



A National Sector Workforce Strategy to Address Environmental Talent Needs and Gaps

March 2021



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



We would like to thank the 41 individuals from 34 organizations representing industry employers, industry and professional associations, educators, diversity organizations, and governments for their contribution to the workforce strategy:

- AET Group
- Alberta Labour and Immigration
- Atout Recrutement
- Associated Cargo Specialists (ACS)
- Bow Valley College
- BC Agriculture Council
- Canada Green Building Council (CaGBC)
- Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE)
- Canfor
- Canada North Environmental Services
- Cleantech Commons at Trent University
- Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- Delta Remediation
- Efficiency Canada
- EnviroCompétences
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- General Motors
- Giant Mine Remediation Project
- GW Associates Planning Consultants
- MICONE Consulting Inc.
- Okanagan College
- Ontario Environment Industry Association
- Project Learning Tree Canada (PLT)
- P.M. Ruby Consulting
- QuadReal Property Group
- REALPAC
- Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT)
- Sustainable Forest Initiative
- 3 Point Environmental Inc.
- Trace Associates Inc.
- University of British Columbia
- Vancouver Economic Commission
- Youth Climate Lab

The workforce strategy session and subsequent development of this document was made possible through funding from Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and the Government of Canada's Sectoral Initiatives Program. We are greatly appreciative of the support.

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Funded by Natural Resources Canada and the Government of Canada's Sectoral Initiatives Program.

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A NATIONAL WORKFORCE STRATEGY For Canada's Green Economy

Key stakeholders have formulated a sector workforce strategy to:

- ✓ **Address the current and anticipated talent needs and gaps within this growing sector; and**
- ✓ **Build the world's leading environmental workforce right here in Canada.**

The strategy is intended to have a national focus to achieve broad-based and significant impacts across the value chain of sectors invested in environmental goods, services, and solutions.

The strategy is a “living document”. Current business and market conditions may influence the criticality and support for addressing the issues.



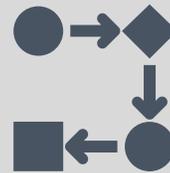
Identifying and Shaping Priority Actions



Concrete actions that can be taken to address key issues and gaps and to take advantage of opportunities

Includes programs and initiatives that can be at the level of associations, educators or employers

Solutions may look different and have different priority at regional, urban or rural level and for employers of different types – effort to maintain a broad focus for the sector as a whole



Potential accountability for actions and further follow-up

This group doesn't have the responsibility for action, it's for input

Identify any groups or organizations who might be owners or critical participants given their current mandate



Barriers and risks that need to be addressed and opportunities that will enable quick action

Industry and Business Priorities

Factors that can influence support for addressing workforce issues:

- Responding to climate change
- Business continuity & performance
- Expanding or diversifying markets
- Technology adoption
- Responding to government policy and regulations
- Others





LABOUR MARKET OUTLOOK: HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHLIGHTS

A Greener Economic Recovery for Canada

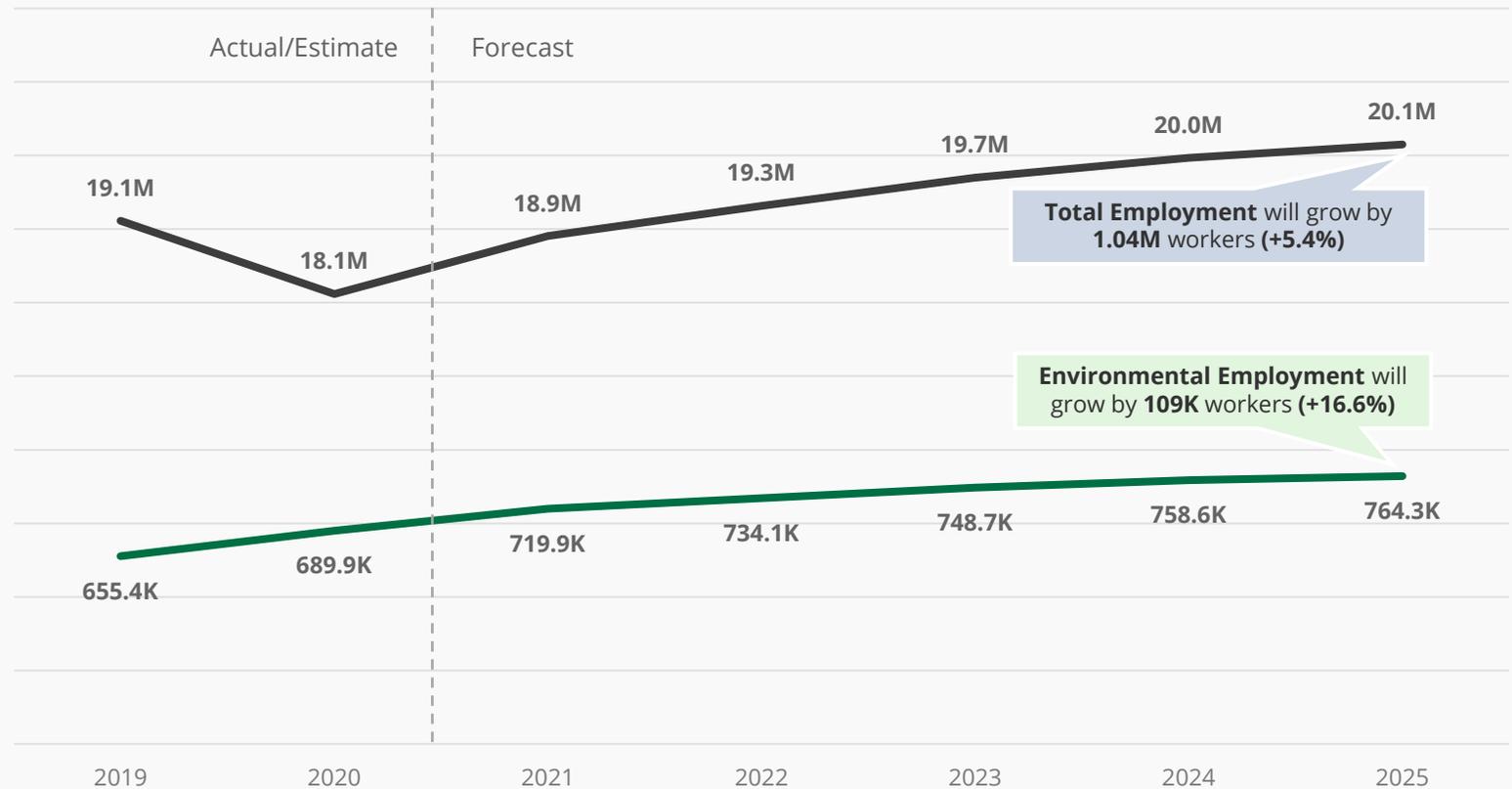
Canada's labour market has partially recovered from the initial COVID-19 shutdown. The unemployment rate was 8.8% at the close of 2020—still higher than when we entered the decade (5.6%).

The impacts were not evenly distributed among employers and workers. A full job recovery have taken hold for some but could take longer for others. And in certain segments such as the environmental sector, growth was still underway.

While Canada's employed labour force shrank in 2020, the environmental sector **added 35K net new jobs**—reflecting a 5% increase.

Our updated forecasts also reveal that environmental employment could increase by **17%** to 2025, compared to 5.4% for Canada overall.

Total versus Environmental Employment, 2019 to 2025



HIGHLIGHTS

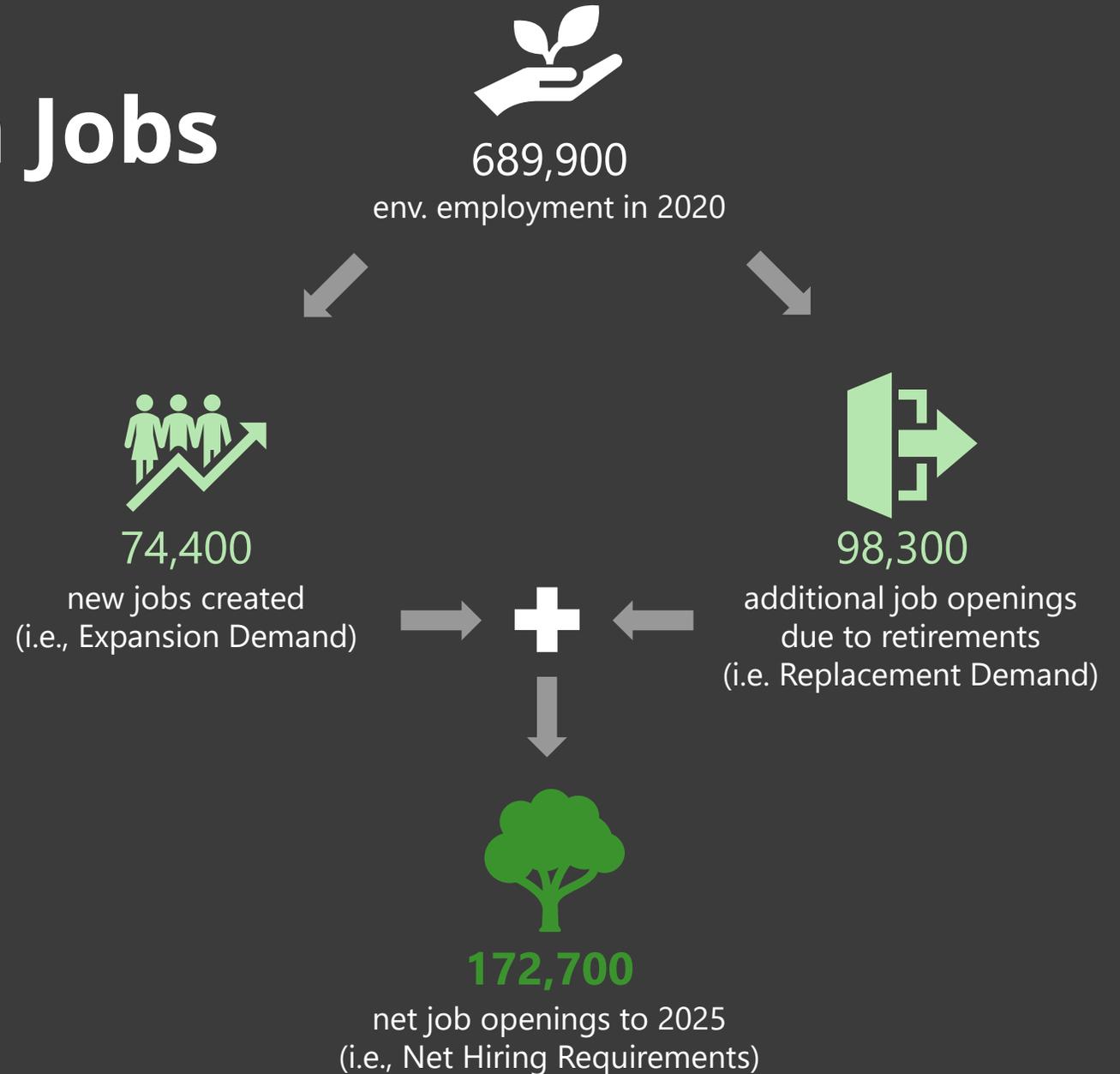
The Future of Green Jobs

About **1 in 26 workers** in Canada (**689K workers**) was in a green job in 2020, up from 1 in 30 in 2019.

- Environmental workers were present in every Canadian region, industry and practically every occupation.
- Green talent is needed in a variety of environmental fields, from Air Quality to Natural Resource Management to Environmental Policy and Legislation.

Job growth and retirements will account for **173K net environmental job openings by 2025**—equivalent to 25% of 2020 employment levels.

- About 43% of net job openings will stem from expansion demand, while 57% will be due to replacement demand.
- About 37% of net hiring requirements (108K jobs) will be for core environmental workers—or those in roles that require environmental competencies.



HIGHLIGHTS

Critical Shortages Expected

The following occupations are projected to experience a shortage of environmental workers across Canada due to (1) wider supply/demand gaps, (2) post-secondary education pre-requisites, and (3) environmental-specific competency requirements:



Legislators and senior management



Engineering inspectors and regulatory officers & Inspectors in public and environmental health and occupational health and safety; Non-destructive testers and inspection technicians



Utilities equipment operators and controllers (incl. Water and wastewater treatment plant operators)



Physical and life sciences professionals



Construction managers; Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics



Electrical and electronics engineers; Aerospace engineers & Other professional engineers, n.e.c.



Architects; Landscape architects; Urban and land use planners & Land surveyors



Forestry technologists and technicians & Conservation and fishery officers; Agricultural and fish products inspectors



Managers in manufacturing and utilities



Contractors and supervisors, mining, oil and gas



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: ACTIONS AND SOLUTIONS

Overview

Over 50 priority actions were identified from the **Environmental Workforce Strategy** session on March 9, 2021. We consolidated some solutions and extracted foundational workforce research*, which resulted in 12 priority actions. Each one has been mapped to one or more key issues and opportunities.

***Timely, relevant and credible labour market intelligence and insights**

The following value-added workforce studies were suggested as prerequisites to further analyzing the issues and customizing solutions:

- Understand the representation of diverse groups by occupation and experience level and investigate the cause/source of said underrepresentation
- Develop scenario projections and enhance modelling to reflect workforce implications from new projects and policies
- Characterize how technology and innovation are impacting workplaces, practices, and skill requirements
- Validate future occupation and skill shortages through improved labour supply data (e.g., number of graduates per program) and share findings with employers, governments, educators, and trainers to support the allocation of funding and resources to address talent needs and gaps
- Identify interprovincial mobility issues and opportunities by occupation, industry and specialization

SOLUTION # 1

Provide end-to-end support to remove the barriers around the supply, attraction, integration, and retention of underrepresented workers

- End-to-end solutions could offer wage subsidy programs that also integrate childcare (especially for single mothers), transportation, language training costs, matchmaking with employers, integration into employment, and microloans for training.
- ECO Canada’s immigrant bridging program, where bundled supports were offered (e.g., matchmaking, training, etc.) to ensure successful integration for both employers and candidates, was cited as a good example.

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted interventions by sector with deep collaboration • Networks for workers to access jobs • Employers: Culture valuing diversity; hiring practices; leadership, access to networks • Education and support for employers: skills and capabilities of underrepresented workers; accessing programs; understanding barriers • Commitment from employers and educators to enhance diversity • Data to support business case • Sufficient funding for 5 to 10-year time horizons, KPI's; policy and incentives for outcomes
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) supportedemployment.ca/what-we-do/ • Institute of Corporate Directors: Culture Oversight icd.ca/Media-Centre/News-Releases/2019/ICD-Releases-Guidance-on-Culture-Oversight-of-Boards • Toronto Community Benefits Network communitybenefits.ca/about
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers, industry and professional associations – diversity, equity and inclusion working groups • Organizations representing underrepresented groups • Education and training providers • Various government ministries • ECO Canada and other high-profile champions (e.g., Council of the Federation; Bank of Canada, Institute of Corporate Directors; Canadian Chamber of Commerce)

SOLUTION # 2

Address workplace barriers (e.g., culture, amenities needed, work environment) to improve inclusiveness

- Changes in culture will improve industry appeal
- Employers and workers must be prepared for a change in culture to support a more inclusive environment, including shifts in behaviours, attitudes, traditions and interactions
- Smaller employers often face greater challenges to attract and develop their workforce and make transformational shifts to workplace culture

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer commitment to results; mandates from Boards and throughout organization; leadership and employee awareness of diversity enablers and barriers; include diversity in performance measurement and change management goals • Education and support for employers: shared knowledge and awareness of barriers • Accessible training • Incentives for results
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada Green Building Council – Workforce 2030 cagbc.org/Workforce/home.aspx • Institute of Corporate Directors: Culture Oversight icd.ca/Media-Centre/News-Releases/2019/ICD-Releases-Guidance-on-Culture-Oversight-of-Boards • Scholarships from companies, bands and financial support from government agencies
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers and Boards of Directors • Industry and Profession Associations – diversity, equity and inclusion working groups • Organizations representing underrepresented groups • Educators • Bands and Bands’ economic development corporations • Federal and provincial governments • ECO Canada and high profile and collaborative champions (e.g., Council of the Federation; Bank of Canada, Institute of Corporate Directors; Canadian Chamber of Commerce)

SOLUTION #3

Offer career development programs and pathway information for diverse groups to increase representation throughout career levels, improve integration and advancement to leadership roles

- Improves representation and provides more opportunities at leadership or senior levels

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify target groups who can benefit the most, understand their needs and engage with employers• Large-scale, targeted and sustained investment in advertising, marketing, and on-the-ground talent pipelines into prioritized sectors and industries• Information on numbers, types of jobs, entry requirements, career pathways and salaries starting at secondary education levels• Cultural change in sectors and work environments to support inclusion and equity• Company environment and structural supports (e.g., childcare, flexible hours) to improve equity, diversity and cultural safety• Longer-term funding and accessible training for candidates to obtain entry requirements• Employment opportunities in fields with career development opportunities
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project Learning Tree Canada: A Guide to Green Jobs in Canada: Voices of Indigenous Professionals pltcanada.org/en/product/english-a-guide-to-green-jobs-in-canada-voices-of-indigenous-professionals-pdf-download/• Future Skills Centre fsc-ccf.ca/
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industry associations, professional associations and employers• Organizations representing underrepresented groups• ECO Canada• Indigenous groups and band councils• Federal and provincial governments• Educators

SOLUTION # 4

Elevate the profile of the environmental sector, professionals and careers through broad-based and targeted awareness campaigns to enhance perception

- CPA cited as best practice (make the profession attractive and interesting)

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained, funded and national campaign leveraging influencers and targeted outreach for specific jobs and communities • Positive, forward looking, exciting and relevant campaign including people that are a part of target audience • Reflect breadth of environmental sector encompassing myriad professions and opportunities • Connect early with students starting at secondary levels • Leverage similar programs from other sectors
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Learning Tree Canada: A Guide to Green Jobs in Canada: Voices of Indigenous Professionals and Mentorship for Youth in the Forest and Conservation Sector pltcanada.org • Diversity in Sustainability diversityinsustainability.com/ • Influence – Inspiring our Future Leaders influencementoring.com/ • Canada Green Building Council – Workforce 2030 cagbc.org/Workforce/home.aspx • Scholarships from companies, bands and financial support from government agencies
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary and post-secondary education and governments • ECO Canada, bands and other associations including cleantech sector • Non-profit organizations involved in STEM learning

SOLUTION # 5

Map and assess competency requirements and demand by experience/role level to develop capacity and recognize the value of experience within the sector

- Develop process to recognize experience requirements within professions to improve knowledge retention and transfer
- Competency programs should recognize both experience and credentials

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Labour market information on top environmental career opportunities shared with career development community• Segmenting competency requirements by level (entry, intermediate, senior) that recognizes experience and education and supports career advancement• Availability and acceptance of programs and methods that evaluate and recognize experience and demonstrated competence
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None mentioned
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industry associations and employers• Regulators or associations for professions• ECO Canada

SOLUTION # 6

Engage, reintegrate and retain individuals taking maternity or parental leaves

- Reintegrate and support return to work
- Provide flexible work arrangements
- Onboarding; re-training/upskilling
- Management practices to keep connected while on leave

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education and support for employers: best practices guide; management practices; external agency to coordinate and coach• Regulations to support workers rights to modified work• Financial support/incentives to support reintegration programs• Knowledge of legal requirements• Acceptance that parenting and modified work requirements can extend beyond 1 year• Lack of standardization across Canada• Understand historical triggers of legislative changes for leaves, e.g., parental leave
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None mentioned
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employers; industry associations; human resource associations• Federal Labour Ministry – Canada Labour Code• Provincial employment standards branches

SOLUTION #7

Support employees requiring unplanned personal emergencies and leave requirements

- Addressing family, personal health, community issues through:
 - ✓ Funding
 - ✓ Flexible work arrangements
 - ✓ Day care and elder care in areas where it impacts retention

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulations to support workers rights to leaves and modified work• Employer flexibility to for flexible work arrangement and leaves• Lack of standardization of legislated leave programs and across Canada• Understand historical triggers of legislative and policy changes for leaves, e.g., paid leaves
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None mentioned
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employers; industry associations; human resource associations• Federal Labour Ministry – Canada Labour Code• Provincial employment standards branches

SOLUTION # 8

Develop experiential learning opportunities for career and job seekers and support capacity building among employers (e.g., co-op and internships, mentoring programs, etc.)

- Experiential learning examples include:
 - ✓ Co-op and internships; mentoring programs for diverse employees to address shortages for occupations and skills
 - ✓ Temporary placements or secondments to gain experience and address shortages, business continuity for associations; partnerships amongst organizations/sectors
 - ✓ Skills transferability and career exposure for career transitioners

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage similar programs from other sectors • Demonstrate business case for hiring interns and co-op students • Education and support for employers and supervisors; networks of mentors; identify experiential learning champions • Training and support for job seekers to increase success: Continuing Education Credits; networks • Financial support/incentives to increase employer involvement, offset costs and improve capacity to provide internships and mentors (especially for SME's) • Promotion of programs • Support development of mentoring skills
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Learning Tree Canada: Mentorship for Youth in the Forest and Conservation Sector pltcanada.org/en/green-jobs/mentorship-program-for-youth-in-forest-conservation/ • Influence – Inspiring our Future Leaders influencementoring.com/ • Diversity in Sustainability diversityinsustainability.com/ • Toronto Community Benefits Network communitybenefits.ca/about • Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning Canada cewilcanada.ca/ • MENTOR Canada mentoringcanada.ca/ • Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers cacee.com/about.html
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-profits: Influence Mentoring; National Mentoring Partnership; Career Mentoring Program for New Immigrants • Industry champions • ECO Canada • Post-secondary institutions

SOLUTION #9

Increase capacity within the education system to support in-demand and growing occupations and environmental specializations (e.g., micro-credential/up-skilling or program expansion)

- Water and wastewater treatment operators (this issue was validated in Quebec)
- Capacity building solution will have to be at the education and policy levels

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to scale-up collaborative program development amongst employers and educators • Significant funding to colleges, institutes and training organizations to develop and add new courses; develop flexible, on-line courses and learners to take the courses • Social equity and carbon reduction lens on investment • Major awareness campaigns about the new courses and support for learners • Regulatory changes to enable PSE's to upgrade curricula faster • Employer engagement, leadership and coalitions to engage government
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada Green Building Council – Workforce 2030 cagbc.org/Workforce/home.aspx • Canadian Colleges for Resilient Recovery (C2R2) mohawkcollege.ca/centre-for-climate-change-management/industry-partners/canadian-colleges-for-a-resilient-recovery • Future Skills Centre fsc-ccf.ca/ • Canadian Digital Learning Research Association cdlra-acrfl.ca/digital-learning-canada/
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators, governments and employers • Efficiency Canada • ECO Canada • C2R2 • Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan)

SOLUTION #10

Remove educational barriers through financial supports to attain credentials and PSE (e.g., micro loans)

- Support tuition or certification costs that represent a barrier to education, upskilling and entry into environmental sector for underrepresented groups or transitioning workers
- Low-interest loans for skilled immigrants offset high costs of relicensing or certification and to achieve professional success

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compulsory upgrading/continuing education for professions and trades• Understanding economic impacts to unemployment and under-employment• Resources for employees and job seekers to pursue training and upskilling including incentives to take time off• Differentiate requirements for credentials vs. competencies
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Windmill Microlending windmillmicrolending.org/• Bredin Centre for Career Management – Microloans for Professional Newcomers bredin.ca/unemployed-albertans/other-services/Servus-Bredin/• Vancouver Police Credit Union – New Recruit Loans vpcu.com/Borrow/Loans/Recruit-Tuition-Loans/
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional and industry associations, unions and employers

SOLUTION #11

Develop new or enhance existing environmental competency or occupational standards for career awareness, competency assessment and recognition, and professional development (to help workers stay relevant)

- A competency recognition program removes the guesswork for recruiters and hiring managers
- Further investigation is required as to which areas would benefit most from a competency certification program (sector vs. occupation vs. skill)
- A competency-based approach could be used to assess immigrants and international students that may have the knowledge or experience (e.g., Foreign Credential Recognition or FCR)
- Periodic monitoring of regulatory, business, technological and other trends impacting sectors, professions and skills

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward-looking assessments of competency requirements • Training materials that include practical applications and examples of “on-the-ground” competency requirements • Alignment of standards and professional regulations with government standards • Traditional views of some associations and regulators to changing skills development practices and acceptance of competency and soft skill requirements as well as credentials
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAGBC Workforce 2030 Coalition – Submission to Ontario Government cagbc.org/cagbcdocs/workforce/Workforce2030_Pre_Budget_Submission_2021.pdf
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional associations and regulators for regulated professionals • Professional Standards Board

SOLUTION #12

Promote talent management best practices, tools and resources for capacity building among small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's)

- Practices, tools and resources to support broad-based or targeted workforce attraction, retention and development

Key considerations (success factors and potential barriers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tips, resources, best practices and summaries of available grants for employers• HR templates and tools including career path planning guides• Partnerships with SME's in sector and province to ensure needs are met
Available program, resources, or other supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None mentioned
Organizations to involve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industry and professional associations• Employers

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

SOLUTION

SOLUTION	ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES								
	New or underutilized talent sources			Workforce retention and development			Longer-term/structural issues		
	Under-representation of select groups	Transitioning workers from other sectors	Industry-wide attraction and recruitment strategies	Improved retention and productivity	Career development and pathways	Succession planning/knowledge retention	Learning and development that meets future demand	Assessing and recognizing competency/transferability	Career and industry awareness
#1 End-to-end support	●		●	●					
#2 Workplace barriers	●	●	●	●	●				
#3 Career development and pathway information	●			●	●	●			
#4 Awareness campaigns	●	●	●						●
#5 Map competency requirements and demand by experience level		●	●	●	●	●		●	●
#6 Supports for maternity and parental leavers				●	●	●			

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

SOLUTION (cont.)

SOLUTION (cont.)	New or underutilized talent sources			Workforce retention and development			Longer-term/structural issues		
	Under-representation of select groups	Transitioning workers from other sectors	Industry-wide attraction and recruitment strategies	Improved retention and productivity	Career development and pathways	Succession planning/knowledge retention	Learning and development that meets future demand	Assessing and recognizing competency/transferability	Career and industry awareness
	#7 Supports for unplanned personal leavers	●		●	●				
#8 Experiential learning	●	●	●	●	●	●			●
#9 Education and training capacity		●	●	●	●		●		
#10 Education and training supports	●	●			●				
#11 Competency and occupational standards	●	●		●	●		●	●	●
#12 Capacity building for SME's				●		●			

PRIORITIZATION & NEXT STEPS

OUR APPROACH TO

Prioritizing the Solutions

From the 34 organizations who participated in our strategy session, 17 participated in our post-session survey. Respondents were asked to identify the solutions that were:

 **Important:** most necessary; addresses critical issues or opportunities and with higher consequences of inaction



Urgent: requires swift action or resolution



Impactful: offers sustained benefits or long-term effects



High Opportunity: the solution is considered a “low hanging fruit” or easy-to-do due to the high availability of programs, supports, funding, resources or best practices that could be adapted or leveraged

SURVEY RESULTS

Prioritizing the Solutions

Solution	Number of Respondents (out of 17 in total)			
	Important	Urgent	Impactful	High Opportunity
#1 End-to-end support	11	7	11	5
#2 Workplace barriers	5	6	10	5
#3 Career development and pathway information	8	5	10	7
#4 Awareness campaigns	4	2	13	4
#5 Map competency requirements and demand by experience level	3	2	11	3
#6 Supports for maternity and parental leavers	3	3	12	9
#7 Supports for unplanned personal leavers	1	5	9	6
#8 Experiential learning	6	8	10	5
#9 Education and training capacity	3	4	12	1
#10 Education and training supports	1	5	9	3
#11 Competency and occupational standards	2	3	10	5
#12 Capacity building for SME's	3	4	12	4

NEXT STEPS

Optimizing the Strategy

Key stakeholders also suggested additional solutions for consideration:

*“We must prioritize setting **clear, regulated standards** [in all professions] to build the overall capacity and create interlinkages between different professions and labour groups.*

- *Loose guidelines or unclear directions for professional interaction with future environmental and climate standards will only lead to more pain in the long term.*
- *Rather, creating phased, legislated, professional transformation pathways will allow effective, gradual planning and implementation to expand the scope of the environmental goods and services sector, as well as implicate traditionally non-environmental sectors in this work.”*

“The virtual career fair ECO Canada did was wonderful. This would be great to continue regularly.”

“[Explore] innovative ways to “get the word out” related to environmental opportunities.”

NEXT STEPS

Optimizing the Strategy

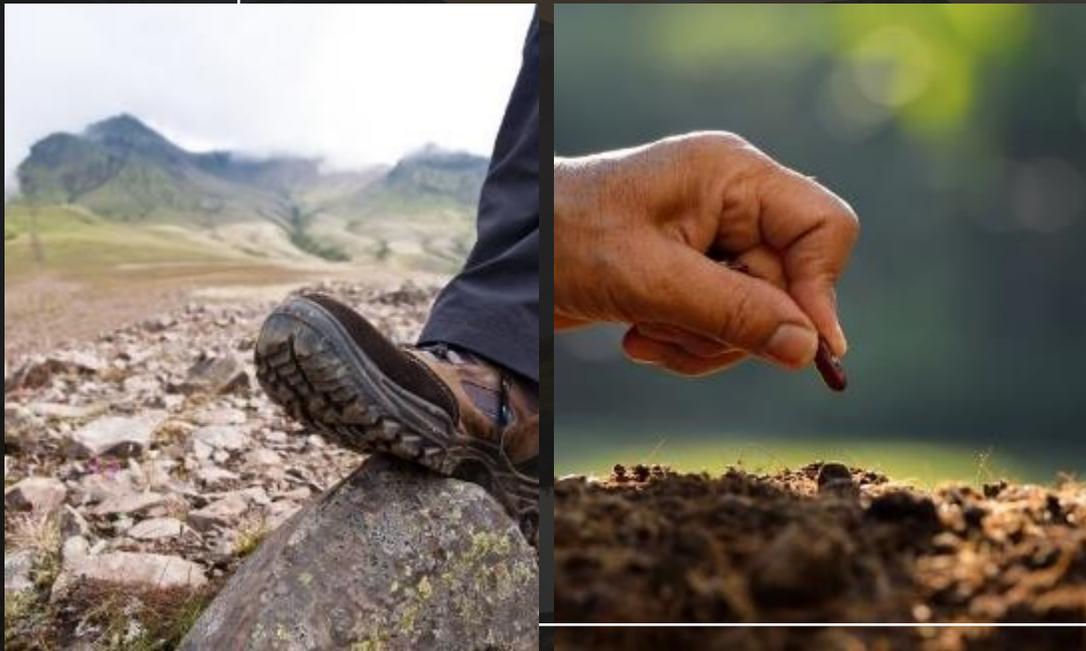
Respondents also indicated the following when asked ***“What needs to happen next to optimize the value of this work?”***

- Ensure a clear “owner” and champions and develop strategic partnerships to make the actions happen
 - Develop metrics, track progress and report results
 - Identify leading practices
 - Identify and enlist all stakeholders in a coordinated effort
 - Address requirements for new or revised legislation with government partners
- Determine economic and social impact of implemented actions
 - Jobs filled, diversification of workforce, retention of women, etc.
- Develop regional, sector and profession-specific strategies and plans



“There was great expertise and participation....working groups and quarterly meetings would provide continuity and more in-depth work.”

About ECO Canada



ECO Canada is the steward for the Canadian environmental workforce across all industries.



We champion the end-to-end career of an environmental professional.



Our efforts promote and drive responsible, sustainable, economic growth to ensure that environmental care and best practice are a priority.

We are thought leaders in the environmental labour market. Our research provides unmatched statistics with up-to-date, relevant data and insights for policy, business and educational purposes.



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