

IBCC and the Indigenous Leadership Initiative June 2020 Public Opinion Poll

Despite the presence of immediate COVID-19 priorities, more than two-thirds of Canadians still consider protecting natural ecosystems as a major or moderate priority.

- Not surprisingly, the issues considered as main priorities for the federal government are improving the economy and health care, as well as responding to the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Nonetheless, 72% consider protecting natural ecosystems and habitats either a major (37%) or moderate (35%) priority.

Most Canadians want to see changes to the economy as part of economic recovery efforts, and most agree it is important to include measures to conserve nature as part of new economic recovery measures.

- Only 16% of want to simply go back to the pre-COVID economy. Seven-in-ten (72%) want to rebuild while introducing change – either through introducing some new approaches (39%) or a fundamental transformation of the economy (33%).
- More than 70% of Canadians think it is important to include nature-based climate solutions like new protected areas as part of the new economic recovery measures, 70% want to include measures to support nature conservation, and 65% want to invest in Indigenous communities and northern/remote areas.

Most Canadians (61%) are spending more time interacting with nature compared to before COVID-19. Correspondingly, 97% of Canadians have either maintained (80%) or increased (17%) their support for nature conservation since COVID-19.

- Almost 1 in 5 – and 1 in 4 younger Canadians – say their support for these efforts have increased since the pandemic.

Canadians resoundingly support the government continuing to invest in measures that reach the target of protecting 30% of lands, rivers and lakes by 2030.

- Overall, 84% of Canadians say fulfilling this commitment is either very important (49%) or somewhat important (34%).
- Fulfilling this pledge is considered most important among residents of Ontario (86%), Quebec (86%), Atlantic Canada (83%), and BC (82%), while support is slightly lower in Saskatchewan (78%) and Alberta (74%).

There is broad support for federal funding and investing in Indigenous stewardship as part of economic recovery measures.

- Across all of Canada, 72% either strongly (33%) or somewhat (39%) support federal funding and investing in Indigenous stewardship, such as Indigenous Guardians programs and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas.
- Support is higher in Ontario (76%) and Atlantic Canada (74%), while it is lower in the Prairie provinces (60%+).

Support for expanded federal funding of Indigenous Guardians and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas increases significantly when Canadians learn how these efforts positively impact the economy.

- Canadians become more supportive when they learn about the benefits of Indigenous Guardians that either increase the return on investment or reduce costs.
- Support for investing in IPCAs deepens when people hear it is an effective way to reach Canada's nature conservation commitments and provide certainty for industry.

Survey results are from online interviews with a random sample of 3,019 Canadians 18 years of age and over, conducted June 8 to June 10, 2020. As a guideline, a probability sample of this size would yield results accurate to $\pm 1.8\%$, 19 times out of 20 (95%). National data has been weighted by region, gender, and age, based on the most recent Census figures.