

**Country:** Canada

**Committee:** UNESCO – 2 (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

**Agenda Item:** Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness

“We are working extremely closely with all the countries in the world because we know that we all need to do our part.” - Catherine McKenna

Canada has 10 provinces and 3 territories, in a federated governance system. The country has the smallest population of the Group of Seven states, at around 38 million inhabitants, Canada’s constitutional mandate to protect the environment lies with the provinces, with each province or territory developing its own climate change communication and education. The provinces and territories are also responsible for implementing climate policy and achieving national targets. Education is also a provincial mandate.

The country has among the highest per capita emissions globally. According to the Global Carbon Atlas, Canada emitted 14 t CO2 per person in 2020. The 7th National Communication (2017), explains that Canada is highly affected by climate change. In particular, warming leads to drought, forest fires, floods, and severe thunderstorms with increasing frequency. According to The 7th National Communication this is due to Canada’s location in the northern half of the northern hemisphere, with long and cold winters, and a large landmass with a small population, which increases energy and transportation use. Transportation is the second-largest contributor to greenhouse gases, only topped by energy.

Considering its contribution to climate change, Canada joined the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as an Annex-I country. Canada initially signed the Kyoto Protocol but withdrew in 2011 and has hence not accepted the Doha Amendment. The country signed and ratified the Paris Agreement in 2016.

The agencies such as Environment and Climate Change Canada, The Environment and Climate Change Youth Council, The Net-Zero Advisory Body, Transport Canada, The Canadian Centre for Climate Services bring together federal, provincial, and territorial ministries to work together to address climate change. They produce reports and advise the government on reaching Canada’s goal of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

When it comes to education, there are 13 distinct education systems in Canada. Thus, Canada has no National Curriculum Framework. Climate change education is organized differently in each province and territory. Some surveys showed that teaching climate change education in Canadian classrooms was limited and they highlighted the need for better and more climate change education in Canada. The 7th National Communication declares, “The subject of climate change is integrated into the primary and secondary school curriculum in Canada, and many nongovernmental organizations exist to assist educators to access diverse resources and align teaching activities with the required curriculum.”

Climate change is taught across a wide range of subjects but is usually part of Science and Geography studies. Students typically start learning about climate change in Grade 4 with studies in grades 10–12 exploring the more complex nature of climate change including global impacts and anthropogenic drivers. A growing number of universities and higher education institutions in Canada offer programs related to climate change. Also The 7th National Communication highlights that climate change training opportunities are available for different sectors in the provinces and territories. These include training activities for healthcare professionals, municipalities, the tourism industry, agriculture sectors and community organizations to plan for climate change and prepare public for potential threats. Each province and territory has comprehensive websites with access to information for Canadians. Canada aims to engage all people in climate action through diverse projects and initiatives.

As mentioned before, Canada is one of the top ten global emitters of climate pollution and has some of the highest per capita emissions amongst major industrialized countries. Our contribution to climate change matters, this problem is not for Canada alone, every living organism on this planet is being affected by it and this is perhaps the most urgent problem our society is facing today. Considering this is a problem for everyone, the delegation of Canada would recommend fighting for stronger climate policies, educating public - especially the youth; providing opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge, tools, and strategies for teaching about climate change, and provide teachers with current provincial/national data and resources. We also call for more curriculum content regarding the various approaches to climate change policy and community workshops to hone skills for climate activism. Canada also recommends mitigation strategies such as greenhouse gas reduction policies; an exit plan that breaks economic reliance on the oil and gas sector by supporting workers and communities impacted by the shift to a sustainable economy.

We advise building awareness and understanding of climate change, its impacts and the associated environmental, economic and social issues; encouraging and motivating people to take personal action to take environmental and climate action around the world.

“Climate change is sometimes misunderstood as being about changes in the weather. In reality, it is about changes in our very way of life.” – Paul Polman.

**Resources**

*Canada supports climate education and awareness by Clean Air Partnership. (no date).* Available at: https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/news/2019/07/canada-supports-climate-education-and-awareness-by-clean-air-partnership.html (Accessed: April 12, 2023).

*Canada’s updated Nationally Determined Contributions (2021) gives a detailed overview of provincial climate actions in its Annex 2.* Available at: <https://education-profiles.org/europe-and-northern-america/canada/~climate-change-communication-and-education#Context%20 (Accessed>: April 12, 2023).

*Climate Action and Awareness Fund (2022).* Available at: https://www.canada.ca/en/services/environment/weather/climatechange/funding-programs/climate-action-awareness-fund.html (Accessed: April 12, 2023).

*Where We Stand: The Integration of Climate Change Education in Canadian Schools* (2021). Available at: https://www.bccic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/FINAL-Climate-Change-Education-in-Canada.pdf (Accessed: April 12, 2023).

*Climate Change Communication and Education* (no date). Available at: https://education-profiles.org/europe-and-northern-america/canada/~climate-change-communication-and-education (Accessed: April 12, 2023).

*Climate Change Education in the Canadian Classroom, Perspectives, teaching practice, and possibilities.* (2020). Available at: <https://www.edcan.ca/articles/climate-change-education-canada/> (Accessed: April 12, 2023).