



TOGETHER | ENSEMBLE
2022

togetherensemble.ca

2022 Conference Report

Together|Ensemble

Tracking Canada's Commitment to the United Nations
Sustainable Development Goals

Acknowledgments

Thank you to all our partners and supporters that helped bring Together | Ensemble 2022 to life. Great things happen when our collective efforts unite to achieve the ambitious agenda of the SDGs in Canada.

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Together | Ensemble 2022 took place online from March 2–4, 2022.

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Together | Ensemble Conference

In 2015, world leaders from all 193 United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, creating the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to guide global action on the urgent economic, social, and environmental challenges facing our planet.

The SDGs have been foundational in creating an internationally recognized language and measurement framework for sustainable development. But, in 2022, no country is on track to fully achieve the SDGs by 2030.

Together | Ensemble is Canada's national conference devoted to tracking progress on the SDGs, bringing together all Canadians to tackle our toughest sustainable development challenges. Together | Ensemble 2022 was the fourth iteration of this growing all-of-society conversation, originally convened in 2017 by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation as the first multi-stakeholder symposium in Canada dedicated to the SDGs.

Our Together | Ensemble conversations, and the collaborations and action they catalyze, are more essential than ever.



**Every citizen in this country has a role to play
in building the country that we're going to be.**

The Honourable Karina Gould

Minister of Families, Children and Social Development



U.N. Sustainable Development Goals



End poverty in all its forms everywhere.



End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.



Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.



Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.



Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.



Reduce inequality within and among countries.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.



Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.



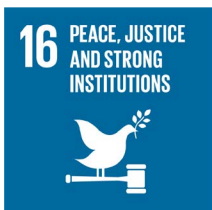
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.



Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.



Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.

Forward

The University of Waterloo takes our responsibility to lead by example and champion the Sustainable Development Goals across our campus and networks very seriously. This past March, we welcomed delegates virtually to Together|Ensemble to investigate ways that we can continue to build and foster these advancements within a landscape that includes global conflicts and a pandemic.

What strikes me most about this conference, and the contents of this report, is the resiliency and overall commitment of stakeholders to achieve great things. As Canada and countries around the world continue to grapple with the repercussions of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and rising geopolitical tensions, our work toward achieving the SDGs is more important than ever.

Universities and colleges play an important role in educating our students and the public about these challenges, and in mobilizing scientific and technological expertise to address them. We also have a responsibility to address the challenges that apply to our own campuses and in our communities.

The challenges of sustainable development are complex and interconnected. As we continue to witness, global threats like the pandemic and climate change compound existing social and economic inequities. They create additional hardships for already marginalized groups, including Indigenous people, racialized people, low-income communities, people with disabilities and other equity-deserving groups.

Canada's ranking of 29th in the world when it comes to implementing the SDGs must improve. As leaders, we have a responsibility to raise awareness and take action to improve implementation.

In 2018, the University of Waterloo founded the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) of Canada to bring the country's universities and colleges together to make progress on the SDGs. Today, we continue to use our position as home to Canada's largest Faculty of Environment to share knowledge, activate research and help solve the interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges confronting the world. Our commitment to being a champion in this area doesn't stop with our past contributions. We continue to move towards improving the uptake of the SDGs.

Together|Ensemble has reinforced the important role that institutions, like the University of Waterloo, play in bringing together multiple sectors to contribute, collaborate and align. Over three days in March, we discussed transformation, collaboration and progress for the SDGs. However, such conversations should continue each and every day. As you read through the Conference Report, I hope you will be inspired to take action and join us in making your community, our country and the world a better place.

Together, we can create a better future for our communities and the world.

Dr. Vivek Goel
President and Vice-Chancellor
University of Waterloo



Executive summary

Together | Ensemble 2022 was the fourth, since 2017, in a series of symposia and conferences of Canada's diverse and growing all-of-society community dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The three-day online event was energized by an impressive mix of 26 sessions, more than 110 speakers and 700 attendees. This included a full day of dynamic side events organized by leading SDGs groups from across Canada. Sessions from all three days were recorded and are available [online](#).

Discussions at Together|Ensemble were notably shaped by the fact that 2022 is the half-way point to 2030 for the mandate of the SDGs. This fact introduced a sense of urgency to the discussions, especially considering that no country is on track to fully achieve the SDGs. The event took place a month after Russia's devastating invasion of Ukraine, and was also the second Together|Ensemble conference during the COVID-19 pandemic—two events that have starkly revealed social inequalities and the foundational importance of SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.



Executive summary

The broad-ranging Together|Ensemble 2022 conversations covered all 17 of the SDGs, with eight core themes:

- 1 Time for transformation**

Given that Canada is only on track to meet one of the SDGs by 2030, conference speakers emphasized the need for greater ambition now in fighting for transformative system change.
- 2 Collaboration: The engine of transformation**

Throughout the conference, speakers highlighted the ways that innovative local, national and international collaborations are core drivers of progress on the SDGs.
- 3 Intersectional SDGs: The global meets the personal**

A common perspective from SDGs activists was the recognition that the SDGs are all intrinsically interwoven and that this understanding must be at the heart of new collaborations.
- 4 Climate action: Deadly impacts, a drive for solutions**

The historic climate emergency related fires, floods and heat waves in Canada in 2021 underscored the need for action, not rhetoric, including a clean energy transition and making every organizational decision a climate decision.
- 5 Reconciliation at the heart of the SDGs**

Many Together|Ensemble speakers emphasized the need to overcome a historic gap and put decolonization and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Canada at the heart of SDGs activism.
- 6 Forward together: Reframing stories and language**

Together|Ensemble 2022 was marked by an energetic youth-driven perspective that to achieve meaningful broad participation in advancing the SDGs, decision making requires a reimagining of the Leave No One Behind Pledge.
- 7 Economics of the SDGs: We have the goals, where's the money?**

Speakers noted that the major SDGs economic issue is one of turning intent into action: there are existing public and private sector SDGs initiatives, but a gap in actual investment and accountability.
- 8 Gen 2030: Youth empowering the present, shaping the future**

The conference reflected an emerging generational shift—from those who defined the SDGs and environmental movement in Canada for the past half century, to the 20-something youth activists driving it today.

Time for transformation



Time for transformation

Together | Ensemble 2022 speakers noted the need to, and challenge of, moving from our current mindset of incremental systems change towards deeper, faster transformations.

“We’re almost halfway to 2030 and Canada is not on track to achieve the SDGs. A lot of people use the word transformation, which we know can be overused, but I think that’s the moment that I was hearing people say we’re at,” observed Margaret Biggs, the Matthews Fellow in global public policy at Queen’s University, reflecting on the two days of Together | Ensemble 2022 conversations. In 2022, Canada was only on track to meet one of the 17 SDGs, SDG 4: Quality Education.

Bridging this progress gap requires a different approach to meeting the goals of Agenda 2030, noted Alain Bourque, Executive Director of the climate change adaptation group Ouranos. “We have to realize that we have many small shifts to make at the same time. This means that we probably need to move away from incremental changes and think really about transformational changes and to really rethink what we were doing in a major systematic way,” he said.

Community Foundations of Canada President Andrea Dicks said that the SDGs themselves are a tool to unlock this transformative progress. “What we talk a lot about here at CFC, is a shift from incremental, transactional approaches to change, to those that are interconnected and transformational. I think the SDGs give us a platform to do that,” said Dicks.

“Fight harder” for system change

Veterans of environmental and political activism at Together | Ensemble 2022 called for more assertive promotion of the SDGs—with governments of all political stripes. “We are in a perilous moment [...] I don’t think we have any choice but to fight harder because the threats are more severe than ever,” said Green Party MP Elizabeth May in an impassioned reflection on a half-century of environmental activism. “We have to be harder, stronger, fiercer and not allow ourselves to be co-opted into even friendly governments with nice ministers.” This perspective was echoed by City of Calgary Mayor Jyoti Gondek who said that when it comes to the SDGs, “We need to be unafraid to talk about these goals. Sometimes we get trapped in that ideological conversation about, oh, will it make me look too progressive? What will the Conservative government say if we’re talking about sustainable development goals? So, let’s make sure that goals are integrated into our decision-making, our vernacular.”



Nothing ages a person faster than resigning to the status quo.

Together | Ensemble 2022 participant in the conference chat

Time for transformation

A pandemic reset

The urgency of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in system change by creating new perspectives said City of Duncan Mayor Michelle Staples. “The pandemic has really provided us, on a global scale, the ability and opportunity to actually recognize the connections between the SDGs, because we’re almost forced to do so,” she said. Denise Amyot, President of Colleges and Institutes Canada said that the pandemic brought home the local importance of the SDGs. “It was like an epiphany,” she said. “Why do we only talk about the SDGs for our international projects and not for what we do here in Canada with our members, for our members? What happened is that now, no matter what we do, we think about the SDGs. So, it has been very transformative for us.”

TOGETHER MAKES A DIFFERENCE

In his introductory remarks, conference MC Chúk Odenigbo highlighted the challenges of isolation and sense of being overwhelmed that can slow changemakers. He encouraged conference participants to take heart from gathering at Together|Ensemble 2022 and remember, “You’re part of a larger community of changemakers, you’re not alone.”

Transformation starts with self-awareness

Transformational change often starts as an inside job, with self-awareness and a shift in personal attitudes, said Narinder Dhami, Managing Partner at Marigold Capital. “Sometimes as Canadians we get stuck, because we’re good people doing good work. As good people, we cannot be racist, we cannot be sexist, we cannot have bias. [...] This binary approach to good and bad is actually a very dangerous approach, because it prevents us from getting better. [...] If we can all embrace the stance of being good-ish so we can actually improve, we can recognize that there’s always areas for us to do better, to do more, and to build greater equity, I think we could do much more, [...] and truly drive the change that we hope to see,” she said.

In making these shifts, Janhabi Nandy, Executive Director of the Climate Change Secretariat in Environment and Climate Change Canada said it’s important to watch for the personal signs of burnout. “I think one of the challenges is that after we’ve spent an hour talking about how transformational things need to be, it’s easy to get overwhelmed by that and not to be able to actually effectively engage professionally or personally because it’s all, it’s everything. How do you do that all the time?” This can be particularly acute, she noted, if you feel you lack the tools to act. “It can be debilitating to have shifted your mindset, but not be equipped with the tools to be able to transform,” said Nandy, noting that the Secretariat is focused on creating toolkits to aid local communities adapt to climate change.

Collaboration: The engine of transformation



Collaboration: The engine of transformation

New local, national and international collaborations are driving progress on the SDGs. No single institution or government can take on this work alone.

“The 2030 Agenda is a shared responsibility,” said Olivier Bullion, Director of the SDG Unit at Employment and Social Development Canada. “Achieving the goals requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort. Collaborative partnerships are fundamental to achieving the goals.” Vivek Goel, President of the University of Waterloo noted that Canada’s SDGs movement is grounded in collaboration. “The uniqueness of SDSN Canada is its connections between partners and collaborators across the country. The power of this group is rooted in its interdisciplinary relationships and initiatives,” he said.

Chris Henderson, Executive Director of Indigenous Clean Energy, noted that reconciliation with Indigenous communities necessarily requires new forms of collaboration. “If we’re decolonizing power, the nature of relationships have to be different” he said. “Partnership is the product of relationship. When you have relationship, trust is created. And the foundation of trust allows us to change and transform.”



The uniqueness of SDSN Canada is its connections between partners and collaborators across the country.

Dr. Vivek Goel
President of the University of Waterloo



Collaboration: The engine of transformation

Accepting difference—key to progress

One of the core challenges in achieving successful collaborations is being able to accept different opinions and ways of thinking said City of Calgary Mayor Jyoti Gondek. “We have to understand that our ways of thinking are different from each other. And so, as decision-makers on a local council, sometimes that’s the thing that’s holding us back,” said Mayor Gondek. Michelle Staples, Mayor of the City of Duncan said that from her experience, having a diversity of opinions and voices around the table requires inevitable compromise. “It means actually going, *we’re not all going to be happy with the outcomes of this*. There are going to be things that we all have to compromise that we all have to let go of to do what’s best for the community. That’s how we have to show up for those discussions. It’s not wanting to win or lose,” said Mayor Staples.

Be patient and laugh

Long-term successful collaborations involve two characteristics that don’t often get celebrated: patience and humour, said conference speakers. “When we talk about collaboration, [*it’s key*] to talk about patience. We need to be patient, not with respect to time, but with people and organizations in order to recognize that everyone is advancing at different speeds and that we need to be inclusive as much as possible to advance in a more systematic way in the future,” said Alain Bourque, Executive Director of Ouranos.

Sometimes this patience relates to dealing with large institutions, such as the federal government, observed Janhabi Nandy, Executive Director of the Climate Change Secretariat in Environment and Climate Change Canada. “From the federal government level, I know that collaboration can seem difficult sometimes. [*But*] as one of those nameless, faceless bureaucrats, every opportunity we have to hear from people, no matter how distant or personal it seems, matters to the individuals who take in that feedback and it informs the way that they go about their business. If you have the energy, lean in and embrace it and you might be surprised by the impact that it has on these big institutions,” said Nandy.

In order to achieve a just transformation, University of Waterloo environmental scientist Robert Gibson said “humor or joy is crucial.” He noted that “the amiability, the collaborative skills of people who’ve done environmental work has been pretty amazing over the last 50 years. I think that may be part of the contribution the environmental movement can make to this broader transition. I’m [*also*] in favor of the comedians joining.”

Collaboration: The engine of transformation

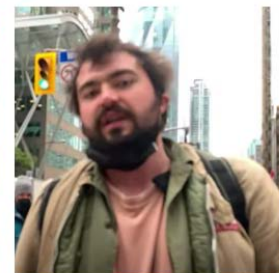
Hold on to the pandemic sense of breaking barriers

The past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic have shifted collaborative approaches and created a new sense of what can be achieved together said City of Duncan Mayor Michelle Staples. She noted the City’s ability to work with all levels of government and community organizations to provide housing for more than 100 citizens. “[What] we were able to do was to break down all of the silos of different levels of government and really work together, something that we hadn’t been able to do prior to the pandemic. Now that we have experienced that, it’s getting people to hold onto the idea and the experience that when we do this, it actually works,” she said.

Another beneficial pandemic shift that needs to be continued is virtual participation in community consultation that had enabled those with mobility challenges, parents and the elderly to participate more fully, said City of Kitchener Mayor Berry Vrbanovic. “The last two years have been very challenging, but there’s been some positive stuff that has come out of it that I actually think is going to last. For example, the notion of now allowing delegations to appear virtually,” he said.

Collective art for climate action starts with conversations

Toronto-based filmmaker Lisa Robertson shared that in co-founding [Artists for Real Climate Action](#) in 2019 she has seen the transformative power of collective action. Driven by a desire to put the climate emergency on the political front burner during the 2019 federal election, Robertson helped bring together several dozen actors and filmmakers to make [a series of short climate emergency videos](#) to share on social media. She said the project’s ongoing success is rooted in starting the conversation. “You’ve just got to show up with a lot of passion and ask people in your community who want to be involved,” advised Robertson.



Intersectional SDGs: The global meets the personal



Intersectional SDGs: The global meets the personal

The SDGs have 169 targets and 232 indicators, all of which are intrinsically interwoven—progress on one advances the others.

“When we talk about climate action, we’re also talking about gender equity, decent work and economic growth and reduced inequalities,” said Chris Henderson, Executive Director of [Indigenous Clean Energy](#). Reflecting on his almost four decades of environmental activism, University of Waterloo environmental science professor Robert Gibson noted, “There’s very little you can do about [*the environment*] that will be useful and lasting without addressing the other crimes and stupidities that we are now trying to confront with the Sustainable Development Goals.”

It’s the intersectionality of the SDGs that draws many people towards them, said conference MC Chúk Odenigbo. “I came into working with all the SDGs because we realized that everything was connected,” said Odenigbo, Founding Director of [Future Ancestors Services](#), an Indigenous and Black-owned, youth-led professional services social enterprise. And Lillianna Coyes-Loiselle, [VIDEA](#)’s Manager of Indigenous Youth Engagement and Reconciliation, said that it’s this intersectionality that’s at the heart of advancing the SDGs. “Acknowledging everyone’s unique intersectional identity and our lived experiences can lead to a more holistic understanding of the issues that ultimately allows us, as a collective, to empower one another and actually reach solutions,” she said.



When we talk about climate action, we’re also talking about gender equity, decent work and economic growth and reduced inequalities.

Chris Henderson
Executive Director of Indigenous Clean Energy



Intersectional SDGs: The global meets the personal

An SDG by another name, just as sweet

A common theme of Together|Ensemble 2022 was “being able to recognize SDG work, even if it’s not labelled as SDG work,” said MC Chúk Odenigbo. This extends to helping clients and communities see their existing or targeted work in the context of the SDGs, said Ouranos’ Alain Bourque. “We [*partner*] with people working on the ground, for example a municipal land-use planner or an engineer for Agri-Quebec. And [*we’re*] a bit worried and they never talk about the SDGs. But it’s fine because they have so many urgent matters to deal with. We take a systematic approach and gradually connect [*them with*] the SDGs,” he said.

Alex Lidstone, Executive Director of Climate Caucus, a national network of more than 470 local government elected officials driving systems change to transform our communities within a decade, said that this broader view of SDGs related work requires taking the time to imagine the broader impact of decisions. “Creating healthy and regenerative cities often requires what I call multi-solving from local governments. This means with every decision, councils have to think about the far-reaching implications like traffic, greenhouse gas emissions, social and health outcomes, equitable access to green space, healthy ecosystems, consulting with your local Indigenous communities and what does that mean? And how do we do that?” she asked.

THE POWER OF INTERGENERATIONAL SHARING

“We are seeing these forms of both intersectoral and, I would underscore, intergenerational collaboration where the moral clarity of newer generations can connect with the wisdom and resources of older generations to chart a path forward,” said John McArthur, Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at the Brookings Institution. He noted Concordia University’s 17 Rooms Exercise, a semester-long, university wide series of brainstorming sessions in winter/spring 2022 as an example of bringing the campus community together for conversation around how Concordia can have even greater impact in relation to the SDGs.

Intersectional SDGs: The global meets the personal

The story to now: Fifty years of building the SDGs

Together|Ensemble 2022 speakers reflected on the 50th anniversary of the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Environment in Stockholm, the world's first to discuss reconciling environmental quality and economic development, setting the stage for the development of the SDGs. "In 1972, the world was profoundly different from what it is today. The problems are so much worse now than they were then," observed University of Waterloo environmental scientist Robert Gibson.

In his land acknowledgment, Hwiemtum (Fred Roland), Director of the Sacred Cedar Centre addressed how the historical moment is grounded in the need to reimagine a better world. "You're looking at the development of a new world. What is this new world for us and how do we sustain our movement forward? We have to unlearn to learn," said Hweimtum.

As part of this "unlearning", the University of Waterloo's Jean Andrey noted that Rachel Carson's 1962 book Silent Spring sparked the environmental movement by raising the alarm about the devastating environmental impact of the overuse of pesticides, particularly DDT. "Carson taught us what we now know well—that everything is connected. What looked to be [technological] solutions, sometimes miracles, as DDT was referred to, often turn out to be naive approaches that introduce systemic problems that are difficult to resolve," said Andrey.

Steven Guilbeault, federal Minister of the Environment and Climate Change said that this awareness of connection is embedded in the SDGs, something that has been highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic. "We have witnessed the interconnectedness of key pillars of our society: health, social well-being, the economy and the environment. We must apply the same principle to solve the climate and environmental emergencies of our day, while promoting peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet," said Minister Guilbeault.

Intersectional SDGs: The global meets the personal

SDGs: Moments to remember

1971

Setting the stage: Canada is the 2nd country in the world to create a federal Department of the Environment and activism gets going with the founding of Greenpeace in Vancouver.

1972

Canadian Maurice Strong is Secretary General of the 1972 Stockholm United Nations Conference on the Environment.

1987

Canadian Jim MacNeill is Secretary General of the World Commission on Environment and Development and lead author of the influential Brundtland Commission report Our Common Future.

2015

At the United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development in New York City the global community endorses Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by 2030.
The report creates the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

2017

The first Together symposium is hosted by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation.

2018

Canada presents its first Voluntary National Review to the United Nations, tracking progress to date on the SDGs.

2021

Moving Forward Together, Canada's 2030 agenda national strategy released in February.

2021

Canada's Federal Implementation Plan on the SDGs released in July.

Climate action: Deadly impacts, a drive for solutions



Climate action: Deadly impacts, a drive for solutions

The historic fires, floods and heat waves that devastated British Columbia in the summer and fall of 2021 were top of mind for speakers at Together | Ensemble 2022 and informed the urgency of addressing the climate emergency.

Between June and August 2021, almost 600 people in British Columbia died due to a heat dome, and in the fall devastating flooding caused billions of dollars of damage to public and private infrastructure in B.C.'s lower mainland, ranked one of the world's top ten climate-related disasters of 2021.

"These were catastrophic, life-changing events at 1.1-degree Celsius [*above pre-industrial global temperatures*]," said Elizabeth May, Green Party MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands. She noted that the Paris Agreement goal to keep global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius depends on dramatic greenhouse gas emission reductions in this decade—while much of the conversation has shifted to a target of net-zero by 2050, which May notes will be too late. "We have absolutely been far too accepting of rhetoric in place of action. So we have to move faster and we have to do way more," said May.



**We have absolutely been far too accepting
of rhetoric in place of action.**

Elizabeth May
Green Party MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands



Climate action: Deadly impacts, a drive for solutions

Technology and behavioural change

“In order to combat climate change, we have to look at a clean energy transition. It’s the only way to really get there to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions,” said Chris Henderson, Executive Director of [Indigenous Clean Energy](#), a national partnership hub for Indigenous participation in clean energy across Canada. However, climate adaptation expert Alain Bourque from [Ouranos](#) cautioned that addressing the climate emergency isn’t purely a technological fix. “There’s a lot of economic players that think that the solutions around climate change are technological in nature. Technology is obviously going to help us. But it’s really the mindsets, the changes in the behaviour that are going to make the huge difference,” said Bourque. He noted that the [IPCC Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability report](#), makes links to the SDGs and acknowledges a move to adaptation. “You see the shift happening in the scientific community to switch from documenting the problems to finding and contributing to the solutions,” said Bourque.

CLIMATE—A WINDOW TO THE SDGs

“Canadians are focused on climate and that’s right. But in addition to climate [...] there’s a lot of knock on issues related to the SDGs, whether it’s to do with inequities, whether it’s to do with food security, whether it’s to do with infrastructure. We can use the focus on climate, not to overtake other aspects of the SDGs, but to open up the window to the implications and the interactions across the SDGs,” observed Queen’s University global public policy researcher Margaret Biggs.

Tools for Action

Support it

[Canadian Philanthropic Commitment on Climate Change](#) an opportunity for foundations and other funders in Canada to signal their commitment to act on climate change regardless of their respective missions.

Attend it

The seventh in the Adaptation Futures international conference series on global adaptation, [Adaptation Futures 2023](#), organized by [Ouranos](#), the Government of Canada and the [World Adaptation Science Programme \(WASP\)](#), October 2–6, 2023 in Montreal.

Climate action: Deadly impacts, a drive for solutions

The climate bottom line

Both for profit and not-for-profit organizations need to make their response to the climate emergency a core part of their financial bottom line, said Anne-Josée Laquerre, Executive Director of Quebec Net Positive. “These days, almost every business decision is also a climate decision. Right now, every company has the responsibility to place themselves on the transition pathway that will be compatible with a low-carbon future,” she said. Laquerre added that much of the public focus on business and climate change is related to large, high-visibility companies. “We need to help all of our small businesses to adapt to climate change right now, because if the bigger companies can adapt and change and the smaller are not being helped, they’re not going to be resilient in a low-carbon future. This is going to be very problematic for our communities. So we need to be working with all sizes of businesses,” she said. Andrea Dicks, President of the Community Foundations of Canada said that if businesses and non-profits aren’t financially focused on addressing the climate emergency, it may require government action. “It is 2022 and if we are not investing our assets with a strategy that is deployed against our values then perhaps we deserve to be regulated, because it seems completely inconsistent to not do so,” Dicks said.

A net positive vision

Given the climate emergency, Anne-Josée Laquerre told Together|Ensemble 2022 that achieving net zero carbon emissions isn’t enough. Instead, she shared “the audacious vision” of Quebec Net Positive, the Montreal-based group she co-founded. “We think that by 2050, Quebec could be the first net-positive jurisdiction in the Americas,” she said. “Our net-zero mindset right now is looking at how we operate our economies today and trying to reduce its footprint, but not changing the paradigms. What needs to happen right now is we need to be thinking totally differently.”

WHAT WENT UNSAID

“As a Black Canadian I’m disappointed that the discussion didn’t talk about race, because in the past 50 years, race has definitely been a massive issue. [...] We did not talk about environmental racism. [...] And so, I love the way we ended—that the essence of this discussion has been about transformation, and that transformation is incredibly important to be able to move forward in terms of the environment and in terms of social justice,” observed Together|Ensemble 2022 MC Chúk Odenigbo in response to a panel discussion reflecting on the past half-century of SDGs-related activism.

Reconciliation at the heart of the SDGs



Reconciliation at the heart of the SDGs

In the U.N.'s Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development signed on September 25, 2015, Indigenous peoples are specifically mentioned in two of the 17 goals—SDG 2: Zero Hunger and SDG 4: Quality Education.

There is no mention of decolonization or addressing land claims, environmental degradation of traditional lands or a myriad of other social justice issues that affect Indigenous peoples. In Canada, this has become an increasingly glaring SDGs gap, in particular considering that Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission report was published just three months after the 2030 Agenda.

At Together|Ensemble 2022 many speakers spoke of the need to put reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Canada at the heart of the SDGs. "One of my big hopes for the 2030 Agenda, is that we are better about integrating reconciliation into our understanding of sustainable development in recognizing that we cannot achieve all of our SDG ambitions without also achieving all of our reconciliation goals," said conference MC Chúk Odenigbo.



One of my big hopes for the 2030 Agenda, is that we are better about integrating reconciliation into our understanding of sustainable development [...].

Chúk Odenigbo

Founding Director and Director of Ancestral Services, Future Ancestors Services



Reconciliation at the heart of the SDGs

Active decolonization: me to we

One of the key steps on the road of Indigenous reconciliation is “to decolonize our processes, our organization and ourselves,” said Lillianna Coyes-Loiselle, Manager of Indigenous Youth Engagement and Reconciliation at [VIDEA](#) and an executive on the University of Calgary’s Indigenous Student Council. She noted that “Canada today remains a white settler colonial state that practices neocolonialism on its Indigenous, immigrant and marginalized populations. [We] need to be doing this decolonial work in order to actually achieve true, just and sustainable development.” Aniqah Zowmi, a Community Engagement and Gender Specialist at the [Ontario Council for International Cooperation](#), said “I really try to reflect on what does decolonization mean in practice? Not just in the words we say, but what does it mean when we talk about the way that we create programs, we structure them, the way that we value lived experience?” Both Zowmi and Coyes-Loiselle noted that many existing programs rest on a legacy of colonialism that defines the knowledge base for existing best practices. “[But] are those the bodies of knowledge that we should be leaning on or are there new, different, traditional forms of knowledge that we can lean on?” asked Zowmi.

Indigenous leadership

Indigenous community involvement in clean energy is a way to “decolonize power” and democratize energy, said Chris Henderson Executive Director of [Indigenous Clean Energy](#), a national partnership hub for Indigenous participation in clean energy across Canada. “Indigenous communities are today the largest and most powerful clean energy community in Canada, apart from Canadian utilities. They own or co-own or have a defined financial benefit agreement with over 20 percent of Canada’s electricity generating infrastructure, almost all renewable,” explained Henderson.

This includes more than 200 major clean energy projects and smaller ones such as the installation of energy efficient heat pumps in the First Nation community of [Bella Bella](#)—a double win in terms of indoor air quality and thus residents’ health. This Indigenous energy ownership also empowers First Nations communities in other ways, noted Mi’kmaq Youth Activist James Blair. “Strong institutions for First Nations mean that they’ll be better equipped to tackle reducing poverty and hunger rates in Canada and overall inequities. And then they’ll be able to spur decent work in economic growth and be able to make their communities more sustainable overall,” he said.

Reconciliation at the heart of the SDGs

Systems rethink

In parallel with reconciliation, numerous Together|Ensemble 2022 speakers discussed and emphasized the way that historical systems of power across Canada need to be questioned and transformed in order to advance the SDGs. “When we’re talking about systems change in local government, we’re really talking about refocusing from our day-to-day service provision for residents and businesses and taking a broader view on things with the impact of municipal decisions on the future, including issues such as climate change, equity, economic prosperity, all while living within the limitations of our planet. We need to reflect the extent to which we’re open to change, can influence change and are willing ourselves to change,” said City of Kitchener Mayor Berry Vrbanovic.



Whatever you do, it must be concrete and it must be aimed at closing that gap.

Jean Becker

Associate Vice-President of Indigenous Relations at the University of Waterloo

Call to close the gap

In her land acknowledgment on Together|Ensemble 2022’s second day, Jean Becker, Associate Vice-President of Indigenous Relations at the University of Waterloo made a powerful call to action on advancing decolonization and addressing the recommendations of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission report.

“There remains much to do. You don’t need me to give you a list of actions you should take. That will be determined by your understanding of the issues, your capacity and ability to act and particularly your commitment to radical change in the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. What you need to move to action is to understand what really happened and what is still happening in Canada,” said Becker. She noted that socioeconomic and political imbalance in opportunities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians is at the heart of reconciliation. For example, while Canada ranks 6th in the world in quality of life, Indigenous communities in Canada rank 63rd.

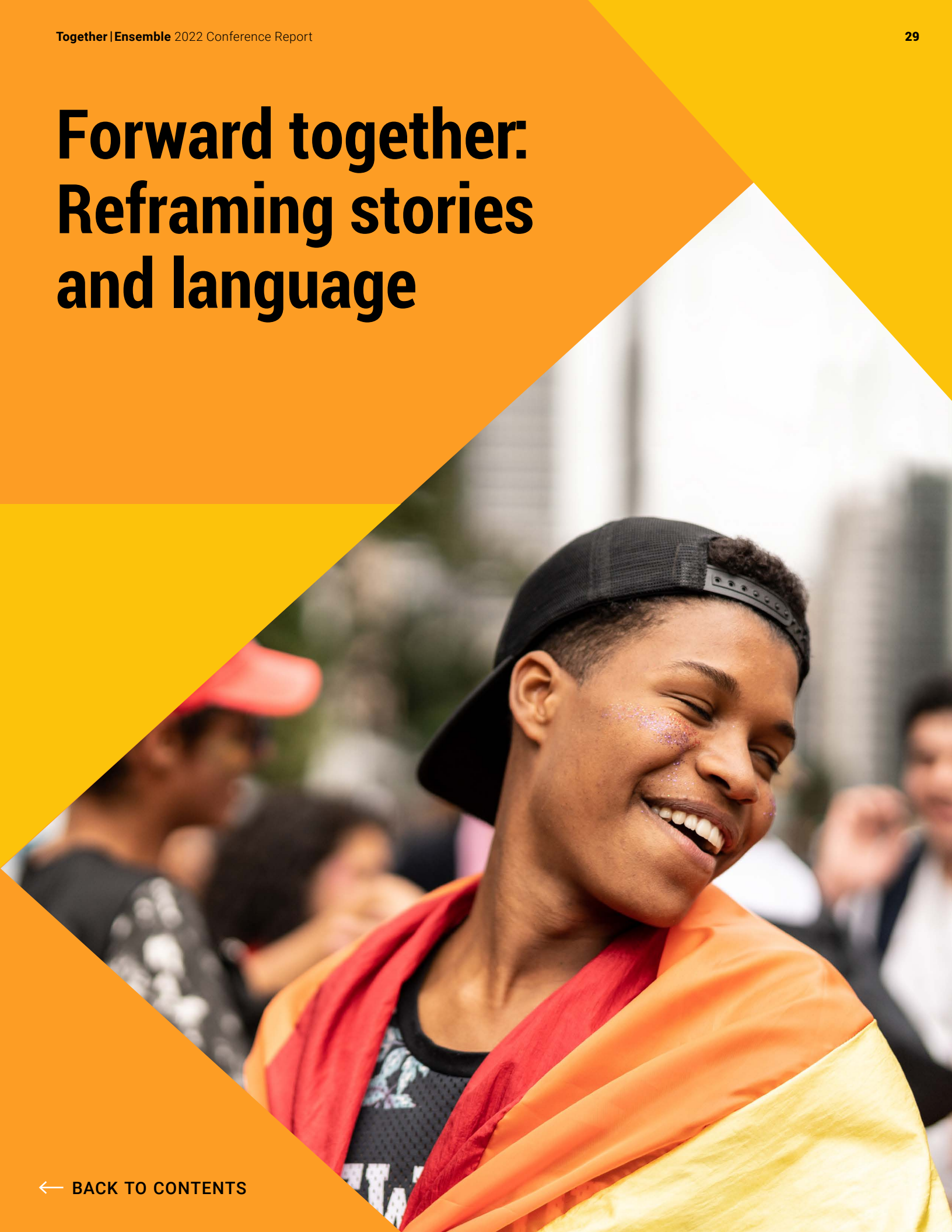
“Whatever you do, it must be concrete and it must be aimed at closing that gap,” said Becker.

Tools for Action

Download

VIDEA’s Decolonization Toolkit, a great personal and organizational primer on reconciliation.

Forward together: Reframing stories and language

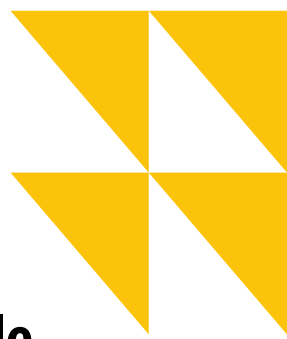



Forward together: Reframing stories and language

In order to foster real and meaningful participation in decision-making around the 2030 Agenda, it is essential to reimagine the Leave No One Behind Pledge.

“The Pledge, makes the assumption that there are people ahead that are reaching their hand back and bringing up people who are behind. But who’s to say that the people ahead or who are more privileged know in which direction we should be going, or know what kind of help the people behind need?” said Aspen Ho, a LGBTQ2IA+ youth activist and student at Simon Fraser University.

Other speakers noted that this reassessment of who decides extends to our frameworks for the credentials that establish ones’ authority to be at a decision-making table. “It is just as important for someone who has a lived experience of self-sufficient farming or Indigenous sustainability practices to be at the same table as someone who may have a degree in clean energy or sustainability,” said Aniqah Zowmi of the [Ontario Council for International Cooperation](#).



Some of the communities that we think of as vulnerable are actually the ones that have been the most resilient over time and geography and that they can teach us on what we need to do better and how we need to think differently.

Janhabi Nandy

Executive Director of the [Climate Change Secretariat in Environment and Climate Change Canada](#)

Forward together: Reframing stories and language

Reframing 'vulnerable' communities

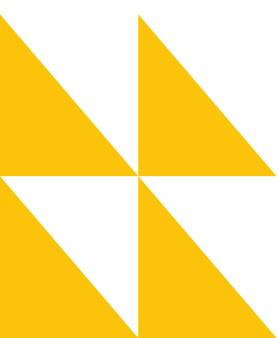
Questioning the language used in the Leave No One Behind Pledge extends particularly to the word "vulnerable", said OCIC's Zowmi. "I hate the term because I think the term vulnerable or the term marginalized or the term excluded seems to implicitly place the onus of this exclusion on those communities as if it's for some reason the fault of BIPOC communities, or it's the fault of LGBTQ+ communities. [...] I talk about systemically marginalized, systemically excluded because it's not the individual's fault that they're excluded. It's the fact that the systems are working exactly the way that they were built to," she said. Extending this critique, VIDEA's Lillianna Coyes-Loiselle said applying the term 'vulnerable' can be disempowering. "What can happen when you're talking about, and you label someone as being vulnerable? It prevents them from stepping into their power, and it really silences their voice and reduces their dignity by labeling them in this way that really goes away from the intersectionality of their identities," she said.

The power, complexity and challenge of sharing stories

Part one

When it comes to increasing the diversity of voices, many speakers noted the power of stories to drive transformation. For example, Lillianna Coyes-Loiselle said that the VIDEA storytelling night is about creating a safe space in which youth can gather and share stories in person and online, becoming more confident in their voices. "[We] celebrate the positive stories and the power and the strength and resilience that everyone we work with has, that's so important. We want to celebrate and elevate these stories, just as much as the stories that might involve trauma and issues," she said.

However, Aspen Ho explained that storytelling culture walks a fine and shifting line between celebratory and exploitative. "I sit with this strange tension of no one is entitled to know your story. I think a lot of the systems we exist in feed into this almost 'trauma porn' experience of, in order to justify the fact that you are Indigenous or you're racialized, or you're a woman, you have to relive the trauma or the challenges of existing with that identity in order to justify why you are the right person to speak on that," Ho said.



Forward together: Reframing stories and language

Part two

As a concrete example of the potential pitfalls with public storytelling, City of Calgary Mayor Jyoti Gondek recounted her experience of the city's 2020 public consultations on creating an anti-racist city. The event was organized as a regular public hearing, with speakers getting five minutes to speak and no questions. "We should have realized that people would come and talk to us about their experiences with racism and be incredibly traumatized. They would live through their crises again. It was tragic listening to people. We missed the boat on how we should have done this. We didn't have counseling services there. Our intention was pure, but our system made us do it in a way that was not sensitive to people's needs," said Gondek. Her colleague Michelle Staples, Mayor of the City of Duncan extended this point noting that how stories are framed can have a huge impact on local politics. "Communication is one of the biggest

struggles we all have. It is so easy and so fast for miscommunication to happen in the era of social media, for stories to take off, for rumors to explode. [...] When we're talking about complexity, this isn't [in] all of the stories. We need to talk about the whole story and engaging people constantly in dialogues around that without losing them," she said.

The Canada Forum for Impact Investment and Development's (CFIID) 2021 *State of the Sector* report revealed "a pretty bold movement on gender lens investing, not only in Canada, but around the world," said Narinder Dhami, a CFIID board member. In Canada, for example, the *Community Foundations of Canada* program *Communities for Gender Equality* is working with community foundations "to ensure that they have a gender lens in their investment policy," says CFC President Andrea Dicks.

BEST PRACTICES FOR INCLUSION

ImpAct-EDI is a new initiative to foster a culture of inclusion at Canada's colleges, said Denise Amyot, President and CEO of Colleges and Institutes Canada. "This national initiative will bring people together to talk about best practices, have a coordinated approach to inclusion and to see how we can influence the business sector and the communities where we work," she said.

Economics of the SDGs: We have the goals, where's the money?




Economics of the SDGs: We have the goals, where's the money?

The economics of the SDGs is an all of society challenge that requires the reframing of public budgets, private and publicly traded equity and how philanthropic organizations direct their grants.


“The issue right now in March of 2022 is not whether or not the money exists [*for achieving the SDGs*], but one of whether or not we are prioritizing where that money goes and how it flows,” said Andrea Dicks, President of the [Community Foundations of Canada](#) (CFC). She noted that philanthropic foundations in Canada are legally required to disperse a minimum of 3.5 % of their assets annually, or about \$3 billion dollars presently. However, Dicks said that while a growing number of foundations are using SDGs-tracking accountability mechanisms (including [The United Way and City of Winnipeg’s Voluntary Local Review](#) and CFC’s [VitalSigns](#)), “proactive grant making and investment is really limited to a handful of foundations right now when it comes to the SDGs.”

There is an overall lack of targeted investment in the SDGs in Canada at all political levels beginning with a lack of federal financial commitment, said economist John McArthur of the [Brookings Institute](#). He noted that while Canada has an approximately \$2 trillion economy, the federal budget allocation specifically for supporting the SDGs is just \$5 million a year. “That’s equivalent to roughly 12 cents per Canadian, per year. That is the official ‘budget’ for the country’s efforts on the SDGs,” said McArthur. “That cannot be right.”

Learn more about the Government of Canada’s [SDG Funding Program](#).



The issue right now [...] is not whether or not the money exists, but one of whether or not we are prioritizing where that money goes and how it flows.



Andrea Dicks
President of the Community Foundations of Canada

Economics of the SDGs: We have the goals, where's the money?

ESGs don't necessarily support the SDGs

When introduced by the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment initiative in 2006, the Environment, Society and Governance (ESG) framework was seen as a big step forward to guide investors towards supporting sustainability initiatives. Indeed, ESGs have grown enormously—it's estimated that there will be \$53 USD trillion in ESG-ranked investments by 2025. But Narinder Dhama, Executive Lead at New Power Labs and Managing Partner at Marigold Capital (both dedicated to creating greater SDGs impact) said that ESG-based funds today often border on greenwashing. "Do investors who are investing in public ESG funds understand what's actually in the group of companies that make up those funds?" she asked. For example, she noted that tobacco company Philip Morris is a highly-rated ESG company and is included on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. University of Waterloo researcher Olaf Weber agreed that the ESG-based framework is now used by investors "mainly to reduce financial risks."

Dhama said that rather than the ESG framework, private market impact investing, using tools such as the Global Impact Investing Network, has the largest potential to create transformative SDGs-related change. However, she acknowledged that few Canadians have the access or knowledge to be involved in private equity investing, something she's working to help shift. "The opportunity, if we do this right, is tremendous and combining that private capital, and the philanthropic and public capital, can truly address the large needs that we have across the world," said Dhama.

Neoliberal capitalism vs. corporations supporting the SDGs

There was debate at Together|Ensemble 2022 on the extent to which companies large and small can help drive, or hinder, the SDGs. "The rise of neoliberalism (*in the 1990s*) squashed us and we didn't see it," said Green Party MP Elizabeth May noting that she'd had much more success as an environmental activist in the 1970s and '80s. May said that in the past decades there has been an increase in corporate control, for example the North American Free Trade Agreement's chapter 11, which empowers companies or investors to sue a NAFTA signatory government for or alleged breaches of its obligations under the treaty. "We let corporate power trump democracy," May said.

Economics of the SDGs: We have the goals, where's the money?

However, Anne-Josée Laquerre, Executive Director and Co-Founder of [Quebec Net Positive](#), said that large and small corporations must increasingly be economic drivers of the SDGs. “My [*belief*] that companies can be part of the solution has sustained my commitment over the years,” said Laquerre, whose career includes positions with Noranda, Domtar and Bombardier Aerospace. She observed that in the past 40 years, Canadian companies have moved from reacting to individual environmental issues and simple compliance, to a recognition that they must act collectively for the greater good, something she sees reflected in the statement of the U.S. [2019 Business Roundtable](#).

As for the role of smaller companies in driving the SDGs, Jean Martel, a sustainability coach at [Evolv](#) said that in his experience many owners want to contribute to the SDGs, but are unsure how—which is where coaching and education provide a tipping point: “Every entrepreneur can change the world, one project at a time,” said Martel.

Indigenous SDGs economic leadership: Impact benefit agreements

A significant part of the economics of how Canada meets its commitment to the SDGs depends on the activities of our extensive resource sector, particularly in mining and forestry, said Mi'kmaq Youth Activist James Blair. “Indigenous governments are very well placed to play a role here,” he said. Blair highlighted the importance and growing role of [impact benefit agreements](#) between Indigenous communities and resource companies.

These are project-specific binding agreements, often valued at millions to hundreds of millions of dollars, that outline how a resource project will be carried out, including environmental and social protections and the roles and responsibilities of both the proponent and the local Indigenous communities. “The agreement ensures that both are really gaining from this economic activity,” sometimes including Indigenous ownership over part of a major project. “This is real wealth that's being unlocked for First Nations communities. And in turn that will unlock real progress towards reaching the SDGs,” said Blair.



This is real wealth that's being unlocked for First Nations communities. And in turn that will unlock real progress towards reaching the SDGs.



James Blair
Mi'kmaq Youth Activist

Gen 2030: Youth empowering the present, shaping the future



Gen 2030: Youth empowering the present, shaping the future

Together|Ensemble 2022 included a palpable sense of generational shift —a passing of the activist baton from those who defined the sustainability and environmental movement in Canada for the past half century, to the 20-something youth activists driving it today.

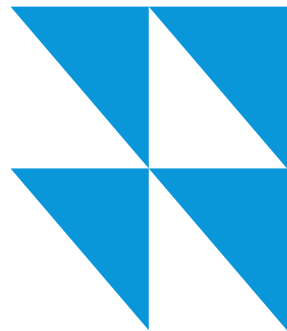
“There’s so much youth activism,” said Queen’s University’s Margaret Biggs. She noted that this energy and effort from ‘generation 2030’ is primarily at universities, colleges and at the community and city level.

Yet it’s youth activism that also has the potential to inject transformational perspectives on national issues, said Karina Gould, Canada’s Minister of Families Children and Social Development. “When it comes to Agenda 2030, this is where people of all ages, but particularly young people, can look in and say, ‘We don’t actually have to do things the way we’ve always done it. Actually, here are ways that we can do it better’. And it’s incumbent upon us in leadership positions to listen to those voices,” said Minister Gould.



We don't actually have to do things the way we've always done it. Actually, here are ways that we can do it better.

The Honourable Karina Gould
Canada’s Minister of Families Children and Social Development



Gen 2030: Youth empowering the present, shaping the future

The ABC's of youth activism on the SDGs

Ask youth

Unlocking progress on the SDGs depends on more actively engaging youth in the decision-making process, listening and acting on input, said Jasveen Brar Executive Director of the [Youth Climate Lab](#). "Overall it's about ensuring that we're not only heard, but our opinions and our thoughts are reflected in policy change," said Brar. City of Calgary Mayor Jyoti Gondek echoed this view. "We need to stop talking at youth. We need to stop telling youth that you should do this or that and start asking them about what they want to do, because we don't know best. They're the ones that'll tell us what the future of our city looks like," said Mayor Gondek.

Be yourself

"Be yourself [...] accept yourself fully," said conference MC Chúk Odenigbo. He [shared his story](#) of innovatively reaffirming his personal love for and connection with the natural environment as a young black man, something which led to his founding [Future Ancestors Services](#), an Indigenous and Black-owned, youth-led professional services social enterprise that advances climate justice and systemic barrier removal. Building

an empowered sense of self can come from being offered a seat at the table, said youth activist Lillianna Coyes-Loiselle. "Something that I struggle with is imposter syndrome, which I know so many people can relate to and feeling like your voice isn't important and you don't have anything of value to bring to the table. So, something that really pushed me and encouraged me to share my voice and advocate for myself and my community was folks just showing me that my knowledge and my lived experience was important to share," she said.

Community knowledge is key

Youth Climate Lab's Jasveen Brar noted that project disappointments are often due to people new to a space not taking the time to understand community needs. "[What] I like to keep in my heart when I'm present in this work is to understand the needs of your community and how you can fill those," said Brar. As for where to start, Nidhu Jagoda, [SDSN Canada's](#) Youth Coordinator said "Get involved in any capacity you can, look at what's happening in your direct communities, whether it's school, work, volunteering, and try to take small steps. From there you connect with like-minded individuals and it grows into something much bigger than yourself."

Action Steps

[10 tips from Future of Good](#) on how to shift your organization's culture needs to further embrace youth input.

[Tools for youth climate advocacy from the Youth Climate Lab](#).

Gen 2030: Youth empowering the present, shaping the future

Hosted by the
[Alberta Council for Global
Cooperation.](#)

Watch the full awards
ceremony at
[Together|Ensemble 2022.](#)

2022 SDG Youth Awards: Celebrating action for transformative change

The [Canada SDG Youth Awards](#) is a new national youth-led initiative to recognize the contributions of young people across Canada towards achieving the SDGs. The awards highlight the many ways young people aged 30-and-under are taking collective action to drive progress on the SDGs. The inaugural 2022 winners were selected by a panel of 13 youth from across Canada, and nominations were evaluated in five categories based on leadership, initiative and impact.

“You’re taking extraordinary steps to helping Canada advance the 2030 Agenda. You took it upon yourselves to be the change you want to see. Your work encourages and inspires others, including myself, Minister Gould and the Prime Minister,” said Ya’ara Saks, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development at the [Canada SDG Youth Awards ceremony](#).

The SDG Youth Awards recipients were:

- The Imagine Barrie Campaign, run by the [Simcoe County Environmental Youth Alliance](#), incorporating youth voice into the City of Barrie’s 2021 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan.
- The [Youth Policy Advocates’ Policy Corner](#), based in Turtle Island/Canada, is a local chapter of the European platform, Policy Corner.
- [Transition Space](#) is an online resource hub and community network dedicated to helping Ontario youth navigate the adult disability system.
- The SDG Impact Challenge was a solutions hackathon held virtually on March 20–21, 2021, organized by the [University of Waterloo’s SDG Student Hub](#) and Global Spark.
- The [Girls of Tomorrow Foundation’s](#) Menstrual Health Program is an initiative that increases Ugandan girls’ access to menstrual health education and supplies.
- The [Youth DO Crew](#) is a volunteer and leadership development program for high school students in the rural Albertan communities of Raymond, Taber, Coaldale, and Coalhurst.
- The Winnipeg-based [Institute for International Women’s Rights](#) fosters education, awareness and action to promote women’s human rights.
- [Lives For Literacy](#) is an international youth-led NGO working to ensure youth have the opportunity to acquire literacy skills needed to prosper academically and economically.
- [Ottawa’s RAD Cohort](#) fosters and highlights the importance of youth-led radical collaboration to achieve the SDGs, with a climate justice lens to the 2030 Agenda.
- The Halifax-based [Our Communities, Our Voices](#) program engages young Indigenous leaders to share stories, knowledge and perspectives from their communities.

Appendix 1:

Together | Ensemble 2022 Side Events

Sixteen side events featuring almost 75 speakers were hosted on day three of the Together|Ensemble 2022 conference. These events were organized by a variety of leading SDGs organizations in Canada, representing a diverse set of SDGs conversations for taking stock on progress, sharing resources and building new collaborations.

The side event recordings are all available on the [Together|Ensemble YouTube channel](#). Each side event is included in the following list and is hyperlinked to its respective recording.

Canada collaborating globally on the SDGs

Presented by Colleges and Institutes Canada

The Sustainable Development Goals Affinity Group met to share learnings from the past year of their collaboration to embed SDGs principles in their institutions' processes, practices, education and training. Under the leadership of CICan, the Group includes UNESCO-UNEVOC, INACAP-Chile, TAFE-NSW and KATTI-Kenya.

SDGs teaching community of practice

Presented by the School of Environment Enterprise and Development, University of Waterloo

SDGs-informed educators exchanged experiences and shared innovations in teaching the SDGs in Canadian colleges and universities.

Towards a collective roadmap to accelerate the SDGs in Quebec

Presented by Accélérer 2030 (French)

This event brought together groups from across the Québec SDGs ecosystem to discuss opportunities for collaborations and sharing resources to accelerate the SDGs in light of the Québec Government's new SDGs 2022-2027 strategy. Co-organizers: the EDS Institute of Laval University, IFDD and CIRODD.

Canadian Colleges and Institutes collaborating for Social ImpAct

Presented by Colleges and Institutes Canada

ImpAct is a three-year project for colleges and institutes to co-create initiatives that contribute to their shared vision of better futures, people and communities. This workshop explored how to scale ImpAct's four core initiatives: social entrepreneurship; campus sustainability; reducing barriers to inclusive access; and SDGs accord.

Appendix 1:

Together | Ensemble 2022 Side Events

Sustainable justice

Presented by the Centre for International Sustainable Development Law

This interactive roundtable explored how progress on SDG 16, especially law, justice and institutional reforms, can contribute to achieving the other SDGs.

Reimagining SDG#4: Quality education from a youth perspective

Presented by the Atlantic Council for International Cooperation

ACIC youth speakers, from past and current programs, shared their experiences, visions, and hopes about the role youth voices play in reimagining education—from peer-to-peer and hands-on learning to emphasizing traditional knowledge and lived experiences.

Reflection and brainstorming on decolonizing methodologies for sustainability

Presented by the University of Waterloo

Faculty of Environment PhD students who co-lead a faculty wide initiative to encourage critical reflection on colonized aspects of current sustainability research shared the step-by-step process they've developed to guide reflections and discussed their lessons learned.

Connecting SDGs with impact tracking

Presented by the Centre for Social Innovation

This session offered easy to apply ways to track SDGs impact and walked speakers through the importance of visually communicating impact using a Logic Model.

Just|Green|Cities: Integrating the SDGs into municipal infrastructure decisions

Presented by Partners for Action, Windfall Ecology Centre and Possibilian Ventures

In this session, speakers discussed the key insights from the new Just|Green|Cities Discussion paper. It outlines a common framework and language for integrating equity-driven decision-making into municipal infrastructure renewal to respond to the climate crisis.

Teaching and learning with the SDGs: Educators and students driving transformational change in academic settings

Presented by the British Columbia Council for International Cooperation and Canadian Environmental Network

Sustainability leaders in the education sector reflected on the challenges and opportunities they have faced in promoting the SDGs as a framework for transformational change in academic settings, and in engaging with diversity, equity and inclusion in relation to the 2030 Agenda.

Appendix 1:

Together | Ensemble 2022 Side Events

Sustainability and the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Presented by the Coalition for the Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples

A discussion on how the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Canada's commitment to implement it, should shape the interpretation and implementation of the SDGs.

Canadian leadership in SDGs in international development

Presented by the Canadian Association of International Development Professionals

A Q&A session with leaders within Global Affairs Canada regarding Canada's contribution to SDGs.

Reflecting on SDGs reporting in higher education institutions

Presented by McGill University

This panel discussed the processes, motivations and intentions behind SDGs reporting in higher education organizations. Panelists shared experiences in institutional SDGs reporting, reflections on the future of the process and ideas about how to make the exercise more effective.

Building a better future: Youth engagement for the SDGs

Presented by Employment and Social Development Canada

This event explored youth engagement on the SDGs, discussed the lessons learned and gaps identified through youth-led and youth-focused projects, and explored ways to facilitate youth engagement on the 2030 Agenda.

SDG localization and VLRs in Northern Ontario

Presented by Algoma University

This two-part event included, first, a panel presentation involving three northern Ontario municipalities localizing the SDGs and/or implementing Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs). Panel two showcased research and student work from Algoma and Lakehead Universities on considerations of SDGs implementation specific to Northern Ontario.

Sustainability storytelling

Presented by ReImagine17

An interactive event that used a mix of reflection questions, break-out room discussions and journaling activities to create a space for young changemakers to share their SDGs and justice advocacy work, and discuss their hopes, fears and dreams for the future.

Appendix 2: Program and Speakers

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

11:00 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.	Conference Opening	MC – Chúk Odenigbo , Founding Director and Director of Ancestral Services, Future Ancestors Services
11:05 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Land Acknowledgment	Hwiemtun (Fred Roland) , Cultural Ambassador for Cowichan Tribes, Director of the Sacred Cedar Centre, Duncan BC
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Opening Remarks	The Honourable Karina Gould , Minister of Families Children and Social Development of Canada Dr. Vivek Goel , President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Waterloo
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Driving Shifts for Climate Action in Canada	<i>Climate change represents one of the largest existential threats facing humankind. The symptoms-- increased precipitation, drought and extreme weather events-- are also leading to a sharp rise in "eco-anxiety". It's clear that urgent action is needed to mitigate and adapt to these threats. As climate disasters piled up in 2021, Canada's ambitions and commitments to climate action need to accelerate to better reflect the deep transformations needed.</i> <i>This panel will explore critical shifts needed across Canada to meaningfully address climate change and the window of opportunity to build a resilient, inclusive, sustainable economy.</i> Moderator – Jasveen Brar , Co-Executive Director, Youth Climate Lab Chris Hendersen , Executive Director, President, Indigenous Clean Energy, Lumos Energy Alain Bourque , Executive Director, Ouranos Janhabi Nandy , Executive Director, Climate Change Secretariat, Environment and Climate Change Canada
12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	In Conversation with Minister Gould	The Honourable Karina Gould , Minister of Families Children and Social Development of Canada MC – Chúk Odenigbo , Founding Director and Director of Ancestral Services, Future Ancestors Services Nidhu Jagoda , Network Coordinator, SDSN Youth Canada

Appendix 2: Program and Speakers

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	SDGs in Canada Roundtable: Where do the SDGs Help us Unlock Progress?	<p><i>The Sustainable Development Goals provide a powerful 'shared language' that allows a diversity of groups to compare approaches, align efforts, and monitor outcomes. No single organization, institution, or government can take this work on alone: progress will require unprecedented cross-sectoral collaboration with each segment of society having an important and unique role to play.</i></p> <p><i>This panel invites speakers from a diversity of sectors to share how the SDGs can help unlock progress in tackling Canada's biggest sustainability challenges.</i></p> <p>Moderator – Michelle Baldwin, Senior Advisor, Transformation, Community Foundations of Canada</p> <p>Denise Amyot, President and CEO, Colleges and Institutes Canada</p> <p>James Blair, Mi'kmaq Youth Activist</p> <p>Jean Martel, Sustainability Coach, Evol</p>
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Mayors Panel: Systems Change in Local Government	<p><i>Canada's municipalities stand at the forefront of major disruptions and transformations facing our communities. From adapting infrastructure needs in a changing climate to social justice reforms, and addressing the mental health crisis brought on during Covid-19, these challenges and many more are strongly connected through the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, municipal leaders must work to transform the aspiration of the SDGs into durable commitments to action.</i></p> <p><i>This panel will explore what systems change in local government can and should be and what kind of opportunities the SDGs present to unlock progress on major sustainability challenges in our communities.</i></p> <p>Moderator – Alex Lidstone, Executive Director, Climate Caucus</p> <p>Jyoti Gondek, Mayor, City of Calgary</p> <p>Berry Vrbanovic, Mayor, City of Kitchener</p> <p>Michelle Staples, Mayor, City of Duncan</p>
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	SDG Youth Awards <i>Presented by the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation</i>	<p><i>The Canada SDG Youth Awards is a new national youth-led initiative recognizing the contributions of young people across what is currently Canada towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Join us to help celebrate the many ways young people aged 30 and below are taking action and the continued progress towards the Global Goals.</i></p> <p>MC – Chúk Odenigbo, Founding Director and Director of Ancestral Services, Future Ancestors Services</p> <p>Noor Tajik, Sustainability Support, President's Office, University of Regina</p> <p>Sandra Kuhar</p>

Appendix 2: Program and Speakers

Thursday, March 3, 2022

11:00 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.	Opening and Welcome	MC – Chúk Odenigbo, Founding Director and Director of Ancestral Services, Future Ancestors Services
11:05 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Land Acknowledgment	Jean Becker, Associate Vice-President, Indigenous Relations, University of Waterloo
11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Canada's National Strategy for the SDGs	Olivier Bullion, Director SDG Unit, Employment and Social Development Canada
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	50 Years in the Environmental Movement: A Retrospective Look	<p><i>The first global environmental awakening coincided with the publication of Silent Spring in 1962 and evolved rapidly thereafter. Over the past 50 years, society has grappled with a range of challenges including insufficiently regulated pesticides, acid rain, the ozone hole, waste, and climate change. This past half-century also has witnessed many achievements in citizen awareness, organizational standards, and public policies/legislation.</i></p> <p><i>This panel invites experts to look back on what we have learned from these challenges and apply learnings to current and future problems.</i></p> <p>The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change of Canada (<i>Opening Remarks</i>)</p> <p>Moderator – Dr. Jean Andrey, Dean of the Faculty of Environment, University of Waterloo</p> <p>Anne-Josée Laquerre, Executive Director and Cofounder, Québec Net Positive</p> <p>Elizabeth May, Member of Parliament for Saanich-Gulf Islands and Parliamentary Leader of the Green Caucus, House of Commons</p> <p>Dr. Robert Gibson, Professor, School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability, University of Waterloo</p>
12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Networking Break – Presented by Community Foundations of Canada	
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	SDGs Financing: Next Steps for Building Back Better	<p><i>The impacts and risks presented by the Covid-19 pandemic reinforce the case to align more global finance in support of a more sustainable and inclusive world to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It is essential to explore more innovative financial instruments with the potential to direct private finance towards critical sustainability solutions.</i></p> <p><i>This panel brings together sustainable finance expertise to highlight notable solutions in practice and explore opportunities for innovation in the biggest gap areas for SDGs investments.</i></p> <p>Andrea Dicks, President, Community Foundations of Canada</p> <p>Moderator – Dr. Olaf Weber, Professor and University Research Chair, University of Waterloo</p> <p>Narinder Dhami, Executive Lead, New Power Labs & Managing Partner, Marigold Capital</p>

Appendix 2: Program and Speakers

Thursday, March 3, 2022

<p>2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.</p>	<p>Re-Imagining the Leave No One Behind Pledge of the 2030 Agenda</p> <p><i>Presented by the British Columbia Council for International Cooperation and VIDEA</i></p>	<p><i>The ‘Leave No One Behind’ (LNOB) pledge was adopted as a cross-cutting theme of the Sustainable Development Goals. This presents a unique opportunity to consider innovative ways that youth deconstruct, decolonize, and reimagine the LNOB pledge in their research, outreach and advocacy.</i></p> <p><i>This panel will act as a platform for powerful stories from youth in British Columbia, Canada, who face compounding and intersecting barriers which they resist, challenge, and overcome in their everyday lives. Drawing on lived experience, the speakers will advocate for policy-makers and other stakeholders to move beyond performative tokenism to provide real, effective, and meaningful opportunities for youth from marginalized and underrepresented communities to participate in policy-making processes and multi-stakeholder platforms in the context of the SDGs.</i></p> <p>Moderator – Dr. Zosa De Sas Kropiwnicki-Gruber, Policy Director and Gender Specialist, The British Columbia Council for International Cooperation</p> <p>Katelynne Herchak, Manager of Indigenous Governance and Decolonial Practices and Policy, VIDEA</p> <p>Aspen Ho, Student, Simon Fraser University</p> <p>Lilianna Coyes-Loiselle, Manager of Indigenous Youth Engagement and Reconciliation, VIDEA</p> <p>Aniqah Zowmi, Community Engagement and Gender Equality Specialist, Ontario Council for International Cooperation</p>
<p>3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.</p>	<p>A Roadmap Forward for the SDGs in Canada</p>	<p>Margaret Biggs, Matthews Fellow in Global Public Policy, Queen’s University</p> <p>John McArthur, Director of the Center for Sustainable Development, Brookings Institution</p>
<p>3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Workshop: Digital Advocacy for Climate Activism</p> <p><i>Presented by Artists for Real Climate Action</i></p>	<p><i>Hosted by the collective Artists for Real Climate Action, this workshop aims to engage more activists in producing content for use online. The workshop will explore every step of the process in creating a digital advocacy campaign for climate activism, ranging from the writers room through the actual production process including editing, branding, adding visual and or auditory elements, crowdfunding, and the process of dissemination through networking and social media.</i></p> <p><i>All speakers in this workshop are experienced creative professionals who will share their process to turn a shared passion for social change into an active campaign aimed at influencing public attitude towards proactive mitigation of the negative impacts of the climate emergency. With the current prosumer production tools and a little coaching, anyone can create polished online advocacy campaigns.</i></p> <p>Moderator – Sandy Crawley, Host/Moderator, Founding Member of Artists for Real Climate Action</p> <p>Lisa Robertson, Award-winning filmmaker, Founding Member of Artists for Real Climate Action</p> <p>Gord Rand, Actor, playwright and filmmaker, Founding Member of Artists for Real Climate Action</p> <p>Liisa Repo-Martell, Award-winning stage and screen actor, Founding Member of Artists for Real Climate Action</p>



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