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Six in Ten (59%, +3 pts) Canadians Agree That if Canada's Government Does Not Act Now to Combat Climate Change, It Will Be Failing the People of Canada

However, 35% (+5 pts) Agree that Now is Not the Right Time to be Investing in Measures to Reduce Climate Change Given the Tough Economic Conditions

Toronto, ON, September 1, 2023 – As Canada is on track to have its most destructive wildfire season yet, and July 2023 was potentially the planet's hottest month on record, a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News reveals that a strong majority see the Canadian government holding key responsibility to combat climate change, and quickly. However, Canadians are also concerned about the current economic conditions and how they will be asked to contribute on an individual level, with over one-third feeling now may not be the right time to invest in climate action given the economic pinch felt by many across the country, an increase of 5 points since early 2023.

As agreement with a number of statements related to climate change action, government responsibility, and national leadership have increased since early 2023, Canadians may be solidifying their opinions of the urgency of climate action – as well as the perceived economic toll this may take. The fact that both sentiments are increasing in intensity rapidly creates a very difficult situation for the government, who must be seen to be acting on climate change without jeopardizing economic growth.

While Canadians are divided on whether Canada is a world leader in the fight against climate change, the majority agree that Canada should do more, at higher rates than just a few months ago

Canadians are unsure of whether Canada is a world leader in the fight against climate change, with a third (33%) saying it is while a quarter (25%) say it is not, though agreement is up 3 points compared to research conducted in February 2023.¹ However, six in ten (58%) agree that Canada should do more in the fight against climate change. This is felt particularly among university graduates (65%) compared to those with a high school education (55%). Agreement is highest among those in Quebec (64%), Ontario (62%), British Columbia (62%) followed by those in Atlantic Canada (56%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (55%), and Alberta (26%).

Six in ten (59%) agree that if Canada's government does not act now to combat climate change, it will be failing the people of Canada, marking an increase of 3 points since February. This is felt more among women with six in ten (64%) agreeing with this statement (vs. 54% men). A similar proportion (60%, +5 pts) agrees that if businesses in Canada do not act now to combat climate change, they will be failing their employees and customers, felt more strongly among university graduates (67%), and those with a post sec education (64%), compared to high school graduates (52%).

¹ <https://www.ipsos.com/en/earth-day-2023-concern-and-focus-slipping-climate-change>



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However, just over one quarter (26%, +3 pts) agree that Canada's government has a clear plan in place for how government, businesses, and people themselves are going to work together to tackle climate change. Men (30%) are more likely to think the government has a clear plan in place (vs. 22% women) as well as younger Canadians aged 18-34 (37%) compared to those aged 35-54 (24%) or 55+ (20%).

The majority agree that recent wildfires are worse because of climate change, though this sentiment is lower among men and those in Alberta

The majority agree that the recent wildfires have been worse because of climate change (63%) and agreement is highest among women (67%, compared to 59% men), and those in British Columbia (72%), Quebec (69%), and Ontario (64%), regions which have recently faced wildfires. However, a notable portion (19%) *disagree* that climate change and recent wildfires are connected phenomena.

The majority also agree the recent fires across the country underscore the reason why we need to take urgent action on climate change (58%). Agreement is highest again among university graduates (68%) compared to high school grads (53%) and those with a post-secondary education (57%), and those in Quebec (66%) and Ontario (58%). One in five (20%) Canadians disagree that the recent fires across the country underscore the reason why we need to take urgent action on climate change, particularly felt among those aged 55+ (24%), compared to 18-34 (16%).

Individual action to combat climate change is offset for many Canadians by current tough economic conditions

When it comes to individual responsibility, six in ten Canadians (60%) say that if individuals do not act now to combat climate change, we will be failing future generations. However, Canadians are divided on whether now is the right time to act with around one-third (35%, +5 pts) saying that now is *not* the right time to be investing in measures to reduce climate change given the tough economic conditions, and a similar proportion (38%) saying now is the right time to act. Boomers are more likely to say that now is *not* the right time to act (40%), followed by Millennials (36%).

When asked to think about the actions they can personally take to help fight climate change, almost four in ten said a financial incentive would encourage them to take more action. While this remains the top of the list, the same as February 2023, a higher proportion of Canadians are saying that people around them changing their behaviour and seeing the impact of climate-driven weather events around the world would encourage them to take more action to fight climate change.

Having easy access to information on the steps they can take every day remains the second most encouraging way they can take action, suggesting over three in ten do not know what they can do to fight climate change on a daily basis. Conversely, around a quarter say they already do everything they can.



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Thinking about the actions you personally can take to help fight climate change, what could encourage you to take more action, if anything?

	% Selected July 2023	% Selected February 2023
A financial incentive, or tax cut to allow me to make more environmentally friendly purchases of goods and services	36% (-5)	41%
Having easy access to information on the steps I can take every day	34% (+2)	32%
Seeing the impact of climate-driven weather events in my country	32% (+2)	30%
Seeing friends, family, and neighbours making changes to their behaviour	28% (+6)	22%
Seeing the impact of climate-driven weather events in other countries around the world	26% (+4)	22%
I already do everything I can	24% (+6)	18%
Only government-enforced action will make me change my behaviour	7% (+4)	3%
Something else	4%	-
Don't know	13%	-

Those aged 35+ and those living in Ontario are less willing pay more tax to prevent climate change

Overall, almost half (45%) wouldn't pay more of their income in taxes than they currently do now to help prevent climate change. While this is still a significant proportion, it has decreased (-3 pts) since February this year. Those aged 35-54 (48%) and 55+ (52%) are more likely to say they wouldn't pay more compared to those aged 18-34 (34%). Canadians living in Ontario would be the least likely to pay more of their income tax (48%) with those in Quebec showing the least reluctance (35%).

Overall, a quarter (25%, +5 pts) *would* pay more of their income in taxes than they currently do now to help prevent climate change while a similar proportion (26%) are unsure. Interestingly, household income is not an indicator of whether Canadians would pay more in taxes, with almost three in ten (28%) of those with a household income of \$40,000 to \$60,000 and a similar proportion (29%) of those with a household income of \$100,000+ saying they would pay more in taxes than they currently do now to help prevent climate change.





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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between July 19th and 20th, 2023, on behalf of Global News. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

For more information on this news release, please contact:

Sean Simpson
Senior Vice President, Ipsos Public Affairs Canada
+1 416 324 2002
Sean.Simpson@ipsos.com

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