

The background of the logo features a circular sunburst design with teal lines radiating from a central point. The words "Action", "Research", "Communication", and "Motivation" are written in a teal, sans-serif font along the outer edge of the circle, separated by small teal dots.

Re.Climate™

COMMUNICATING FOR CHANGE



Carleton
University

Centre for Climate
Communication
and Engagement

ReClimate.ca

November 26, 2025

Re.Climate is Canada's centre for training,
research and strategy on climate change communication
and engagement at Carleton University.



Baffin Island, NU — An Inuit mother has her daughter in her amouti, a traditional way to carry the young people. Residents of Nunavut say they can see the effects of climate change in real life, in their own backyard. RYERSON CLARK

CLIMATE POLICY ROLLBACKS IN CANADA'S NATIONAL MEDIA

Fall 2025 National Media Analysis



Mississauga, ON — Prime Minister Mark Carney speaks at a press conference as he is joined by Industry Minister Melanie Joly at a manufacturing facility in Mississauga, Ont., on September 5, 2025. SAMMY KOGAN / THE CANADIAN PRESS VIA AP

MEET THE SPEAKERS



Chris Hatch

RE.CLIMATE COMMUNICATIONS
CONSULTANT, AUTHOR OF THE
WEEKLY ZERO CARBON
NEWSLETTER



Ghadah Alrasheed

RESOURCE AND TRAINING DIRECTOR,
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Hanna E. Morris

PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF
THE ENVIRONMENT,
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



Brent Jolly

PRESIDENT, CANADIAN
ASSOCIATION
OF JOURNALISTS

What's included

Surveyed a sample of national media outlets

- Globe and Mail, National Post, Financial Post, CBC News, Toronto Star, Macleans

Used Cision media monitoring database

Approach

- High level analysis of search terms to identify linkages, frequency, etc.
- Detailed read-through of random sampling of stories to identify frames, narratives, voices, etc.

What's not included

We surveyed national outlets operating across Canada in English

Doesn't capture results or narratives in:

- Social media
- Independent media
- Quebec/francophone or broadcast media
- Regional media, podcasts

**Report
available at
ReClimate.ca**



Overview of Climate Change Coverage 2025

Mid-sized topic

- Roughly similar to mental health

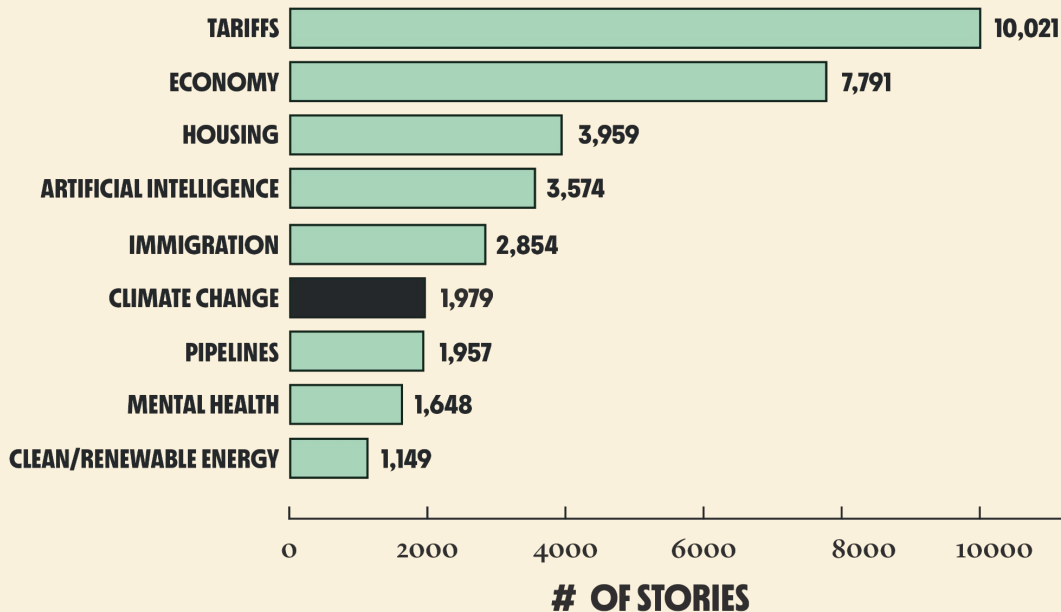
Broad acceptance of climate science

- With notable exceptions e.g:
Postmedia opinion/analysis sections

Darkening narratives

- *Rollbacks of climate policy*
- *Decline in public priority*
- *Economic necessity of delaying climate action*

How big an issue is climate change in the national media?

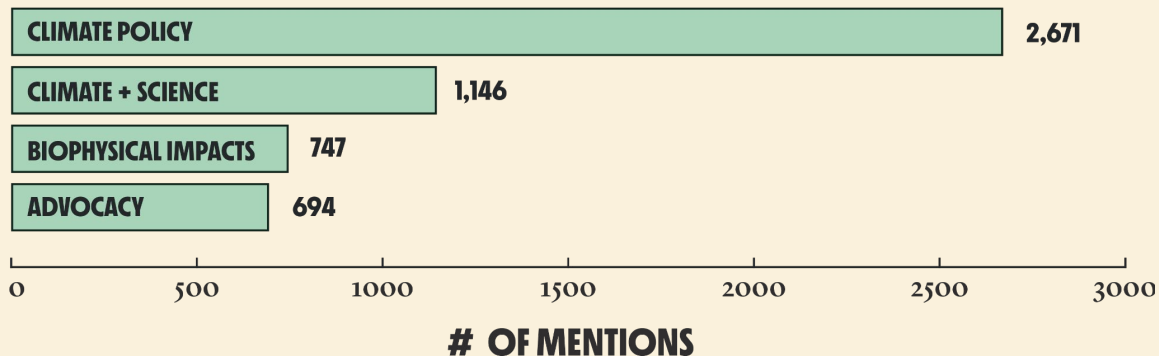


Source: Number of stories with relevant search terms in sampling of national news outlets searched using Cision; Jan-Mar 2025.

Climate coverage ignores the climate

- Framed as a political matter: Political messaging, political positioning
- Primary voices are politicians

How is climate change covered?

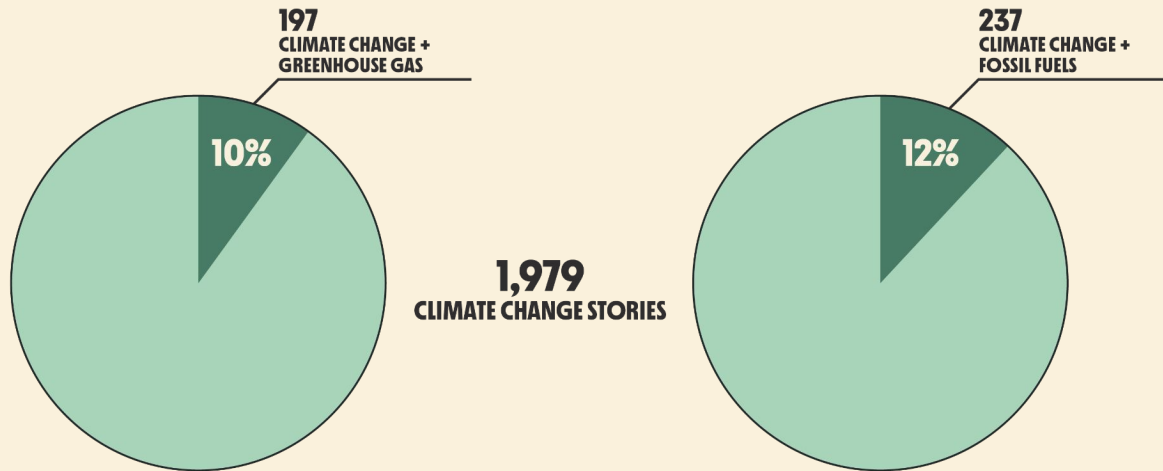


Source: Number of mentions of related terms within each category in sampling of national news outlets searched using Cision; Jan-Mar 2025.

Missing Context and Causes

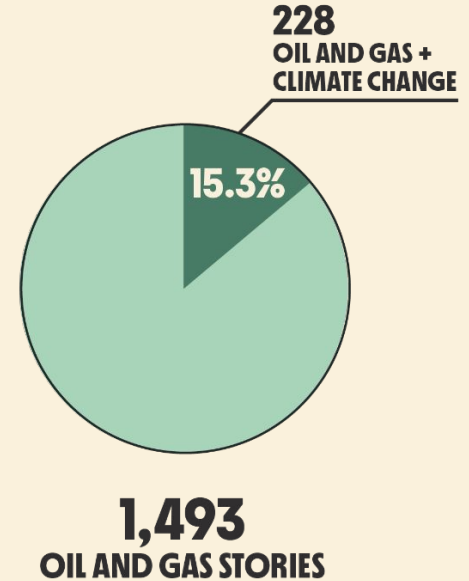
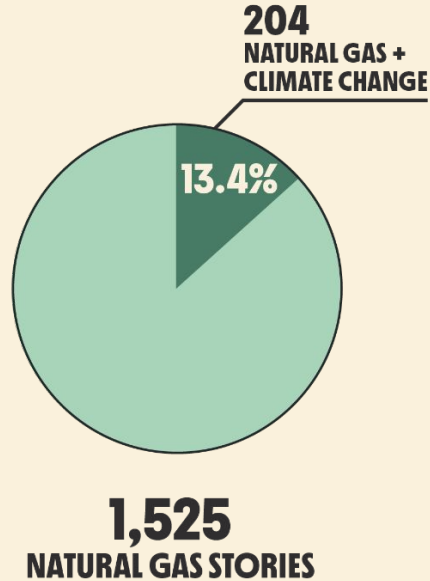
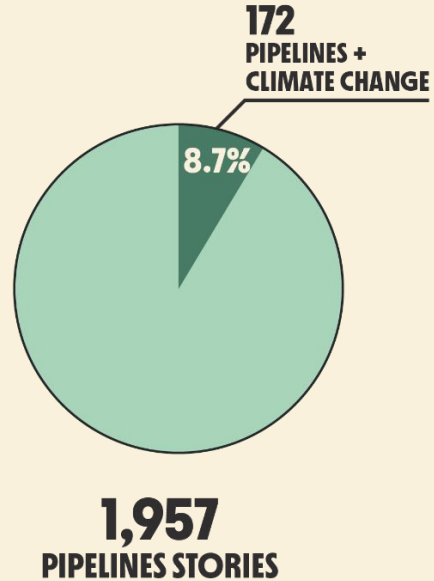
A problem without a cause

- ~90% of climate stories don't mention fossil fuels or greenhouse gases
- 85% of fossil fuel stories don't mention the climate



Source: Proportion of media stories mentioning climate change compared to all stories on climate change mentioning greenhouse gases, fossil fuels, using Cision; Jan-Mar 2025.

Linking Fossil Fuels to Climate Change



Source: Proportion of media stories mentioning pipelines, natural gas, oil & gas that also mention climate change searched using Cision; Jan-Mar 2025

The missing negative context

- Accelerating climate change and impacts
- Increased fossil fuel burning and extraction
- Canadian policies/emissions compared to other countries

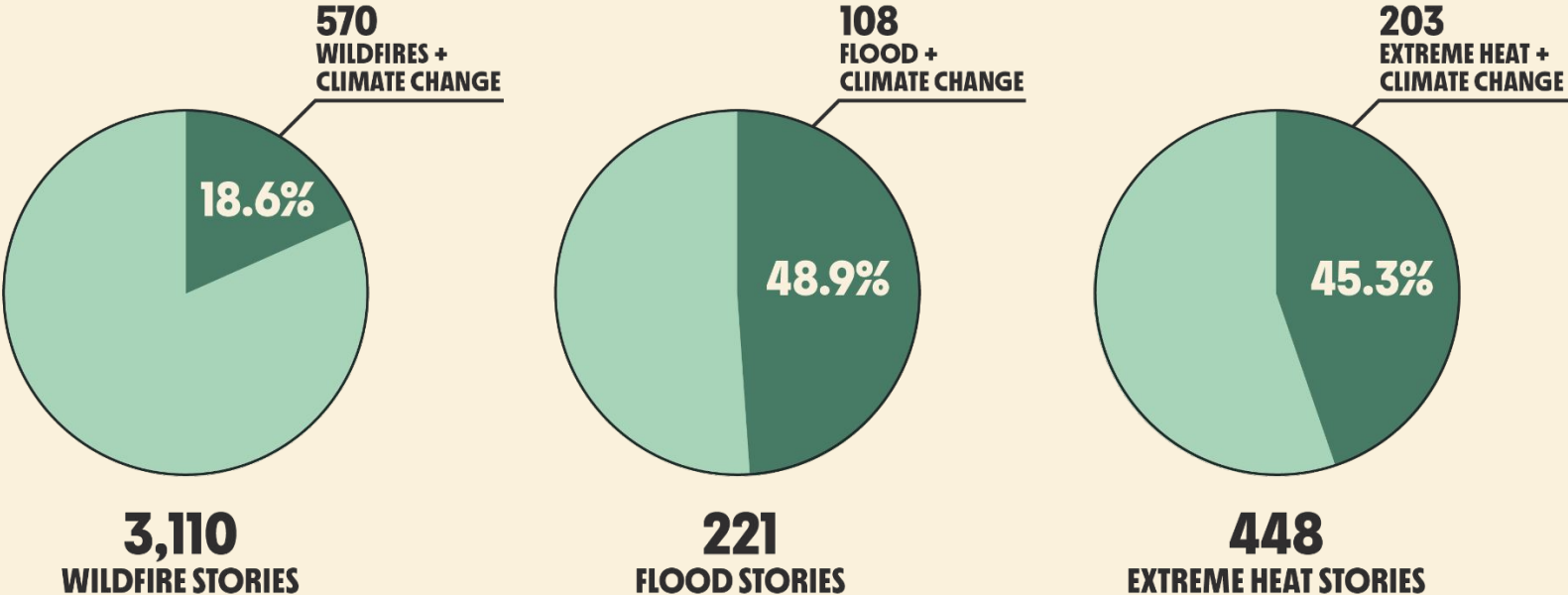
The missing positive context

- Accelerating global clean energy deployment
- Trends in electrification & Canada's relative position
- Economic/health attributes of decarbonization

FIRE, FLOOD AND HEAT

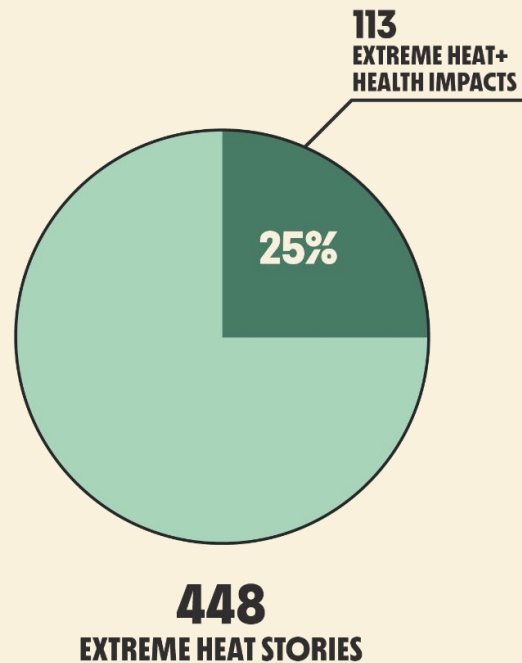
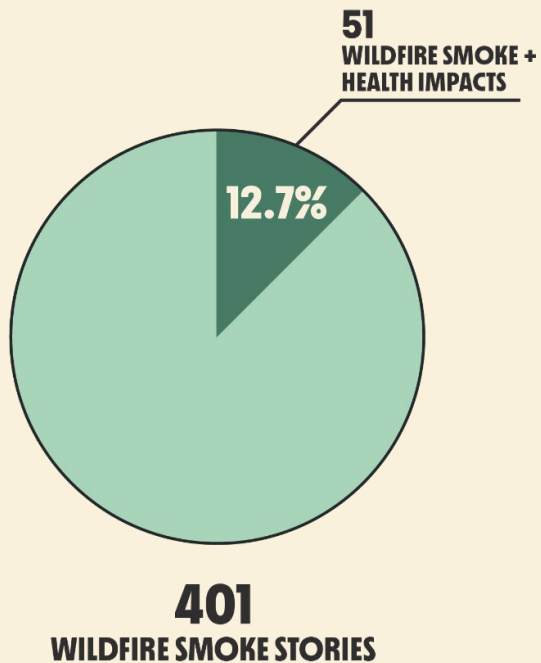
Connecting extreme events and climate change

Connecting Extremes and Climate Change



Source: Proportion of media stories mentioning wildfires, floods, extreme heat that also mention climate change searched using Cision May-Aug 2025.

Extreme Events and Health Impacts



Source: Proportion of media stories on wildfire smoke, extreme heat that mention human health impacts, searched using Cision May-Aug 2025.

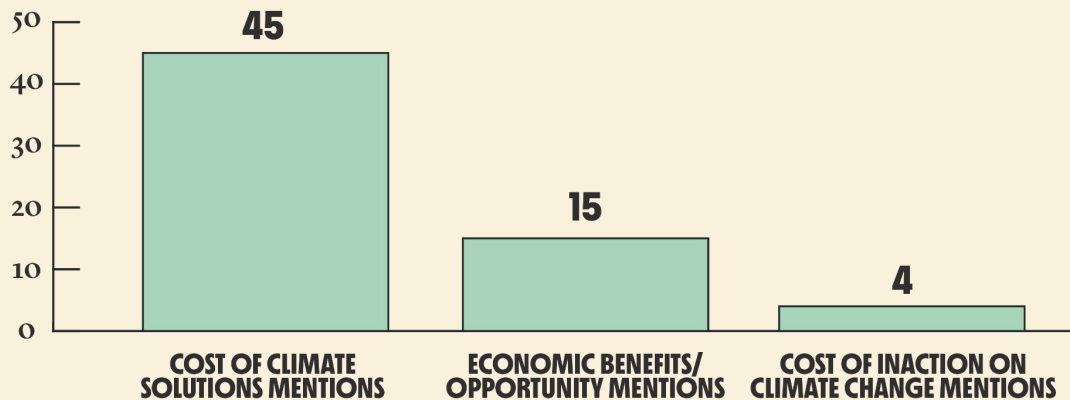
CLIMATE POLICIES AND SOLUTIONS

Overview of Climate Policy Coverage 2025

Policies

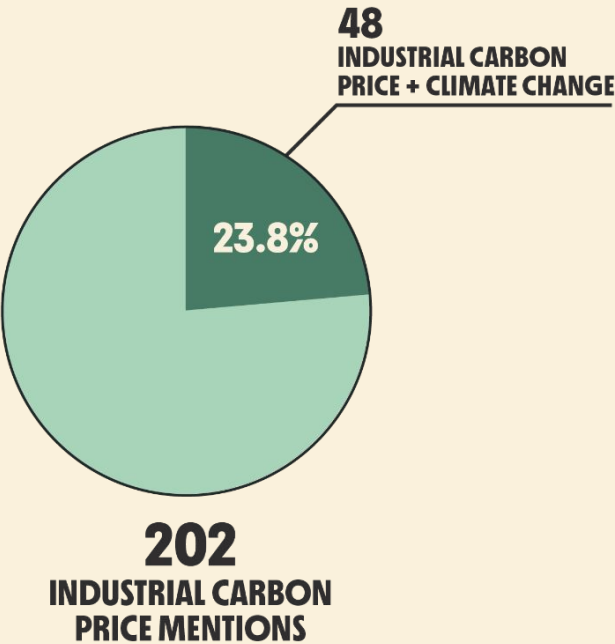
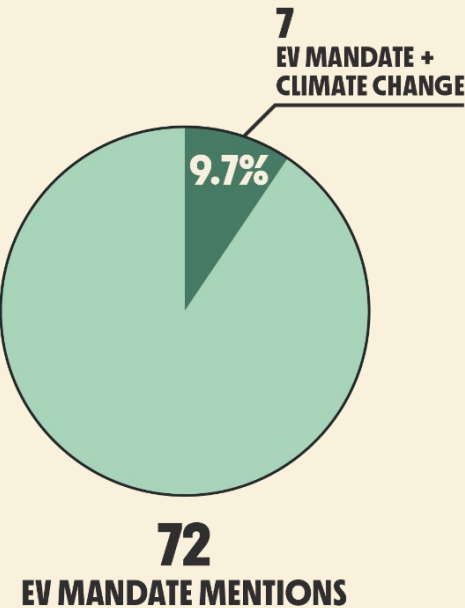
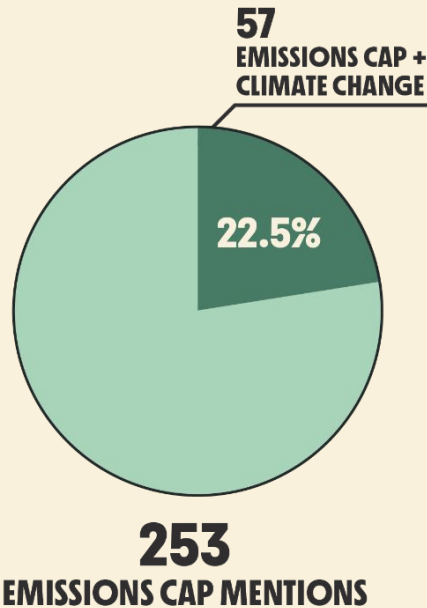
- Costs of climate policies/measures mentioned 3X more than benefits
- Costs of action cited 11X more than costs of inaction

Cost of climate policy



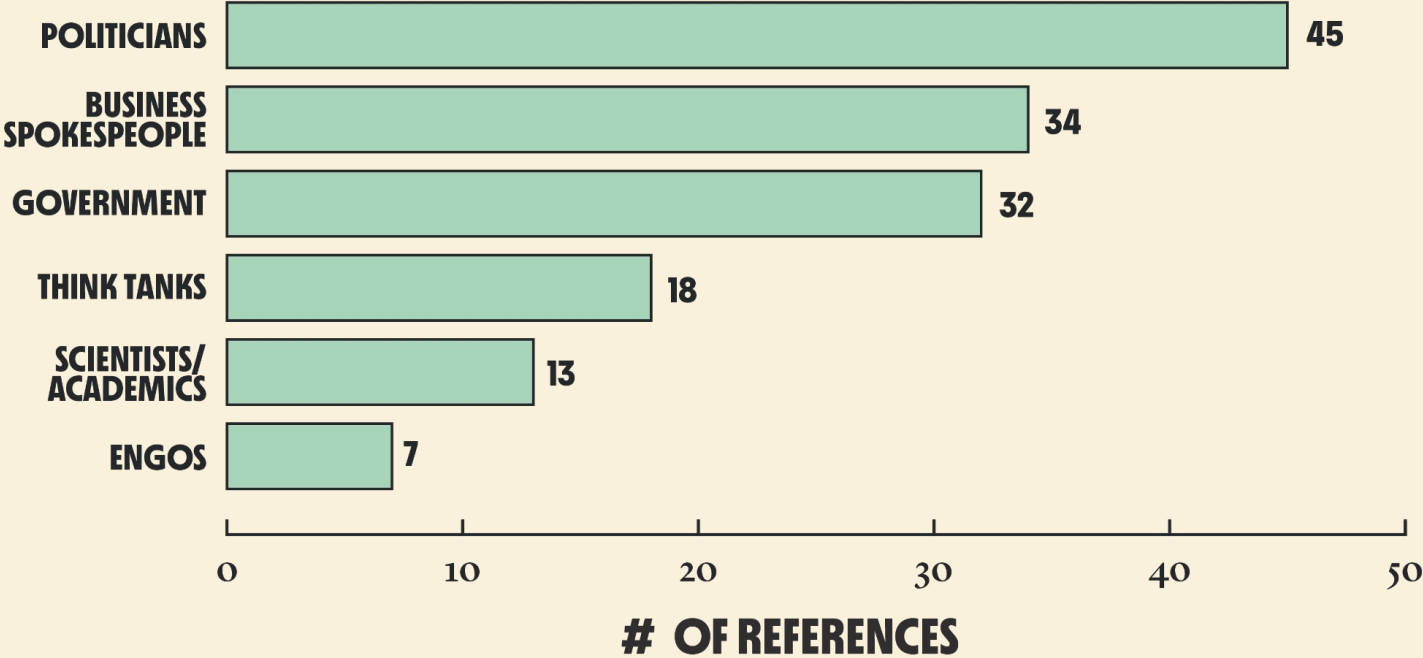
Source: Mentions based on detailed analysis of a random sample of national media coverage in 2025

Are Climate Policies Linked to Climate Change?



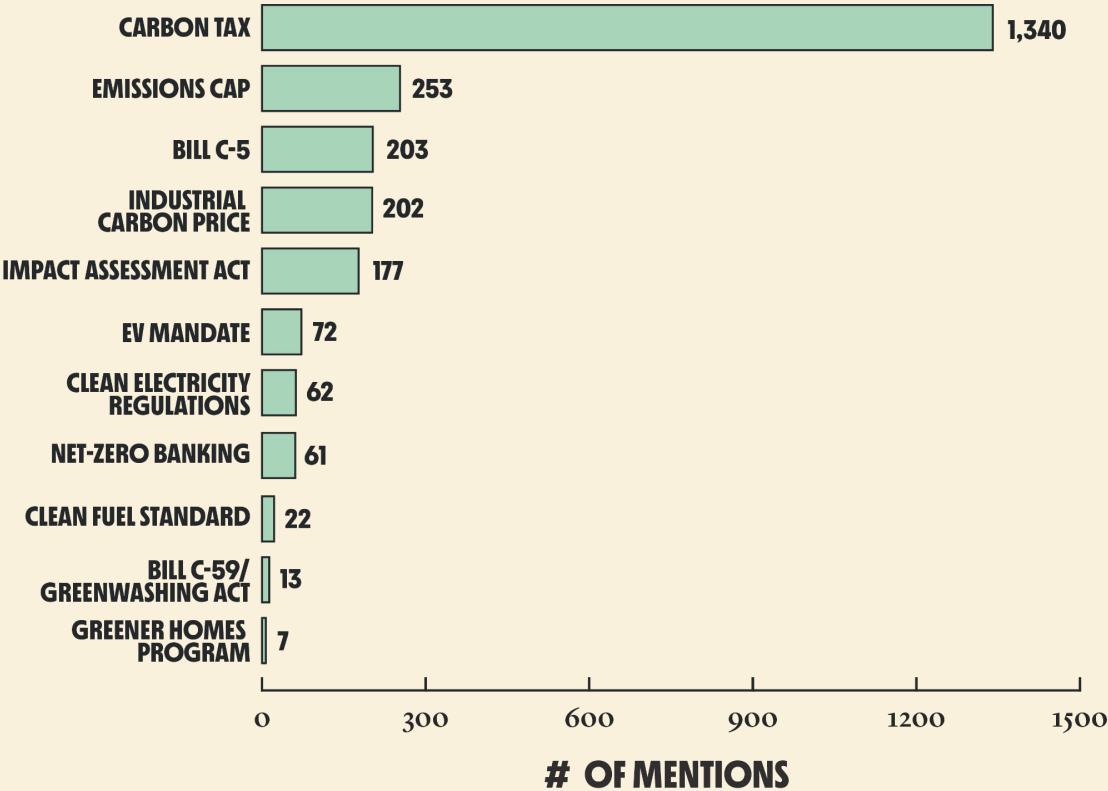
Source: Proportion of stories that mention climate policies in the context of climate change, compared to the total for each. Searched using Cision Jan-July 2025

Who Gets Quoted or Referenced in Climate Policy Coverage?



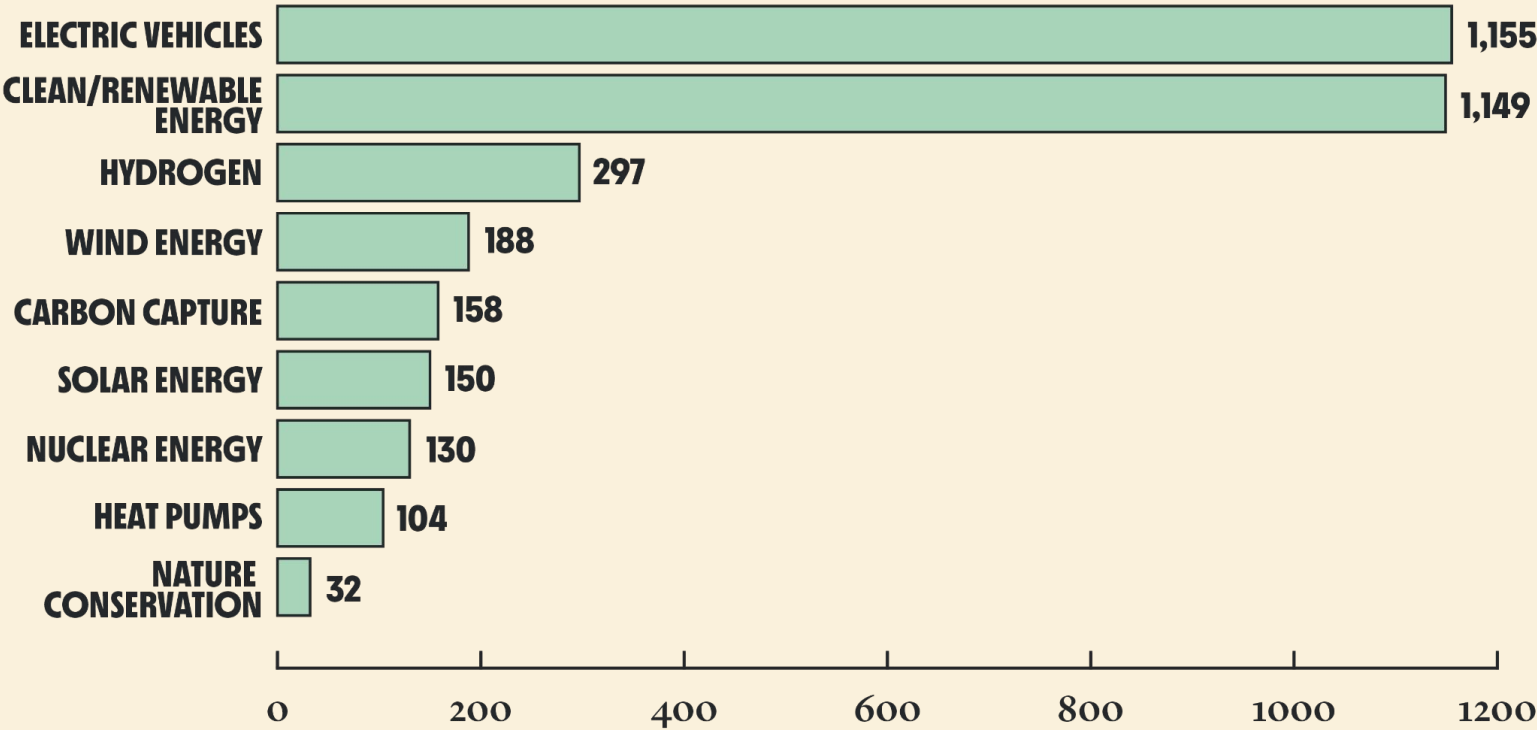
Source: Sources quoted or referenced based on detailed analysis of a random sample of national media coverage in 2025

Which Policies Get Most Attention?



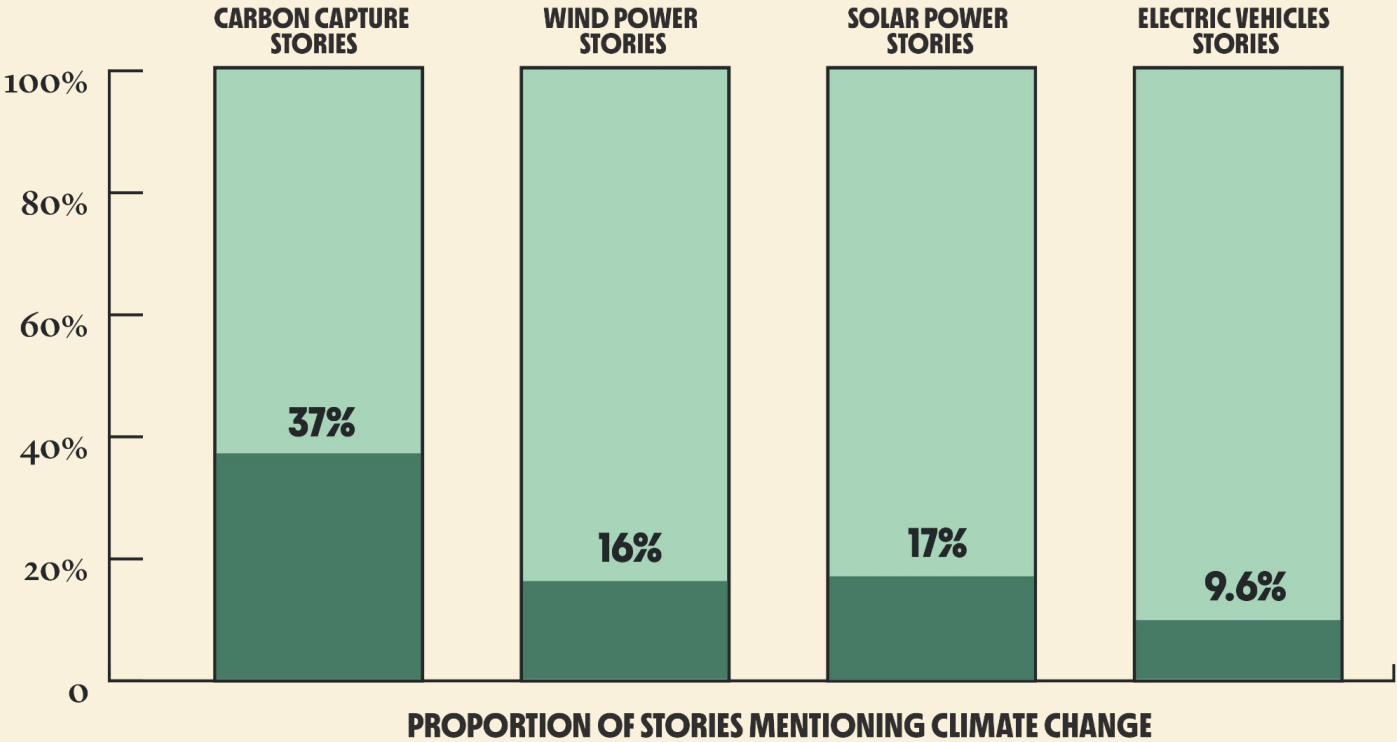
Source: Number of stories mentioning climate policies searched using Cision; Jan-July 2025

Which Solutions Get Attention?



Source: National media mentions of climate change solutions, searched using Cision; Jan-Mar 2025

Technologies Commonly Linked to Climate Change



Source: Proportion of stories that mention technologies in the context of climate change, compared to the total for each. Searched using Cision Jan-July 2025

THE CHANGING MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Media Channel	Opportunities	Limitations
LEGACY MEDIA	Still the most trusted news source.	- Climate stories lack context. Younger Canadians are shifting away.
LOCAL NEWS	- High public demand during elections and emergencies. - More space for local voices & concerns.	Shrinking fast: 2.5M Canadians live with one or no local outlet.
SOCIAL MEDIA	32M Canadians are active social media users (80% of the population). - Many engage with environmental organizations and personalities on social media.	Partisan patterns: Conservative users on X, NDP on Instagram and TikTok. Low trust in general (especially TikTok and X).
INDEPENDENT/ COMMUNITY MEDIA	- Offers in-depth reporting. - Innovative in their revenue models. - More open to climate narratives.	Smaller initial reach.

FOUR PATHWAYS FORWARD

Address Gaps in Public Understanding

Perception Gap

Show that **the majority of Canadians** are concerned and support climate action.

Climate Change Cause

Explain that **climate impacts are driven by burning fossil fuels** (oil, gas, coal).

“What about other countries?”

Show **how Canada compares to other countries** in emissions, policies and clean energy investments.*

Solutions Feel Unrealistic

Show how **the world is moving fast** towards cheaper clean electricity.

Highlight climate projects that delivered benefits beyond mitigation.

*Useful trackers:

- **Climate Policy Database** – International comparisons
- **440 Megatonnes’ Climate Policy Tracker**
- **Climate Watch** – Emissions
- **Climate Backtracker** – Canadian policy rollbacks

Data and Comparisons

Provide summaries, charts and briefers.

Storytelling

Offer stories and examples and pitch to local outlets with stories of projects making a difference in people's lives and delivering multiple benefits at once.

Access and Resources

Connect journalists with credible sources, local voices, and front-line workers.

Reframe the Narrative

Use a fairness frame

- Governments must regulate big polluters and invest for future generations.
- Climate action protects the safety of Canadians and prepares communities.

Shift from cost to investment

- Frame climate action as investments with future returns—financial, social and health.

Show the “true costs”

- Make visible the cost of climate change and climate inaction.
- Include costs linked to oil and gas projects.



Edmonton, AB — Raquel Feroe and Deborah Robb at their Solar Gazebo at Riverdale Community League.
DAVID DODGE / GREEN ENERGY FUTURES

Reach New Audiences with
New Messengers / Formats

Partnerships

- Partner with content-creators.

Training

- Offer training to people who can potentially appear in media or run their own channels.

“Engagement Labs”

- Build “engagement labs” to turn dense reports into sharable content such as reels and explainers.



Montreal-Est, QC — Reporters attempt to ask questions of Conservative Party Leader Pierre Poilievre during a federal election campaign stop. CHRISTOPHER KATSAROV / CANADIAN PRESS



Thank You

Re.Climate