



David
Suzuki
Foundation

David Suzuki Foundation

2016 impact report





Thank you!

With your support, we achieved many victories in 2016 — *thank you!* The projects you made possible combat climate change, protect biodiversity and secure environmental rights.

Across the country, 146 communities have passed municipal Blue Dot environmental rights declarations. These include some of Canada's biggest cities: Hamilton, Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and Vancouver. Now some 15 million people in Canada — *about 40 per cent of the country!* — live in communities that recognize their right to breathe clean air, eat and drink safe food and water, live in a stable climate and have a say in decisions that affect their health and well-being. More than 25,000 volunteers are on the ground, gathering support to move forward to our ultimate goal: recognizing your right to a healthy environment in Canada's Constitution.

During the past year, you've also helped put Canada on track to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Your support funded work on our country's first truly national climate action plan — including a carbon price, the phase-out of coal nationwide, major transit infrastructure investments and Canada's official ratification of the Paris Agreement.

Thanks to you, we continued to push for a ban on bee-killing neonicotinoid pesticides. You also made it possible for our community to ask decision-makers to ban tanker traffic on the north Pacific coast — and they did! And with your help, thousands of milkweed plants and hundreds of thousands of seeds made it into the hands of people across Canada. When they bloom, they'll help welcome threatened monarch butterflies.

This report outlines but a few of last year's achievements. We could not meet our ambitious goals to find solutions to Canada's pressing environmental issues without your ongoing support. These successes are your successes.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,



Peter Robinson
CEO, David Suzuki Foundation

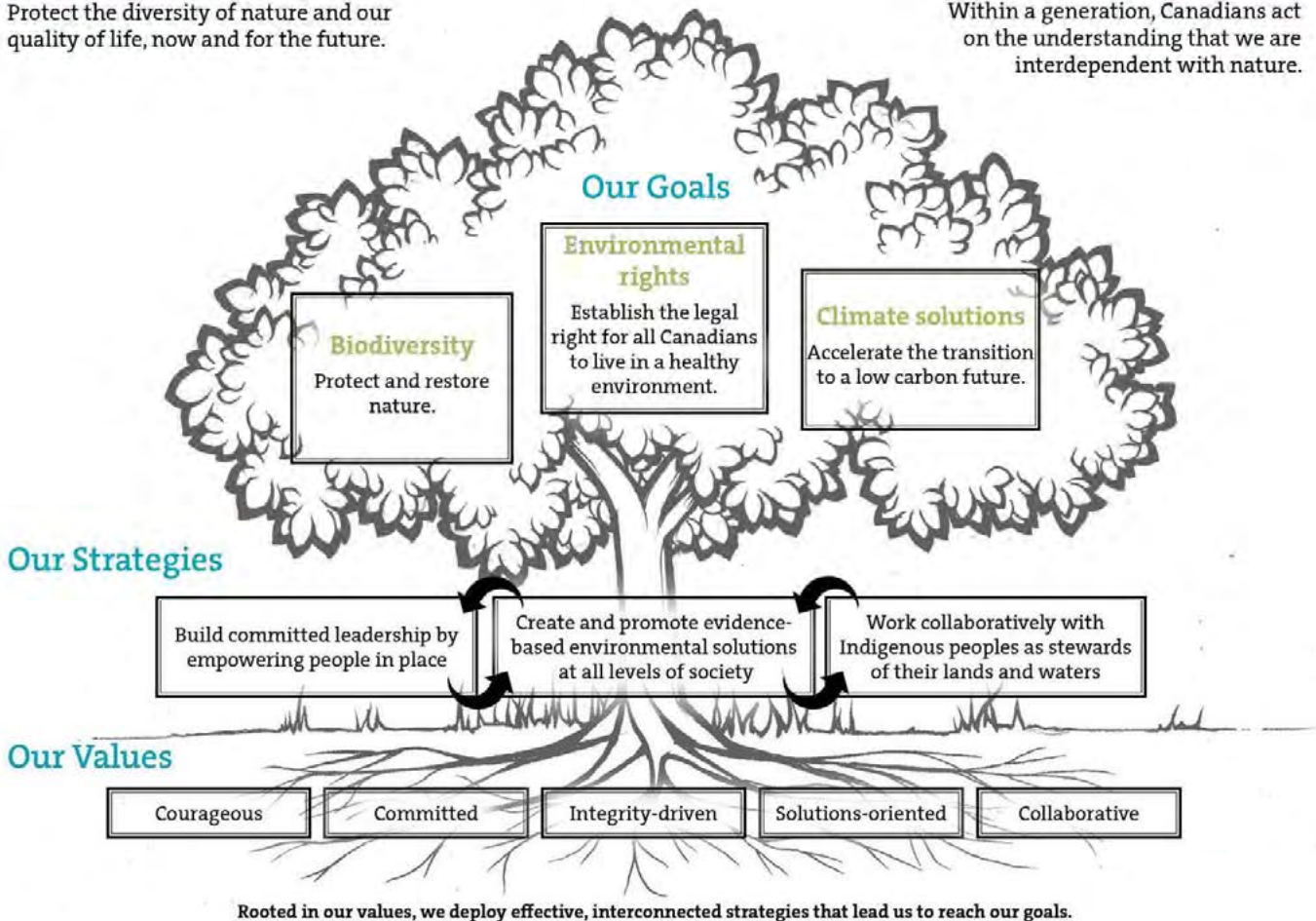
IMPACT FRAMEWORK

Our Mission

Protect the diversity of nature and our quality of life, now and for the future.

Our Vision

Within a generation, Canadians act on the understanding that we are interdependent with nature.





2016 key accomplishments: Combatting climate change

AN END TO COAL

Coal is the dirtiest fossil fuel. It contributes to climate change, poor air quality, many illnesses — including asthma — and rising health-care costs.

Your support launched a campaign to eliminate all Canadian coal power plants. Tens of thousands of people sent letters to government through our “say no to coal” online action. On November 21, 2016 we hand-delivered an anti-coal letter – on behalf of more than 34,000 people! – to Parliament Hill.

Two hours later, the federal government announced a plan to free Canada from conventional coal-fired electricity by 2030. This action, combined with Alberta’s climate plan commitment, will eliminate about eight per cent of Canada’s carbon footprint nationwide and save nearly 1,000 lives.

This is a major win for public health, the environment and the economy. Between 2016 and 2035, it’s projected to save more than \$5 billion in health-care costs!

To learn more about what Canada’s coal phase out means, [check out this blog](#).

A NATIONAL PRICE ON CARBON

Putting a price on greenhouse gas emissions is a powerful tool for combatting climate change. It makes clean technology more affordable and polluting technologies more expensive.

Thanks to donors like you, we helped British Columbia lead the way on carbon pricing — back in 2008. Now the federal government has seen the benefits. On October 3, 2016 Canada [introduced a national carbon price](#).

A strong price on carbon will also reduce smog, save lives and reduce the risk of diseases such as asthma. And it will help create thousands of jobs in the clean energy economy!

CLEANER TRANSPORTATION

Without funding, buses, subways and bike lanes can't keep up with population growth and the quality of service declines. Frustrated, people go back to driving their cars and traffic congestions increases.

For Canada to meet its climate targets, we need more public transit.

Governments make promises to build transit infrastructure. Thanks to your support, we're holding decision-makers' feet to the fire.

In November, the federal government [announced plans to spend \\$25.3 billion over the next 11 years](#) to improve and expand public transit infrastructure. This is well beyond the \$2 billion in annual investments we've called for in the past!

This is a major win that will cut traffic congestion, reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable development in major Canadian cities.

And your support also helped push the city of Toronto to develop a bike lane on Bloor Street, a major traffic artery, as a pilot project last summer. So far it's working! Survey results found bicycles were 43 per cent of total traffic in a one-hour period and bike traffic was up 75 per cent from the same period last year, when the lanes didn't exist.

A FEW MORE SMALL VICTORIES FOR BIG CHANGE

Thanks to your support:

- Some 5,000 people contributed to the federal government's climate action [plan](#).
- After much urging from the Foundation and our partners, [Ontario and Quebec made a breakthrough renewable energy deal](#). Ontario will import up to two terawatt hours of Quebec hydro power each year from 2017 to 2023 — enough energy to power a city of 240,000 people.
- Canada announced a national low-carbon fuel standard — one of the climate actions we requested in our online platform. Almost 30,000 people told decision-makers "Canada must show leadership on climate change."

COMING UP IN 2017

This year, we will focus on organizing local climate solutions and alternatives to a carbon-based economy. We'll build, train and mobilize a community of climate advocates we can call on to advocate for policy solutions from all levels of government. We'll also model pathways for a low-carbon future by partnering with local projects that illustrate the potential of community-scale renewable energy. Community leaders will share lessons learned and help new start-up communities overcome barriers.

We'll push government at all levels to continue increasing transit funding in major urban centers. We'll promote sustainable transportation policies that favour alternative and active transportation modes such as car-sharing, car-pooling and bike lanes. We want Toronto to create at least 30 per cent of its 400-kilometre bike plan network. We'll continue to advocate for a federal zero-emission vehicle standard to promote clean transportation methods and emission reduction. We'll aim for Quebec to exceed its goal of having 100,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2020.



2016 key accomplishments: Securing environmental rights

As you may already know, more than 100 nations recognize the right to live in a healthy environment. But not Canada. Thanks to you, we are well on our way to changing that!

In the two short years since the [Blue Dot movement](#) launched:

- More than 105,000 people from across Canada have signed the Blue Dot pledge.
- Some 25,000 volunteers are on the ground gathering support.
- An astonishing 146 communities — representing some 15 million people (about 40 per cent of the country's population!) — have passed environmental rights declarations.

With your help, we've made tremendous progress on the road to achieving our long-term goal: enshrining environmental rights and responsibilities into Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. When we're done, you and every other person in Canada will have the legal right to clean air, safe water, healthy food, abundant ecosystems and a say in decisions that affect your health and well-being.

Here are a few examples of environmental wins achieved by Blue Dot teams in 2016:

- The [Camrose, Alberta Blue Dot team](#) held environmental rights conversations with citizens and their elected representatives. Council passed the declaration and then they cited it as a reason for putting solar panels on the local arena roof!
- The [Prince Edward Island Blue Dot team](#) achieved their environmental rights declaration and are now involved in amending PEI's Water Act!
- The Regina, Saskatchewan Blue Dot volunteers are working hard hosting events and canvassing citizens to have local council sign the declaration. Council has deferred the vote twice and will debate again in 2017. ([If you live in Regina, you can help!](#))

STRENGTHENING ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS IN ONTARIO

The Ontario government asked for input to update its incomplete Environmental Bill of Rights. The Blue Dot team capitalized on this once-in-a-generation opportunity to:

- Meet with members of provincial parliament from across the political spectrum
- Organize local events using cutting-edge digital tools to increase their reach
- Co-host a reception on Parliament Hill with Ecojustice for more than 45 members of Ontario's provincial parliament
- Raise awareness and interest in every region of the province through the work of 400 volunteers
- Engage more than 12,000 people to write to Ontario Environment Minister Glen Murray via our website and campaign postcards

BRINGING CANADA'S HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE TO THE WORLD'S ATTENTION

In 2016, Foundation senior communications specialist Panos Grames addressed the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Geneva. He summarized what he heard from people living on Canada's Pacific coast, that the ocean is "*the architecture, the food store, the economic lifeblood and essence of the people who live along its shores, providing the air they breathe and the food they eat.*"

The committee [responded!](#) They:

- Agreed that stronger environmental protections are essential to safeguard human rights
- Asked why Canada is not doing more on oceans protection and climate change
- Told Canada to transition away from damaging fossil fuel production
- Called for Indigenous peoples' meaningful participation in decision-making related to development projects on or near their lands

COMING UP IN 2017

The current political climate provides a window of opportunity to move forward to achieving a federal environmental bill of rights. This is a necessary step toward our ultimate goal: recognizing your right to a healthy environment in Canada's Constitution.

In this next phase, your support means we can focus on helping members of Parliament understand why a national environmental bill of rights is important and how it can fulfil this government's green goals.

Thanks to you, we're recruiting grassroots volunteers as "constituent champions" — Blue Dot ambassadors. They'll keep local MPs up-to-date on campaign developments and help them realize how environmental rights benefit the citizens they represent.



2016 key accomplishments: Protecting biodiversity

POLLINATORS

You already know monarch butterflies are in trouble. Planting milkweed throughout their migratory range is the single most important thing we can do to help them.

This year we distributed *thousands of milkweed plants* and *hundreds of thousands of seeds* into the hands of people across the country. When they bloom, they'll help welcome threatened monarch butterflies returning to Canada this spring.

Aiming to be Canada's most monarch-friendly city — Markham, Ontario passed a unanimous declaration supporting the butterflies. Markham's supporting our [Monarch Manifesto](#) (already more than 13,000 strong!) and [#GotMilkweed](#) campaigns. And it's creating the world's first municipal "Milkweed Nursery" in Milne Dam Conservation Park.

Meanwhile, bee populations in Canada are also in decline and tens of thousands of people agree [it's time to ban bee-killing pesticides in Canada](#). We're tracking the evidence linking neonicotinoid pesticides to pollinator deaths and going to court to protect them. We're working to ban these harmful pesticides nationwide.

We are also bringing pollinators flowers! Thanks to your support, this past summer our [Homegrown National Park Project](#) volunteers planted wildflowers in schools, parks and along residential streets. They created more native plant canoe gardens and made city lanes bloom.

OCEANS

Foundation senior research scientist Scott Wallace's work on the trawl fishery was recognized when Canada's Pacific Groundfish Trawl Habitat Agreement — a global precedent negotiated between fishers and environmental groups to address the impact of bottom trawling on sensitive seafloor habitats — [won the Coastal Ocean Award for Significant Achievement in Aquatic Conservation](#).

People need to know if their seafood is what they think it is! Your support helped us release [Taking Stock: Sustainable Seafood in Canadian Markets](#) with our partners, noting weak government labelling and traceability requirements. The report identifies specific problems and areas where the seafood supply chain can improve sustainability.

Thanks to you, [Camp Suzuki 2](#) was another resounding success! The camp, located on Gambier Island in the heart of B.C.'s spectacular Howe Sound, aims to inspire the next generation of environmental leaders. We hosted 42 young adults and 55 children over two weeks. Participants spent time outdoors learning about nature and how to protect it for future generations.

And when the federal Oceans Protection Plan was released and it turned out to be more about increasing marine shipping and development than protecting the ocean, more than [22,000 people wrote to the prime minister](#) to tell him he had missed the boat!

WOLVES AND COYOTES

In response to dwindling moose populations, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry wanted to weaken regulations, making it easier for anyone with a small game license to hunt wolves and coyotes. With our partners, we argued that science doesn't support predator control as a long-term way to manage prey populations. You helped Foundation supporters send almost 10,000 messages opposing the Ministry's proposal and in a rare move, it [rescinded the regulations](#).



SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS-LED CONSERVATION

Thanks to you, we also worked to support Indigenous communities to ensure that the biodiversity values they hold dear are identified and maintained through provincial planning processes. We're supporting the Doig River and Saúlteau First Nations identification of valued ecological components of their traditional territories, which will feed into the Regional Strategic Environmental Assessment (RSEA) process that pertains to fracking in the Peace Valley, B.C. The RSEA creates a space for Indigenous communities to identify places that they want to be off limits to industrial activity.

We worked with Blueberry First Nations to map the alarmingly high level of industrial activity in its traditional territory, in an [Atlas of Cumulative Disturbance in the Traditional Territory of Blueberry First Nations, 2016](#). A startling 73 per cent of Blueberry River First Nations traditional territory is within 250 metres of an industrial disturbance. The report is being used by the Blueberry First Nations in negotiations with government.

Our report [Madziih \(caribou\) Tsáá? ché ne dane Traditional Knowledge and Restoration Study](#) profiles the traditional knowledge of Doig River First Nation elders. Interviews with elders identified places where boreal caribou used to roam and calve in their traditional territory, and made the case that these areas should be prioritized for restoration. The report advances Indigenous leadership in ecological restoration and puts traditional knowledge on par with the Western science that has, to date, informed caribou recovery.

COMING UP IN 2017

In 2017, The Butterflyway Project will support our existing successful initiatives in the Toronto and Montreal areas and launch a new, national online platform to inspire more community-driven, pollinator-friendly activities. We hope to inspire more experimentation and volunteerism across Canada — with people joyfully creating new habitat for bees and butterflies, one neighbourhood at a time.

The Foundation will continue to advocate for at-risk wildlife, such as caribou and snapping turtles. It will also continue to support Indigenous-led conservation efforts such as tribal parks.

And we will continue work to push Canada to fulfil its commitment to protect at least 10 per cent of its marine and coastal areas by 2020, using all mechanism and tools available, including building public awareness and support.



These successes are your successes. We couldn't achieve them without you and others who care.

We have our work cut out for us in 2017! We'll keep working on advancing creative solutions towards Canada's sustainable future.

Thank you for helping us build this future.



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