





# How can researchers inform and accelerate the shift to a Green Economy?

**Professor Stewart Elgie** 







# **Canadian Context**

- Green growth agenda stalled in Canada 2007-15
  - Key barrier = economy. Highly partisan issue.
  - Green growth seen as 'threat' (resource/carbon intensive)
- How can researchers help to change this?
  - Built env-econ research network (2008+) not enough
  - Change the public debate create safe space for new gov't
  - Break the env't *versus* economy narrative
- Needed (a) <u>credible economic experts</u> to build understanding / legitimacy on policies for green economy, and (b) <u>prominent leaders</u> (business, NGO, politics) to provide economic credibility and political cover
- Action: Create two major research and policy change initiatives (2013-15)





### CANADA'S ECOFISCAL COMMISSION

# Practical solutions for growing prosperity

**Goal**: Build support for <u>pollution pricing</u> through blue chip economists plus prominent national leaders (cut across politics and env - economy)

#### Who is on it? 2 tier structure:

Advisory Council

- Ex-leaders of all political parties
- CEOs of business and NGOs

Commissioners

- 11 top fiscal/economic experts
- All independent, highly credible

Secretariat

- Coordinate and manage
- Research, writing, comms



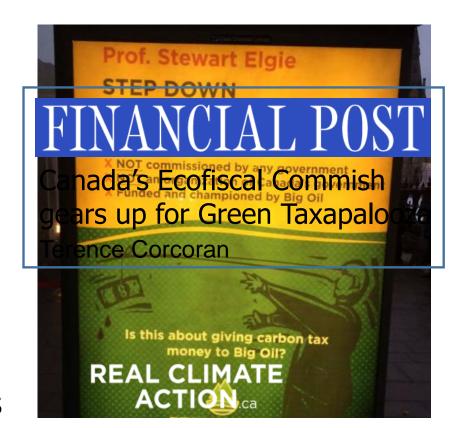


## CANADA'S ECOFISCAL COMMISSION

# Practical solutions for growing prosperity

# **Output and Impact:**

- 3 major reports / year (re: pricing)
  - Carbon pricing (main), roads, water, etc
  - 10-15 events/ year
  - 100+ media stories / year
- High impact on policy makers/shapers,
  and surprisingly big impact on political leaders
  - Lead role in rehabilitating carbon pricing in Canada
  - Helped shape new government's carbon pricing policy
  - Less impact on other pricing issues (so far)



# **Smart Prosperity**

**Goal**: Drive clean growth policy change through (i) policy-relevant *research*; (ii) *connecting* scholars with business, government and NGO leaders, and (iii) broader *communication*. *Ideas* + *Impact*.

#### What? 2 tier structure

## 1. SP Institute (research network / think tank hybrid)

- Network: 80+ scholars economy, policy, law (¾ Canadian, ¼ global)
- Expert staff: research, comms, events
- Global partners: e.g. GGKP, Grantham, OECD, RFF, Duke, UCL
- Focus: policies on (i) Clean Innovation; (ii) Resource Efficiency (Circular Econ.); (iii) Price Pollution, and (iv) Conserve & Value Nature (Bio Econ)

## 2. SP Initiative (Leaders Group)

- 30+ prominent business CEOs (all sectors) and NGO leaders
- Work with nation's top communications experts
- Release reports / letters / statements on clean growth
- > A powerful platform, builds on Institute's research



# **Smart Prosperity**

# **Output and Impact:**

- SP Research Institute
  - 15-20 reports, briefs / year (research -> key policy issues)
  - 15-20 events / year (research + policy, *interactive*)
  - High impact on policy-makers/shapers and 'experts'
  - 40-50 media stories / yr; 11,000 social media followers
- SP Initiative (Leaders)
  - 2 major reports per year (built on research)
    - Clean growth, innovation, bio-econ, etc
  - High profile statements by business/NGO CEOs
  - High impact on political leaders, public debate
    - Launch generated 500+ stories, trended on twitter, quoted in PM/Premiers speeches
    - o Letter by 100 CEOs built critical momentum for national climate & clean growth plan





# Lessons and Challenges: Broader

# Challenges

- Alignment: academic system d/n reward policy impact
- Most academics aren't policy change experts
  - Knowledge translation, connection, communication are key
  - Need 'intermediary' skills (bodies)
- Hard to fund in university model
  - Mix of foundations, gov't, companies, research councils
- Individual universities wanting credit (impediment)

#### Lessons

- Academics can have real policy impact, with direction and support
- Creating incentives, training, support = hard, but possible
- Building a powerful platform helps (joint action, mobilization, 'brand')



