



# Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act

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The *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act* enshrines in legislation the Government of Canada's commitment to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and provides a framework of accountability and transparency to deliver on it.

The Act establishes a legally binding process to set five-year national emissions-reduction targets as well as develop credible, science-based emissions-reduction plans to achieve each target.

It establishes the 2030 greenhouse gas emissions target as Canada's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement emissions reductions of 40-45 percent below 2005 levels by 2030.

The Act also establishes a requirement to set national emissions reduction targets for 2035, 2040, and 2045, ten years in advance. Each target will require credible, science-based emissions reduction plans to achieve it.

Each emissions reduction plan must contain:

- the greenhouse gas emissions target for the year to which the plan relates;
- a summary of Canada's most recent greenhouse gas emissions inventory (National Inventory Report) and information relevant to the plan that Canada submitted under its international climate change commitments;
- a description of the key emissions reduction measures the Government of Canada intends to take to achieve the target;
- a description of how Canada's international commitments on climate change are taken into account in the plan;
- a description of any relevant sectoral strategies;
- a description of emissions reduction strategies for federal government operations;
- a projected timetable for implementation;
- greenhouse gas emissions projections resulting from the measures and strategies; and
- a summary of key cooperative measures or agreements with provinces, territories and other governments in Canada.

Each emissions reduction plan must also explain how the measures and strategies outlined in the plan will contribute to Canada achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. When developing an emissions reduction plan, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change must provide the provinces and territories, Indigenous Peoples, the Net-Zero Advisory Body and interested persons with the opportunity to make submissions.

## 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan

The 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan will outline how Canada will achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions of 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2030. This plan will also include an interim greenhouse gas objective for 2026, which will act as a midpoint check-in between now and 2030.

The Act requires the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to establish the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan within six months of royal assent, with the authority to extend this deadline by ninety days.

Engagement is an important part of the collaborative approach the Government of Canada is taking to address climate change. To provide partners and stakeholders with as much time as possible to make their submissions to the plan, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change has extended the deadline to establish the 2030 emissions reduction plan to March 29, 2022.

## Accountability and reporting

The Act holds the Government of Canada to account by requiring the Minister of Environment and Climate Change to report to Parliament with respect to each target.

For each target, the Act requires:

- an emissions reduction plan outlining the measures and strategies the Government of Canada will take to achieve the target;
- a progress report to update on the ongoing implementation of the emissions reduction plan; and,
- an assessment report to indicate whether a target has been met and to assess the effectiveness of the measures and strategies described in the associated emissions reduction plan.

In the event of a missed target, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change must include in the assessment report for that target the reasons why Canada failed to meet the target and describe the actions the Government will take or is taking to address the failure.

In addition to the accountability provided by setting targets and planning in an open, consultative process, the Act includes specific measures for third parties to hold the Government to account.

The Act establishes a Net-Zero Advisory Body in legislation, which will provide independent advice on targets and emissions reduction plans, including measures and sectoral strategies that the Government of Canada could implement.

The Act requires that the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development examine and report on the Government's implementation of climate-change mitigation measures at least once every five years. This measure will ensure rigorous oversight of the Government's progress toward implementation.

The Act requires the Minister of Finance, in cooperation with the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, to publish an annual report outlining key measures that federal departments and crown corporations have taken to manage the financial risks and opportunities related to climate change.

The Act also requires a comprehensive review of the Act five years after its coming into force.

The *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act* became law on June 29, 2021.

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