



Virtual Bird-Dogging

A Workshop

Lydie Padilla, *digital campaigner*
lpadilla@greenpeace.org

COVID-19 Crisis & Response

Sharpen your Mind!

The Current Moment

- COVID-19 crisis has produced an economic crisis, and a concerted plan is required from the government to help us recover, including spending lots of \$
- To have a green & just recovery we need to see climate concerns and people put at the centre of the recovery, not corporations and private profits.
- If recovery \$ spent well, it could go a long way to tackling the climate crisis and many other crises we face
- Three federal ministers (McKenna, Wilkinson, Guilbeault) have been tasked with developing a COVID-19 recovery package, and we've heard they're planning to finalize it by the end of June.
- We've heard the Teck Mine issue had a big impact on cabinet, shifted things in terms of how climate is seen, and a big part of that was a revolt of MPs speaking out publicly before the government had taken a position.

The Strategy: Heat & Light

We'll put HEAT on MPs to speak out, and then LIGHT to publicize their commitments so we can hold them do it.

Who: MPs, especially those on our priority list (see list next page)

What: speak out in support of a green and just recovery

When: now until end of June is focus, but will likely continue over summer

How: digital bird-dogging, meetings, and other pressure, where we document their statements and then make sure they're made public.

Priority MPs

Cabinet Ministers

Steven Guilbeault (Heritage)

Catherine McKenna (Infrastructure)

Jonathan Wilkinson (Environment)

Marie-Claude Bibeau (Agriculture)

Deb Schulte (Seniors)

Backbench Liberal MPs

Nate Erskine-Smith

Will Amos

Adam Vaughan

Sean Fraser

Mark Gerretsen

Jennifer O'Connell

Joël Lightbound

Sean Casey

Rachel Bendayan

Élisabeth Brère

Alexandra Mendès

Mélanie Joly

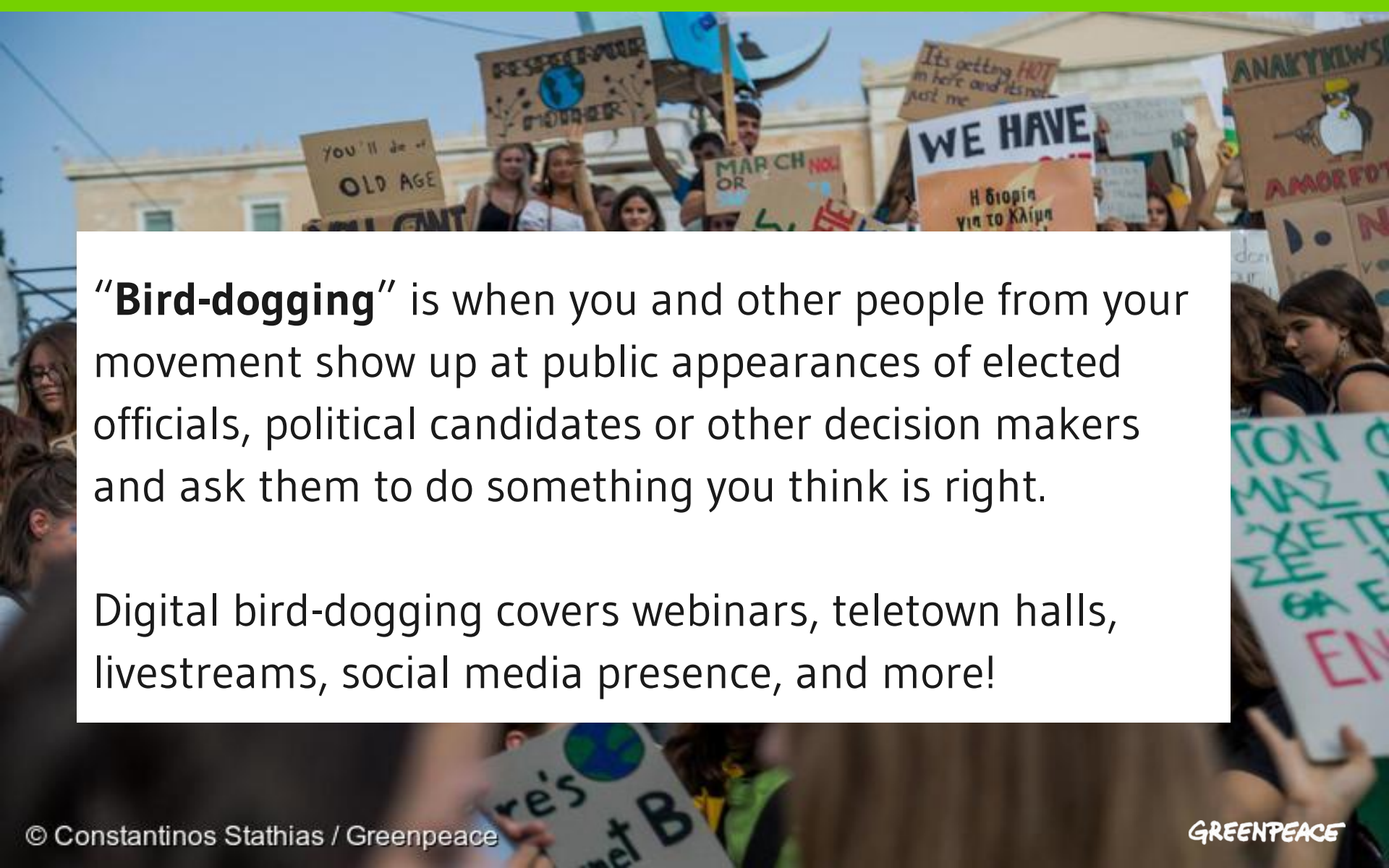
Sherry Romanado

Julie Dzerowicz

AGENDA

1. What is bird-dogging
2. Recruit your team
 - 2.1. *Practice: team up! (5min)*
3. Get to Know your MP
 - 3.1. *Practice: Research your MP (5min)*
4. The Art of Killer Questions
 - 4.1. *Practice: Write 1-3 questions (5min)*
5. Social Media Bird-dogging
 - 5.1. *Practice: Ask your MP! (5min)*
6. Virtual Event Bird-dogging

What is Bird-Dogging



“Bird-dogging” is when you and other people from your movement show up at public appearances of elected officials, political candidates or other decision makers and ask them to do something you think is right.

Digital bird-dogging covers webinars, teletown halls, livestreams, social media presence, and more!

Recruit Your Team

Bird-dogging is a lot more impactful if you have a team of people who show up at your MP's public appearances, rather than just one person.

Your Amazing Team

Question Askers

The name is self-explanatory, they ask the questions. Great for people who love the spotlight, but even if you're shy, it's not a problem! Just write down your question in advance and **speak from the heart** when you read it.

Recorders

They will be in charge of recording audio/video of the interaction to ensure you **get your MP on the record**. This will be useful for the advocacy work that follows!

Communication Gurus

They will help you track your MP to learn what events they're appearing at, and when you ask the question they help **get the word out**. They will also make sure that any significant statement or engagement on behalf of the decision maker, makes it to the **public eye** (holding them accountable). They can live tweet the event, share key messages/images on social media and can also invite the **media** and set up interviews if you have a spokesperson in your group.

Helpers

They can assist those in the other roles and **learn** from them.

Get to Know Your MP

Researching your MP's schedule and identify their online events.

Research Your MP

Subscribe, follow, research

Find their name. Follow your MP on social media, sign up to their email list and set up a Google Alert for their name.

Identify bird-dogging opportunities

Do some research on the internet, on their website or even by **calling their office directly**, to identify interesting events they'll be attending or organizing where you could ask a question. Register for the events.

Prepare for events

Get familiar with the platforms where events are hosted (Facebook Live video or Zoom). Train yourself and learn how they work before your meeting!

Find out what you can about the format of the online events ahead of time. Try to find out the agenda and content of the event in advance. If this information isn't publicized, reach out to the organizers directly. This way, you will have a better idea of when the **best moments are to interact with your MP** and you will not miss your opportunity.

Alexandre Boulerice, Rosemont-La Petite Patrie

Members of Parliament

Members of Parliament

Key Roles

Constituencies

Election Candidates

FIND MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Search current and past members by name, constituency or postal code

CURRENT MEMBERS



Alexandre Boulerice

NDP

Alertes

Recevez des alertes lorsque du contenu susceptible de vous intéresser est publié sur le Web

Mes alertes (1)



Alexandre Boulerice



Alexandre Boulerice, Rosemont-La Petite Patrie

Google

Alexandre Boulerice

Envron 178 000 résultats (0,53 secondes)

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[boulerville.org](#)

[Alexandre Boulerice: Accueil](#)

Aide pour les médias: Alexandre Boulerice interpelle le ministre Guilbeault. Bonjour M. le Ministre, Tout d'abord, je veux vous remercier pour votre travail et ...

boulerville.org

S'inscrire à la liste d'envoi

Prénom et nom* Lydie Padilla

Courriel* padillalydie@gmail.com

Code postal* h2g2m1 Téléphone 514 442 3884

S'inscrire

alexandre.boulerice Envoyer un message

541 publications 3 733 abonnés 6 820 abonné(s)

Alexandre Boulerice NPD
Député NPD de Rosemont - La Petite-Patrie.
[boulerville.org](#)

Abonnés : simonboulerville, camcaas, jrbania et 17 autres

PUBLICATIONS IDENTIFICATIONS

Alexandre Boulerice

Politician

Send Message

Home Events About Photos More

Upcoming Events

Alexandre Boulerice does not have any upcoming events.

Past Events

APR 9 Facebook Live avec Nimâ Machouf Thu 6:30 PM - 95 guests Alexandre Boulerice Montreal

Alexandre Boulerice, député

Site Web Itinéraire Enregistrer

3,0 ★★★★★ 6 avis Google

Administration gouvernementale à Montréal, Québec

Adresse : 1453 Rue Beaubien E, Montréal, QC H2G 3C6

Alexandre Boulerice @alexboulerice - May 16

On doit se serrer les coudes et défendre les #Québécois et #Québécoises d'origine #asiatique et lutter contre toute forme d' #intolérance et #racisme. #solidarité #polcan #Montréal #NPD #rosepatrie #COVID19

0:48 1K views

3 21 76

GREENPEACE



Practice:
Research your MP
(5min)

The Art of Killer Questions

Sharpen your Mind!

AOC Questions Mark Zuckerberg



The Art of Asking Spot-on Questions

What

Asking what a candidate thinks about a policy forces them to **demonstrate their priorities** and be specific and concrete in the position they take.

Why

Asking why an MP supports a policy pushes them to explain **the reasoning behind their positions**. Their explanation can expose weaknesses or help showcase the benefits of a given policy.



How

Asking how your MP will **follow through on a promise** is essential to understanding their theory of change and getting them to commit to a specific course of action. It reveals whether or not they view the issues with **a sense of urgency**.

The Art of Asking Spot-on Questions

Long-form questions

1. Start with something personal about yourself.
2. You can reference your MP's past positions or statements related to your question.
3. Ask a question that puts them on the spot (What, Why, How).

Example:

*"My name is Lydie, I live in Montreal and I'm the mother to a toddler. Last year, you declared a climate emergency. You have also promised to look into a green stimulus package. With time ticking away and our window to stop the devastating impacts of climate change closing, **how are you going to use the economic recovery from COVID-19 to ensure Canada meets its climate commitments? Why do you think this is the right approach?"***

The Art of Asking Spot-on Questions

Short-form questions

1. Be concise and get right to the point.
2. Ask a question that puts them on the spot (again and always: What, Why, How).

Example:

How will you ensure COVID-19 recovery spending doesn't make the climate crisis worse? Will you promise to attach climate conditions to any bailout for high-polluting sectors like oil or aviation, and if not why not?

The Art of Asking Spot-on Questions

Important Reminder

Politicians are masters at the art of avoiding answering questions that make them uncomfortable. **You can cut through their game** by pointing out that they have not answered your question and **politely insisting** that they answer it.



Example:

Thank you very much for your response. But if I may, I didn't hear you actually answer the part of my question about whether you'd attach conditions to bailouts. Could you please clearly state whether you'd attach climate conditions to bailouts for polluting industries, and if not why not?

Social Media Bird-Dogging

Sharpen your Mind!

Social Media Bird-Dogging

Do's

When they post something related to one of the specific topics you identified with your team, you can **ask your questions in the comment section or as a reply.**

Introduce yourself and be concise, just as you would in an in-person event. You can also engage them by tagging them in a post and **asking about their position on your issue or a specific piece of news** (e.g. "What is your position on X or Y?").

Remember to **be polite yet firm.** Encourage them to keep sharing and go deeper into the topic, while not harassing your MP with too many questions.

Don't

Don't be rude, inflammatory or aggressive.

Don't demand everything else be dropped to address your concern, or be dismissive of the hard times many people are experiencing right now because of COVID-19.

Don't ignore what they've said in their response when you reply. **Listen, then respond.** At the same time, don't let them change the subject or distract you. Think whether they've actually answered your question.

Virtual Bird-Dogging

Sharpen your Mind!

How to Ask Your MP a Question During an Online Event

Training

1. **Teach yourself how to record and document your bird-dogging.**
 - a. You can use this free software : <https://obsproject.com> and watch [this video](#) to learn how to record your screen.
 - b. You can also take screenshots during the events.
2. Get familiar with the platform your MP will be using (Facebook Live, Zoom...)

Before an Event

1. **Prepare your plan** (questions, communications opportunities, social media coverage). Confirm roles & responsibilities.
2. **Organize a brainstorm and list 5-10 questions** (long and short format, What, Why, How?).
3. In some cases you might want to ask "When": "When will you be hosting a town hall on this topic?" **If you only have 10 seconds, a simple yes or no question might be better.** Give yourself a bit of flexibility when preparing your questions!
4. Establish platforms and lines of communications.

The Secret to Getting Your Question Asked

Right before the start

1. Confirm lines of communications.
2. Check roles, confirm list of questions.
3. Be ready to record and document your bird-dogging (video, screenshots, notes).

During an Event

1. Be ready as soon as the question period starts. Raise your hand first and fast.
2. You can quickly write your question in the chat section. You may be asked to write a draft of the question before they choose you. Writing a softball question will help you get called (keep the curve ball for when you get the mic).

When it's time to ask your question, don't panic and trust yourself! **Be polite, confident and ask your question.** Many of the audience members will be grateful to you for speaking up.

If they do not answer your question adequately, **try to ask a follow up.** Politely, and without being aggressive, continue to press for your question to be answered.

Sometimes, **it may take a few people asking the same question** before it gets recognized by the moderators as important. **If possible, have various people from your team asking similar questions in the chat.**

Share, Debrief & Plan Next Steps

Share your story

Share what happened on your social media

(e.g. by crafting a short video with your footage or by designing a meme with free software like Canva). Contact us for advice.

actions@greenpeace.ca

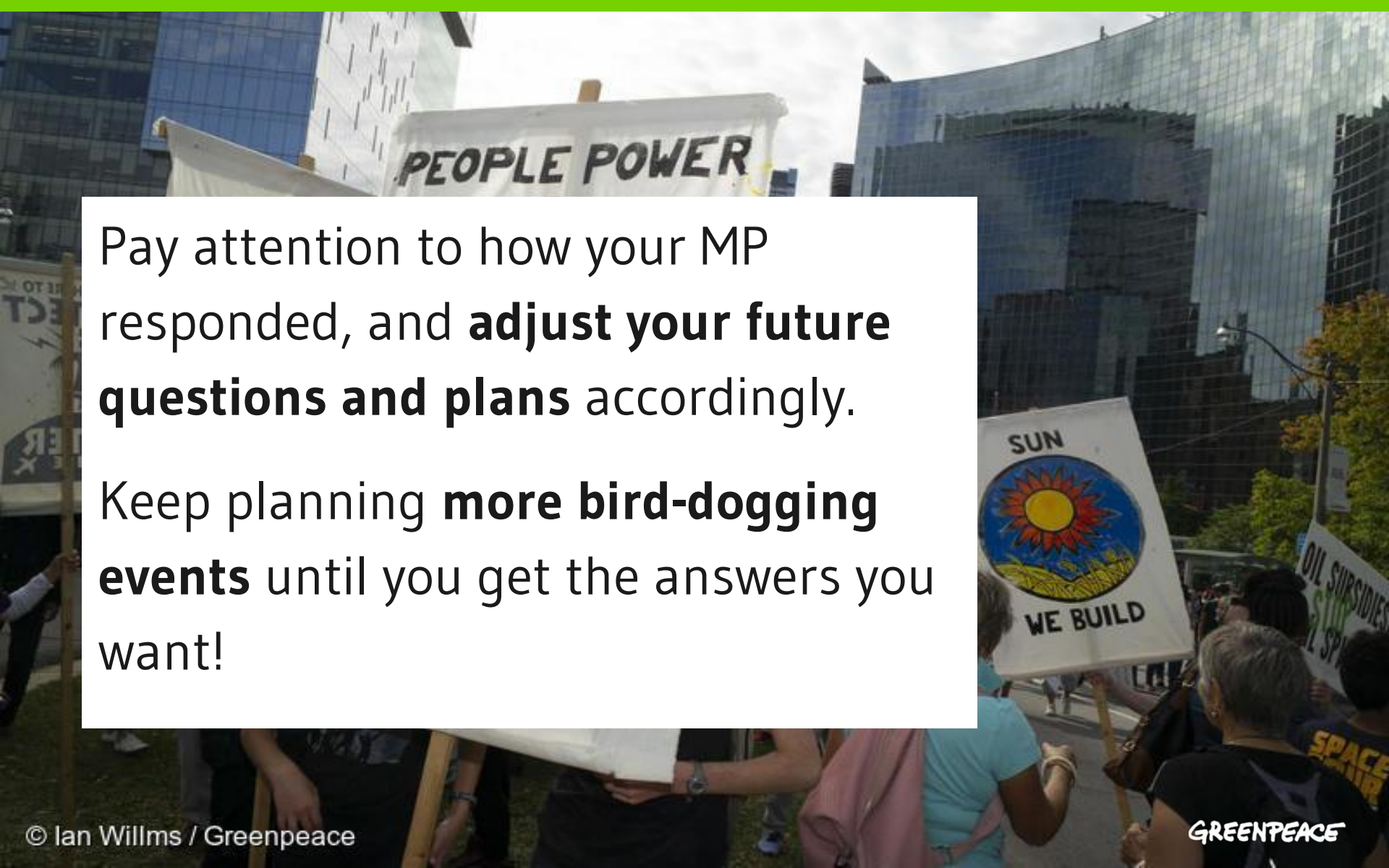
Write a blog about the decision maker's answer and get it published online. Email us if you are interested! actions@greenpeace.ca

To **get the story in the news**, you can also write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper! Contact us for advice. actions@greenpeace.ca

Lessons learned

As a team, discuss learnings, successes and how you can do even better next time! And let us know how everything went!

Identify what went well, what obstacles you faced, and any improvements you could make for next time. Be supportive of each other and respectful of how different people might prefer taking different approaches and roles. Be sure to celebrate your successes (publicly if you succeed in getting a commitment from your MP)!

A photograph of a protest in an urban setting. In the background, a large white banner with the words 'PEOPLE POWER' in bold black letters is visible. In the foreground, a person holds a sign with a circular logo containing a sun and the text 'SUN' above and 'WE BUILD' below. Other signs are partially visible, including one with 'OIL SUBSIDIES' and another with 'SPACE'. The scene is set against a backdrop of modern glass skyscrapers.

Pay attention to how your MP responded, and **adjust your future questions and plans** accordingly.

Keep planning **more bird-dogging events** until you get the answers you want!

Upcoming Events

Tue, May 26: Day of Action with Twitterstorm & more content

Wed, May 27: Nathaniel Erskine-Smith doing virtual event

Thu, May 28: 7pm ET - Webinar featuring Minister McKenna on COVID-19 recovery plans

June: continue bird-dogging, meetings, and other pressure on MPs!

Meeting with MPs

They really might say yes!

Request a Meeting with your MP

- Requesting a meeting with your MP is a great way to get your voice heard
- You have their undivided attention!
- Steps:
 - Connect: If you want to do this let us know and we can provide support
 - Schedule: Email or call your MP's office and tell them you're a constituent and ask if it's possible to meet with your MP (people do this all the time!)
 - Prep: go over what you want to say, what questions you want to ask. Research some of your MP's past statements & actions so you can reference them. Think of some personal details you can include; be yourself! :)
 - Meet:
 - Debrief: let us know how it went! Review what your next steps are.
 - Follow up: send an email right after to confirm the key points from the meeting with them. As needed follow up on any questions or actions coming out of the meeting.
- Cool example: Smita met with her MP Gagan Sikand! :)

Next Steps!

You got this

Next Steps

- Decide and let us know if you're interested in virtual bird-dogging, meeting with your MP and/or researching target MPs upcoming events.
- If you're into the virtual bird-dogging, let us know if you're up to attend the upcoming events on May 27 & 28.
- Get out there! And keep us in the loop! We want to know how it all goes, what you find works well, and what doesn't. :)

A low-angle shot of a large, leafy tree in a city park. Two children are climbing the tree. One child, wearing a green shirt, is on the left, reaching up. The other child, wearing a yellow shirt and glasses, is on the right, sitting on a branch and holding a camera. The background shows a city skyline with tall buildings under a bright sky. The text 'Des Questions?' is overlaid on the image.

Des Questions?

Lydie Padilla, digital campaigner
lpadilla@greenpeace.org