

CANADIAN PRESS/LEGER MARKETING

**A Study of the Perception of
Canadians with regards to the
Environment**

Executive Report

July 13, 2001



1.0 Study Report

- ◆ **Three-quarters of Canadians feel that the quality of the environment has deteriorated over the past ten years.**

Q Over the last ten years, has the quality of the environment greatly deteriorated, slightly deteriorated, not deteriorated at all or improved?

(n=)	Greatly deteriorated	Slightly deteriorated	Did not deteriorate	Improved	Don't know/Refusal
1504	36.2%	41.0%	7.1%	13.1%	2.5%

- ◆ **Air and water pollution are the most important environmental problems, say Canadians.**

Q-Among the following environmental problems, which one do you think is the most important?

(n=)	Water pollution	Air pollution	Ozone Layer	Global Warming	Clearing of tropical forests	Acid rain	Other/None	Don't know/Refusal
1504	27.5%	22.1%	16.5%	15.1%	13.3%	2.2%	0.9%	2.4%

- ◆ **Two-thirds of Canadians are opposed to the construction of new nuclear power stations in their country.**

Q- Are you in favour or not in favour of the construction of new nuclear power stations in Canada?

(n=)	In Favour	Not in Favour	NSP/Refusal
1504	25.7%	66.1%	8.2%

- ◆ **Environmental groups earn the trust of more Canadians when it comes to improving the environment.**

Q-Who do you trust most to improve the quality of the environment in Canada?

(n=)	Environmental groups	Scientists	Governments	Private enterprise	Other / None	Don't know / Refusal
1504	32.3%	24.1%	22.6%	13.0%	4.8%	3.2%

- ◆ **The Environment is the third most significant concern of Canadians.**

Q- Among the following social problems, which one do you find most disturbing?

Is it...?

(n=)	Health	Poverty	Environment	Education	Violence	Drugs	Housing	Other	DNK / Refusal
1504	26.1%	18.8%	12.4%	11.9%	11.8%	11.4%	4.2%	1.2%	2.2%

2.0 Results

2.1 The Quality of the Environment has Deteriorated, Say Canadians

According to 77.2% of the population, the quality of the environment has been on the decline in the last ten years. A portion of 36.2% feels that this deterioration has been significant while 41.0% feels it has not been significant. Finally, 7.1% of the population believe that the quality of the environment has remained unchanged.

Canadians feeling more strongly that the environment has indeed deteriorated since the 1990's are women (82.0%), Anglophones (82.2%) and Prairie residents (84.3%).

Among those who believe that the quality of the environment has improved, we find men (16.2%) people in the 55 to 64-age bracket (21.0%), French-speaking Canadians (17.4%), Canadians with less schooling (24.4%) and Quebecers (18.2%).

Q1 Over the last ten years, has the quality of the environment greatly deteriorated, slightly deteriorated, not deteriorated at all or improved? n = 1504	Greatly deteriorated	Slightly deteriorated	Did not deteriorate	Improved	DNK/ Refusal
Atlantic Canada	27.9%	50.2%	7.1%	11.8%	3.0%
Quebec	43.8%	25.0%	11.5%	18.2%	1.5%
Ontario	37.9%	41.8%	6.2%	12.3%	1.8%
Prairies	28.7%	55.6%	6.9%	4.5%	4.3%
Alberta	29.4%	52.7%	1.7%	13.8%	2.4%
British Columbia	31.2%	46.1%	11.1%	11.4%	5.3%
Canada	36.2%	41.0%	7.1%	13.1%	2.5%

2.2 Air and Water Pollution Very Important Issues for Many Canadians

According to 27.5% of Canadians the pollution of lakes, rivers and oceans represents the most important environmental problem followed by air pollution with 22.1%, the thinning of the ozone layer (16.5%), global warming (15.1%), the clearing of tropical forests (13.3%) and acid rain (2.2%).

Air pollution is important for Ontarians (27.9%) while the thinning of the ozone is of grave concern to 19.2% of women. Global warming is more important for 17.5% of male respondents, 22.8% of those whose mother tongue is neither French nor English, 22% of British Columbians, 20.3% of University-educated respondents and 19.8% of individuals in the higher income brackets.

Q2 Among the following environmental problems, which one do you think is the most important? N = 1504	Water pollution	Air pollution	Ozone Layer	Global warming	Clearing of Tropical forests	Acid rain	Other/ none	Nsp/ Refusal
Atlantic Canada	29.6%	22.0%	16.1%	13.2%	12.0%	6.4%	0.0%	0.8%
Quebec	26.3%	20.8%	19.5%	14.7%	12.3%	2.8%	1.6%	1.9%
Ontario	26.4%	27.9%	15.2%	14.4%	11.5%	2.3%	0.8%	1.6%
Prairies	28.8%	20.5%	18.8%	10.2%	14.8%	1.3%	1.8%	3.8%
Alberta	30.6%	16.8%	13.9%	14.45	21.1%	0.7%	0%	2.4%
British Columbia	28.8%	12.8%	15.9%	22.0%	14.6%	0%	0.6%	5.3%
Canada	27.5%	22.1%	16.5%	15.1%	13.3%	2.2%	0.9%	2.4%

2.3 Two-Thirds of Canadians Opposed to Construction of New Nuclear Power Stations in their Country

A proportion of 66.1% of Canadians are not in favour of the construction of new nuclear power stations in their country.

Those opposed to such initiatives can be found in the following categories: 74.0% of women, 79.5% of Francophones, 80.3% of Quebeckers, 71.6% of individuals with an annual family income of \$20,000 to \$39,999, 75.6% of individuals who stay home and 70.2% of respondents who have completed high school.

In favour of the construction of new nuclear power stations are 35.2% of men, 29.3% of Anglophones, 34.3% of Ontarians, 32.2% of individuals with an annual household income of \$60,000 or more, 32.9% of manual workers and 33.1% of University-educated Canadians.

Q3 ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OR NOT IN FAVOUR ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW NUCLEAR POWER STATION IN CANADA ? N = 1504	Yes	No	Don't know/ Refusal
Atlantic Canada	18.2%	72.0%	9.9
Quebec	14.2%	80.3%	5.5%
Ontario	34.3%	56.4%	9.3%
Prairies	29.6%	60.5%	9.9%
Alberta	24.5%	64.5%	11.0%
British Columbia	25.4%	68.7%	5.9%
Canada	25.7%	66.1%	8.2%

2.4 Canadians Trust Environmental Groups to Improve the Environment

Environmental groups earn the trust of 32.3% of Canadians when it comes to improving the quality of the environment in Canada while scientists earn the trust of 24.1% of the population. A total of 22.6% of Canadians feel that governments can better solve environmental problems and 13.0% feel that private enterprise can be most trusted.

Ecologists earn the trust of 37.0% of women, 39.4% of individuals in the 45 to 64-age bracket, 38.3% of Francophones, 39.0% of Quebecers and 40.4% of students.

The categories of Canadians who trust governments to a greater degree can be summarized as follows: 27.6% of men, 31.8% of Albertans, 36.0% of individuals whose mother tongue is neither French nor English and 29.0% of retirees.

Q5 Who do you trust most to improve the quality of the environment in Canada? Is it...? N = 1504	Ecologists	Scientists	Gov't	Private Enterprise	Other/None	Nsp/Refusal
Atlantic Canada	33.5%	24.4%	29.5%	8.9%	2.8%	0.8%
Quebec	39.0%	23.7%	15.2%	15.1%	4.9%	2.2%
Ontario	30.6%	26.7%	23.6%	11.0%	5.2%	3.0%
Prairies	28.4%	24.4%	23.4%	13.0%	6.5%	4.3%
Alberta	27.8%	17.9%	31.8%	17.4%	2.4%	2.6%
British Columbia	29.7%	21.5%	22.1%	14.6%	14.7%	6.7%
Canada	32.3%	24.1%	22.6%	13.0%	4.8%	3.2%

2.5 The Environments Ranks Third in the Minds of Canadians

Asked to give their opinion regarding various social issues, Canadians mentioned being more interested in health issues (26.1%), poverty (18.8%), the environment (12.4%), education (11.9%), violence and public safety (11.8%), drugs (11.4%) and affordable housing (4.2%).

3.0 Methodology

This study was conducted by Leger Marketing through telephone interviews among a representative sample of 1504 English- or French-speaking Canadians, 18 years of age or older.

The interviews were conducted from our Montreal and Winnipeg call centres between July 3 and July 11, 2001. Up to ten recalls were made in the case of non-response.

Using data from Statistics Canada, the results were weighted according to geographic location, gender and language spoken at home to ensure a sample representative of the entire Canadian adult population. In the end, the maximum margin of error obtained for a sample of 1504 respondents, is of $\pm 2.6\%$, 19 times out of 20.