

A Guide to Hosting Your Own Conversation



Climate Change Consultations
for Newfoundland and Labrador



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Who Should Use this Guide?	2
Documents You Will Need	3
Important Considerations for Hosting a Conversation	4
Planning the Session	4
Delivering the Session	5
Idea Sharing and Discussion	6
Concluding the Session	6
Important Reminders for the Host	7
Important Reminders for the Note Taker	8
Other General Public Engagement Resources	8
Where to Send Your Conversation/Session Information	8
Appendices	9
Appendix A: Sample Invitation	9
Appendix B: Sample Agenda	10
Appendix C: Sample Event Scenario	11
Appendix D: Sample Introductory Script for the Host	13
Appendix E: How to Adjust for Larger Groups	14
Appendix F: Questions and Sample Prompts	15
Appendix G: Printable Documents	16
Appendix H: Privacy Notice	20

Introduction

The science is clear: the earth's climate is changing and human activities are the cause. While the scale of the challenge is great, the momentum for ambitious action to tackle climate change has never been stronger. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is developing a new strategy on climate change to ensure the province is well-positioned to manage the risks and take advantage of new opportunities. All Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are invited to take part in this conversation and share their ideas for action, suggestions, and thoughts on how to build a prosperous province with a low-carbon economy and communities that are well-adapted to the changing climate.

There are multiple opportunities for the public to engage in this important topic, including public discussion sessions in various locations in the province; online discussion sessions; engagement sessions hosted by community groups and others supported by this Guide; and an online feedback form, among others. For all the ways you can get involved and provide input, visit www.gov.nl.ca/TalkClimateChange.

Who Should Use this Guide?

Anyone interested in hosting a conversation or session related to the public engagement process on a new provincial climate change strategy should read this Guide.

- It contains important information on how to plan and facilitate a meaningful conversation.
- It references other helpful resources available to help you run a smooth and effective session.
- Additionally, a Note Taker's Template (for note takers to use when capturing ideas discussed at the session) and Participant Action-Idea Sheet (for participants to use to write down any additional ideas they may want to have considered) are provided at the end of this Guide. These pages, which are also available online at www.gov.nl.ca/TalkClimateChange can be photocopied for use during your session.

While this guide has largely been designed to assist those interested in hosting relatively small community-based conversations (i.e., about 15 people or less), many of the ideas and sample materials contained here can be used - with some modifications - for larger audiences. If you expect more than 15 participants to attend your session, please refer to *Appendix E: How to Adjust for Larger Groups*.

Documents You Will Need

For your conversation you will need the following:

- Copies of the discussion document, *Climate Change Consultations for Newfoundland and Labrador: Discussion Guide 2016*, which outlines key elements of the impacts and opportunities associated with climate change and includes the key questions that the public is being asked to consider during this engagement process.
- Copies of the *Note Taker's Template*, and/or a laptop computer to capture ideas emerging from the session.
- Copies of the *Participant Action-Idea Sheet* for all participants (found at the end of this *Guide* and also available for download on the website below) to ensure all participants' ideas are captured.
- An electronic copy of the Powerpoint presentation deck or alternate presentation materials, if desired.

All of these documents are available online at www.gov.nl.ca/TalkClimateChange. If you have any questions about the materials or would like a copy sent to you, please contact the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency at (709) 729 1210 or climatechange@gov.nl.ca.

Important Considerations for Hosting a Conversation

Planning the Session

Good planning is critical to hosting a meaningful engagement session. We recommend that individuals interested in hosting a session:

- Set a date for the session that allows you sufficient time to notify participants.
- Set a time for your session that you think can work for the people you want to invite or believe would like to participate.
- Arrange an appropriate venue for the session ensuring it is accessible, appropriately-sized and comfortable (visit the location in advance to be sure it meets your needs).
- Invite the people you want to attend or believe will be interested in the topic (see Appendix A: Sample Invite).
- Find an individual who you believe can be an effective note taker (see the section *Important Reminders for the Note Taker*).
- Review the discussion document, *Climate Change Consultations for Newfoundland and Labrador: Discussion Guide 2016*, and become familiar with the issues and questions under consideration. Additional information about climate change and Newfoundland and Labrador can be found at www.turnbackthetide.ca
- On the day of the session, set up the room appropriately (e.g., to encourage a relaxed atmosphere and to stimulate discussion, consider arranging chairs in a circle or semi-circle, or around a table).

- Ensure you have a laptop computer for use by the Note Taker or sufficient paper copies of the *Note Taker's Template*.
- Ensure that you have ample copies of the discussion document and the *Participant Action-Idea Sheet* as well as enough pencils/pens for your audience.
- All hosts are encouraged to use all three discussion questions at their sessions. However, if you or your organization has specific interest in only one or two of the discussion topics, you may modify your session accordingly.

Delivering the Session

Welcome/Introduction

- Get started on time.
- Safety. Let people know where emergency exits are located and any other safety-related messages you feel are necessary.
- Introduce yourself and welcome the participants. See Appendix D: *Sample Introductory Script for the Host*.
- Describe the purpose of the session and review the agenda.
- Advise the participants that the note taker will not write down the names of people making comments, but to keep in mind this is a public event (see Appendix H which includes a sample privacy notice). Direct participants' attention to the privacy notice on their table.
- Give participants any special instructions/reminders about the session (see the section *Important Reminders for the Host*).
- If size of audience and time allow, invite participants to introduce themselves.
- Ask participants to briefly review the discussion document (ideally each should have a copy) or make a brief presentation on the main themes contained in the document. A presentation, with speaking notes, that can be used for this is available at www.gov.nl.ca/TalkClimateChange.

Idea Sharing and Discussion

- Begin the discussion by reminding people that there will be three distinct rounds of discussion based on three related questions and an opportunity at the end to cover other topics or issues that were not already addressed or discussed.
- Ask the first question and encourage the audience to begin sharing ideas.
- If the conversation is slow to start, ask some prompting questions (see Appendix F: *Questions and Sample Prompts*).
- Work through the three questions with participants and encourage all to participate. If required, take steps to ensure single individuals do not dominate the discussion (Note: people should be given opportunities to contribute but make it clear that they are not required to do so).
- Ensure the note taker captures the key points on the provided templates (written or electronically).
- Between each question, if time permits, ask participants, “Now that you have heard ideas from everyone on this question, have any new ideas emerged for you? Is there anything you want to say about one or more of the ideas raised by another?”
- At the end of the three questions or rounds of discussion, if time permits, ask “Are there any other possible action-ideas you want to mention before we close the session?”

Concluding the Session

- Thank everyone for attending and for participating in the conversation.
- Let them know that all comments collected during the session will be rolled up and posted online. They will also be sent to the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency where they will be organized and merged with input from all other public sessions and then be provided to decision-makers for consideration. The privacy of individuals will be protected throughout the process.
- Collect all public input (the Note Taker’s e-file and/or recording sheets; Participant Action-Idea Sheets).
- Ensure all e-files and hand-written input collected is provided to the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency as soon as possible.

Important Reminders for the Host

- Clearly state that your main role is to ensure that action-ideas are collected and positive discussion occurs among participants.
- Ask participants to turn off phones, or set to vibrate.
- Tell the participants where the washrooms and emergency exits are and inform them of any other safety issues related to the facility.
- Should any media be present at your session, identify them to the audience and ask the media to conduct any conversations with participants outside the main room to avoid disruptions and to not record individual statements unless authorized.
- Encourage participants to speak openly and honestly, and listen to and respect the views of others.
- Explain the role of the recorder (see the section *Important Reminders for the Note Taker*).
- Ask the three main questions as outlined and try to keep participants focused on the question being discussed.
- Explain how we want to capture all ideas (even those ideas where not everyone agrees).
- Stay neutral on specific ideas presented.
- Ensure no one individual dominates the discussion time. If an individual continues to talk beyond the agreed upon time, you can ask them to wrap up their remarks and tell them this idea has been captured and if time permits, you will revisit the topic at the end of the session.

Important Reminders for the Note Taker

- Ensure that any information that is obviously identifying is not written down (e.g., if someone says “as a person with four children living in Freshwater my idea is...” you should record “as a parent who lives in a small community my idea is...”).
- Capture all individual action-ideas related to the three guiding questions using participants’ words.
- Seek clarification on actions noted, if required, by repeating back what has been captured.
- Enter each idea into the appropriate (electronic or paper) form provided.
- Capture an idea multiple times if it is raised multiple times.
- Ensure that the Privacy Notice at Appendix H is at your table and/or displayed in the room.

Other General Public Engagement Resources

For additional information on public engagement principles and practices, the document *Public Engagement Guide*, is available at ope.gov.nl.ca/publications/pdf/OPE_PEGuide.pdf.

The International Association for Public Participation website (www.iap2.org/) also contains a variety of resources on how to plan and organize effective public participation activities.

Where to Send Your Conversation/Session Information

Mail: Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency
P.O. Box 8700, 5th Floor, West Block,
Confederation Building, St. John’s, NL A1B 4J6

Fax: 709-729-1119
Email: climatechange@gov.nl.ca

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Invitation

The following is meant to give you an idea about what you might say in an invitation to the session you are planning. Feel free to personalize this and adjust it to make it relevant to the participants you are inviting.

Good Afternoon,

You are invited to a public engagement session in **(Community)** at the **(Venue)** on **(Date)** beginning at **(Time)**.

As you have likely heard, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is developing a strategy on climate change and is inviting all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to contribute ideas for action, suggestions and potential solutions to tackle this issue.

Climate change presents both impacts and opportunities for the province. At this session, we will be discussing how government can take steps to lower greenhouse gas emissions while growing the economy and having prosperous communities that are well-adapted to the changing climate, and we are seeking your ideas and input. For details on this session and to register, call **(Telephone number)**.

Thank you,

Host's Name (and organizational affiliation if appropriate)

Appendix B: Sample Agenda

The following is a recommended agenda for a session of approximately 15 participants. If you expect your sessions to be attended by more than 15 people, see the *Appendix D: How to Adjust for Larger Groups*.

A Conversation About a Climate Change Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador	
Date:	
Location:	
Welcome/Introduction	5 minutes
Overview of the Session (Purpose; Agenda)	5 minutes
Climate Change Overview (presentation or review of discussion document)	10 minutes
Discussion Questions	
Question 1: What should the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador do to support clean economic growth?	30 minutes
Question 2: What steps do you think need to be taken to better adapt to climate change?	30 minutes
Question 3: How should the Provincial Government demonstrate leadership on climate change?	30 minutes
Question 4: Is there anything else you would like to add on the development of a climate change strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador?	10 minutes
Wrap up and Thank you	5 minutes

Appendix C: Sample Event Scenario

Event name: A Conversation on Climate Change for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians

Organized by:

Date:

Start time & expected duration:

Location:

Event set-up:

- Note taker will use a tablet/laptop/paper template to record participant.
- Participants will be provided with copies of the discussion guide - Climate Change Consultations for Newfoundland and Labrador: Discussion Guide 2016.
- Pens and paper.

Order of Events:

- (Sample times are provided. Please adjust to the time of day your session is being held)

7:00 p.m.

Welcome/Introductions 5 min

- Host welcomes participants
- If time permits, and the audience is not already familiar with each other, ask participants to briefly introduce themselves
- Read the introductory script

7:05 p.m.

Overview of the Session 5 min

- Review the purpose of the session
- Review the format for the session
- Explain roles of the host, note taker etc.
- Review the privacy notice

- 7:10 p.m. **Climate Change Overview** 10 min
- Briefly review the information contained in the discussion document that provides the basis for your discussion. The host may also use the Powerpoint presentation available on the website at www.gov.nl.ca/TalkClimateChange
- 7:20 p.m. **Discussion Question # 1 - Growing the Green Economy** 30 min
- The host introduces the first discussion cycle.
 - Question: **What should the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador do to support clean economic growth?**
 - For each of discussion the note taker captures ideas and comments without attributing names or personal information;
 - Facilitator provides a time check at 15 and 25 minute marks
- 7:50 p.m. **Discussion Round #2- Adapting to Climate Change** 30 min
- The host thanks everyone for their contributions to the first question and introduces the second discussion cycle
 - Question: **What steps do you think need to be taken to better adapt to climate change?**
 - Process repeats as above
- 8:20 p.m. **Discussion Round #3 – Government Leadership** 30 min
- The host thanks everyone for their contributions to the second question and introduces the third discussion cycle
 - Question: **How should the Provincial Government demonstrate leadership on climate change?**
 - Process repeats as above
- 8:50 p.m. **Discussion Round #4** 10 min
- The host thanks everyone for their contributions and advises that there is now one additional opportunity to add any additional input that they feel they haven't expressed already.
 - Question: **Is there anything else you would like to add on the development of a climate change strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador?**
- 9:00 p.m. **Thank you and Wrap Up**
- Event concludes

Appendix D: Sample Introductory Script for the Host

This sample script is meant to help you introduce the session. Feel free to personalize this and make it relevant to the participants you are hosting.

Welcome and thank you for attending this conversation on climate change.

My name is _____ and I am the host of this session.

Scientists are clear: climate change is happening and human activities are the cause. There is a renewed push across Canada and around the world to spur clean economic growth and to build strong communities that are well-adapted to the impacts of climate change. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is developing a strategy on climate change to ensure the province is positioned to adapt to the impact of climate change and to seize green economy opportunities. To inform this strategy, Government is asking all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to contribute their ideas for action and suggestions. The contributions you make at these sessions will be sent to the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, and will be critical in shaping the path forward.

Today we will discuss three questions. They can be found in the discussion document which also provides an overview of the topics and sets the context for our discussion here today. We will have about 30 minutes to discuss each question. We understand that all of the questions are connected and some ideas may apply to more than one question (**e.g., a single idea might help grow the green economy and help communities adapt to climate change**). Don't worry if your idea does not neatly fit into the particular question under consideration. What's most important here is that your ideas are shared, understood and recorded.

Please speak openly and honestly and respect the views of others during the session. All views and ideas are considered important. My job as your host is to ensure that the discussion stays on track, that everyone has an opportunity to contribute, that the discussion is respectful, and that we cover the three questions we have been asked to consider in the time we have.

Firstly, it is important to note that none of the input collected at this session will be personally attributed. In other words, no names will be associated with any answers or input captured. Any language used that would potentially allow someone to be inadvertently identified after the fact will not be captured. Furthermore, as you have noticed, no attendance has been or is being taken. Any registration information that may have been collected was only used to gauge the number of participants likely to attend this session, and will be destroyed. For more information on how we will address such issues, please see the Privacy Notice we have provided (**Note: have a copy of the Privacy Notice in this guide on hand, preferably taped to a wall or door where people can easily view it, or distributed on tables where people are seated**). This is, however, a public session and we remind you to use your own judgement when sharing personal stories or information.

Appendix E: How to Adjust for Larger Groups

Be ready to adjust your session if more people arrive than expected by having additional chairs and materials available. However, if you expect or are planning for more than 15 people at your session, some pre-session modifications to the agenda and additional planning are recommended.

Larger group sessions are more complex and difficult to plan for and implement than smaller sessions. The larger the group, the more difficult it becomes to capture the views of all participants as individuals may be more intimidated to speak openly, there is an increased risk of disruptive sidebar conversations and there may not be enough time to hear from everyone adequately.

If you know in advance that you are likely to get a large number of people at your session, we recommend that you arrange the room to allow for smaller table discussions (**i.e., six to eight people per table**). You can identify one volunteer person per table to act as table note taker/facilitator (**Note: if you have the people required, a better alternative is to have one facilitator and one note taker per table**). In this case, as Host, you become the lead-facilitator who periodically gives guidance to your table volunteers. The session agenda would also need to be modified somewhat to reflect the need for tables to give brief 'report-backs' to the larger group. For instance, if you opted to go with three tables of eight people because you did not want to have an open plenary discussion with 24 people, instead of allotting 30 minutes per question for individuals to present ideas (**the scenario for 15 or less people**), you would give each table 20 minutes to discuss their ideas and then each table would also have approximately three minutes each to present the key ideas or highlights emerging from their table discussion.

If you are caught off guard by the arrival of more people than anticipated, and there are not enough discussion documents available for everyone, ask people to share the discussion document and to write down their ideas on note paper. (**Note: it is always advisable to have extra materials on hand, including note paper and pens, no matter how many people you are expecting**)

Appendix F: Questions and Sample Prompts

Question 1: **What should the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador do to support clean economic growth?**

Possible prompts:

- What can the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador do to support individuals, businesses, and communities to lower greenhouse gas emissions?
- How can we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions?
- How can the Province support further uptake in energy efficiency and growth in the green economy?
- Should the Province adopt carbon pricing? If so, how could the revenues be used?
- What ideas presented by others do you like/not like?
- After listening to others, have any additional ideas emerged for you?

Question 2: **What steps do you think need to be taken to better adapt to climate change?**

Possible prompts:

- What can municipalities do to be better prepared for a changing climate?
- How can we minimize risks associated with climate change to property and public health and safety?
- What information gaps need to be filled?
- What tools and resources would help individuals, businesses, and communities take account of climate change in their planning and decision-making?
- What role can professions and professional associations play?
- How can planning and decision-making be improved?
- What ideas presented by others do you like/not like?
- After listening to others, have any additional ideas emerged for you?

Question 3: **How should the Provincial Government demonstrate leadership on climate change?**

Possible prompts:

- How can the Provincial Government reduce GHGs and improve energy efficiency in its own operations?
- How can we raise public awareness on climate change?
- What policies, regulations, and standards could the Provincial Government adopt to set a clear direction for the province?
- Should the Province adopt a greenhouse gas reduction target in between the 2020 and 2050 targets?
- What ideas presented by others do you like/not like?
- After listening to others, have any additional ideas emerged for you?

Appendix H: Privacy Notice

- We want participants to feel comfortable expressing views and have taken these steps to ensure you are not identified:
 - We will not write down the names of individuals making comments
 - The note taker will not write down information that would obviously identify you
 - Registration information will be destroyed after the session
 - Attendance will not be taken
- Please keep in mind that this is a public event. While we will take steps to ensure individuals are not identified in government documents, we cannot control what other participants may say outside this room.
- Your views are being collected under the authority of section 61(c) of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015*, for the purpose of identifying opportunities and potential solutions to the impacts associated with climate change in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- If you have any questions about how this information will be collected, used and disclosed, please contact the Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency at (709) 729-1210 or by emailing climatechange@gov.nl.ca.

Office of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency
5th Floor, West Block, Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Share ideas online by visiting www.gov.nl.ca/TalkClimateChange

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