



GVAT Climate Justice Survey

Responses from **Nick Loughton, Green Party, Victoria**

1) The UN, in February, 2021 declared a “code red alert” for the planet, warning that the current plans to cut emissions are not enough to curb a global rise in temperatures.

What immediate changes to federal policy would you endorse to address this emergency?

I would immediately end subsidies to the fossil fuel industry, halt construction of TMX and other harmful pipelines and vote to invest in a rapid transition to renewables. We need immediate climate action and parties that flip-flop on pipelines or pursue weak climate targets are not going to rise to the challenge of this moment and save our planet. The Greens are the only party with a climate plan to avert catastrophe. All other parties fall short.

2) Wildfires are increasing in intensity, frequency and size, threatening forests, homes and businesses, including in this region.

What do you see as the causes and solutions? What will your party do about it?

Inaction on climate change and unsustainable forestry practices have led to an increase in wildfires across the country. We need to follow the experts and Indigenous communities that have been successfully managing the landscape for thousands of years. Creating a more sustainable forest industry can include increasing diversity in our forests and ending the spraying of glyphosate that eliminates deciduous trees. These trees are fire resistant, acting as fire breaks. Spraying our forests increases the production of spruce and pine in monocultures. We should also change stocking standards to increase diversity in climate resistant larch and Douglas fir.

3) Canada’s forests have become net emitters of GHGs.

Will your party count GHG emissions from forests in its overall climate accounting formula? How will your party reduce emissions from forests?

Yes, our party would include forests in our overall climate calculations and we would stop harvesting old growth trees that are emitters of carbon when cut down. We would also work with experts to fund research for carbon capturing programs. This would include the creation of

protected areas with both carbon capture and Indigenous-led old growth forests. Programs like this already exist in some parts of British Columbia. The forest industry has researched how to reduce emissions in many areas, we just need the political will.

4) In the pandemic and during WWII, Canadian governments shut down things that interfered with achieving essential goals. In July, the Capital Regional District (CRD) board unanimously approved a groundbreaking new policy on transportation prioritization in the region, which calls for shifting federal and provincial funding from highway expansion to public transit, walking, cycling and rolling.¹ The 2016 Pan Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate change similarly calls for shifting funds from urban highway expansion to public transit and active transportation.

Will your party stop funding urban highway expansion and instead fund public transit, walking, cycling and rolling infrastructure? Will you personally speak out in support of the CRD's position against highway expansion?

Funding public transit, walking, cycling and rolling infrastructure is crucial to creating accessible, green cities. We are in a climate crisis fueled in part by transportation emissions. We need to be using every tool in the toolbox to create cities that are not increasing our GHG emissions exponentially. Maintaining highway safety is important. If highway expansions are necessary for safety, then we would make sure the decision is financially sound and what is best for the safety of the community.

5) During the pandemic, the federal government has provided temporary operating funding for public transit. In Canada, federal transit funding has been almost exclusively restricted to capital expenses in the past. Federal operating funding would allow transit agencies to reduce fares and increase bus service, improve HandyDART paratransit service, and provide affordable public highway bus service between communities (such as between Victoria and Port Hardy as well as to smaller communities such as Port Renfrew / Pacheedaht).

Does your party support generous permanent ongoing funding for public transit operations?

Yes our party supports funding public transit operations and we believe they are crucial for accessibility of all citizens. Rural communities are often left out of the picture and must be accessible. In Victoria, federal investment can fund expanded bus systems and a bus rapid transit network. Funding transit services allows people to prioritize their families.

6) The pandemic exposed Canada's vulnerability in the global food system. We rely heavily on global supply chains run by transnational mega corporations. Consumer demand for local food production is growing. Strengthening local, diverse agri-food systems will be key to increasing food security and our resilience and could reduce GHG pollution.

¹ www.capitaldaily.ca/news/opinion-crd-must-push-province-to-fund-rapid-bus-instead-of-expanding-highways

How should the federal government support local and diversified farming in Canada and lower GHG emissions from food and agriculture?

Supporting small scale, local farmers is the most sustainable way we can move forward with our agriculture industry in Canada. We need to prioritize Canadian-grown food and make it affordable and accessible to everyone, not sold for massive markups or only accessible at small markets. The federal government can create a more robust grown in Canada program, similar to the Grown in BC program. We need to elect more MPs that understand the importance of locally grown food and not those that are career politicians or those catering to large agrifood monopolies like Bayer.

7) Emergency mobilizations require social cohesion, but inequality undermines such collaboration. The COVID-19 pandemic has further lifted the veil on the inequities in our society.

How do you propose to tackle the climate crisis and these inequities at the same time? One required element of doing so is referred to as Just Transition – what is the role of the federal government in ensuring no one is left behind in the grand decarbonization transition before us?

We cannot transition without a just transition plan and the Green party has one that leaves no one behind. To transition without a plan would further divide our country and increase inequities leaving many people without jobs, but the good news is there are more jobs in the renewable energy sector than the oil and gas industry, we just need the people and the political will to prioritize it.

8) The path forward has to be one of true cooperation and partnership, and one that honours and respects Indigenous title and rights. We need a path forward that seeks to make right the injustices of the past and fundamentally breaks with the colonial practices that have marked so much of our politics and economic development for centuries.

What are you hearing from Indigenous communities about the climate crisis? How can you and the federal government walk a path forward on climate that respects and honours Indigenous title and rights?

Indigenous people are the original caretakers of this land and we need to be creating climate action plans that prioritize the rights of Indigenous people. For far too long decisions about turtle island have been made without the people who lived here first and that needs to end. Indigenous communities are saying they want to prioritize climate action in a way that supports their communities such as renewable energy projects or projects that focus on locality. Indigenous tourism is increasing across the province and this can be a great way to protect and conserve land while supporting the local community. Ultimately, if we are not respecting Indigenous rights and title through policy creation, we are failing. We need to uphold UNDRIP and the 94 Truth and reconciliation commission calls to action.

9) During World War Two, in order to meet the military production and social needs of its population, Canada created 28 new crown corporations. Within two years, Canada increased

manufacturing of aircraft 25 fold. Before the war, shipbuilders numbered only 2000, at the end of the war, there were 30,000 shipbuilders.

Given the scaling up that is necessary to combat the climate crisis, how can the federal government create new institutions to get the job done and/or leverage existing institutions?

The Green Party has been the only party that has advocated for a war-time response to the climate crisis. Seth Klein's book A Good War has been the play book for many Green elected officials across the globe. If we do not at least create climate targets that meet the Paris agreement, which the Greens are the only party that do, we will not have a future to plan for. The federal government has a huge role in changing our entire direction as a country. If we elect Green MP's we will mobilize our resources to create a war time response focused on drastically cutting our emissions, investing in renewable energy that will create millions of jobs and redefine how our economy works for Canadians.