

THE 2000 FEDERAL ELECTION PLATFORMS – ENVIRONMENT REPORT CARD

	Green Tax Reform	Endangered Species	Parks	Toxics and Pesticides	Air and Climate Change	Water	Environmental Accountability	GREEN GRADE
Liberal Party	F	F	B+	D	C	C	F	D+
Canadian Alliance	F	C+	F	F	D	D-	F	D-
Progressive Conservative Party	A	B+	F	B	B	A-	F	C+
New Democratic Party	A	A	A	C+	B+	B+	B+	B+
Bloc Québécois	F	D-	F	B+	C	D	F	D

Explanation of Grading System

The election platforms of the 5 main political parties were graded against the platform of GreenElection.org, which was developed in consultation with a number of environmental organizations around the country.

Generally parties were given some points for addressing an issue, but received higher grades for a more detailed proposal. If an issue was not mentioned, parties received an "F" for "Failed to Address".

Calculations for the Green Grade were as follows:
Failed to Address = 0 points, D= 1, C = 2, B = 3, A = 4.

*Note: Parties were graded on their platforms **only**, not their prior statement or actions.*

The Election Platform Report Card was produced on behalf of Sierra Legal Defence Fund, Sierra Club of Canada, WildCanada.net, Canadian Environmental Law Association, IFAW Canada and Greenpeace Canada.

This document is available on the following web site: www.sierraclub.ca/national/green-election/

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Green Tax Reform

Liberal Party	No mention of green tax reform. F.
Canadian Alliance	No mention of green tax reform. F.
Progressive Conservative Party	Would implement financial incentives and preferential tax treatment to encourage industries to set better standards for pollution as well as for renewable sources of energy. Would encourage drivers to purchase low sulfur fuels by reducing the federal excise tax. A
New Democratic Party	Would change the federal tax system so that tax policies encourage a more sustainable economy, ie reduce taxes on sustainable activities and increase them on unsustainable activities. Would provide a tax benefit for employers providing public transit passes to employees. A
Bloc Québécois ¹	No mention of green tax reform. F.

Endangered Species ²

Liberal Party	The Liberals, second attempt at endangered species legislation, Bill C-33, died on the Order Paper when the election was called. That Bill was very weak. The Liberals do not commit to re-introduce legislation. Platform discusses only past actions and funding; it makes no new commitments. F
Canadian Alliance	Would protect endangered species primarily through voluntary measures including stewardship programmes and stakeholder consensus, but would support regulation to protect habitat with fair market-value compensation where voluntary measures prove inadequate. No mention of science-based listing of endangered species. C+
Progressive Conservative Party	Would immediately introduce legislation to protect endangered species including a science-based listing process, cooperative initiatives, and compensation where appropriate. Vague on habitat protection. B+
New Democratic Party	Would implement legislation to protect endangered species and their habitat in cooperation with other governments. Identification of species at risk would be done by independent scientists. A
Bloc Québécois	Believes that the role of the federal government is to work with the provinces to coordinate initiatives. Asserts that habitat protection is a provincial responsibility. Does not propose that the federal government reintroduce its legislation. D-

¹ The Bloc Québécois, because it does not aim to form the government of Canada, does not make policy commitments except to say how it will pressure the federal government to do or not to do a certain thing.

² This section addresses parties' commitments to endangered species legislation, not general initiatives on ecosystem health. The NDP, the Progressive Conservatives and the Canadian Alliance all make mention of a sustainable fishery, and the NDP also speaks of sustainable forestry. Only the Progressive Conservatives and the NDP provide meaningful detail as to how they would work to make these industries sustainable.

Parks

Liberal Party	Would complete the National Parks System by creating new parks. Would provide additional funding to Parks Canada. No mention of marine parks. B+
Canadian Alliance	No mention of parks. F
Progressive Conservative Party	No mention of parks. F
New Democratic Party	Would expand marine protected areas and national parks system as a whole and would protect the parks system from commercial development. A
Bloc Québécois	No mention of parks. F

Toxics and Pesticides

Liberal Party	Would significantly increase research into the effects of toxins on health, and then assign responsibility for following up on problems identified by the research. No mention of regulation of toxics or pesticides. Vague. D
Canadian Alliance	No mention of toxics and pesticides. F
Progressive Conservative Party	Would table stronger pesticide legislation. Would initiate educational programs to inform Canadians of the risks of pesticide use, aiming to reduce use of cosmetic pesticides. Would work with industry to set targets to reduce emissions of pollutants most dangerous to human health, especially children,s health. Would ensure greater public consultation in the setting of biotechnology policy and regulations. Would work toward a law requiring the labelling of genetically modified foodstuffs. B
New Democratic Party	Would institute agreements giving environmental protection precedence over trade agreements in trans-boundary movement of hazardous goods and wastes. No mention of pesticides or regulation of toxics, but would clean up toxic "hot spots" like the Syndey Tar Ponds and the Great Lakes. C+
Bloc Québécois	Proposes that the federal government give effect to the recommendations of the <i>Making Right Choices Report</i> (Parliament Environment Committee, 2000) regarding pesticides, which includes a recommendation for stronger legislation. Proposes that the federal government: increase its research on pesticides, reevaluate 6000 registered pesticides, clean up toxic sites, and create a list of companies who have voluntarily eliminated their use of toxic substances. Would encourage the federal government to cease importation of plutonium and to provide Russia and the United States technical aid to immobilize plutonium stocks within their borders. Favours the federal government signing and ratifying the Cartegena Protocol on bio-security. B+

Air and Climate Change

Liberal Party	Would continue to support the development of cleaner engines and fuels, strengthen emission standards for vehicles, and greatly reduce sulfur in diesel fuel. Would promote increased energy efficiency, fund the development of new energy technologies, increase the use of renewable energy and encourage consumers to buy more energy efficient products by providing information and setting product standards. Would work with industry to ensure smog levels in cities are reduced. No mention of public transit. Vague. C
Canadian Alliance	No mention of air or climate change specifically; but generally would work with provinces in setting national standards and backing up standards with penalties. Would encourage business and industry to develop conservation solutions and would recognize those who deliver improvements in environmentally efficient production. Vague. D.
Progressive Conservative Party	Would introduce a Safe Air Act legislating acceptable quality standards for air emissions. Would work with industry to achieve binding agreements on emissions. Would implement financial incentives to reduce pollution. To address climate change, would lead by example in green power procurement, including energy efficient retrofits for federal buildings and would introduce preferential tax treatment for renewable sources of energy. No mention of public transit. B
New Democratic Party	Would set up a "Clean Air Fund" to back community-based initiatives, support expansion of public transit and put mandatory limits on sulfur content in gasoline. Would implement comprehensive, enforceable and understandable standards for air quality. Would renew efforts to achieve short term reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Would increase research and development funding for green technology. Would create a Green Jobs Fund to provide loan security for the cost of making buildings more energy efficient and to make greater use of alternative energy sources. Good marks for supporting local initiatives and public transit. B+
Bloc Québécois	Proposes that the federal government redirect the annual nuclear subsidy toward renewable energy. Proposes that Canada respect its international obligations in respect of climate change and supports additional funding toward that end. Supports plan for expanding efforts to reduce air pollution. C

Water

Liberal Party	Would fund improvements to municipal water and wastewater systems, conduct research on contaminants, and create a building code for municipal water and waste water facilities. No mention of bulk water exports. No commitment to enforceable water standards. Vague. C
Canadian Alliance	No mention of water specifically; but would generally work with provinces in setting national standards and backing up standards with penalties. D-
Progressive Conservative Party	Would introduce a Safe Water Act to ensure standards in drinking water. Would legalize Health Canada,s guidelines for drinking water, channel investment into municipal infrastructures to ensure safe drinking water and more effective waste management systems, and would seek to harmonize standards on activities near municipal water sources. No mention of bulk water exports. A-
New Democratic Party	Would set up a Clean Water Fund to upgrade municipal water quality. Would develop and implement a national water strategy including safe drinking water standards and a ban on bulk water exports. B+
Bloc Québécois	Proposes that the federal government address the problems of erosion of the St. Lawrence bank. Opposed to bulk water exports. D

Environmental Accountability

Liberal Party	No mention of environmental accountability. F
Canadian Alliance	No mention of environmental accountability. F
Progressive Conservative Party	No mention of environmental accountability. F
New Democratic Party	Would develop an environmental Bill of Rights to ensure the right of all Canadians to a safe and healthy environment. Would ensure that a "green screen" integrates environmental criteria into all federal decision-making. No mention of other means of increasing environmental accountability (eg strengthening the role of the Environment Commissioner and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.) B+
Bloc Québécois	No mention of environmental accountability. F