FOR MORE THAN 35 YEARS, THE COUNCIL OF CANADIANS HAS BEEN A HOME FOR PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT A BETTER FUTURE IS NOT ONLY POSSIBLE, BUT NECESSARY.

The unwavering efforts and generous financial support of people like you—our members, donors, and chapter activists across the country—has helped hold elected representatives accountable and challenged the destructive influence of corporations on our governments.

We know that people power is our surest bet in winning a more just world—when we move together, we win.

Here’s a snapshot of what we collectively accomplished over the last year.

ORGANIZED FOR PROGRESSIVE POST-ELECTION CHANGE

Last September’s federal election brought another Liberal minority government to power, and, together, we acted quickly to put a progressive agenda before the new cabinet.

As part of the “Climate Code Red” week of action in October, more than 50 communities from coast to coast took part in locally-led actions, calling on the federal government to implement just transition legislation in the first 100 days of Parliament.

In January, thousands of you signed on to our alternative mandate letters for the new Cabinet Ministers, helping to keep progressive priorities in focus on water, trade, the climate crisis, and health.

When the federal government announced its new budget, we raised our collective voices to oppose tax credits for false climate ‘solutions’ like Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS). And in May, we joined 112 other organizations in urging the government to eliminate all subsidies, public financing, and other forms of financial support to the oil and gas sector by the end of 2022.

As Parliament returns this fall, we will continue to keep up the pressure to make sure the government serves the people, not corporate executives.

RAISED OUR VOICES IN OPPOSITION TO CLIMATE-WRECKING PROJECTS

Canada’s continuing role as an exporter of thermal coal—the most polluting source of energy—has been putting our emissions obligations in jeopardy. Last fall, we joined more than 40,000 other Canadians, and nearly 50 organizations from across the country, in an open letter to Prime Minister Trudeau demanding that the government end its toxic relationship with coal for good.

In May, Council of Canadians chapters and friends on both sides of the Atlantic spoke up against Bay du Nord, a deepwater offshore drilling project in the Flemish Pass, to the east of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Canadian government approved the project just days after the UN Secretary General called funding new fossil fuel projects “moral and economic madness.” So when Equinor, the parent company behind the project, had their AGM in Norway, we made sure that shareholders and executives heard our opposition.

Fridays for Future rally in Antigonish.
CELEBRATED VICTORIES!

After eight years of resistance from Mi’kmaw water protectors, grassroots grandmothers, Elders, youth, and settler allies—including Council of Canadians staff and supporters from across Mi’kma’ki and beyond—Alton Gas announced last fall that it will decommission its Natural Gas Storage Project in Nova Scotia.

And in February, the years-long movement to end offshore drilling in Nova Scotia celebrated a major triumph: the offshore exploration licenses for BP and Equinor expired, leaving no remaining offshore oil and gas projects in the province.

Each blow to the fossil fuel industry is a testament to the power of our collective grassroots resistance. To every one of you who participated in the struggle—whether it was by being on the frontlines, writing a letter, signing a petition, calling decision-makers, or donating time and money—thank you!

STOOD IN SOLIDARITY WITH INDIGENOUS STRUGGLES

For years, you’ve joined us in advocating for the right of First Nations to have the sovereignty, resources, and tools they need to ensure safe drinking water on reserves. Last fall, we delivered powerful messages from more than 1,600 elementary school students from across Canada to Prime Minister Trudeau: hand-written notes and drawings asking that he finally put an end to Drinking Water Advisories on First Nations reserves.

Many of you also answered to the call for solidarity from Wet’suwet’en land and water defenders, who have been protecting their traditional, unceded territory from extractive corporate pipelines and increased militarization from the RCMP.

And in Ontario, many of you opposed new mining and logging permits on Grassy Narrows territory that were granted by the Ford government without even notifying the community. Together, we let the government know that these violations of the First Nation’s rights and sovereignty would only compound the harm that decades of mercury, clearcut logging, hydro dams, and residential schools have already done.

FOUGHT FOR A PEOPLE’S VACCINE

Our federal government has sacrificed equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines on the altar of intellectual property rights—and you’ve responded in countless numbers to our call to oppose the government’s quiet complicity with Big Pharma.

Hundreds of you attended our virtual town hall on how people in Canada can ensure global access to life-saving vaccines. Hundreds more signed our parliamentary petition calling on the government to stop blocking the manufacturing of generic vaccines in Canada and support the temporary suspension of patents at the World Trade Organization. And across the country, you brought the case for a People’s Vaccine to your local MPs.

Thanks to your support, we also commissioned a blistering poll in early June showing that two out of three Canadians want our government to support a patents waiver on COVID-19 tools like vaccines.

Then, on the eve of the recent ministerial meeting of the WTO, we released a powerful open letter—signed by prominent Canadian and international advocates like Stephen Lewis, Joseph Stiglitz, Naomi Klein, and Dr. Joanne Liu—urging Trudeau to listen to Canadians and the rest of the world, not Big Pharma.

With your help, we will continue to keep up the fight for putting human lives before the profits of pharmaceutical monopolies. For more about this campaign, see the feature piece on page 6.

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TOGETHER WE CAN

JOINED TOGETHER IN SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF HATE

With the arrival of the so-called “Freedom Convoy” in Ottawa earlier this year, many of us were shaken and angered to see the harassment of residents and health care workers, expressions of racism, white supremacy, and far-right organizing on our streets, and the double standards in law and policing.

In response, the Council of Canadians spearheaded a national initiative called the Community Solidarity Project to arm local communities with the resources they need to protect themselves and to find grassroots solutions to the underlying issues fueling the rise of the far-right.

Thousands of you also joined us in two well-attended public forums—the first to reflect on the threats posed to our democracy by the Convoy’s occupation of Ottawa, and another on the policing of protests in Canada.
PROTECTED WATER AS A PUBLIC GOOD

When the Ontario government renewed permits last fall allowing an American bottled water giant to extract billions of litres of precious groundwater, you joined in incredible numbers to voice your opposition. The most powerful tool against the commodification of water is an organized network of people committed to safeguarding water as a public trust and shared commons. We thank the tens of thousands of you who became Public Water Champions and took our pledge never to use commercial bottled water.

This year, we also welcomed two new Blue Communities: the municipality of North Grenville and Huron University College, both in Ontario. They join 85 other Blue Communities around the world, committing to protect water as a human right and public good.

HELPED EXPOSE THE REACH OF BIG FOREIGN OIL

As the world grapples with a growing climate emergency, we released a comprehensive report by Gordon Laxer, shedding light on the enormous power that wealthy foreign-owned oil corporations wield over climate policy and democracy in Canada. The production of this report, co-published with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, would not have been possible without your support.

Hundreds of you also joined our webinar in conversation with Gordon Laxer and took the findings from the report into your own communities for discussion. Stay tuned for more collective deliberations on this important study in the coming days.

KEPT OUR MOVEMENT GOING

None of our achievements as an organization would have been possible without your financial contributions. Thanks to your generous support, we can continue to pride ourselves on our political independence, refusing to accept funding from governments or corporations.

We are ever grateful to all of you—our donors, supporters, members, and chapter activists. Thank you for all you do! CP

Summary statement of our revenues and expenses in the fiscal year that ended on December 31, 2021:

REVENUES

Memberships and contributions 4,539,295
Foundation grants 117,406
Other income 6,368
Total Revenue 4,663,069

EXPENSES

Political work 1,130,505
National and international campaigns 706,976
Local and regional campaigns 423,529
Communications & outreach 474,642
Annual conference 4,431
Fundraising 968,103
Finance & admin 613,447
Total Expense 3,191,128
Net Revenue 1,471,941

% OF EXPENSE TOTAL

Political work 35%
National and international campaigns 22%
Local and regional campaigns 13%
Communications & outreach 15%
Annual conference 0.14%
Fundraising 19%
Finance & admin 30%