

Canada West Foundation

Report Card 2022

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Trade & Investment Centre

Report Card 2022

Surviving in the new global trade environment: Indo-Pacific region

Policy Goal: Defend and advance western Canadian trade interests in response to significant shifts in the global trade environment

What we promised

China's federal, provincial and sectoral five-year plans (FYP) and the mechanisms that China uses to advance its policy objectives, like the Belt and Road Initiative, will impact western Canadian interests in China and other Indo-Pacific regional markets. We promised in 2022 the work of the centre would improve the capacity of Canadian exporters to enter and thrive in global markets, particularly in the Indo-Pacific, and articulate trade support needs to federal and provincial governments.

What we delivered

The thesis that trade irritants with existing trade partners would become more important than gaining access to new markets was born out in 2022. In response, TIC nimbly switched focus to respond quickly with research, convening and dissemination to media and stakeholders while still achieving the original workplan objectives.

- TIC completed a guide for western exporters and government support agencies on how to use China's FYP to identify potential opportunities and obstacles. That work was held to be updated in response the expected release of a federal Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- Proposals were developed to organize and convene sector tables, but funding was not secured. These proposals will be re-submitted in light of new funding under the federal Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- A planned China/Taiwan CPTPP modelling project has been delayed due to lack of funding.

Also delivered but not in the workplan:

- In response to the launch of the Indo-Pacific Strategy, TIC participated, often as the sole western/Prairie representative, in over a half-dozen national and international conferences with leading think tanks, academics, private sector and government officials on the strategy to ensure that western views and interests were represented.
- We published an in-depth 'hot takes' blog, [Hot takes on the U.S. Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and Canada](#), immediately after the strategy's release and also a policy brief, [What Now? The West wants in the Indo-Pacific](#), on how western interests fared in the strategy.
- TIC published a report, [Alberta's Place in the World](#), examining opportunities for Alberta in light of the changing global trade environment as part of a broader effort by the Business Council of Alberta to set direction for growth in the province over the coming decade.

What it means for Canada's West

The West trades more with the Indo-Pacific than the rest of Canada. Assuring that western interests are reflected in the strategy is of paramount importance to the success of western trade ambitions. CWF was uniquely positioned to do this through its ongoing research and monitoring of trade issues in Asia.

Surviving the new U.S. trade environment

Policy Goal: Improve effectiveness of western provincial engagement in the U.S.

What we promised

The Trump administration altered U.S. trade policy toward Canada in ways that persist and will continue with the current congress and the next. For Western Canada, management of trade irritants cannot be left to distant Ottawa and Washington, D.C. An area where improvement can be made is the interactions between heads of government and we promised to develop and employ strategies to encourage this engagement.

What we delivered

- CWF issued a press release making the case for premiers to attend the WGA meeting. Research and materials were prepared to support participation of western premiers at the U.S Western Governors Association's summer meeting. As the premiers did not attend last year's meeting this work has been put on hold, but the investment of time and effort has positioned CWF to produce this material should the western premiers decide to attend a future WGA meeting.
- TIC published four editions of the new [North American Brief](#) including a spotlight feature in one issue that examined how provinces and states can apply lessons from pandemic cooperation to future cooperation on transportation.

Also delivered but not in the work plan

- CWF has joined and participated in meetings of two new North American working groups, a tri-national group hosted by the Brookings Institute and a Canada-Mexico working group organized by Carleton University and the Mexican Council on Foreign relations. CWF is again the only western Canadian participant in these groups.
- TIC co-produced a report, [North America's Border Infrastructure](#), with the G.W. Bush Presidential Center, published by the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington D.C., on creating a North American Trade Infrastructure Bank.
- TIC published an op-ed in the Calgary Herald, [Fertilizer emissions – you reap what you sow](#), and convened a [webinar](#) in response to the federal government's fertilizer GHG reduction announcement with the Alberta Minister of Agriculture and speakers from Pulse Alberta, the Saskatchewan Institute of Global Food Security and the Global Farmer Network.
- TIC held a webinar, [The Debate over the Right to Repair in Agriculture](#), with U.S. and Canadian experts to discuss the inability of farmers to fix their own equipment because of a lack of access to equipment and technical know-how.

What it means for Canada's West

The U.S. remains the largest single trading partner for all the western provinces. This trade faces constant and persistent threat from direct and inadvertent protectionism in the U.S. such as the persistence of County of Origin Labelling, tensions over softwood lumber, and environmental and agricultural policies with disguised protectionist potential. These threats need constant and persistent attention.

Sustainable, structural changes to improve trade infrastructure

Policy Goal: Improvement of Canada's international reputation on trade infrastructure

What we promised

CWF's Trade and Investment Centre spent eight years understanding the problems and developing a solution to repair weaknesses in Canada's trade infrastructure system based on international best practice. The TIC also assembled a national coalition of stakeholders to support its research and advocate for adoption of a data-driven long-term plan for trade infrastructure. We promised 2022 would be spent promoting and facilitating the adoption of this solution.

What we delivered

- TIC published the report From Shovel Worth to Shovel Ready, accompanied by a national media campaign which included written support by stakeholders in Canada and abroad and op-eds in national and regional papers, a written federal pre-budget submission and speaking engagements with stakeholders across the country. This work is showing results with increased awareness of the problems that CWF has identified and support for the solutions it has developed.
- CWF received funding from all three Prairie provinces to support our Senior Fellow to work to facilitate development and coordination of trade infrastructure projects.

What it means for Canada's West

The West is the most export dependent region of Canada and there is projected long-term increase in demand for what the West exports. Yet if exporters cannot move products or if customers do not believe that the West can deliver products, the opportunity and the prosperity it entails are at risk. If you can't move it, you can't sell it.

Natural Resources Centre

Report Card 2022

Legislation and regulation that benefits the West

Policy Goal: Ensure that climate emissions and environmental policies are designed and implemented in ways that make sense for Western Canada

What we promised

Western Canada is particularly sensitive to the effects of energy and emissions policies. For 2022, we promised to identify where national and provincial legislation and regulations get it right and where they get it wrong. Our goal is to help the West prosper in a rapidly changing regulatory environment.

What we delivered

- We followed the progress of the federal *Impact Assessment Act* under the Alberta Court of Appeal and into the Supreme Court, with a [What Now? brief](#) published within 24 hours of the Court of Appeal decision, [four op-eds](#) and media interviews.
- We produced a short report called [Methane Emissions and Canada's Oil and Gas Sector](#) that reviewed the substantial progress made to date under both provincial and federal methane emissions regulations. This report gained media attention and we followed up with an op-ed.
- When the federal policy on reducing fertilizer emissions came out, we really went to town together with our TIC colleagues. We held a webinar called [The Federal Fertilizer Policy: Straight talk on emissions reduction, sustainable farming practices and food production](#); we published op-eds in both Alberta and Saskatchewan on this topic; and we held discussions with key people in the agriculture sector as well as government.
- When the federal government came out with its proposed oil and gas emissions cap, we were outspoken—providing a written [submission and testimony to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Natural Resources](#), as well as giving media interviews.
- We appeared across the country on dozens of panels, interviews, and behind the pen in discussing federal and provincial approaches to energy, emissions and climate legislation – providing analysis and commentary on critical issues such as carbon taxes, fuel taxes, energy policy, electricity policy, the federal budget and jurisdictional challenges.

- And to help our audiences keep straight all the emissions and climate-related policy and regulations that had been put forward in 2022, we held an [end-of-year round-up webinar](#) that summarized highlights, key takeaways and what to watch for in 2023.

What it means for Canada's West

Western Canada's industry mix makes it disproportionately sensitive to the impacts of energy and emissions policy. Our research and recommendations to government encourage a balanced approach that considers environmental performance objectives alongside economic prosperity, Indigenous reconciliation and other goals.

Still to come

In 2023, we will continue to engage with legislation and regulations as they emerge, providing analysis and commentary that helps different audiences understand the real-world implications of government policy. Two pieces of legislation in particular will comprise major projects: the *Impact Assessment Act*, which is currently undergoing review by the Supreme Court, and the federal government's proposed Clean Electricity Regulations.

Thriving in the energy transformation

Policy Goal: Identify how local communities and specific groups can mitigate the negative impacts of climate policy and take advantage of new opportunities

What we promised

For 2022, we promised to partner, convene and analyze to create a better understanding of the potential impacts of energy system transformation on communities and regions and to produce policy recommendations for how the West and Canada can capitalize on emerging opportunities with nuclear energy, hydrogen, a more integrated electricity grid and other evolving technologies.

What we delivered

- We continued to produce the [Energy Innovation Brief](#), which highlights innovations in the energy sector and broadens subscriber understanding of sustainable energy. Eight issues of the EIB were published in 2022—including a “takeover” featuring the capstone projects of students in the University of Calgary's Master's program in Sustainable Energy Development. Our issue “[So crazy it might just work!](#)” garnered the most attention from external media and organizations, leading to additional interviews and presentations.
- In February, the Natural Resources Centre and the Human Capital Centre teamed up to host a dynamic half-day workshop: [Energy Jobs of the Future](#). Developed for youth and younger workers, the event explored careers in Canada's rapidly changing energy sector. The event consisted of

three panels focusing on employer needs, everyday life on the job and educating the workforce of tomorrow, and finished up with breakout sessions that allowed participants to ask questions directly of panelists. The event was extremely popular, with over 400 registrants.

- Norway is often held up as a global example of responsible oil and gas production—and they face many of the same challenges as Canada. To explore what can be learned from both countries, we held a webinar, [Balancing Act: Norway’s approach to O&G production and decarbonization goals](#), featuring Norway’s Ambassador to Canada and the Director of Energy Transition Initiative at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. To extend the impact, we produced a [What Now?](#) briefing that summarized key messages from the webinar.
- With Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in spring of 2022, energy security re-entered global discussion in a big way—and we dove into the topic as well. Through [op-eds](#), presentations, media interviews and numerous conversations with senior personnel in government and industry, we explored how Canada’s energy exports can and should be used to support global security outcomes.
- We continued to advance the agenda of a prosperous and sustainable Western Canadian energy sector. We provided analysis and commentary on issues that included carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS), future-fit hydrocarbons, the role of LNG, emissions reduction and Indigenous economic reconciliation.

What it means for Canada’s West

Western Canada contains the main building blocks for thriving in the energy transition – vast expertise producing and transporting energy of all types, a highly-skilled workforce, an entrepreneurial mindset, and phenomenal natural resources. Success will rely on smart planning, smart policies and good timing. Our work advances all three.

Still to come

In 2023, we will continue to produce recommendations for how the West and Canada can best capitalize on emerging opportunities with LNG, CCUS, nuclear energy, hydrogen, a more integrated electricity grid, future-fit hydrocarbons and other evolving technologies.

Using policy to shape ESG finance flows

Policy Goal: Resource sector businesses and western provinces capitalize on their strengths to respond to changing environmental and social governance (ESG) investing practices

What we promised

ESG reporting sits, for the most part, outside traditional regulatory compliance, but is strongly influenced by government policy. For 2022, we promised to fill a critical knowledge gap on how ESG intersects with provincial responsibilities and how those governments should respond.

What we delivered

- We published a major report in May 2022 titled ESG: Why should governments care and what can governments do? The report presents recommendations that will save governments time and money as they grapple with the implications of ESG. The report was sent to Deputy Ministers and other senior staff in all provinces and territories, as well as the federal government.
- After the report was reviewed by government agencies, we engaged in a series of roundtables and workshops with senior government personnel in B.C., Alberta and Saskatchewan to discuss the implications of the recommendations for each of those provinces.
- We also spoke at the Alberta Municipalities 2022 Convention about the implications of ESG for municipalities and how they could enhance business and investment attraction in their region.
- We participated as a partner in the Energy Futures Policy Collaborative, which addressed the question of how to use policy to unlock finance flows for future-fit innovation in Alberta's hydrocarbon sectors.
- And finally, we gave external presentations, including a keynote presentation at the Canadian Alternative Investment in Pensions conference, on the need for standardization in ESG frameworks from an industry perspective; and we participated on a webinar panel hosted by UBC and the German Embassy on whether regulatory frameworks are the right approach for greening financial products.

What it means for Canada's West

Increasingly, investment is directed at those projects that can minimize their environmental, social and governance risks. Policy can help that money flow—or can stand in its way. Our work helps both industry and government understand their role in changing financial criteria.

Still to come

In 2023, we will keep our eye on this important topic and we will produce an update of our 2021 report on ESG and the Canadian Energy Sector.

Targets, measurement and modelling that are transparent and meaningful

Policy Goal: Ensure that the models that drive policy are built on provincially representative assumptions and data in order to produce transparent and meaningful outputs

What we promised

All governments use models to estimate the impact of policies on emission reduction goals, economic goals and other outcomes. But different assumptions and datasets used in models can lead to very different results and the entity that controls the model is the one that controls inputs into policy decisions. For 2022, we promised to examine the federal “black box” modelling of policy impacts on emissions and the economy so that all affected parties can understand how the rules impact them.

What we delivered

- We produced a report: [Transparency and the Pan-Canadian Climate Framework in Action in the West: The case of Saskatchewan](#) that examined the ways in which federal government modelling and information-sharing about the framework has been less than fully transparent and discussed the implications for provinces. This was followed by two [op-eds](#) to reach additional audiences.

What it means for Canada’s West

Because of Canada’s diverse resource endowments, economies, emissions and energy systems, national level evaluations have little value at a local level. This project helped highlight the way in which high-level modelling and assumption-making often fail at a sub-national level.

Still to come

In 2023, we will still keep a close eye on this topic, however, it will not form a stand-alone project.

Human Capital Centre

Report Card 2022

The final piece of the competency puzzle: Engage employers

Policy Goal: A competency-based system of workforce development driven by the demand side (employers), rather than the supply side (educators)

What we promised

For years, employers have expected that education and training providers would supply the workforce they needed. In a competency-based system, they must actively contribute. In 2022, we promised to focus on how to further implement a competency-based system to improve Canada's workforce development by identifying policies and approaches to support employers.

What we delivered

- We attracted three employers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba to the Work Based Learning Consortium upskilling and reskilling project. The project team has built the competency-based job profiles and the associated on-line learning and on-the-job training curriculum for these job roles. We are following the progress of training, which is expected to finish by the end of Q1 2023.
- Other project training programs are ongoing at a major auto parts manufacturer in southern Ontario, and we have prepared the groundwork for an evaluative case study of employee training.
- We provided testimony to the [Senate Committee on Commerce, Banking and the Economy](#) about the need to rapidly upskill and reskill workers for the skilled economy and outlined steps to achieve that goal.
- A brief, [What Now? Rapid Employee Upskilling & Reskilling: An innovative approach to skills shortages](#), outlined how to develop a competency-based system geared to increasing workforce participation and in-demand skills in the skilled workforce.
- A Globe and Mail op-ed, [Canada needs a new training system for jobs that do not require postsecondary education](#) rounded out dissemination of this work for 2022. However, the topic struck a chord and the Auditor General of Canada's office and Alberta College Presidents also requested presentations based on the subject.

- We continued to research apprenticeship as a learning methodology and published an op-ed, [Going back to school? Think about an apprenticeship](#), in the Globe and Mail.
- In December we began discussions about research into employers' attitudes towards and interest in mentorship as part of the government of Alberta's move to increase the number of occupations that are learned primarily on-the-job.

What it means for Canada's West

Employers in the West have learned of practical ways to build the talent they need by working as active members of the workforce development ecosystem.

Collaborative capacity in civil society

Policy Goal: More effective and efficient collaboration among non-profit agencies by building collaborative competencies

What we promised

- Assist organizations in civil society to assess, understand and build organizational, relational and digital capacity to support collaboration and to discuss a new model for financing work in the sector.

What we delivered

- In 2021, we received funding from the Government of Alberta Civil Society Fund grants to work with a group of civil society sector organizations with an interest in building collaborative capacity. This work continued into 2022 and a second grant for this work was received in the spring.
- Our work with a group of Edmonton youth-serving agencies ended in June 2022. In the summer we began work with agencies in the Intimate Partner Violence sector with Edmonton Police and the City of Edmonton as the lead agencies. Through these projects, both groups developed some shared goals and came to a better understanding of each organization's roles along their clients' journeys.
- We used these projects to examine what it will take for sector agencies to be more collaborative. Stemming from this work and ready for publication in early 2023 are two tools for agencies to use. One helps agency leadership to assess their need to collaborate and to what extent. The other will help agencies understand how to collect, manage and share data that is crucial to improving outcomes for clients through increased collaboration.
- In April 2022, we published [Financing Social Solutions through Outcomes Procurement](#) which outlines why and how to turn the funding model on its head and finance the necessary work of social sector agencies, while reducing the workloads of the emergency services. A Calgary Herald op-ed also described this innovative model: [Saving Money and Saving the World with Bottom-up Collaboration](#).

What it means for Canada's West

Civil Society sector agencies in the West have tools to help them be more collaborative and an innovative model through which to finance their work. In the short and medium terms, the agencies with which we worked and others which use them will be better equipped to provide collaborative solutions and outcomes-based care to their clients and to achieve the ultimate goal of reducing the number of people who need their services.

Youth talent and retention

Policy Goal: Reverse the loss of young people from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba

What we promised

In 2021, we explored why it is difficult to retrain and attract youth to Alberta. In 2022, we promised to engage with economic development agencies and other institutions to share our findings and support implementation of our recommendations.

What we delivered

- We published two large reports; one that looked at youth migration across the West and the economic conditions that drive that migration: [The Young Are Restless: Western Youth Migration](#); and another that reported on our work in Alberta, [Work to Live: Alberta Youth Mobility](#).
- We followed the reports with three briefs. [What Now? Oh, the places youth could go!](#) illuminated just how much opportunity for meaningful work there was for youth in Alberta. [What Now? Bridging Alberta's Reputation-Reality Divide](#) discussed how telling better stories about Alberta was crucial for young people to change their negative perceptions. And [What Now? The New Alberta Talent Advantage](#) explained how to meet young adults' desire for experiences not just transactions when they make choices about how to spend their time and money.
- Two op-eds in the Globe and Mail further disseminated project findings: [Study sheds light on why young adults are leaving Alberta – and how to bring them back](#) and [Alberta's economy is diversifying, but it still has some challenges to overcome](#).

What it means for Canada's West

The Prairie provinces have seen swings in youth migration for decades. Manitoba and Saskatchewan have traditionally watched their young adults leave for other provinces. Youth tend to come and go in Alberta – in rhythm with oil price fluctuations. Trends in B.C. have not been as wild but in recent years the province has proven to be very attractive to youth from across the country. However, the Centre's work showed more than economics drive youth migration. In Alberta some negative perceptions drove out-migration between 2016 and 2021. Provincial governments and institutional and organizational leaders can help to change these perceptions.

With this in mind, we are in discussions to extend this work into Manitoba in 2023.

Energy workers and communities need a smooth transition too

Policy Goal: A smooth transition for energy workers and the communities disrupted by climate policies

What we promised

In 2022 we will use a competency-approach to develop policies to help workers in traditional oil, gas and coal extraction sectors face a transition to new careers and apply a competency approach to assist economic development agencies in smaller communities most affected by this transition seek investment from new employers. A critical aspect of investment attraction is a workforce with the right combination of skills. An adaptive competencies pathway to connect labour market information, investment attraction and available training will be tried and tested if funding permits.

What we delivered

- Funding to do this work has not yet been secured, however we continue to make the request to funders and are optimistic we will be successful.
- The Natural Resources Centre and Human Capital Centre joined forces to host the [Energy Jobs of the Future](#) webinar and [blog](#) to look at how youth and young people can transition from traditional jobs in the energy sector to the new jobs in hydrogen, geo-thermal, solar and other energy fields.

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