

# Environmentally-Friendly Energy Sector is Possible for Canadians

*Majority says Alberta's Oil Sands have benefitted Canada overall.*

[CALGARY – Oct. 9, 2008] – The majority of Canadians think it is possible to have a strong oil and gas industry while at the same time protecting the environment and want the government to introduce new regulations to this effect, a new Corus Radio / Angus Reid poll has found.

In the online survey of 1,005 adult Canadians, more than half of respondents think of pollution in general and global warming when they ponder the environment. Around two-in-five Canadians also mention waste management, not recycling, water pollution and the presence of toxic substances in the environment.

When asked to identify energy issues, most respondents (58%) talk about fuel prices. Over half of Canadians (52%) also mention the need to diversify into alternative sources of energy such as solar or wind power, and 45 per cent refer to the high price of oil in international markets. Other themes mentioned are the cost of utilities (41%) and energy shortages (28%).

Respondents were asked to assess the impact of the energy sector in Canada in general terms. Overall, 52 per cent of respondents say the energy sector makes a positive contribution to the country, while 35 per cent rate it as negative.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **68% of Canadians think government should focus on energy conservation and regulating energy use and prices**
- **52% say energy sector is beneficial to the country; 51% say Alberta oil sands have been good for Canada overall**
- **71% of Canadians say it is possible to develop an oil and gas industry that does not harm the environment**
- **27% are not sure which federal party leader has a balanced approach to energy development and environment protection**

Full topline results are at the end of this release

*From October 6 to October 7, 2008 Angus Reid Strategies conducted an online survey among a randomly selected, representative sample of **1,005 adult Canadians**. The margin of error for the total sample is **+/-3.1 %**, **19 times out of 20**. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.*

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Despite the fact that Canadians praise the positive impact of the energy sector on the country, the majority (58%) thinks the oil and gas industry has a bad record when it comes to environmental performance.

When assessing the Alberta Oil Sands, most people across Canada (51%) say that this massive project has been beneficial for the country, while 36 per cent disagree.

Clearly, the animosity that many Canadians express towards the national energy sector is related to environmental concerns. However, 71 per cent of respondents are confident that Canada can develop its oil and gas industry while at the same time protecting the environment.

Sixty-eight per cent of respondents say that the federal government should follow a directive of conserving energy and resources and regulating both energy use and prices. Conversely, 23 per cent of respondents say that Ottawa should instead focus on expanding exploration, mining and drilling, and building new power plants.

A third of Canadians (32%) say that having access to inexpensive energy supplies is important to them, while 37 per cent say the most important thing is to have clean energy supplies. A smaller proportion (28%) cites reliability as an important value when it comes to energy supplies for their homes and vehicles.

Remarkably, none of the five federal party leaders appear to have a good pitch on how to balance energy development and environmental concerns. Twenty-three per cent of respondents say Conservative leader Stephen Harper is the best person to strike this balance, followed by Liberal candidate Stéphane Dion with 19 per cent, the Green Party's Elizabeth May and the NDP's Jack Layton both with 13%, and Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe with only five per cent. Twenty-seven per cent of respondents are unsure of which one of these leaders could really handle a sustainable development of the energy sector.

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## Energy – The environment

*When you think of the environment as an issue, what specifically are you thinking about? Check all that apply.*

	National total
Global warming/ climate change	53%
Carbon emissions	37%
Air pollution	42%
Pollution in general	54%
Toxic substances in the environment	42%
Water pollution	45%
Loss of habitat/ endangered species	35%
Overdevelopment	27%
Waste/ not recycling	47%
Other	5%

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## Energy as an issue

*When you think of energy as an issue, what specifically are you thinking about? Check all that apply.*

	National total
Energy shortages	28%
Diversification into other sources (solar, wind power)	52%
Cost of utilities	41%
Fuel prices	58%
High price of oil in world markets	45%
Other	3%

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## The energy industry

*Some people believe the energy industry makes a positive contribution to Canada in terms of jobs, exports and tax revenue for governments. Other people believe the energy industry makes a negative contribution to Canada in terms of carbon emissions, pollution and high prices. Overall, would you say the energy industry makes a positive or negative contribution to Canada?*

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
<b>Very/ moderately positive</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Very/ moderately negative</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>39%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>10%</b>

## The energy industry

*Right now, which one of the following directives do you think should be the most important priority for Canadian energy policy?*

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
<b>Expanding exploration, mining and drilling, and building new power plants</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Conserving energy and resources, and regulating energy use and prices</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>4%</b>

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## The energy industry

*Overall, how would you rate the record of environmental performance of the oil and gas industry in Canada?*

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
<b>Very/ moderately good</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Very/ moderately bad</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>6%</b>

## Energy – The oil sands

*Some people believe the development of the Oil Sands in Alberta is good for Canada because it provides a large source of oil. Other people believe the development of the Oil Sands in Alberta is bad for Canada because of the environmental concerns associated with the project. Overall, would you say the development of the Oil Sands in Alberta is good or bad for Canada?*

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
<b>Very/ moderately good</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>55%</b>
<b>Very/ moderately bad</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>42%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>3%</b>

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**Energy – At odds with the environment?**

*Do you think it is possible to develop the oil and gas industry in Canada while at the same time protecting the environment?*

	National total
Yes	71%
No	15%
Not sure	15%

**Energy – Supplies**

*When it comes to energy supplies for your home and vehicles, what is most important to you?*

	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ONT	PQ	ATL
Having energy supplies that are inexpensive	32%	35%	35%	52%	31%	23%	38%
Having energy supplies that are clean	37%	39%	30%	17%	39%	43%	29%
Having energy supplies that are reliable	28%	23%	31%	29%	27%	28%	31%
Not sure	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%	6%	2%

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**Energy – The federal party leaders**

*When it comes to balancing energy development and environmental concerns, which of the five federal party leaders is the best person to deal with this balance?*

	Gender			Age		
	Total	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
<b>Stephen Harper - Conservative</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Stéphane Dion - Liberal</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Elizabeth May - Green</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Jack Layton - NDP</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Gilles Duceppe - Bloc Québécois</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>20%</b>

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*Angus Reid Strategies is a full-service polling and market research firm which is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Strategies team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995.*

*Angus Reid Strategies, along with its sister company, Vision Critical, is now the largest Canadian-owned market research enterprise. In addition to its four offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices San Francisco, New York and London, England. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.*

*Angus Reid Strategies polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel ([www.angusreidforum.com](http://www.angusreidforum.com)), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics. This premier online survey platform presents respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses.*

*Over the last year, Angus Reid has covered five elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes. <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=news&newsid=194>*

*More information on the way Angus Reid Strategies conducts public opinion research can be found at <http://www.angusreidstrategies.com/uploads/pages/pdfs/ARS.ARF.WP.pdf>*

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**For more information, please contact  
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

**Copies of this poll are available on our website:  
[www.angusreidstrategies.com](http://www.angusreidstrategies.com)**

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