

FROM THE GROUND UP

toolkit for a Green New Deal

ACTION #5
BIRDDOG YOUR
FEDERAL MP!

GREENPEACE

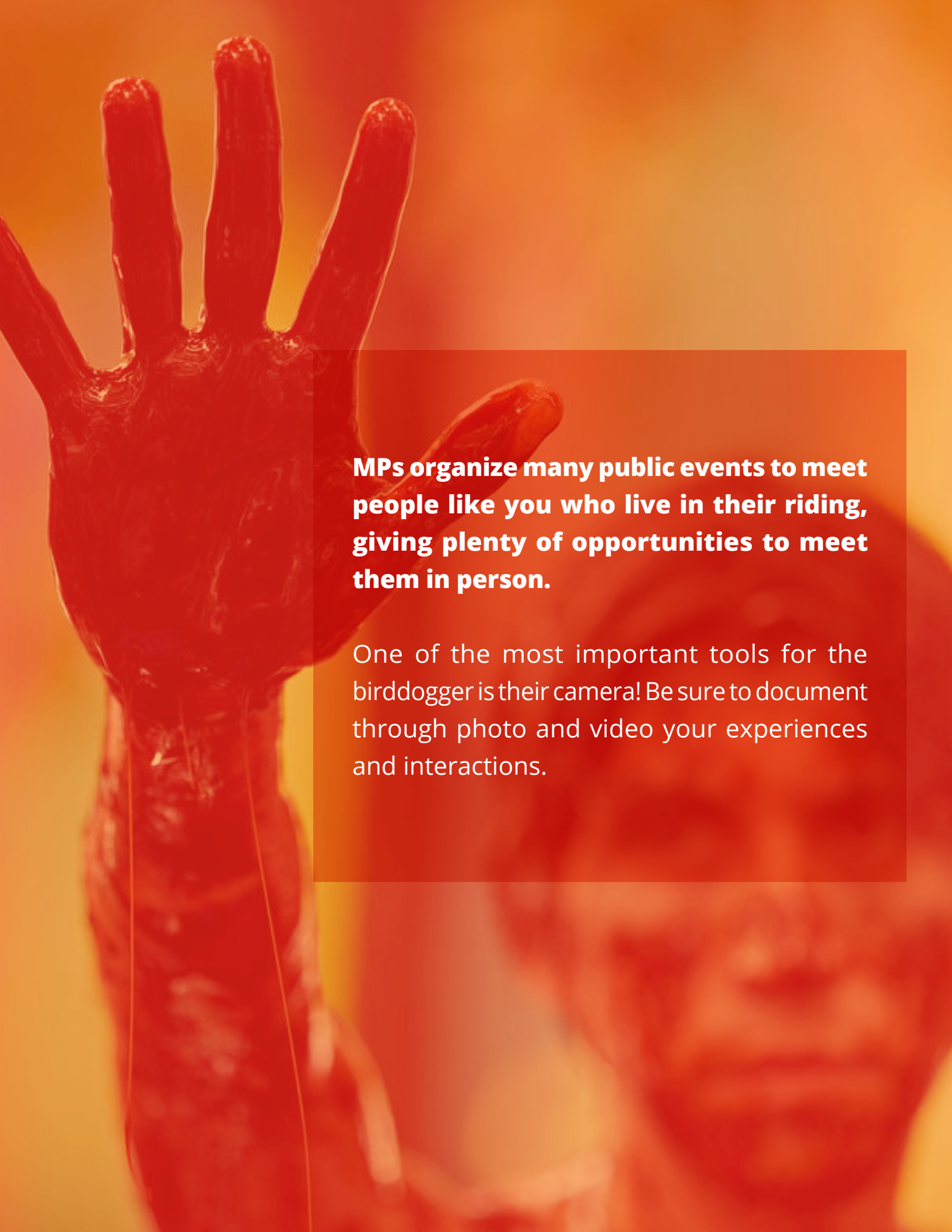
“I WANT YOU TO ACT AS IF THE HOUSE WAS ON FIRE”

–GRETA THUNBERG



Bird-dogging is a powerful tool for ensuring your concerns are heard, and that our political leaders aren't shying away from real conversations about climate change and Canada's future.

This involves one or more people or 'bird-doggers' going to public events where elected representatives, will appear. The bird-doggers ask pointed questions about issues they care about in order to elicit a response and educate the media and the public. It's a good opportunity to publicly ask politicians to support a Green New Deal (GND) for Canada or ask what their positions are towards a GND. Because members of the media often attend these events, bird-dogging plays an important role in getting positions "on record." We all know that politicians don't always keep their promises, so this is a vital part of holding them accountable to their constituents.



MPs organize many public events to meet people like you who live in their riding, giving plenty of opportunities to meet them in person.

One of the most important tools for the birddogger is their camera! Be sure to document through photo and video your experiences and interactions.

NOT SURE WHAT TO ASK?

Here are 5 key questions to ask your MP on their stance for a Green New Deal in Canada:

#1 The global scientific community has given us 11 years to cut our emissions in half. Many suggest for Canada this timeline is even shorter, as Canada, an already industrialized nation, should move even faster. Given the short timeline and the urgent need to cut emissions there is no room for new fossil fuel development projects. Would you commit to ending new fossil fuel development projects to ensure a safe future for all of us?

#2 Canada has yet to fully implement the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the full recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Committee. Would you pledge to fully implement both so we can begin to live up to our commitments to Indigenous peoples?



#3 Canada continues to pour billions of dollars into subsidizing fossil fuel development despite the urgent need to transition away from it. Will you commit to fully phasing out fossil fuel subsidies?

#4 Many workers, especially in the fossil fuel sector, are struggling to find work. Knowing that the world has committed to moving away from fossil fuels and for our own safety we must too what would you do to support workers in finding new employment in more sustainable industries and how would you ensure they are good jobs that you can support a family on?

#5 Would you support a holistic plan to meet the demands of science and justice? Would you support a Green New Deal?

ATTEND A PUBLIC MEETING, DEBATE OR SPECIAL EVENT!

Use your voice and send a powerful message to garner support for a Green New Deal!

Public events are a great place to ask your local federal MP tough climate questions, and make sure they know that voting for the climate is a priority for you. Most ridings will host at least one special event or debate which is open to the public to engage on important topics. Prepare a question in advance that you would like to ask your MP; you can use our sample questions above or make up your own.

The format of these public meetings vary. Try to find out what the structure will be in advance, to ensure you don't miss the opportunity to ask your question. If the information isn't publicized, reach out to the organizers directly.



When it's time to ask your question, don't panic! Many of the audience members will be grateful to you for asking your question. Be clear and to the point. Stay at the mic until your question gets answered.

MP events are often listed in local papers or shared on social media, yet the easiest way to find out is to contact your MP's office directly to ask.

TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS BEFORE YOU BIRDDOG

- Keep an eye on the campaign travel schedules of a local MP you want to target; you can do this by calling their office, subscribing to their party's list or tracking their social media. Your newspaper may also list town hall meetings and other events.
- Events and their locations will often be announced with only a day or two's notice, so it's a good idea to have an action plan ready that you can deploy on short notice.
- Ensure your questions are concise.
- Feel confident in the background information related to your question.

- Think about the tone of your message and what you're trying to achieve. Ask yourself—*"What will the audience get from this exchange?"* The listening public should learn from your question as they listen, regardless of how it is answered.
- Practice with a friend before you go.
- Get creative and raise awareness by bringing a sign, placard or banner to the event (though keep in mind that signs might impact your ability to make it into certain events).
- If you're disruptive you're more likely to be removed quickly. So decide strategically when to do so.
- In some situations, you may be detained or arrested. Greenpeace Canada is not asking anyone to take actions that block or impede election events, or candidates.
- If you sneak into an event and are noticed you will probably be asked to leave or removed.



- Be creative and as funny, dramatic or theatrical as you want—the sky is the limit when thinking of things to do that will help achieve your goals. Costumes can be fun!
- Don't forget your camera to capture and share your experience/interactions.
- Just remember to keep them peaceful, and [on message!](#)

SHARE! WE REALLY WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU DID!

We're asking everyone to send in their experiences and photos to help create a shared, growing story. Share your photos, videos, blogs and vlogs via Twitter, Facebook or Instagram.



Use Hashtags:

#GreenNewDeal

#GreenNewDealCanada

#ActionsNotWords

Don't forget to tag us [@GreenpeaceCA](#) and [@GPCvolunteers](#) on Twitter and [@greenpeace_canada](#) on Instagram.

Another great way to share your story is on [Greenwire](#), an online organizing tool for Greenpeace volunteers which will help you connect to other activists.

NEED EXTRA HELP?

Please contact actions@greenpeace.ca for more advice or support.

A large Greenpeace ship is shown on the water. The ship is white with a red hull and has the word "GREENPEACE" written in large, bold, white letters on the side. A rainbow flag is visible on the right side of the ship. The ship is equipped with various antennas and equipment on its deck. The background shows a calm sea and a hazy sky.

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GOOD LUCK AND THANK YOU!