

# GREEN LEFT CANADA

## Constitution

### Article 1: The Body Constituted

1.1 The body constituted is Green Left Canada, also known as the Green Left. Hereafter in this document, Green Left Canada is referred to as “GLC”.

### Article 2: Scope of the Constitution and By-laws

2.1 This Constitution and By-laws shall govern the activities of GLC, all persons operating on behalf of GLC, and the rights, responsibilities and duties of its recognized committees and membership.

2.2 The Constitution shall have precedence over the By-laws, and any By-law that is inconsistent with the Constitution shall be null and void to the extent of the inconsistency.

2.3 The Constitution and By-laws shall have precedence over any other decision of the membership, and any membership decision that is inconsistent with the Constitution or By-laws shall be null and void to the extent of the inconsistency.

### Article 3: Basis of Unity

3.1 GLC is founded on and guided by the following principles:

*Ecosocialism:* The ecological crisis is grounded in the inherent contradictions and irrationality of unfettered neo-liberal corporate capitalism; the solutions lie in [eco-socialist alternatives](#) which can reverse the current destructive trajectory and deliver a just and green prosperity.

*Urgency:* New paradigms and structures are not only possible but necessary now. The current market-based system has moved us to a precipice; it threatens planetary extinction while privileging the interests of a tiny elite and largely ignoring the struggles and life-experiences of most of us: poor people, working people, Indigenous peoples, women and peoples of colour.

*Ecological Justice:* GLC is committed to economies that reverse the pending ecological catastrophe by putting fewer demands on the earth's carrying capacity to sustain all species. This demands particular attention to reducing climate change, preserving habitat, reducing wasteful consumption, and eliminating our dependence on fossil fuels.

*Democracy and Economic Justice:* Current levels of economic and social inequality are incompatible with democracy; to be democratic is to be truly egalitarian. This means that the elite ruling classes no longer have an outsized influence on government and policy. Instead, all people, especially those from currently marginalized groups, should be empowered to develop economic, political and social systems that support the livelihoods of all people, while respecting the limitations of our planet and protecting its ecological diversity.

*Social Justice:* Discrimination in its various forms is part of the oppressive structure that preserves privilege and domination by scapegoating communities, justifying economic exploitation, misdirecting frustration and dividing working peoples. An eco-socialist society is one that seeks to eliminate discrimination in all its forms, and affirms the rights and dignity of all people.

*International Cooperation and Justice:* Eco-socialists recognize the connections and intersections among militarism, imperialism, and capitalism: the predatory political, security, military and economic interests of national and international elites. We therefore work towards an international order based on cooperation, self-determination, equality, justice and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, in support of the needs and rights of peoples, particularly oppressed peoples, everywhere.

*Affirmation through Collective Action:* GLC recognizes that while the challenges we face are real and pressing, substantive change is achievable through dialogue, organization and collective action. This can occur through both grassroots movement-building and exerting pressure on, and reforming, existing political, economic and security institutions.

## **Article 4: Purpose**

**4.1** It is the purpose of GLC to develop, advocate for and promote eco-socialist values, principles and policies at all levels of government in Canada and in all jurisdictions.

**4.2** The official languages of GLC shall be English and French. GLC shall operate bilingually to the greatest practicable extent.

## **Article 5: Values**

**5.1** The Values of GLC are:

*Core Values and Ethics:* Inspired by a range of Indigenous teachings, wisdom traditions and philosophies, we as eco-socialists value and strive to embody the following:

~ A reverence and love for all life; living in “right relation” with all people and with nature.

~ Interconnectedness of the natural and human worlds, and the interdependence of individuals and communities (local and global).

~ Honesty, transparency, trustworthiness, respect and fairness in our dealings with one another, and in confronting the crises facing our planet.

~ Cooperative and collaborative learning and agency; building solidarity with other organizations, communities and individuals committed to ecological, economic and social justice.

~ Analysis and policies grounded in on-going inquiry, reason and evidence-based research, especially climate science and analysis of social, economic and political inequities.

~ Wisdom — as unbiased judgment, compassion, depth of insight, experiential self-knowledge, as well as virtues such as empathy and benevolence.

~ Humility, real listening, self-reflection, and the absence of arrogance, egoism or excessive pride; while we celebrate the value – and indeed necessity– of differences of opinion and approach, we work to resolve these in a spirit of growth, collaboration and mutual respect.

~ Courage — the willingness to speak truth to power and to face risk, fear, and uncertainty in a way that respects the safety and security of all people and the planet.

~ Creativity, affirmation and joy: we value the arts and strive to recognize and nurture beauty and joy in our daily lives and in our relationships with nature, our work and one another.

## **Article 6: Accountability**

**6.1** All Units and individuals within GLC are accountable to:

- a) the membership in General Assembly;
- b) the National Council when the membership is not in General Assembly.

**6.2** Decisions of the Members in General Assembly shall have precedence over decisions of the National Council, and any National Council decision that is inconsistent with a decision of the Members in General Assembly shall be null and void to the extent of the inconsistency.

**6.3** Unless otherwise specified by this Constitution, the By-laws, or by the membership as the case may be, National Council, on behalf of the membership, is responsible for the overall implementation of actions as called for in this Constitution, the Bylaws, or in other decisions of the membership in General Assembly.

## **Article 7: Official Standing and Definitions**

**7.1** The following persons have official standing within GLC under this Constitution and the By-laws:

- a) Member: An individual who meets GLC's membership criteria;
- b) Spokesperson: the two persons elected by the Members in a General Assembly to act as Spokespersons for GLC. It shall be prohibited for GLC to have two male spokespersons at the same time.

**7.2** The following Units have official standing within GLC under this Constitution and the By-laws:

- a) Provincial/Territorial Organization: An association of GLC in which all GLC Members residing within a province or territory of Canada have membership and voting rights;
- b) National Council: The council referred to in Article 9 of this Constitution and which is elected or appointed in accordance with the By-laws.
- c) Any other Unit created by the members in General Assembly or by National Council.

**7.3** Unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions apply in this Constitution and the By-laws:

- a) **General Assembly:** A general meeting of GLC's entire membership;
- b) **Code of Conduct:** Such rules and guidelines as may be adopted from time to time by National Council outlining the authority, mandate, roles, responsibilities and procedures to be followed by GLC Members and Units of GLC;
- c) **Platform:** The compilation of eco-socialist policies for which GLC will advocate from time to time;
- d) **Policy Motions:** Motions proposed by GLC members that, if adopted in a vote open to all GLC members, articulate a policy that will form part of the Platform; and
- e) **Position:** Any statement from a Spokesperson of GLC that articulates GLC's perspective on an issue of public importance. A Position may not contradict the Platform, Basis of Unity or Values of GLC, or any other membership decision.

## **Article 8: General Assemblies and Special Meetings**

**8.1** General Meetings shall consist of:

- a) individual Members in good standing who have one vote, and
- b) delegates or Members carrying proxies, who are in good standing, and who have voting rights under one or more By-laws that provide for voting by proxy.

**8.2** For General Assemblies and Special Meetings of the Members, a quorum shall be the lesser of (a) fifty percent (50%) of the Members in good standing and (b) fifty (50) Members in good standing.

**8.3** General Assemblies shall be held at least once a year.

**8.4** Sixty (60) days' written notice to Members is required to call a General Assembly.

**8.5** General Assemblies shall be called in accordance with the By-laws.

**8.6** Special Meetings of the Members shall be called in accordance with the By-laws.

## **Article 9: National Council**

**9.1** The National Council shall consist of nine Members and shall be composed of:

- a) A President;
- b) Two Vice-Presidents, one of whom must reside in a Province to the west of Ontario and the other of whom must reside in a Province to the east of Manitoba;
- c) The two Spokespersons elected by the Members; and
- d) Four other Members elected to sit on the National Council by the Members in a General Assembly.

**9.2** It shall be prohibited for the National Council to have two male Vice-Presidents at the same time.

**9.3** Five members of National Council (including either the President or one of the Vice-Presidents of National Council) shall constitute a quorum.

## **Article 10: Amendments to Constitution and By-laws**

**10.1** Notice of amendments to the Constitution shall be included in the notice of meeting at which the amendments shall be considered.

**10.2** Proposed amendments shall be submitted by at least 10 individual Members who are in good standing.

**10.3** Amendments shall be adopted by a majority of the votes cast by Members in good standing at a General Assembly, and shall only become effective upon Members in good standing passing an identically worded amendment by a vote of greater than 1/2 (50%) of the votes cast in a Members' vote conducted by electronic ballot or mail-in, with a ballot return date of no later than one-hundred-twenty (120) days following the General Assembly at which the amendment was passed.

**10.4** Notwithstanding any other provision concerning an amendment of the present Constitution, all proposed amendments concerning Articles 3, 5 and 10 of the Constitution will be adopted only if such amendments shall be adopted by a two-thirds of the votes cast by Members in good standing at a General Assembly, and shall only become effective upon Members in good standing passing an identically worded amendment by a vote of greater than two-thirds of the votes cast in a Members' vote conducted by electronic ballot or mail-in, with a ballot return date of no later than one-hundred-twenty (120) days following the General Assembly at which the amendment was passed.

**10.5** Notice of amendments to the By-laws shall be included in the notice of meeting at which the amendments shall be considered.

**10.6** Amendments shall be submitted by at least 5 individual Members who are in good standing.

**10.7** Amendments shall be adopted by a majority of the votes cast by Members in good standing at a General Assembly.

## **Article 11: Dissolution or Merger**

**11.1** Any resolution to dissolve GLC or to merge it with another organization passed at a General Assembly shall only become effective upon Members in good standing passing an identically worded resolution by a vote of greater than seventy-five (75) percent of the votes cast in a Members' vote conducted electronically or by mail-in ballot, with a ballot return date of no later than one-hundred-twenty (120) days following the General Assembly at which the resolution to dissolve or merge GLC was passed.

**11.2** No transfer of GLC's assets may be commenced or completed until such a mail-in ballot is passed with the required seventy-five (75) percent majority and the resolution to dissolve or merge GLC takes effect.