Call for Input: 2026-2030 Sustainable Jobs Action Plan

Purpose of Engagement

Under the *Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act*, the Government of Canada is required to publish a **2026-2030 Sustainable Jobs Action Plan** no later than December 31st, 2025.[1] The first Sustainable Jobs Action Plan will outline the actions the federal government is taking to support Canadian workers and their communities in the shift to a net-zero economy and to help foster the creation of well-paying, high-quality jobs. Under the *Act,* the federal government is required to invite submissions to inform the Action Plan, as part of its commitment to engagement and collaboration with key partners.

In the current context, the federal government is focused on building one Canadian economy, advancing nation-building infrastructure, creating new careers in the skilled trades, and bringing down costs for Canadians, among other priorities. The Sustainable Jobs approach is focused on meeting current and future labour needs and ensuring workers and communities can thrive in a resilient 21st century economy.

Seeking Your Views on the 2026-2030 Sustainable Jobs Action Plan

The Sustainable Jobs Secretariat is seeking written submissions to inform the first Sustainable Jobs Action Plan for 2026-2030. We invite submissions from trade unions, industry/employers, Indigenous rights-holders and organizations, communities, non-governmental organizations, and other types of organizations, experts, and individuals. The Secretariat also invites submissions from organizations and individuals with expertise on groups currently under-represented in the energy and natural resource economy including women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, Black and other racialized individuals, 2SLGBTQI+ and other equity-seeking groups.

How to Submit

The Secretariat invites written input by **October 29th, 2025,** that responds to the Discussion Questions at the end of this document. In general, we also welcome input on:

- the plans and actions you or your organization are taking that contribute to sustainable jobs; and,
- your priorities and advice for the upcoming Sustainable Jobs Action Plan.

Submissions may be sent to: sustainablejobs-emploisdurables@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca.

How Your Feedback Will Be Used

As with the development of the Act and 2023-2025 Interim Sustainable Jobs Plan, public engagement will be important in shaping the overall direction of the federal Sustainable Jobs approach. Feedback received through this process will be used to inform priorities and actions for the next five years to address current challenges and set a strong foundation towards 2050. Some feedback received may be quoted in the Action Plan, but respondents will not be identified by name.

[1] Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act, 2024. https://lois-laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-23.25/FullText.html

The Sustainable Jobs approach will be informed by the government's mandate, which includes, among other key priorities, establishing a new trade relationship with the United States, strengthening relationships with allies, and expediting projects in the national interest. It will also reflect a fiscal context where the government has committed to spending less on government operations to support a stronger economy,[2] in keeping with the Comprehensive Expenditure Review to reduce departmental spending by 15% over three years. [3]

The Government of Canada is committed to ongoing engagement and social dialogue on sustainable jobs. *Please note that the Sustainable Jobs Partnership Council, as an external advisory body, is responsible for a separate engagement process that will inform its independent advice to the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources. To contact the Sustainable Jobs Partnership Council directly, please email partnershipcouncil-conseildupartenariat@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca.*

Progress to Date

In 2018, the Government of Canada established the Task Force on Just Transition for Canadian Coal Power Workers, which engaged with workers and communities following the decision to phase out coal-fired electricity generation and produced a final report with 10 recommendations on how to support those affected by the phase-out. In response to this report and the need to support workers and communities in the shift to a net-zero economy, which was later codified through the *Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act,* Canada invested $185M to support skills and career development, economic diversification, and priority infrastructure projects for affected coal communities in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

In 2023, the Government of Canada published the Interim Sustainable Jobs Plan, which outlined 10 key actions to support workers and advance economic opportunities in the net-zero economy.[4]

In 2024, the Government of Canada passed the *Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act,* affirming its commitment to collaborating with Canadians workers, Indigenous Peoples, trade unions, employers, industry, and communities in building a net-zero economy.[5] Following this, the Sustainable Jobs Secretariat was established at Natural Resources Canada.

The Government of Canada established the Sustainable Jobs Partnership Council to provide the responsible Minister and specified Ministers with independent advice. As of July 2025, 10 members have been appointed to the Partnership Council.[6]

The first Sustainable Jobs Action Plan, currently under development, is required to be published by December 31, 2025.

About the Action Plan

The Action Plan, per the Act, will establish measures and milestones in the following areas:

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[2] Office of the Prime Minister, Mandate Letter, 2025. Mandate Letter | Prime Minister of Canada
[3] Government of Canada, Refocusing Government Spending, 2024. https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/topics/planned-government-spending/refocusing-government-spending.html
[4] Natural Resources Canada, Sustainable Jobs Plan, 2023. https://natural-resources.canada.ca/corporate/planning-reporting/sustainable-jobs-plan
[5] Natural Resources Canada, Sustainable Jobs Act, 2024. https://lois-laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-23.25/FullText.html
[6] Natural Resources Canada, Partnership Council, 2025. https://natural-resources.canada.ca/corporate/planning-reporting/partnership-council

- Actions to support economic growth and foster the creation of sustainable jobs and employment opportunities across Canada
- Actions to prepare the workforce for sustainable jobs (such as training supports, workforce readiness, skills demand, diversifying the workforce, etc.)
- Actions to support workers and communities, focused on those in transition

The Act also requires the Action Plan to:

- Summarize data and data gaps on economic growth and the labour market related to the net-zero economy, including Indigenous-specific data
- Describe how the Government is upholding the Act's guiding principles towards a net-zero economy that is inclusive, supports Indigenous reconciliation, recognizes regional differences, etc.
- Summarize measures taken by partners and stakeholders in support of the Act's objectives
- Report on progress achieved since the release of the 2023-25 Interim Sustainable Jobs Plan
- Describe how it takes into consideration Canada's Emissions Reduction Plan

The Sustainable Jobs Action Plan will be focused on how actions government and partners take to 2030 can support the pressing needs of today's economy while setting Canadians up for success as we move toward net-zero. Many issues are interrelated, such as the need to grow the skilled trades workforce, diversify and build the Canadian economy (through sectors such as critical minerals, electrification, green buildings, clean fuels, and more), and build both environmental and economic resilience (through climate preparedness and from trade shocks).

The actions we take today are critical to ensure Canada's long-term economic success, where workers and communities can thrive in the low-carbon economy. Developing low-carbon sectors requires targeted action to address labour shortages, skills mismatches, regional disparities, and equity gaps, backed by better data and strong partnerships. To ensure a fair distribution of opportunities, sustainable jobs must account for regional strengths and challenges, building on and complementing actions from other levels of government and Indigenous rights-holders to enable all workers to participate in and benefit from 21st century economic growth.

Key Issues: What We've Heard from Past Engagements

The Secretariat has reviewed recent federal engagements with relevance to Sustainable Jobs. A consistent message across engagements was that Canada is facing both immediate and long-term workforce shortages in key occupations that must be addressed to support current and growing demand in energy, natural resource and other low-carbon industries. Previous engagements also reflected the need for the federal government to prioritize funding for green skills training.

Below are the common themes that have been raised in previous engagements. We welcome input on the following themes as well as input on additional priorities you or your organization would like to raise that are not covered below, by answering the Discussion Questions at the end of this document.

a) Data collection and tracking

Throughout previous federal engagements, respondents noted that available labour market data is insufficient to enable effective planning as we move toward net-zero. Respondents noted that navigating Canada's labour market data can be complicated as information is available from multiple federal

departments[7], as well as provinces & territories, industry, and post-secondary institutions—all of which may use different definitions, methodologies and assumptions.[8] We also heard that existing labour market information is often not available in a disaggregated format—by region, sector and worker demographics—to allow planning effectively for growing occupations and evolving skillsets in clean energy, critical minerals, and other priority sectors.

Employers and training organizations have said existing data are spread out across many sources and are often not up to date, making it difficult to systematically track current and future low-carbon skills gaps. Only 39% of Canadian employers say labour market data is easy to find, and just 44% find it easy to understand.[9] Improving data collection and sharing – for example by creating a common framework or centralized tracking of training availability for relevant skills – has been recommended by some respondents to help governments, educators and industry better match workforce development to current and future job needs. Respondents have said that clarifying the federal role in coordinating, standardizing and filling these labour data gaps is essential to support evidence-based planning.

b) Worker upskilling and reskilling

Broadly, we've heard that workers need training as jobs evolve to meet the skills demands of changing and growing industries. In previous engagements, industry and labour unions asked for increased federal funding and training programs for green and digital skills (for example, training in renewable energy, green construction, critical minerals and advanced manufacturing). Areas identified as needing support included apprenticeships, community college courses and industry- or union-led training centres, with tailored training streams that reflect the unique technologies and skill needs of in-demand sectors. Respondents have also stressed the need to ensure that underrepresented groups—such as Indigenous Peoples, women and newcomers—are actively attracted and supported in training. Expanding accessible reskilling and upskilling programs – including support for mid-career workers and youth – has been highlighted by respondents as critical to help people move into growing sustainable industries as well as to ensure workers can maintain quality employment in their current careers.

The Secretariat acknowledges widespread calls in past engagements for increased federal investment in low-carbon upskilling and reskilling and is focused on identifying which federal levers can deliver the greatest impact to the most in-demand sectors. Given the current context, there is a need to identify cost-effective measures, enable investments from other governments and the private sector, and replicate proven solutions. The need for this training is clear: in 2021 over half of Canadian businesses reported that some of their workforce lacked fully proficient skills for their jobs.[10] Research shows this issue is slated to increase: the OECD notes that more than a quarter of jobs worldwide will be strongly impacted by the move toward net-zero.[11]

At the federal level, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) delivers the bulk of federal training funding and programming across the economy, including direct transfers to provinces and territories. The Sustainable Jobs mandate is focused specifically on skills development for the net-zero

[7] E.g. Statistics Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada, Natural Resources Canada
[8] For example, workforce projections for electricians published by the federal government often differ from provincial forecasts, making it difficult to reconcile how many new workers are needed in each region.
[9] Labour Market Information Council, 'LMI Insights No. 39', 2021. https://lmic-cimt.ca/publications-all/lmi-insight-report-no-39/
[10] Statistics Canada, 'Survey of Employers on Workers' Skills', 2021. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/211014/dq211014a-eng.htm
[11] OECD, OECD Employment Outlook 2024: The Net-Zero Transition and the Labour Market, 2024. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-employment-outlook-2024_ac8b3538-en/full-report.html

economy, including identifying targeted, sector-specific upskilling and reskilling initiatives, and convening industry, labour, and training institutions to identify shared solutions.

c) Workforce planning and collaboration with partners

In past engagements, respondents have underscored that planning for current and future labour needs requires collaboration between governments, Indigenous nations, employers, labour, and community partners. Respondents have recommended various approaches including forming interprovincial working groups, sector councils and community planning teams so labour needs and information can be shared across regions and industries and collaborative solutions identified.

Respondents also emphasized that growing low-carbon sectors—such as clean energy, green buildings and critical minerals—have unique workforce needs and timelines. Some (such as buildings and electricity) are already facing urgent shortages, while others (such as hydrogen and carbon management) anticipate shortages in future years. Respondents have asked for the creation of collaborative planning mechanisms—such as sectoral roundtables, industry-led skills councils and interjurisdictional working groups—to share labour projections, harmonize training standards and exchange best practices.

While many sectors across the economy face similar challenges, for the Sustainable Jobs mandate specifically, the Secretariat is exploring which federal tools—whether targeted funding pilots, regulatory forums or data-sharing platforms—would most effectively convene governments, Indigenous rights-holders, employers, unions, training institutions, and other key partners. By pinpointing the elements that matter most in each sector based on our engagements (for example, skilled-trade forecasting, co-developing curricula or coordinating training delivery), the Secretariat can identify where it can support and help ensure that partners work together to prepare Canada's workforce for the changing demands of energy, natural resources, low-carbon and resilience-enabling sectors. Respondents have been clear that strengthening collaboration, including with other federal departments, can also help align immigration, education and training programs with local labour needs and give businesses and workers more certainty about available talent.

d) Economic opportunity, resilience, and competitiveness

Respondents to previous engagements have consistently highlighted that growing Canada's clean economy can yield enormous economic benefits and will be a driver of job creation. We've heard that clear, predictable regulations and harmonized standards (including across provinces and with trading partners) are enablers for Canadian firms to expand and create jobs in the low-carbon economy and boost Canada's competitiveness. The Royal Bank of Canada estimates that the move to net-zero could create up to 400,000 new jobs in Canada by the end of this decade alone.[12] Past engagements have underscored that by preparing workers now with the right skills, Canada can capture more of this growth and build economic resilience as the global economy shifts to low-carbon technologies.

The *Canadian Sustainable Jobs Act* provides a broad mandate not only to support workforce development, but also to support economic growth and job creation in the net-zero economy. The Act notes that policies and programs in support of sustainable jobs should recognize local and regional needs, account for the cultural values, strengths and potential of workers and communities, and provide an environment in which enterprises, workers, investors and consumers can contribute to achieving sustainable and inclusive economies and societies. Economic growth and job creation will look different

[12] Royal Bank of Canada. (2022, February 16). Green Collar Jobs: The skills revolution Canada needs to reach Net Zero. https://www.rbc.com/en/thought-leadership/economics/featured-insights/green-collar-jobs-the-skills-revolution-canada-needs-to-reach-net-zero/

across Canada, such as in British Columbia's hydrogen corridor, Ontario's manufacturing clusters, and Quebec's critical mineral projects. In past engagements, respondents have called for clearer federal investment frameworks and planning tools—such as regional innovation funds, project-specific tax incentives or public-private partnership models—that can be tailored to the needs of the low-carbon sector. We've heard that by identifying which levers (for example, targeted grants versus loan guarantees) work best to incent job creation and support economic activity in different regions and sectors, and by aligning federal measures with provincial and Indigenous initiatives, the federal government can ensure investments achieve strong economic and community impact as Canada's economy transforms.

Discussion Questions

Please respond to the following questions in your response. Submissions should be sent by **October 29th, 2025** to: sustainablejobs-emploisdurables@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca

1. To advance opportunities for your region/sector and Canada more broadly, what should the 2026-2030 Sustainable Jobs Action Plan prioritize for the **next five years**? What **foundational actions** are needed for long-term success, including to ensure the sustainable jobs legislative principles are applied across government?

2. How do you or your organization currently access and use labour market data, including for future energy planning? What challenges do you face in doing so and what types of data are most valuable to your work or decision-making? (e.g. geographic level, industries, occupations, demographic groups, other forms of disaggregated data)

3. What data and information should be a priority for the federal government to analyze or collect to better track existing and future gaps in low-carbon skills and occupations, and related training?

4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of existing federal skills training programs to fill specific existing and future skills gaps in critical sectors, including energy, natural resources, low-carbon and resilience-enabling sectors? What models or mechanisms do you consider to be the most effective solutions?

5. What priority actions should the federal government take to support workers to efficiently upskill their existing credentials, and support low-carbon industries to find skilled workers? How should the federal government collaborate with external partners to address low-carbon skills and training gaps?

6. What federal actions are most important in the near term to support diversifying the workforce in key sectors? What initiatives (by industry, government, or other organizations) are successfully supporting the inclusion, recruitment, retention, and leadership of Indigenous Peoples, Employment Equity groups, women, and youth in the low-carbon economy and workforce?

7. Actions to foster the move to a net-zero economy and the creation of sustainable jobs exist across all levels of government and society. What actions can your organization contribute to support achieving the changes needed?

8. Does this discussion paper target the right themes and areas requiring change? Do you have anything else to add that has not been covered above or in previous engagements?