

Green Party Response: submitted by Richard Dunn, candidate in Moncton-Riverview-Dieppe – Open Letter to NB Candidates, Federal Party Leaders, on Nature Protection and Climate Change

1. What will you do to protect wetlands, mature forests, and coastal habitats, which are essential to protecting our communities from flooding, ice storms, sea level rise and other adverse effects of climate change and rising carbon emissions?

The biodiversity and ecosystems we depend on are degrading rapidly, the trajectory we are on is not sustainable, and our window of opportunity to change course is closing in the next decade. Biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation are largely a result of changes in land use, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution and invasive species.

Canada has a global responsibility to conserve nature due to our high standard of living as well as our abundant natural resources. Global resources are unevenly distributed - Canada stewards 20% of the earth's wild forests, 24% of its wetlands and almost one third of its stored land carbon.

A Green government will protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems. We will:

- Implement Canada's international commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity and follow-up protocols;
- Expedite recovery plans and implement national and international commitments to reverse species loss;
- Initiate a national urban biodiversity regeneration strategy to expand greenspace, address environmental racism and protect urban-sensitive species such as birds;
- Enhance federal science capacity to inventory and prioritize ecosystems, species at risk, and invasive species.

2. What will you do to ensure the federal government achieves its commitment to protect 25 percent of land by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030?

A Green government will protect a minimum of 30 per cent of freshwaters and lands in each Canadian ecosystem by 2030 and 50 per cent by 2050, prioritizing carbon-rich ecosystems.

We will halt habitat destruction by 2030 and restore the most negatively affected ecosystems such as wetlands by 2050, prioritizing carbon-rich ecosystems.

3. What will you do to ensure the federal government achieves its commitment to protect 25 percent of oceans by 2025 and 30 percent by 2030?

A Green government will lead the way towards:

- Transition to sustainable seafood: work with Indigenous and provincial governments to phase out open net-pen finfish aquaculture in Pacific waters by 2025 and all Canadian waters by 2030 while supporting a just transition of impacted workers, and incentivizing the move to land-based closed containment facilities.
- Reducing threats to ocean ecosystems, including supporting a moratorium on deep seabed mining at least until 2030
- Protecting and restoring coastal and marine areas, and supporting marine nature based climate solutions

4. How will you support environmental organizations to help you achieve Canada's commitments to land and ocean protection?

Environmental organizations are the experts in this field and are key to lead the fight against the climate emergency, providing good advice for government consideration, and sustaining advocacy efforts to get the work done. I strongly believe in collaboration, without it, we will not be able to win this fight for survival and ensure that our children have a future. We need to work together and pool our resources, both across party lines and across the three levels of government. If elected to represent the region in Ottawa, I will be consulting the experts to learn more about the challenges we face, the solutions we can implement and the best way to achieve positive and sustainable results.

If elected, the Green party will scale-up funding for nature-based solutions to the climate crisis.

5. What will you do to empower and incentivize New Brunswick landowners to become involved in advocating and managing for conservation and protected areas as a part of community climate response?

Again collaboration is key as well as education. We need to educate the population on the importance of being involved in the conservation of our land. People also need their government's support to do so. We must stem the onslaught of foreign buyers who are scooping up our land in unprecedented buying sprees. This not only poses challenges for our sovereignty, but creates artificial market conditions and further endangers the surrounding environment.

The Green Party has already pledge to help individuals to include fire mitigation subsidies to owners of rural properties, allowing them to better manage the health of their forests. The Party also promises to protect old growth forests by working with the provinces and First Nations to put an immediate halt to the logging of endangered old growth ecosystems.

Of course, New Brunswick has its own issues with private land ownership that will have to be addressed. If I am elected MP, I will be sitting down with all concerned parties to discuss these issues and find the best solutions to move forward.

6. What will you do to further the Canada Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly the empowerment of Indigenous Nations in environmental conservation?

The Green Party of Canada recognizes the ongoing leadership, resistance and resilience of Indigenous Peoples in the face of systemic oppression and intergenerational trauma. A Green government will support all Indigenous Peoples' efforts to emerge from the positions of disadvantage in which Canada has placed them, including support for cultural revitalization and healing.

We reaffirm our support for the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Greens are committed to implementing UNDRIP for those First Nations who support it. We believe that every nation has a right to decide who will speak on its behalf, and the government of Canada must be led by Indigenous Peoples with respect to designing any UNDRIP legislation. We heard from several First Nations who told us that they had not been consulted on Bill C-15.

A Green government will ensure that all First Nations are thoroughly involved in the development and design of UNDRIP implementation legislation. Greens would also ensure that any Nations who do not support UNDRIP would not have it imposed upon them.

The Green Party of Canada is committed to Reconciliation, Nation-to-Nation engagement and self-determination for Indigenous Peoples, and believes that any meaningful path towards reconciliation in Canada must ensure that First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation leaders are leading the decisions about the future of their people, their lands and their territories.

7. What will you do to invest in Indigenous-led land-use planning in New Brunswick, including the establishment of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas and their stewardship by Indigenous Guardians, Indigenous-led efforts to restore and steward species-at-risk and habitat, and recognize and respect Indigenous knowledge in all aspects of nature conservation?

A Green government will support Indigenous-led protected and conservation areas and fund stewardship of these lands and waters by Indigenous guardians. We will also include Indigenous Peoples and their governance systems in all aspects of site selection, management, and decision-making around economic development within the marine and freshwater realms.