

Influence of Policy Outcomes on Policy Durability

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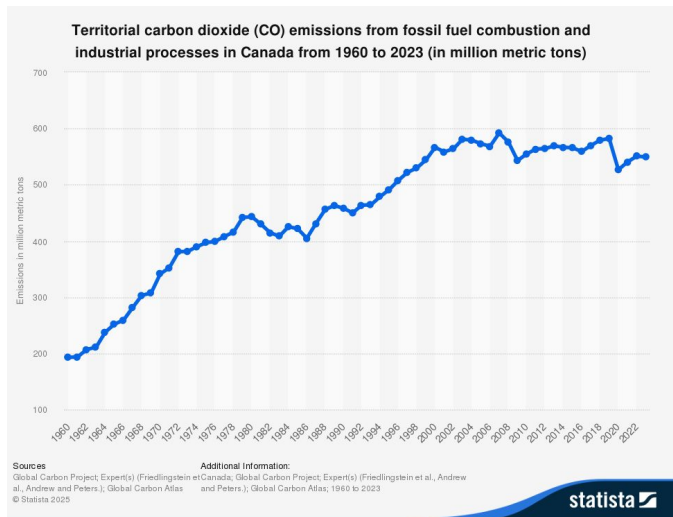
Canada's Federal Carbon Pricing Policy: GGPPA (2018)

- Goal: Create a national framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- Motivation:
 - Fulfill Canada's international climate commitments (e.g., Paris Agreement)
 - Use market-based mechanisms to incentivize emissions reductions
- Structure:
 - (1) Carbon Levy: Applied to fossil fuels
 - (2) Output-Based Pricing System: For large industrial emitters

Canada's Federal Carbon Pricing Policy: GGPPA (2018)

- Flexibility: Provinces could implement their own systems if meeting federal minimum benchmarks
- Canada Carbon Rebate:
 - None kept by govt
 - Most of the money is sent directly and in advance to individuals and families through the Canada Carbon Rebate
 - The rest to Indigenous governments, farmers, small- and medium-enterprises.

Empirical Success as of 2023



Per capita CO₂ emissions

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from fossil fuels and industry¹. Land-use change is not included.



Data source: Global Carbon Budget (2024); Population based on various sources (2024)
OurWorldinData.org/co2-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions | CC BY

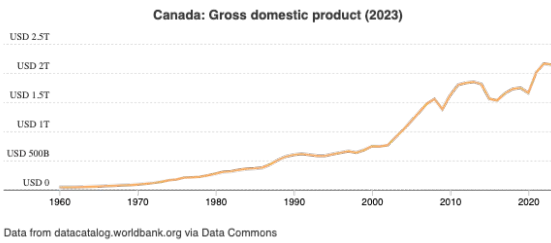
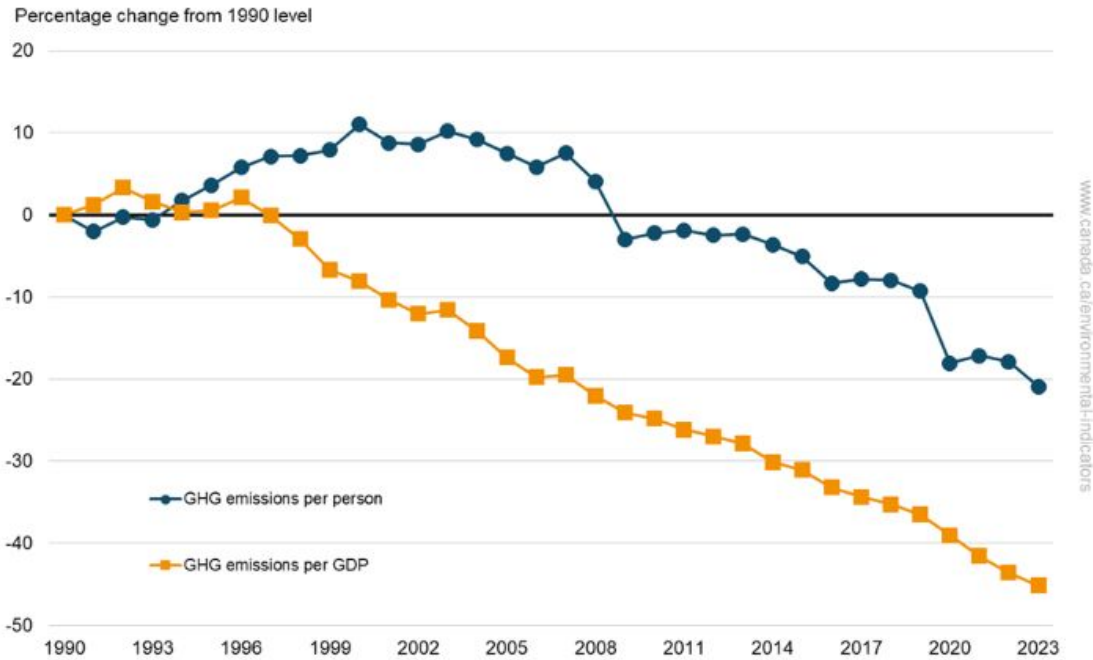
¹ Fossil emissions: Fossil emissions measure the quantity of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted from the burning of fossil fuels, and directly from industrial processes such as cement and steel production. Fossil CO₂ includes emissions from coal, oil, gas, flaring, cement, steel, and other industrial processes. Fossil emissions do not include land use change, deforestation, soils, or vegetation.

Since Federal Carbon Tax (2019): –53.4 MT

Since first provincial Carbon Tax (2007): –80.4 MT

Empirical Success as of 2023

Indexed trend in greenhouse gas emissions per person and per unit of GDP, Canada, 1990 to 2023

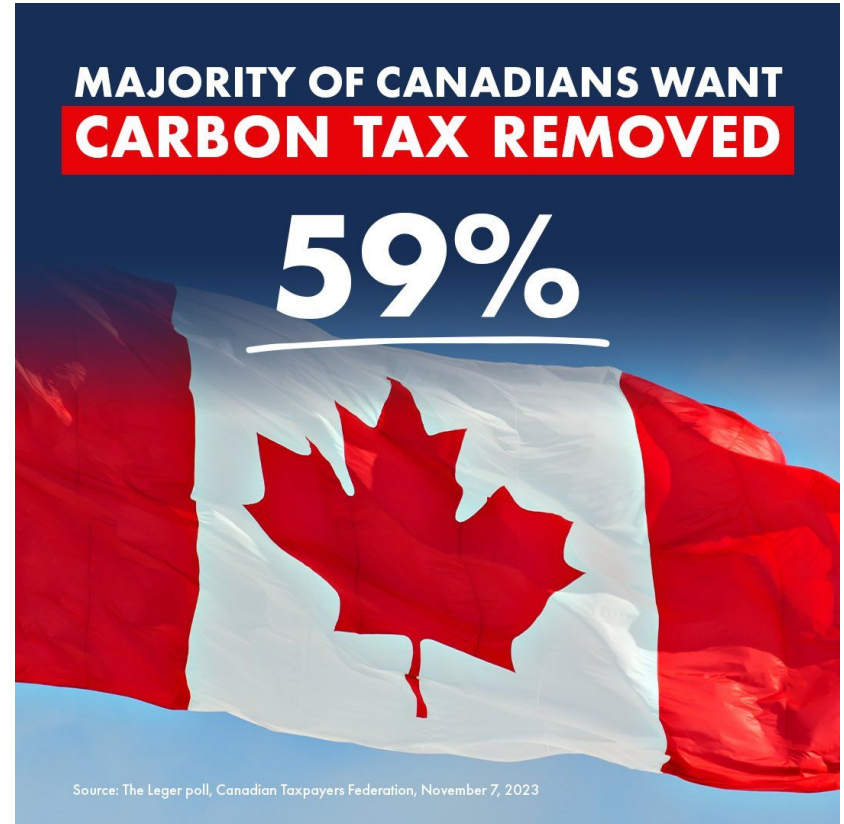


Empirical Success as of 2023

80% of Canadians receive more in Canada Carbon Rebate than they pay in carbon tax

Public mostly not a fan

- 40% of Canadians favored abolishing the carbon tax (Angus Reid Institute Survey)
- 37% of respondents definitely back a party that wanted to eliminate the federal carbon tax (Polling by Abacus Data)
- 1 in 5 said they would never support the idea. (Polling by Abacus Data)



Key Election Issue

AXE THE TAX

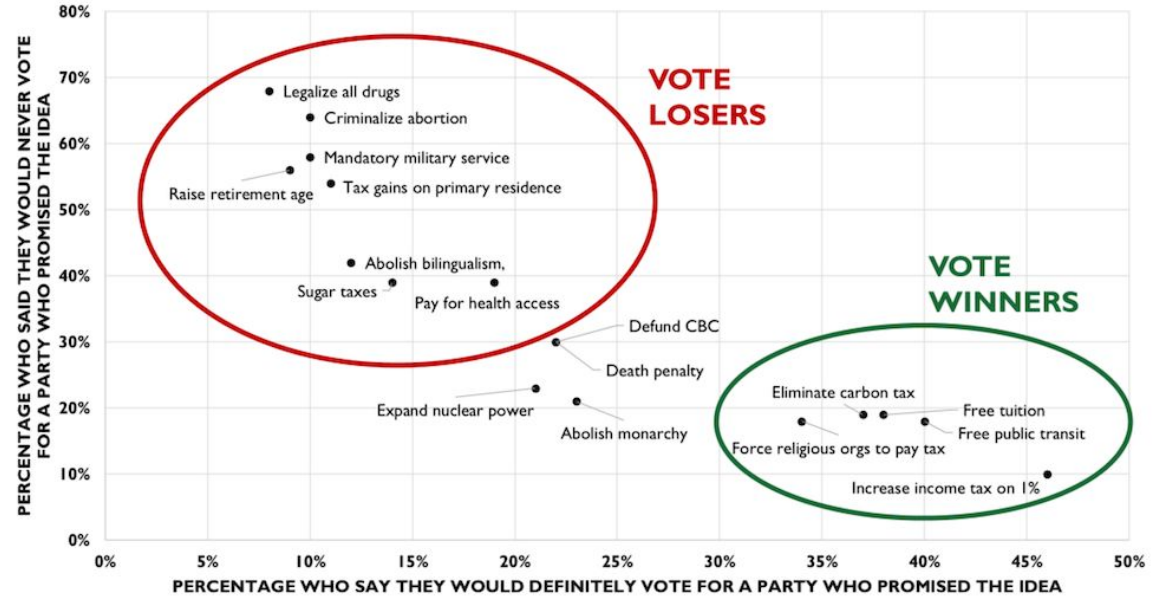
Whereas the Trudeau Liberals' costly carbon tax is driving up the price of gas, groceries, and home heating during a cost-of-living crisis.

Whereas Trudeau's own Parliamentary Budget Officer report proves that the carbon tax will cost most households more than they ever get back.

Whereas Trudeau's woke minister of Environment admitted that they have been misleading Canadians about it the whole time.

And whereas Conservatives have already taken big steps in taking the costly carbon tax off grain drying and barn heating.

We the undersigned call for this Liberal-NDP coalition to axe the tax to bring home lower prices and powerful paycheques.



<https://www.corporateknights.com/category-climate/election-carbon-tax-polling>



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Removing the consumer carbon price, effective April 1, 2025

From: [Department of Finance Canada](#)

How does a policy that appears
technically sound and demonstrably successful
nevertheless lose political support and legitimacy
to the point of repeal?

Policy durability is especially important in environmental policy

“Achieving a transition to a low-carbon economy requires climate policy that is sufficiently durable to last for several decades”

United States National Research Council (2010)

Regulatory Policies and Public Support Challenges

- Climate mitigation policies often lack immediate, tangible deliverables.
- **Delayed benefits:** Impacts like reduced climate risks are long-term, not immediately visible.
- **Political vulnerability:** Without clear short-term gains, policies face greater contestation.
- Public perceptions matter:
 - Perceived success and importance become crucial for political durability.
 - Empirical achievements alone may not secure mass support.

Theoretical gap in Policy durability

Existing Focus:

- Institutional structures
- Elite coalition-building
- Creation of vested interests

Identified Gap:

- Limited modeling of mass public perceptions of policy outcomes
- Especially perceptions of success and importance

How do the mass public's perceptions of policy outcomes shape the political durability of enacted policies?

Key Variables

DV: Policy Durability

Whether a policy is politically sustained, revised, or repealed after implementation

IV:

- **Perceived Success:**

How effective the mass public believes the outcomes are

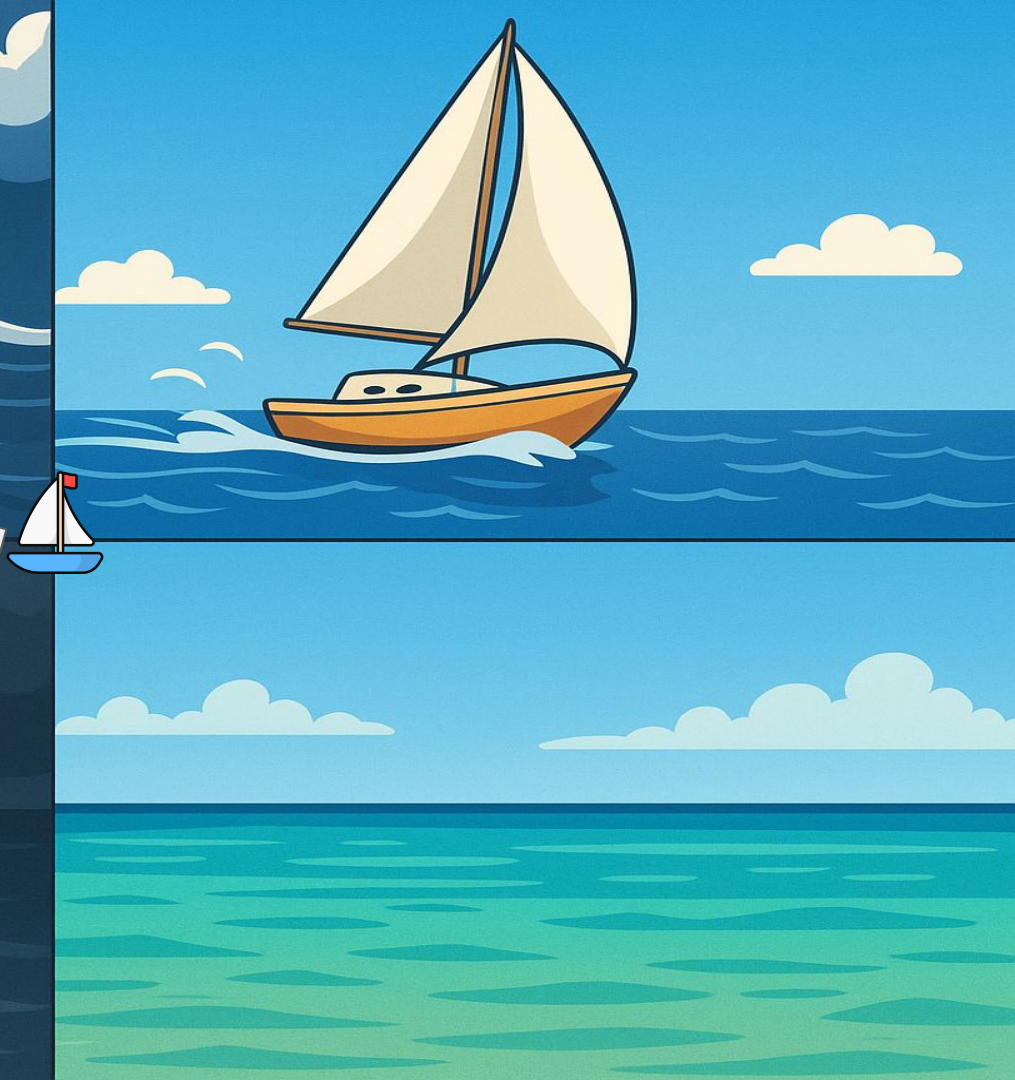
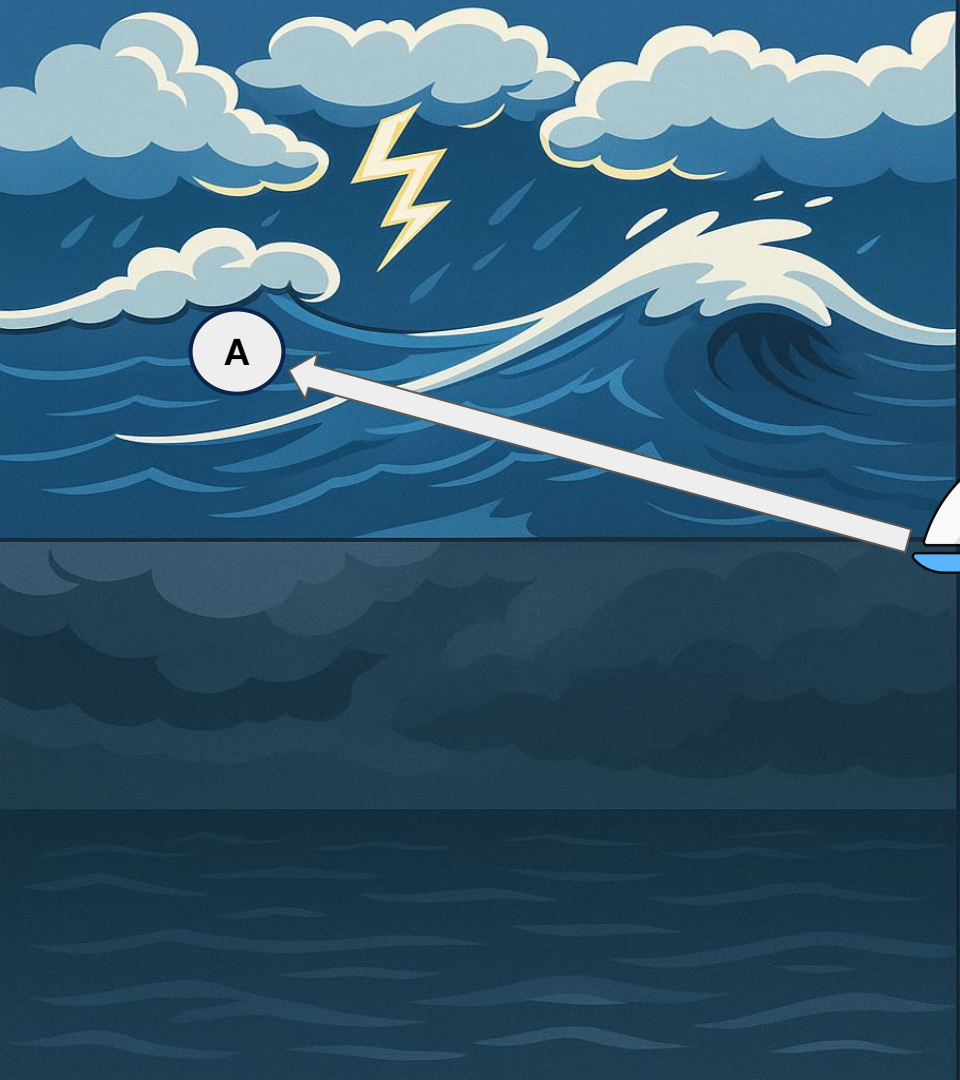
- **Perceived Importance:**

How salient or prioritized the outcomes are in public judgment

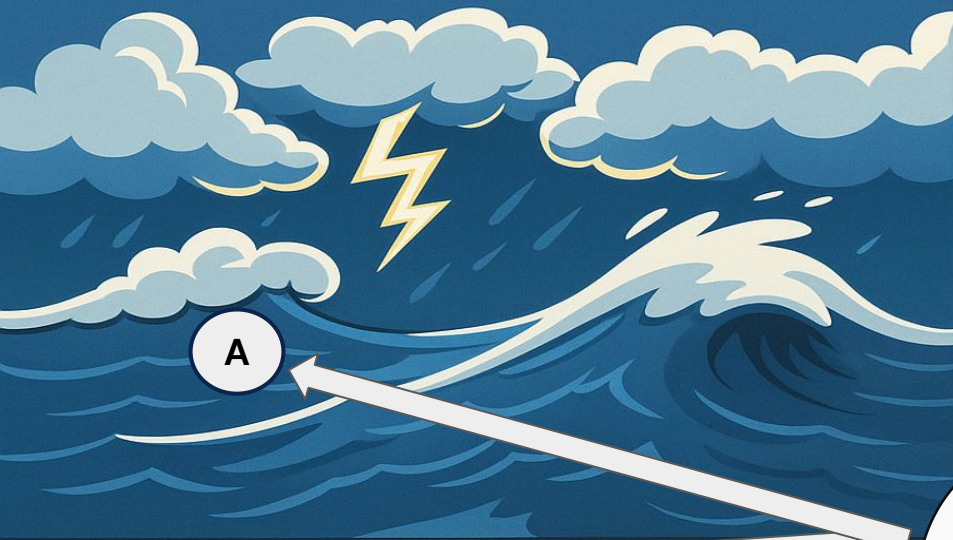
Proposed Framework



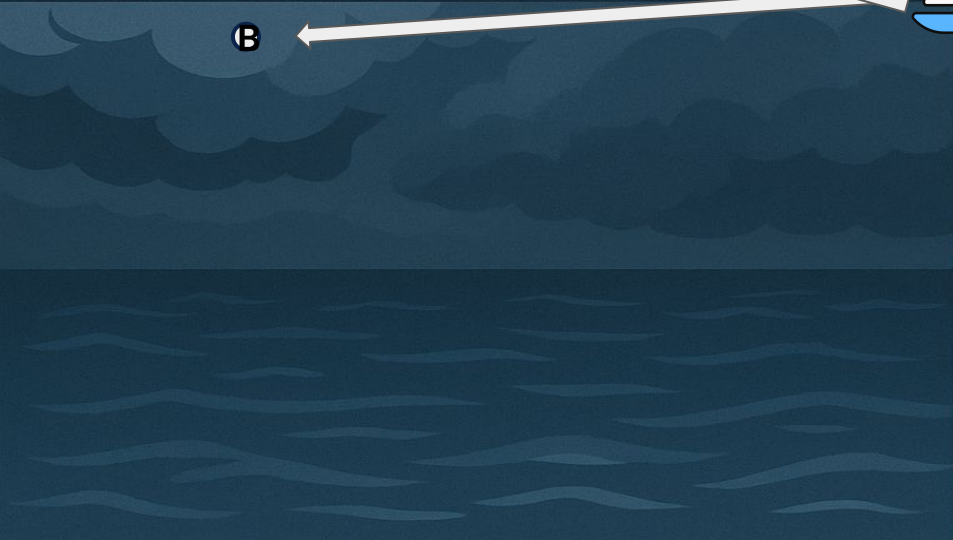






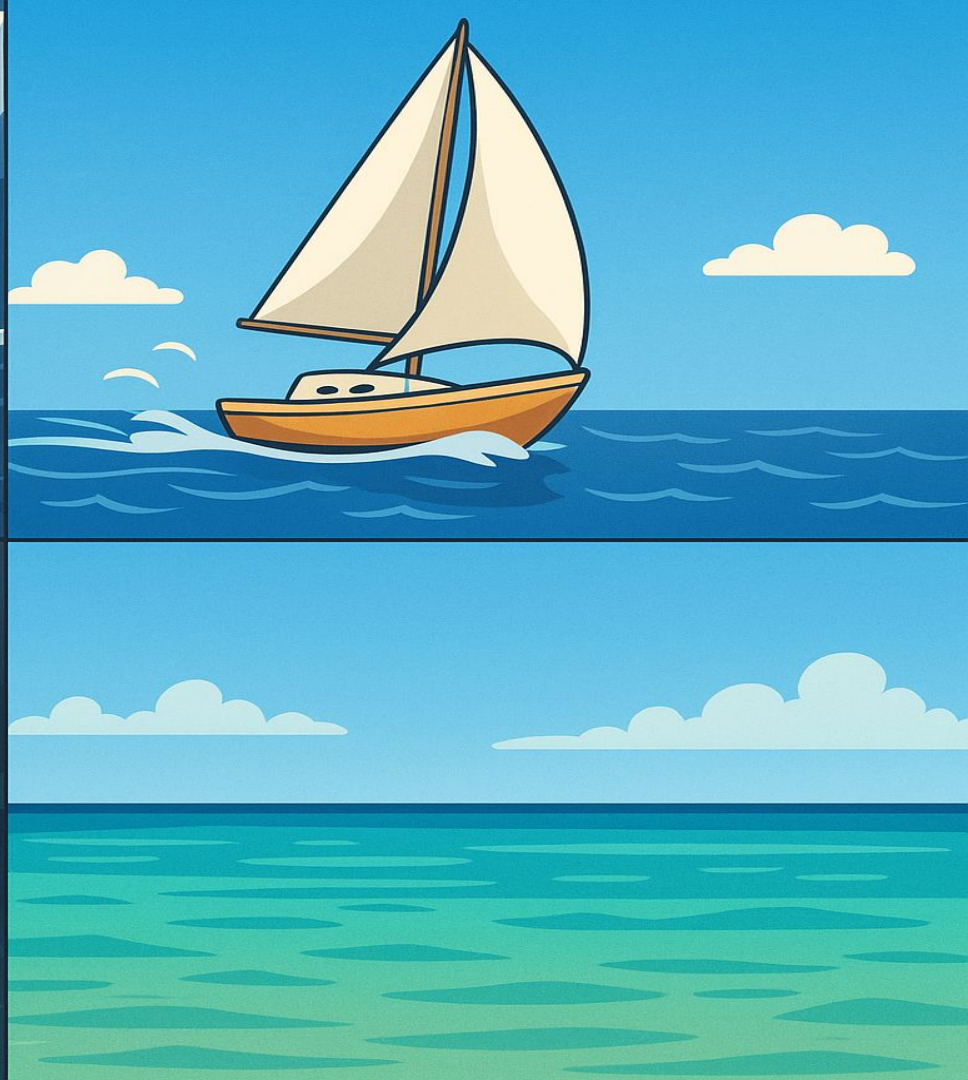
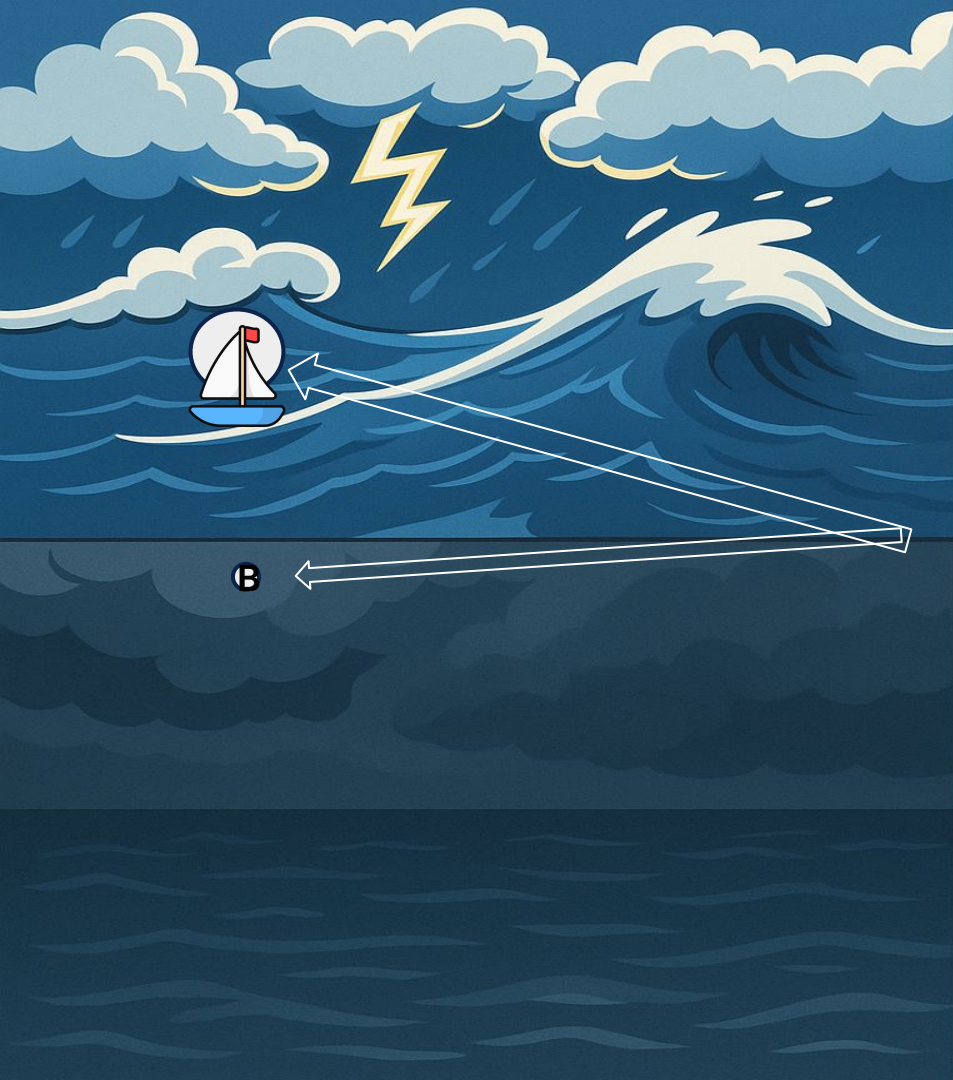


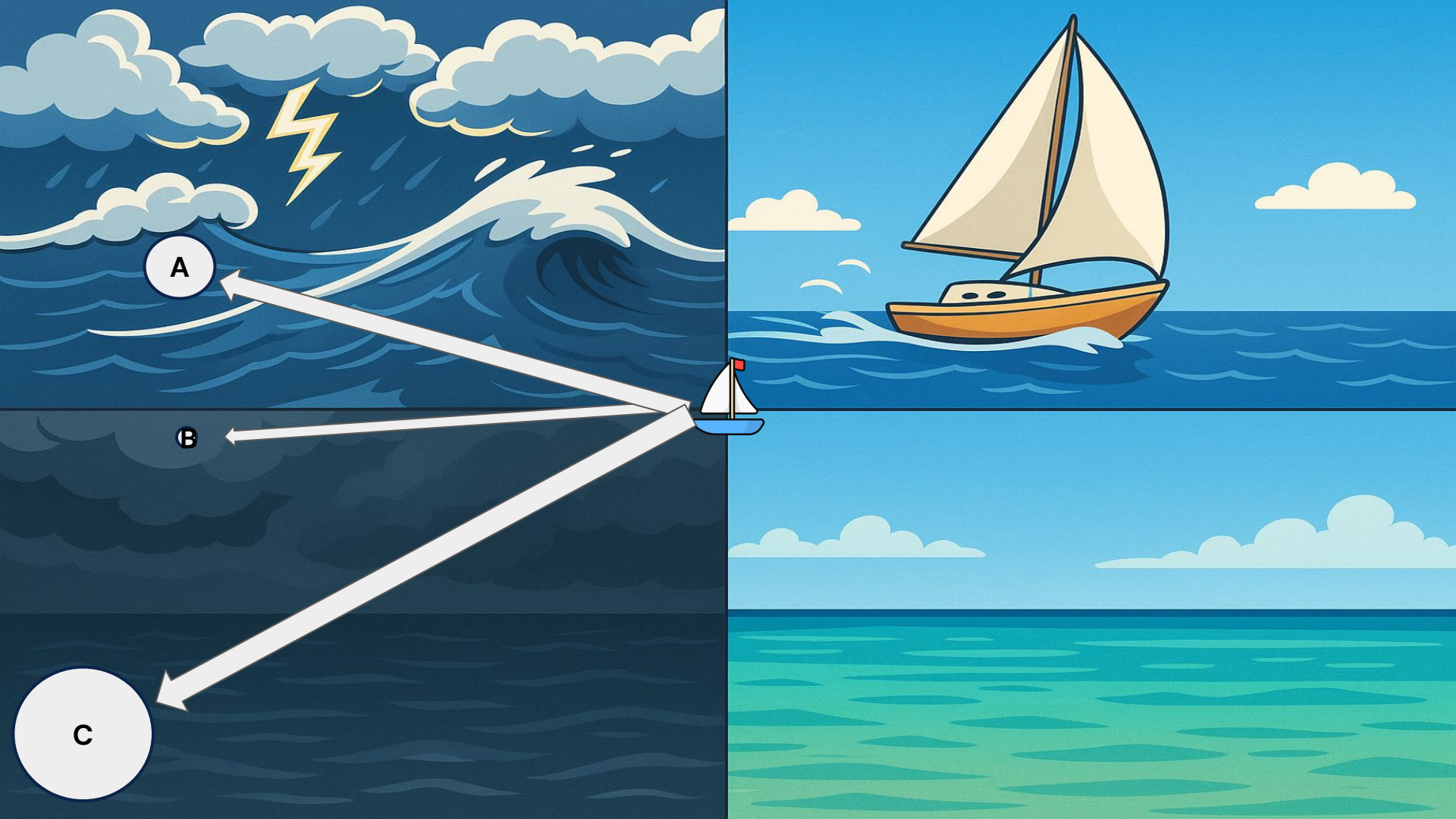
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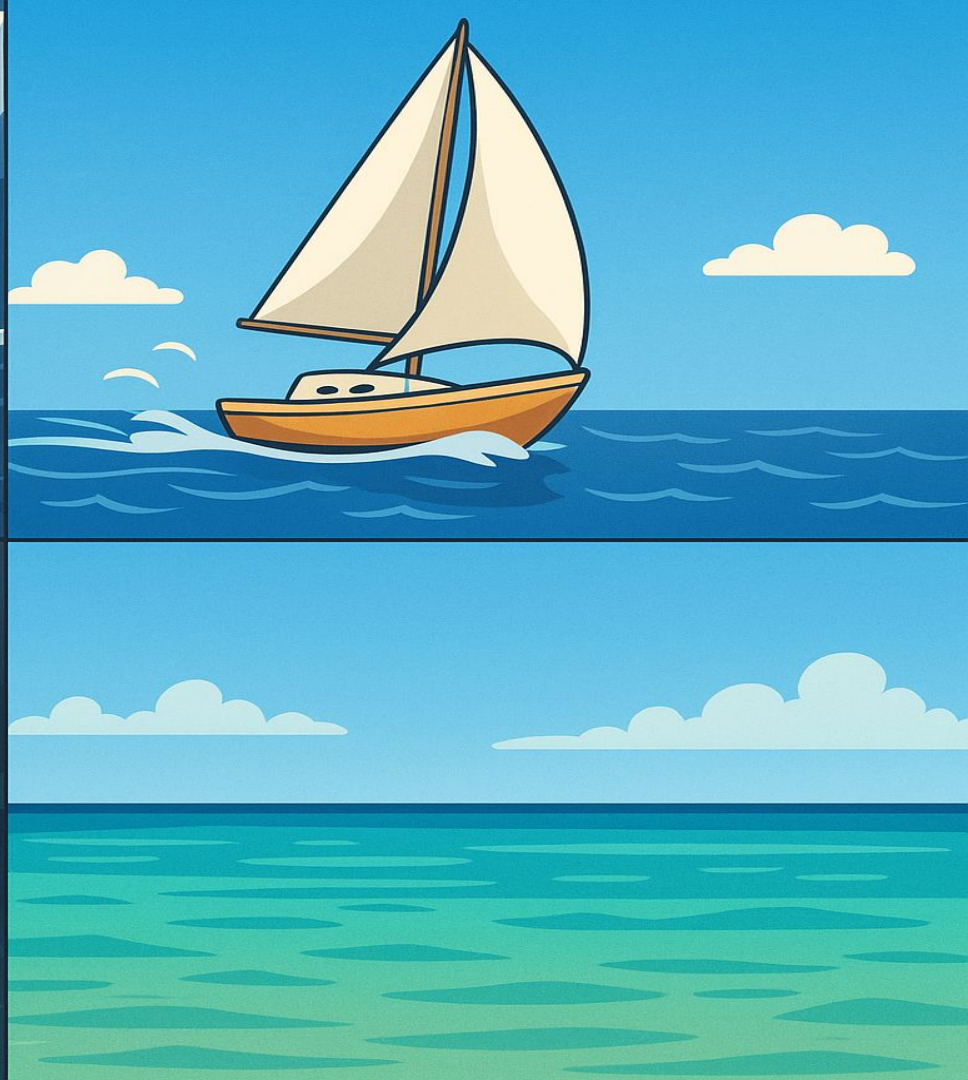
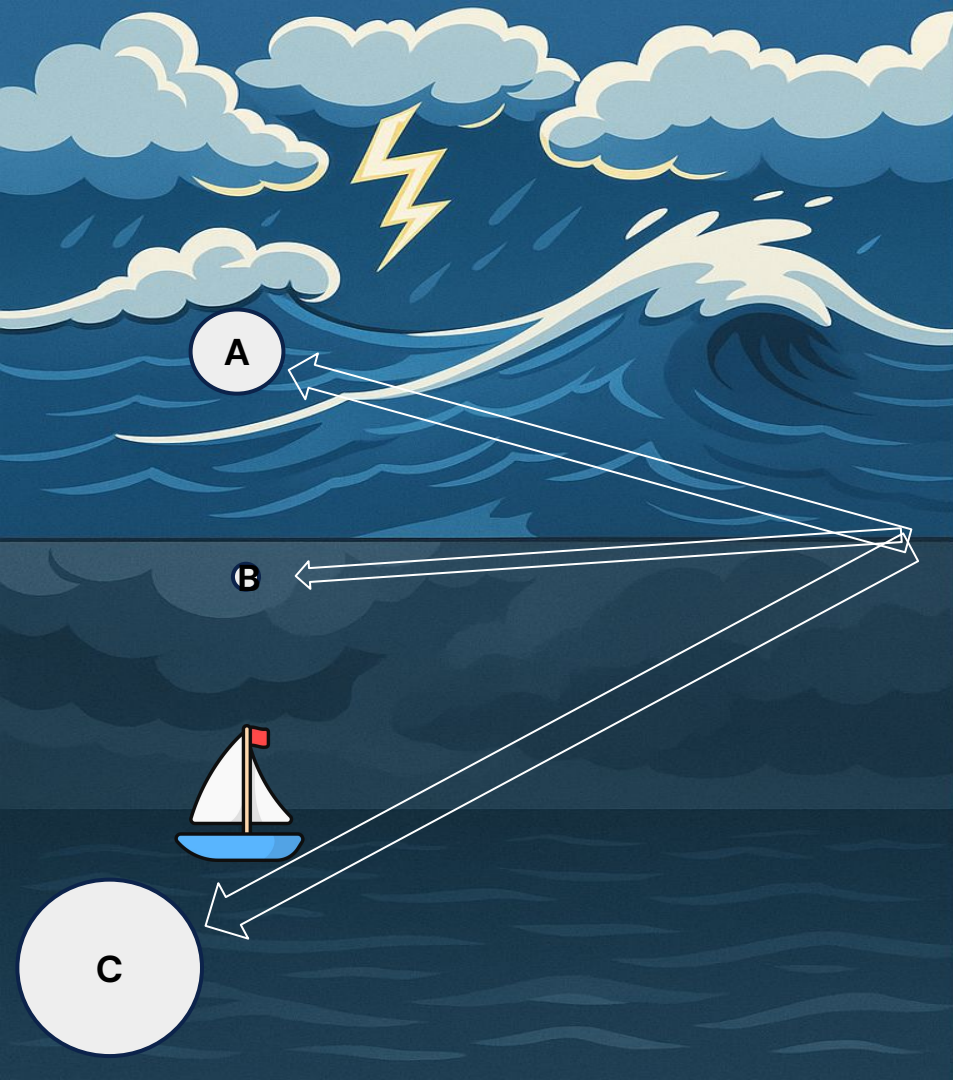


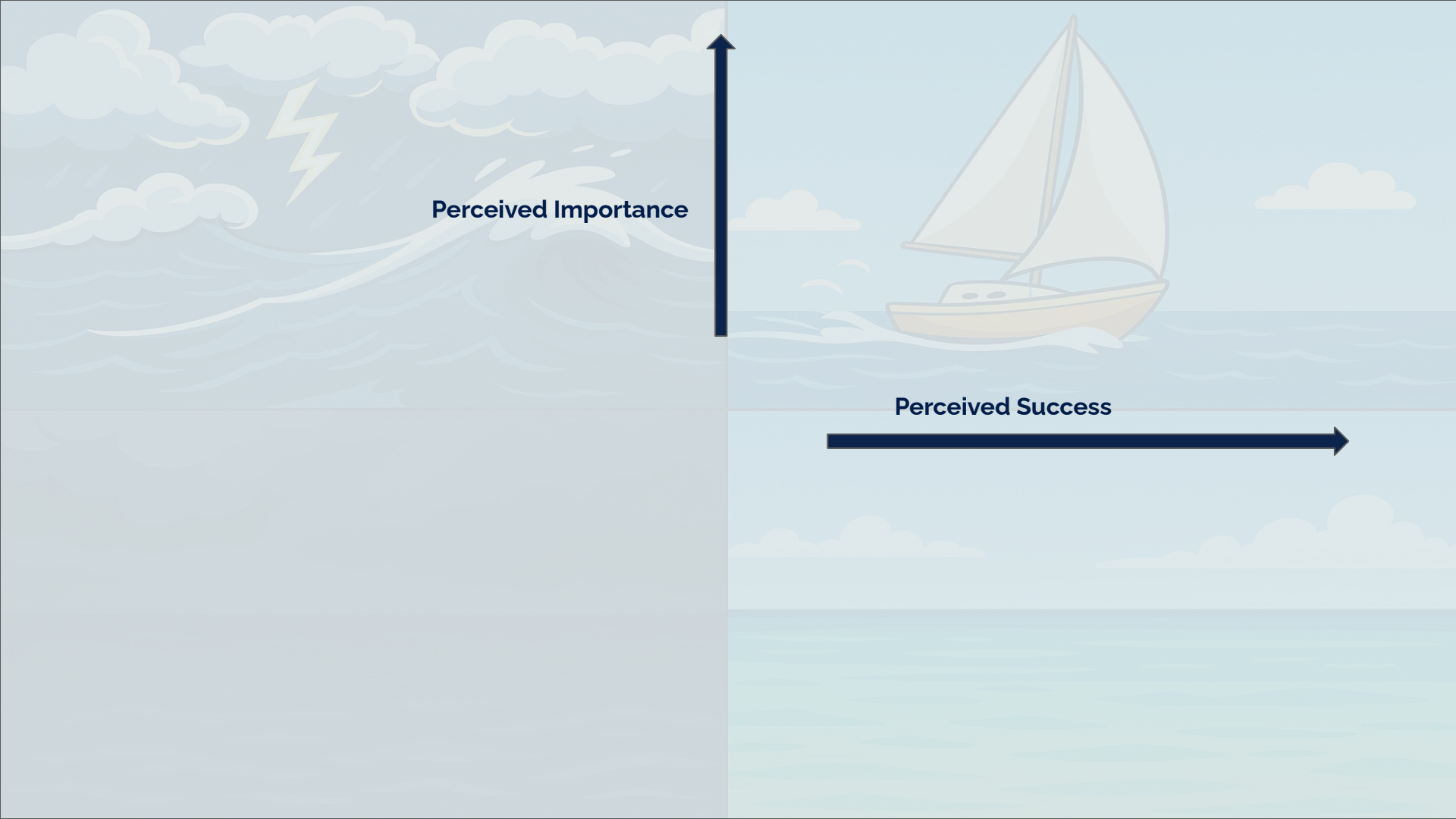
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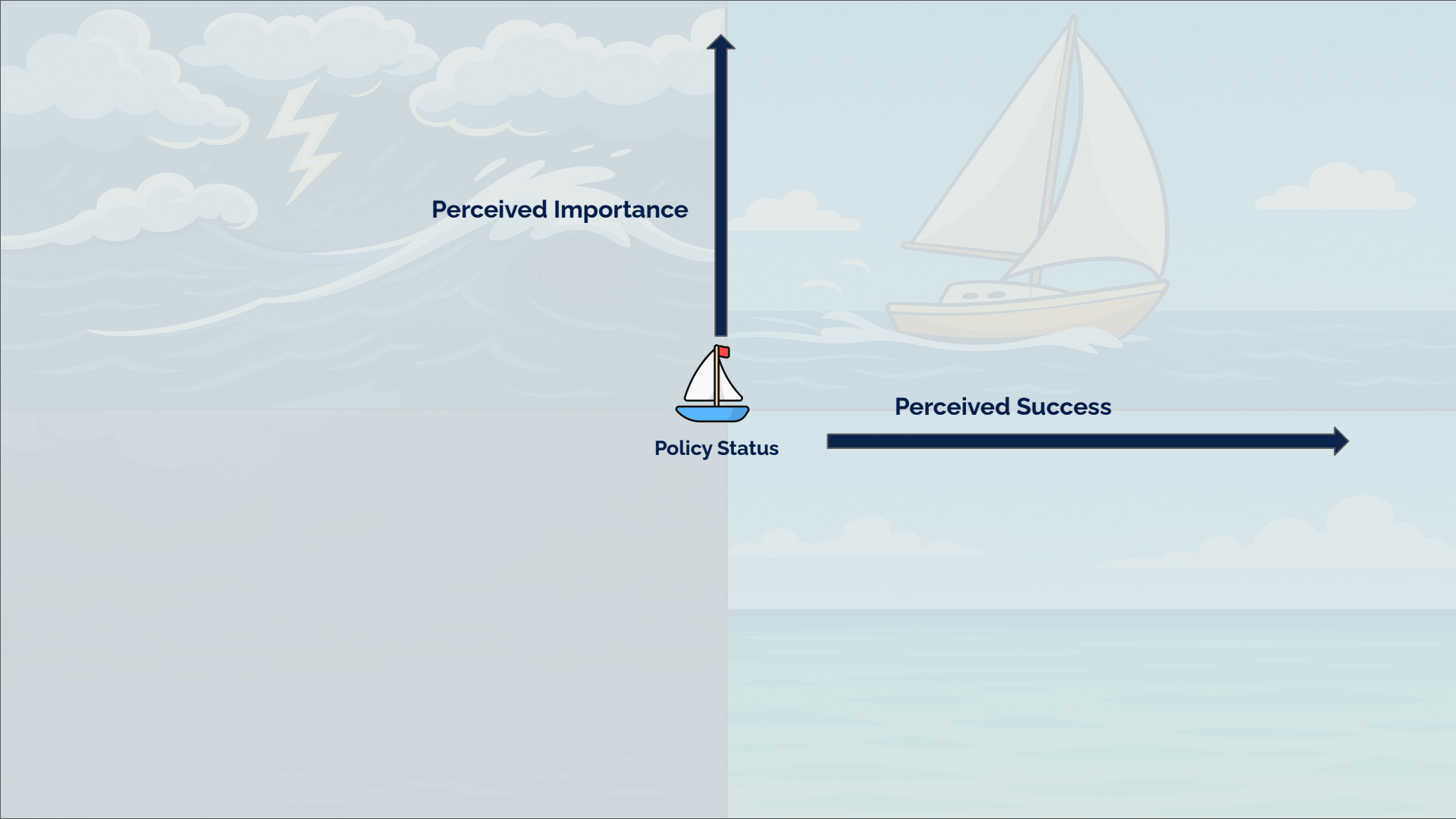






Perceived Importance

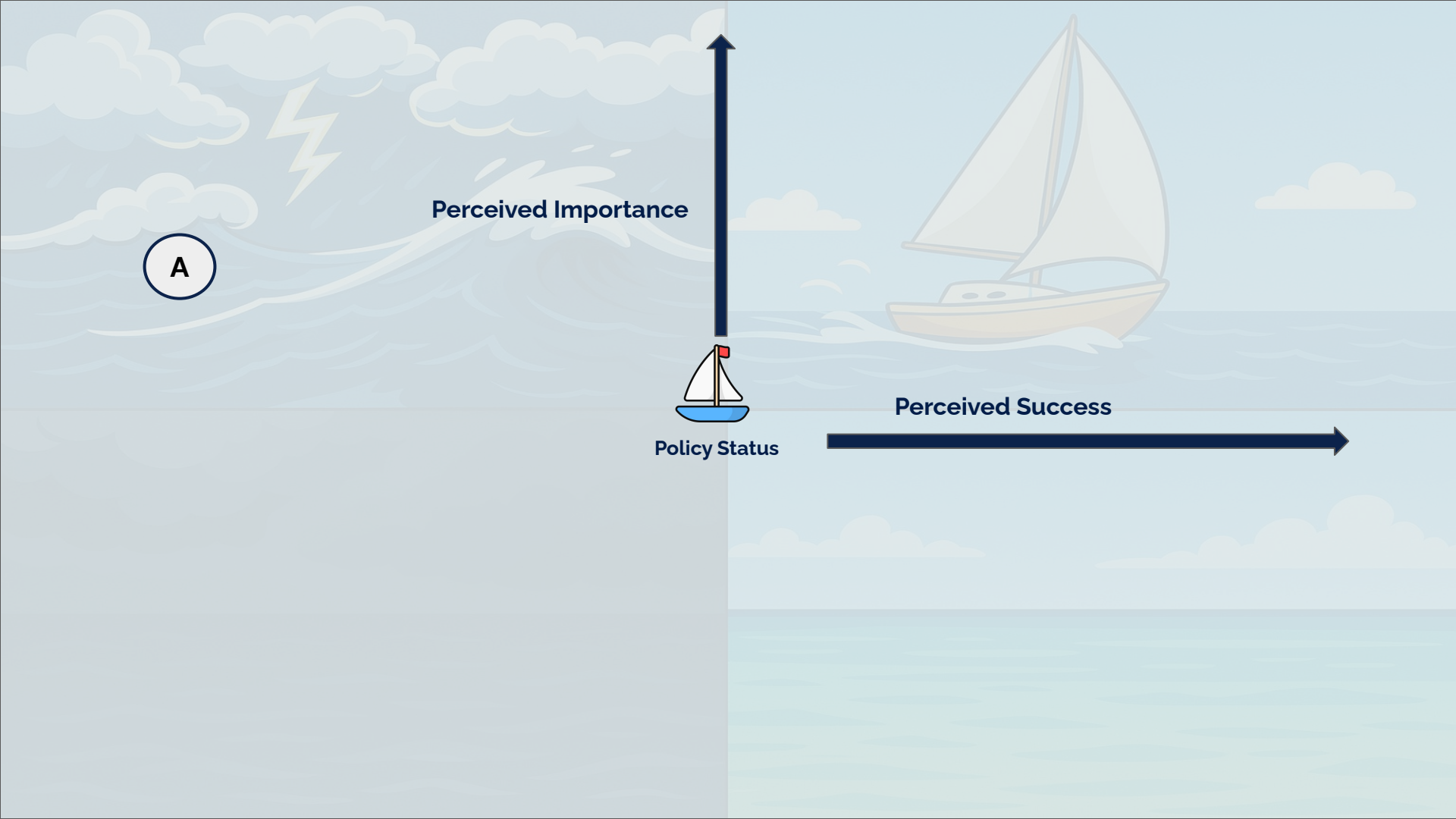
Perceived Success



Perceived Importance

Policy Status

Perceived Success



Perceived Importance

A

Policy Status

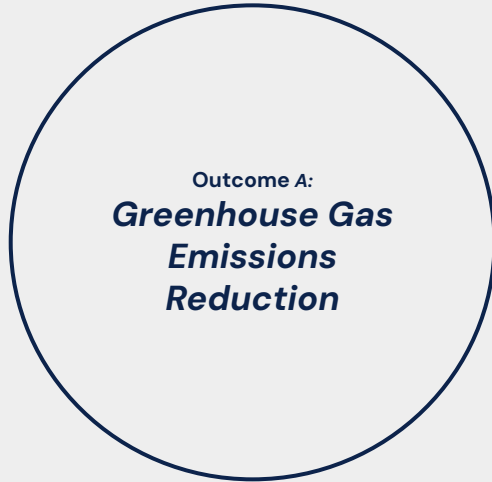
Perceived Success



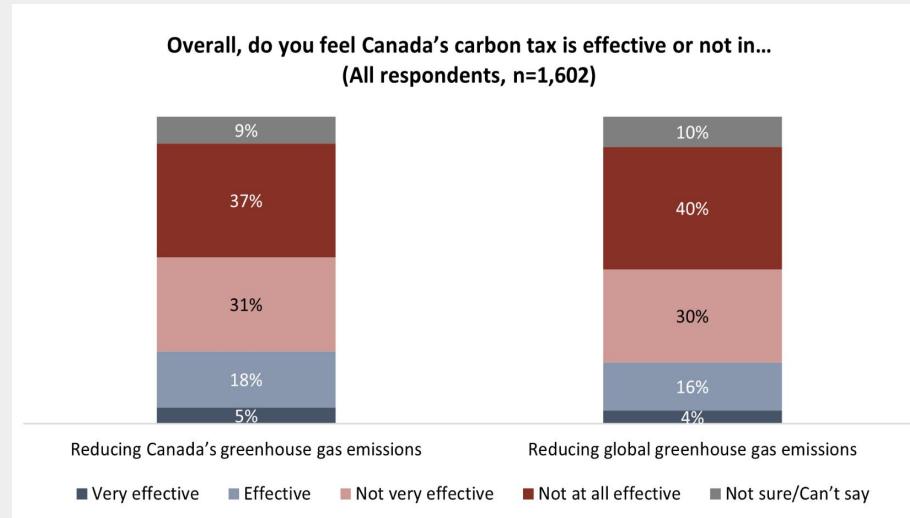
Perceived Success

Perceived importance

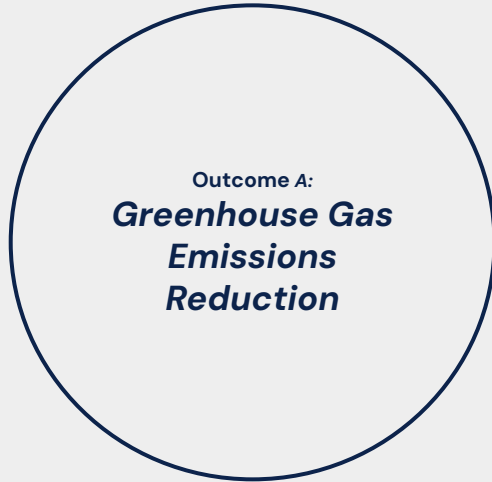
Data source: Survey, media publications



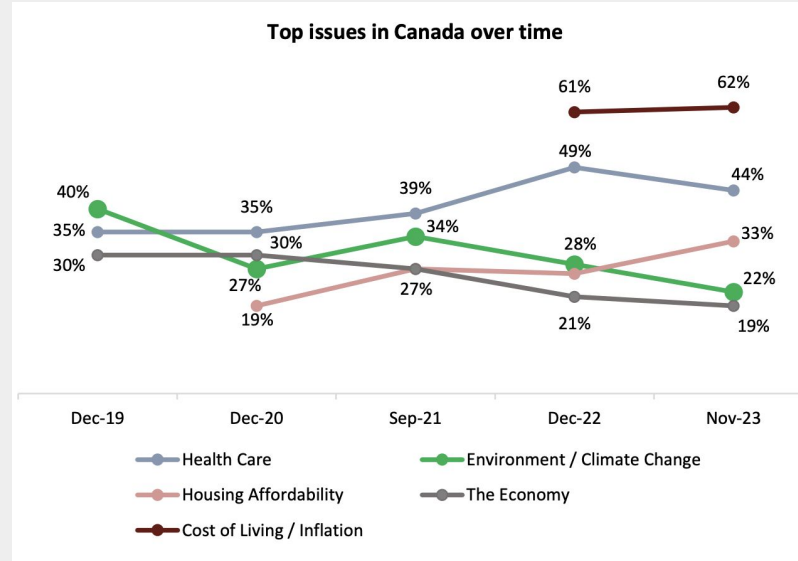
Perceived Success



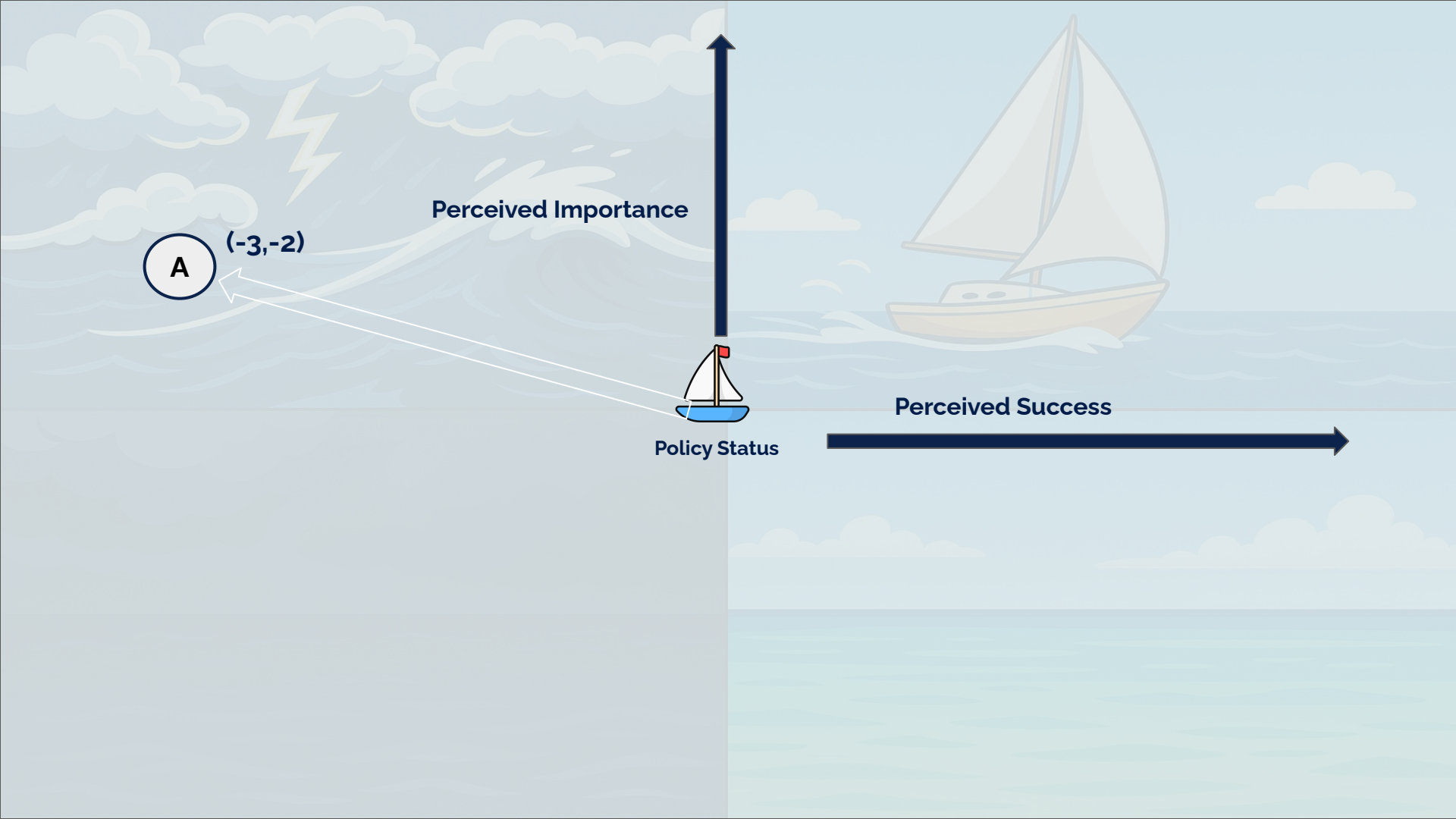
<https://angusreid.org/raise-pause-abolish-carbon-tax/>

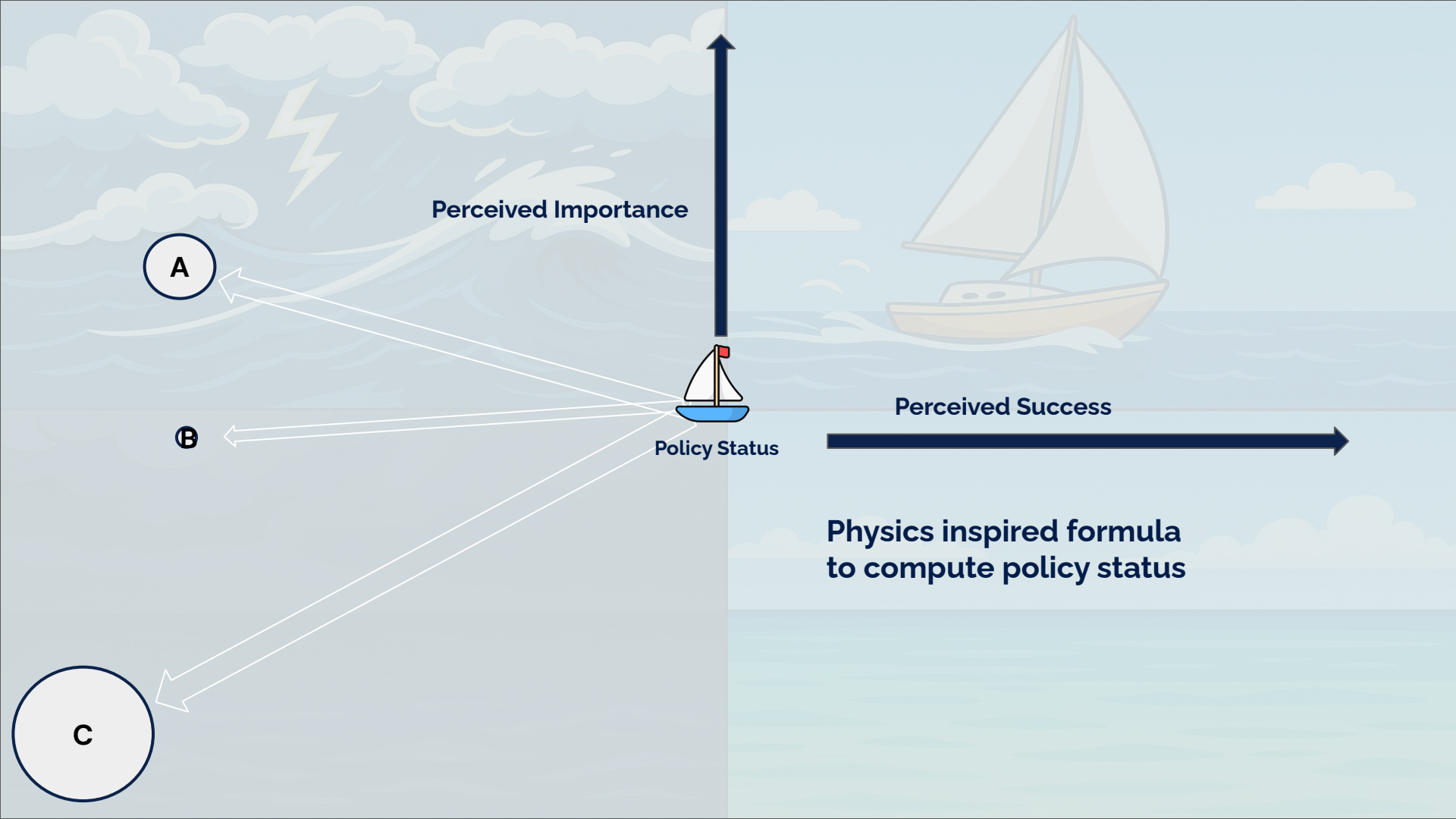


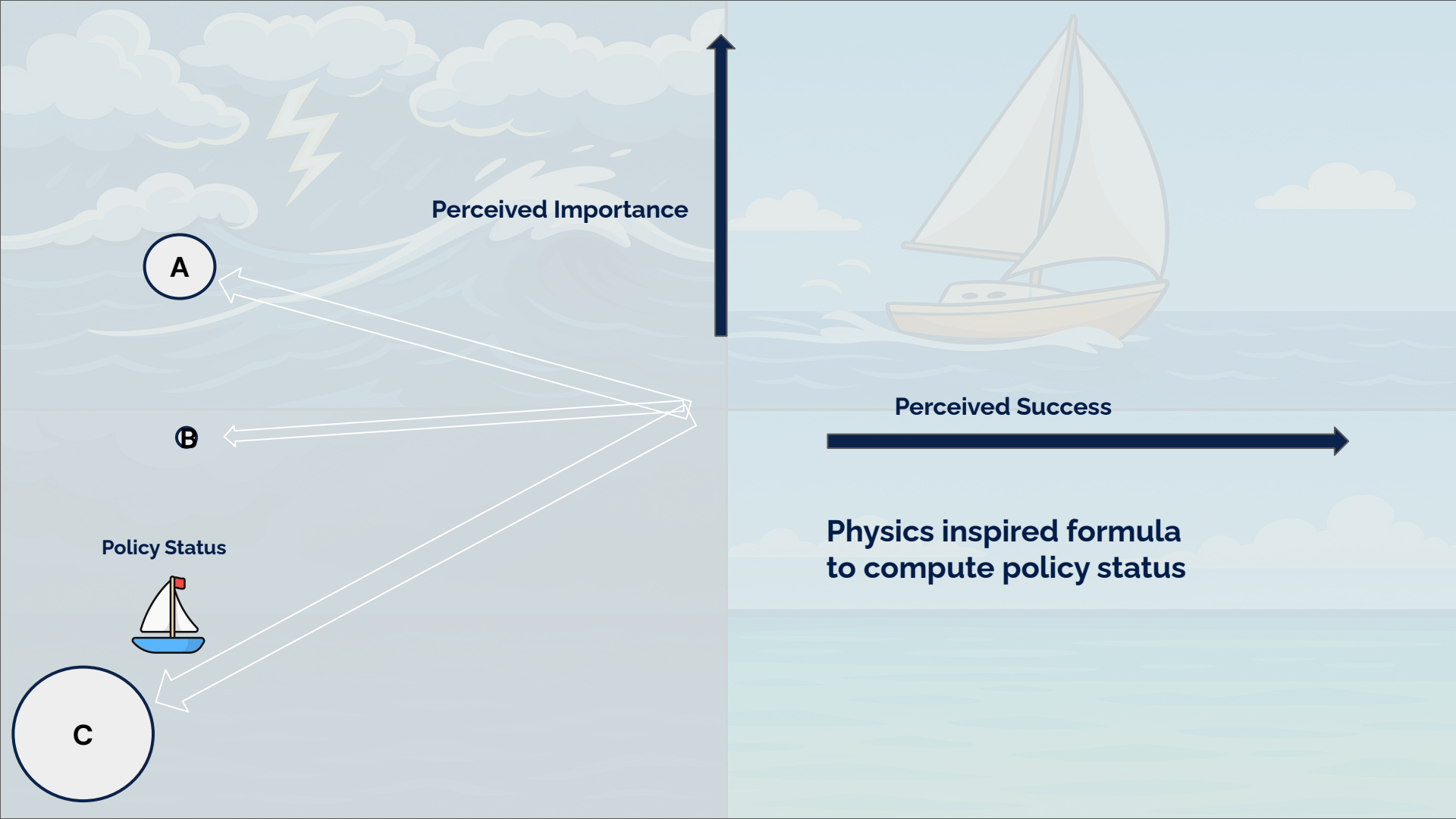
Perceived Importance



<https://angusreid.org/raise-pause-abolish-carbon-tax/>







Hypothesis	Conditions	Expected Outcome
H1	High success + high importance	Strong durability
H2	Low success + high importance	High risk of repeal
H3	Low success + low importance	Low defense: quiet repeal or passive survival
H4	High success + low importance	Passive durability, vulnerable if challenged
H5	Over time, the perceived importance of a policy outcome declines even when perceived success remains high, thereby increasing the policy's vulnerability to repeal or retrenchment.	



Perceived Importance



Perceived Success

The Veterans Educational Assistance Act (GI Bill)



Immigration Enforcement Policies

Amtrak Regional Rail Service Expansion Projects

Perceived Success

Perceived Importance





Energy Star Appliance Standards

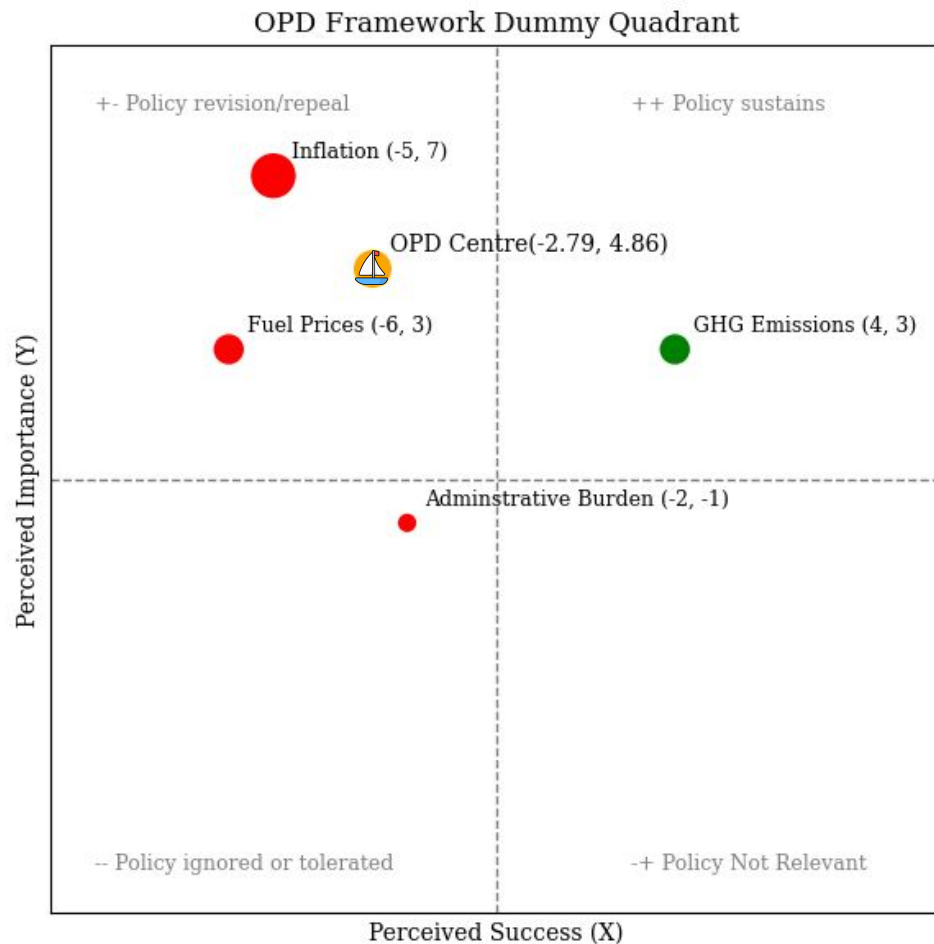


Perceived Success

Perceived Importance

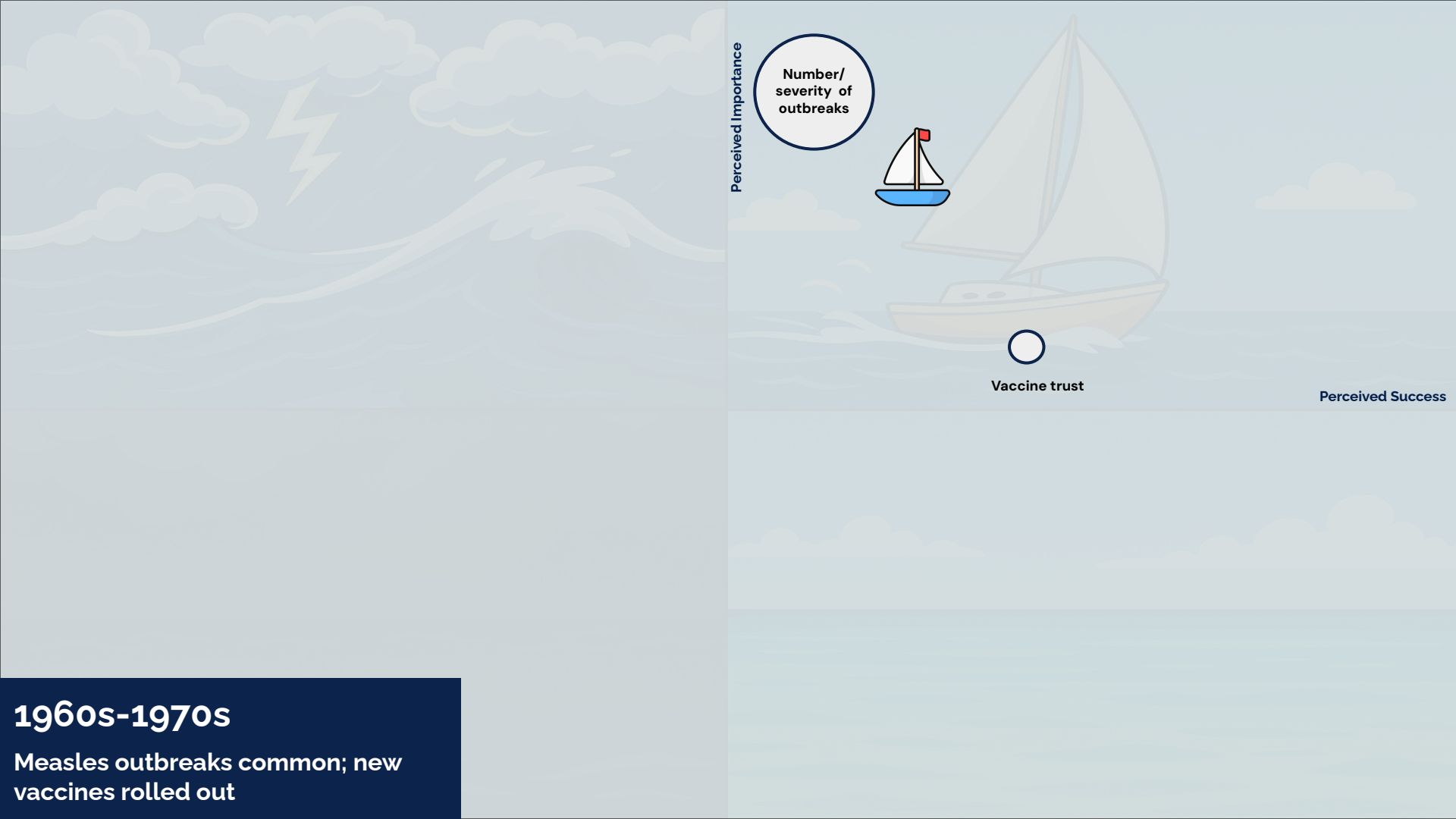


Renamed
to PPF in
final report



H5: Even successful policies face vulnerability over time as perceived importance declines.

Example: Measles Immunization in the US



Perceived Importance

Number/
severity of
outbreaks



Vaccine trust

Perceived Success

1960s-1970s
Measles outbreaks common; new
vaccines rolled out

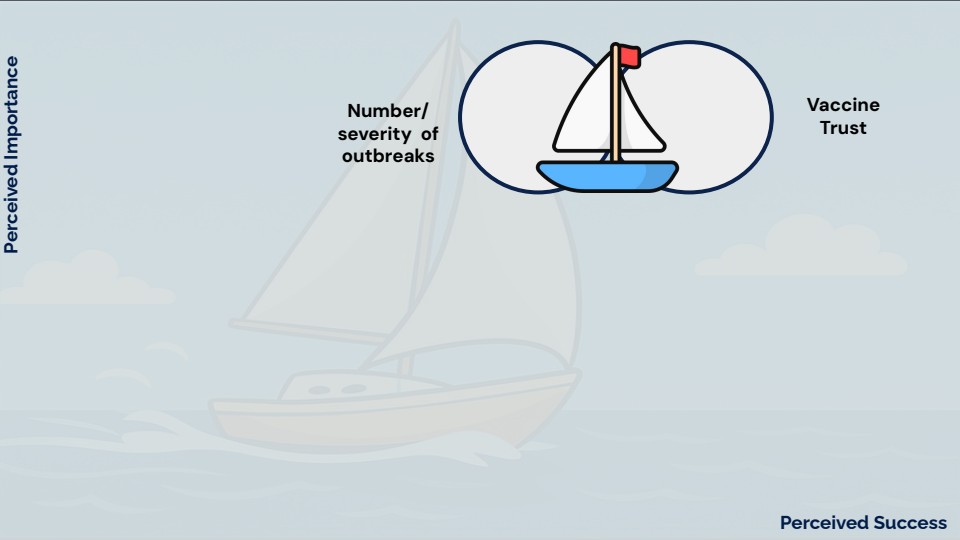


Perceived Importance

Number/
severity of
outbreaks



Vaccine
Trust



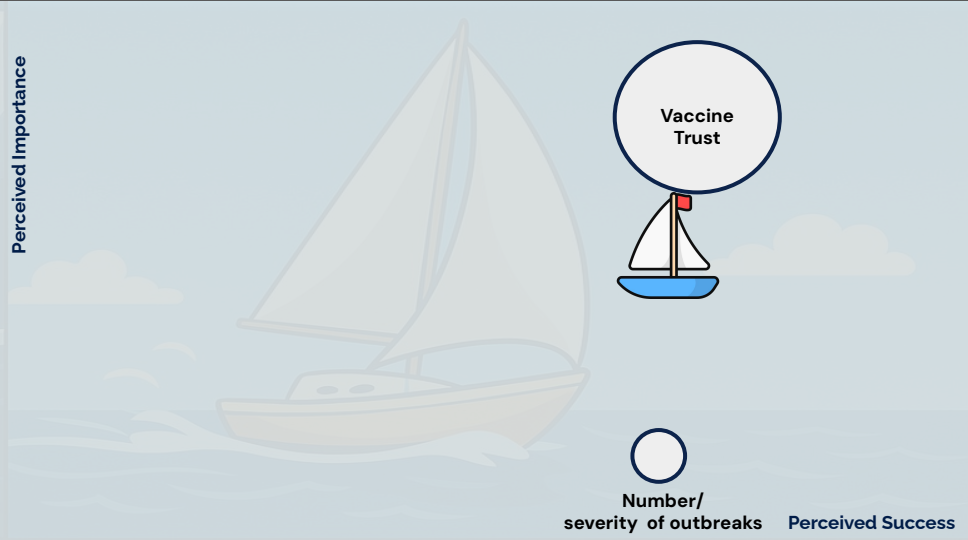
Perceived Success

1980s–1990s

Widespread vaccination success;
sharp drop in cases



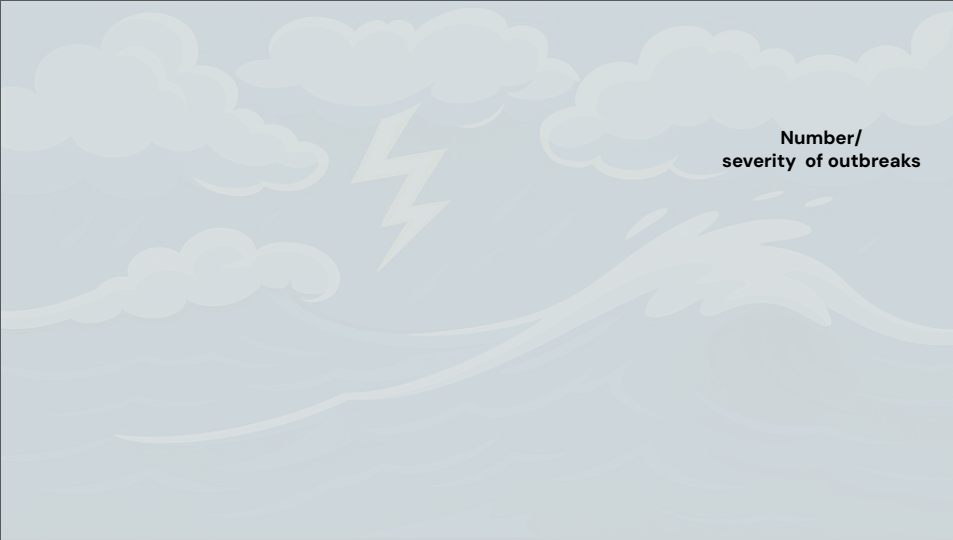
Perceived Importance



Number/
severity of outbreaks Perceived Success

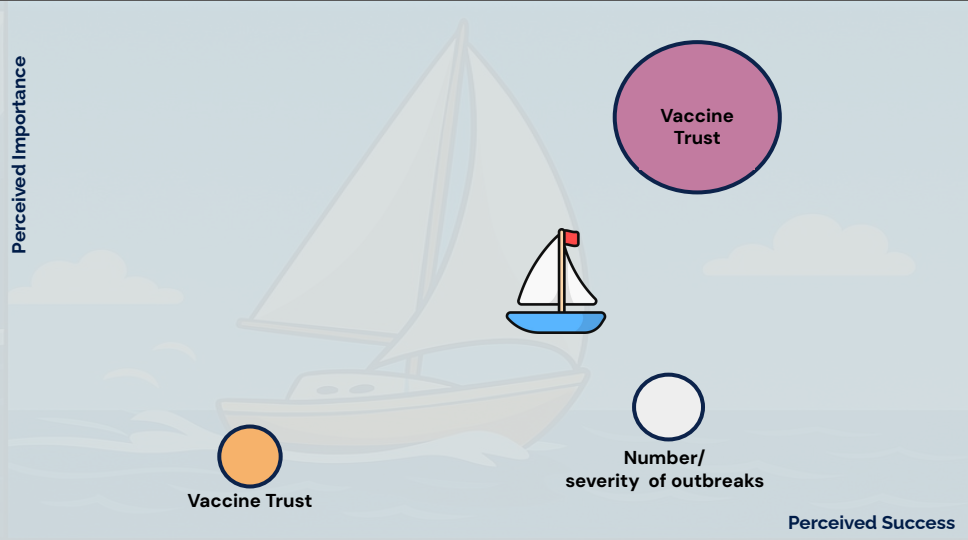
2000s

Measles very rare; public assumes
disease "solved"



Number/
severity of outbreaks

Perceived Importance



Vaccine Trust

Number/
severity of outbreaks

Perceived Success

2010s

Anti-vaccine movements rise;
localized outbreaks return



Vaccine Trust



Number/
severity of outbreaks



Vaccine
Trust

Number/
severity of outbreaks

Perceived Success

2020s

Anti-vaccine movements rise;
localized outbreaks return

Next Steps

- Develop theory more before application
- Perform case study(s):
Exploratory application to assess the plausibility and initial utility of OPD

Research Methodology

Case Study: Canada's Federal Carbon Pricing Policy (GGPPA) and 2025 rollback

Data Sources:

- Public opinion surveys (e.g., Abacus Data, Angus Reid Institute)
- Media content analysis (coverage of carbon tax debates)
- Political discourse analysis (party platforms, speeches)

Analytical Approach:

- Code perceptions into OPD quadrants
- Track changes over time
- Assess whether quadrant position aligns with observed political durability

Conclusion

- Influence of outcome on Policy durability may not be shaped just by empirical success, but by how the public perceives both the success and importance of policy outcomes.
- The Outcomes, Perceptions, and Durability (OPD) framework may offer a structured way to analyze public interpretation as a driver of political resilience.
- In contested policy environments, sustaining public perceptions of success and importance is likely crucial for long-term policy survival.