

BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia was the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce a carbon tax and require greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets by legislation – 33% below 2007 levels for 2020 and 80% below 2007 levels for 2050. The carbon tax was launched together with a suite of ambitious measures outlined in B.C.’s 2008 Climate Action Plan. The carbon tax and complementary policies allowed British Columbians to reach their 2012 interim emissions reduction target of 6% below 2007 levels. In the same period, the province’s population and GDP increased, keeping pace with the Canadian average. This was a major milestone for the province and represented the first step in a longer journey toward achieving 2020 and 2050 targets. British Columbia will continue the internationally recognized leadership it began with the Climate Action Plan in 2008 and is currently developing a Climate Leadership Plan to keep British Columbia on track to achieve the 2020 and 2050 legislated greenhouse gas reduction targets, and support a growing economy.

The starting position:

Population 4, 582, 600 (2013)
GDP \$50, 121.00 CAD per capita (2013)
Country Canada
GHG emissions: 61.5 million tonnes CO₂e (2012)

Specific Actions and Commitments

Carbon Tax

British Columbia’s revenue-neutral carbon tax remains the most comprehensive and ambitious of its kind in North America, establishing a model for other jurisdictions around the world. British Columbia’s carbon tax applies to virtually all fossil fuels, including: gasoline, diesel, natural gas, coal, propane and home heating fuel. The carbon tax started at a rate based on \$10 per tonne of carbon-dioxide equivalent emissions, and rose \$5 each year over four years, reaching \$30 per tonne in 2012. The revenue generated by this tax is returned to individuals and businesses through reductions in other taxes. Since the introduction of the tax, independent research has shown that fuel use per capita has fallen 17.4% between 2008 and 2012. British Columbia remains committed to a strong price on carbon, and works to encourage other jurisdictions to adopt similar measures.

Clean Power

The Province has legislation requiring 93% or more clean and renewable electricity generation. In November 2013, the Province approved BC Hydro’s Integrated Resource Plan that shows that BC Hydro, the largest electricity utility in the province, is at 96% renewable electricity generation. There is currently no coal power generation in British Columbia. British Columbia’s *Energy Plan: A Vision for Clean Energy Leadership*, set out a policy objective to require zero greenhouse gas emissions from any coal thermal electricity facilities in British Columbia. In December 2014, the Province made a final investment decision to develop Site C, a 1,100 MW hydro-electric facility on the Peace River—the third

facility on the Peace River, demonstrating British Columbia's commitment to clean power. Energy utilities are required to pursue demand-side measures (DSM) up to the cost of new clean generation resources before purchasing new generation. BC Hydro is required to meet 66% of new demand through DSM by 2020, and BC Hydro's Integrated Resource Plan shows BC Hydro plans to meet 78% of new demand through DSM.

Energy Efficiency

British Columbia sets energy performance standards to meet targets for market transformation of 66% displacement of electricity demand growth and 20% reduction in energy in houses by 2020. British Columbia recently adopted energy efficiency standards aligned with national and regional leaders for small battery charging systems (e.g., cordless phones, cell phones, power tools, laptops and golf carts), clothes washers, dishwashers and residential gas-fired furnaces. Net present-value energy savings at the provincial level are estimated to be \$157 million CAD. Twenty-nine per cent of LEED Gold building projects registered in Canada since 2007 are located in British Columbia, and all new public sector buildings must be built to LEED-gold standard or better. British Columbia was the first jurisdiction in Canada to adopt both the new National Building Code energy-efficiency requirements for housing and small buildings and the National Energy Code for Buildings, which applies to large buildings (2013).

Transportation

By building the key infrastructure, increasing the adoption of cleaner fuels and encouraging the transition to clean energy vehicles, British Columbia is moving toward building a transportation system that reduces distances driven and is powered by clean energy.

Clean Energy Vehicles

Actions in every sector have helped people, communities and businesses reduce their emissions and their costs. For example, in 2011, the British Columbia government launched its \$14.3 million CAD Clean Energy Vehicle (CEV) Program to provide incentives for eligible clean energy vehicles and deployment of charging-point infrastructure for these vehicles. The CEV Program has provided British Columbians with more affordable clean energy transportation solutions, and British Columbia leads Canada in clean energy vehicle sales per capita and has the largest electric vehicle charging and hydrogen fueling networks in Canada. In 2015, British Columbia renewed the CEV Program to continue to encourage adoption of clean energy vehicles.

Low-Carbon Fuel Standards

Adopted in 2008, British Columbia's Renewable and Low Carbon Fuel Requirements Regulation has helped reduce the province's reliance on non-renewable fuels and the environmental impact of transportation fuels. This regulation enables the Province to set benchmarks for the amount of renewable fuel in British Columbia's transportation fuel blends, reduce the carbon intensity of transportation fuels and meet its commitment to adopt a low-carbon fuel standard. Currently, the regulation targets a 10% decrease in carbon intensity of transport fuels sold in British Columbia by 2020, and 5% renewable content in gasoline (4% in diesel).

Alternative Fuels

The Province implemented the Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Clean Energy) Regulation in 2012 which permits utilities to offer incentives for the purchase of natural gas vehicles and to make investments in liquefied natural gas and compressed natural gas fuelling infrastructure in sectors such as medium and heavy duty on-road transportation, marine, mining and locomotive support.

Cleanest LNG Facilities in the World

The British Columbia government had committed to having the cleanest LNG facilities in the world, while maintaining its leadership in clean energy and climate action. The Province has implemented a benchmark approach with the use of offsets and technology fund contributions as flexible means to achieve compliance. Facilities must reduce the intensity of their emissions against a standard that outperforms the cleanest LNG facilities in the world today.

Commitment to Leadership in Government Operations

Each year since 2010, British Columbia's public sector has achieved carbon neutrality, a first for any province or state in North America. Through the Carbon Neutral Government program, the development of British Columbia-based offsets has meant this achievement places British Columbia on the leading edge of growth in the clean-energy and clean-technology sectors. Provincially owned or leased buildings must be LEED gold or equivalent. The Carbon Neutral Capital Program helps public schools, universities, colleges and hospitals reduce energy costs and use innovative clean technologies. Government buildings are able to showcase examples of clean-energy solutions for hundreds of thousands of British Columbians when they access government services, go to work or attend school.

Local Communities

British Columbia can only meet its greenhouse gas reduction commitments with the help of its cities and communities. 95% of local governments have signed a voluntary agreement with the provincial government through the Climate Action Charter. By signing the Climate Action Charter, local governments commit to: working toward carbon neutrality in their corporate operations; measure their community energy and emissions; and create complete, compact, more energy efficient rural and urban communities. To support their commitments, local government signatories that report on their progress each year are granted the same amount paid in carbon taxes on their corporate operations.