

Real People, Real Change: Strategies for Just Energy Transitions Case of Canada

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What is a just transition?

- JT is context-dependent: it is a shared, negotiated vision and process supported by a set of guiding principles
- JT mentioned as “imperatives” in the Paris Agreement
- ILO’s *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* focus on workers in all sectors
- International Trade Unions Confederation (ITUC) and other organisations stress the importance of social dialogue in the JT process
- Different groups interpret JT differently



What do we mean by Just Energy Transitions”?



- Energy transitions are about people who make decisions that lead to transitions and are ultimately affected by them.
- IISD’s “*Real People, Real Change: Strategic for just energy transitions*” stresses the commonality of approaches and lessons learned from energy transitions for protecting both fossil fuel industry workers and fossil fuel consumers.



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<https://www.iisd.org/library/real-people-real-change-strategies-just-energy-transitions>



IISD's “Four Cs” Framework

Context (e.g.)

- Energy sector structure and ownership
- Resource endowment
- Employment
- International commitments
- Beliefs and values

Champions (e.g.)

- Activists
- Politicians
- Trade unions
- Government officials
- Industry
- Broad-based consultations with stakeholders

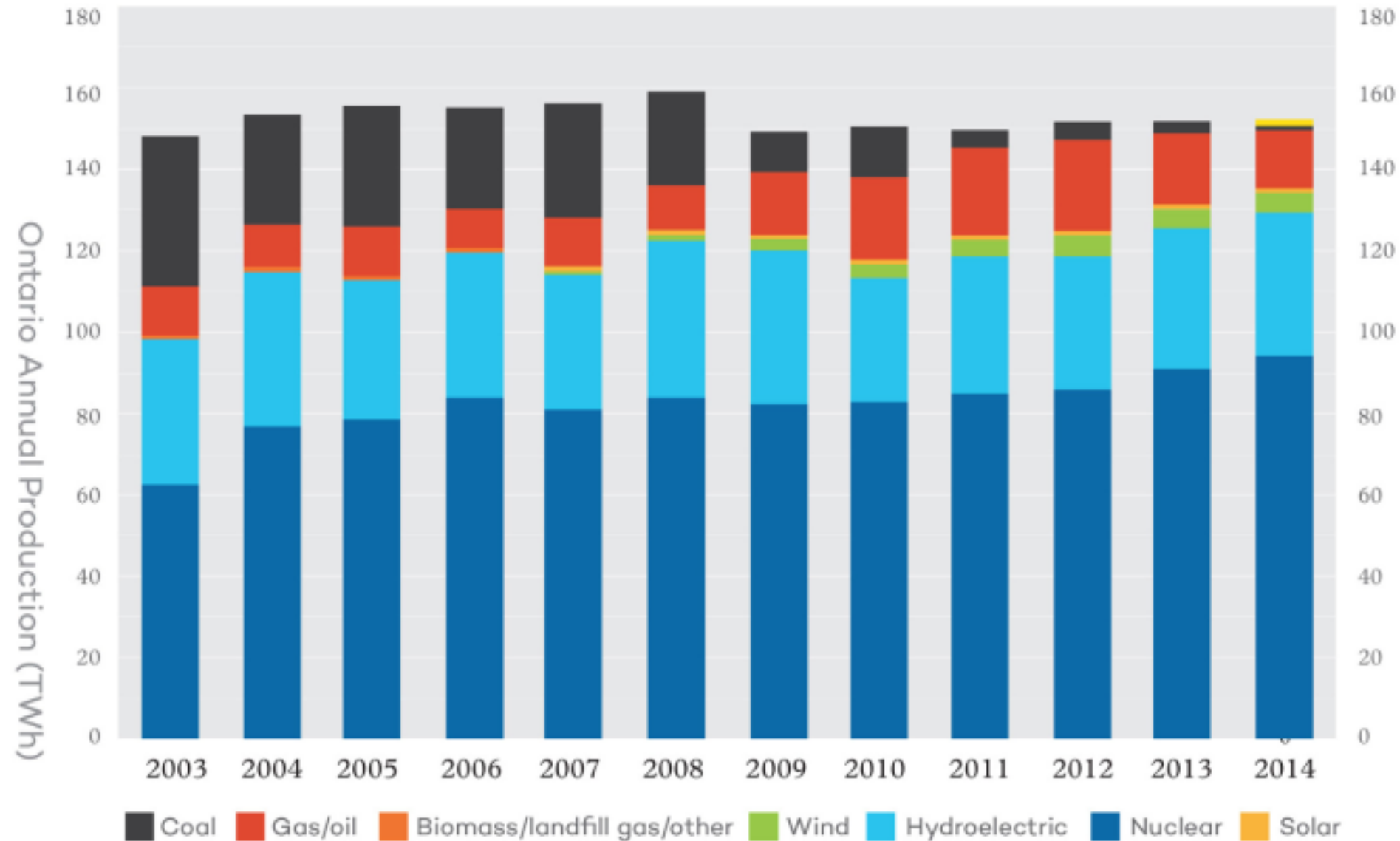
Case for Reform

- Health
- Climate change
- Energy security
- Jobs
- Alternative solutions

Complementary and Just Transition Policies

- Social protection
- Retraining, early retirement and new jobs
- Targeted support to consumers
- Support to renewable energy and energy efficiency

Ontario's coal power phase-out



Alberta's coal power phase-out



- In November 2015, the Canadian province of Alberta committed to a phase-out of coal power by 2030:
=> retirement of over 40% of installed capacity and the de facto phase-out of local thermal coal mines.
 - Coal phase-out is part of the province's wider Climate Leadership Plan. Funding for 1 and 2 comes from carbon tax revenue.
 - Alberta's government relies on three pillars:
 1. CAD 1.1 billion payout to coal power companies under Off-Coal Agreements;
 2. CAD 45 million has been allocated in programming to transition coal workers and communities
 3. Launched a new electricity market design to bring in replacement power.
- => This gained the support of organized labour organisations, power companies, public health advocates, environmental non-governmental organizations and the federal government

Decision of the federal government on coal power phase-out by 2029



MAP OF COAL-FIRED GENERATING STATIONS AND THERMAL COAL MINES IN CANADA



GENERATING STATION



THERMAL COAL MINE

Alberta

- 1 Battle River Generating Station
- 2 Genesis Generating Station
- 3 H.R. Wilson Generating Station
- 4 Keokuk Generating Station
- 5 Sheerness Generating Station
- 6 Sundance Generating Station
- 7 Coal Valley Mine
- 8 Genesis Mine
- 9 Highgate Mine
- 10 Palmsworth Mine
- 11 Sheerness Mine

Saskatchewan

- 12 Boundary Dam Power Station
- 13 Poplar River Power Station
- 14 Shend Power Station
- 15 Esauville Mine
- 16 Poplar River Mine

New Brunswick



- 17 Belledune Generating Station
- 18 Colleen Cove Generating Station

Nova Scotia



- 19 Lingar Generating Station
- 20 Point Aconi Generating Station
- 21 Point Tupper Generating Station
- 22 Trenton Generating Station
- 23 Dunkin Mine
- 24 Sackville Mine



Example of the Canadian Just Transition Task Force for Coal Power Workers and Communities



- Task Force was launched by Environment and Climate Change Minister Catherine McKenna on April 25, 2018
- 11 member task force representing Labour, Industry, ENGOs, Academics
- Mandated to engage stakeholders and offer suggestions on: scale and impacts of coal phase out; Opportunities to transition workers and communities; leveraging funds to support transition; and gaps in policy and programs to support transition
- Visited 15 communities, met with 80 stakeholders, hosted 8 public engagement sessions across the country; toured five generating stations, two coal mines and one port.
 - Key approach in listening intently to stakeholder concerns and identifying potential responses - workers and communities must be at the heart of decision-making

Key recommendations of the Task Force



On 10th of March 2019 TF released report with their findings recommends federal spending “well into the hundreds of millions of dollars” on a long list of new infrastructure, financial and jobs programs, employment training and other solutions. Examples of recommendations:

- "pension bridging program" for workers who will retire earlier than planned due to the phase-out;
- a jobs program to provide affected workers with employment insurance benefits of up to 75 per cent of income for two years, and wage top-ups of up to 90 per cent of previously-earned income for up to two years for workers that get lower-wage jobs;
- establishment of locally-run transition centres are an important resource, serving as a hub where information on re-employment and skills training can be shared, connections can be made and education and financial services offered
- Other recommendations include funding for continuing private healthcare coverage, for education and skills building and to offset the expense of travel or relocating for new employment.

Conclusion: How to Enable Just Transitions?

- Communicating the right message to the right audience can create buy-in from the broad base of stakeholders.
- Transparency and consultation ensure decisions are not taken behind “closed doors”.
- Understanding the local context is key: there is no blueprint to a Just Transition.
- It is important to mainstream Just Transition in other economic sectors as well.



Thank you for your attention!

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#JustTransition #CoalTransition #FossilFuelSubsidies



Further reading from IISS

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