



**ACW** | Adapting Canadian Work and Workplaces  
to Respond to Climate Change

**Adapting Canadian Work and Workplaces to Respond to  
Climate Change:  
Canada in International Perspective**

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## **PROJECT SUMMARY**

How can Canadian work and workplaces contribute to slowing global warming? Environment and climate issues have traditionally been the domain of the natural sciences. But the complexity, destructiveness and speed of climate change are increasing. Responding to climate warming has become an urgent social issue (Dupressoir 2007). Recent research (ILO 2011) has found that work creates as much as 80% of the greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) produced by human activity in developed countries. Canada is no exception. The physical and social upheavals of climate warming are already changing how we work, how products are transported, what we produce and where we produce it. If we are serious about creating a low-carbon economy in Canada, bringing work, the workplace and workers “in” to a green transition, is as crucial as it is timely. As a major producer of GHGs, the work world can also become a major contributor to Canada's efforts to slow global warming. ACW engages with the challenge of slowing global warming, by developing tools to green the workplace and work itself. ACW is Canadian-focused and national in scope, setting Canadian experience in international perspective.

### **Adapting Canadian Work and Workplaces (ACW) asks:**

1. How best can Canada's diverse workplaces adapt work to mitigate greenhouse gases?
2. In Canada's present economic and social environment, what changes in law and policy, work design and business models, would assist the “greening” of workplaces and work?
3. What can we learn from other countries to clarify our understanding of strategic options?

### **ACW Goals**

1. Produce new research on the opportunities and obstacles that law, public policy and work design create for low-carbon adaptation of Canadian resources, manufacturing, construction, services
2. Develop work-based strategies to reduce GHGs and energy use
3. Strengthen green workforce skills, leadership, opportunities for collaboration
4. Integrate international and national best practices into Canadian work
5. Train the next generation of social climate change experts
6. Create enabling conditions for green work reform on a large scale.

### **Expected Outcomes**

1. Increased knowledge about social implications of climate change at work for Canadians via focused knowledge mobilization to six audiences
2. Increased training in green workplace reform for highly qualified personnel
3. Increased aid to employers and unions in implementing green work reforms.

### **Partnership**

ACW membership includes 47 individual researchers and 24 partner organizations in 4 countries and is a member of the Belmont Forum (EU). Team expertise spans natural and applied sciences, engineering, management, law, environmental studies, social sciences and organizational leadership. It includes senior provincial and federal government officials, leaders of major unions, large, medium and small enterprises and directors of some of the most influential think tanks in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K. Core ACW members have worked together since the 1990s, funded by CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC. In ACW all levels of work are co-governed by partners. Partner organizations reach millions worldwide via their multilingual online network.