate actions and 10 percent of respondents believe NETs should not be pursued at all.
- Respondents with the strongest anti-capitalist beliefs are suspicious of most new green technologies (with the exception of renewables).

CYCM members strongly share six core beliefs, including that people have a moral responsibility to help others a lot and that large differences in wealth are immoral. They diverge on four core beliefs, including whether people are basically generous or selfish.

- Respondents who believe people are *basically generous* were more likely to agree that we should *only* pursue climate actions that also address various forms of systemic inequality.
- Respondents who believe people are *basically selfish* were more likely to agree that we need to remove barriers to innovation by unleashing the market.

