

Biodiversity Stakeholder Consultation Sessions

LANDS AND FORESTRY

JULY 17 – 25, 2019

General Agenda

- Welcome and Housekeeping items
- Opening Remarks
- Lands & Forestry Biodiversity expert presentation on the key concepts of the Act
- Q&A
- Break
- Break-out sessions – 3 Questions
- Closing remarks

Biodiversity

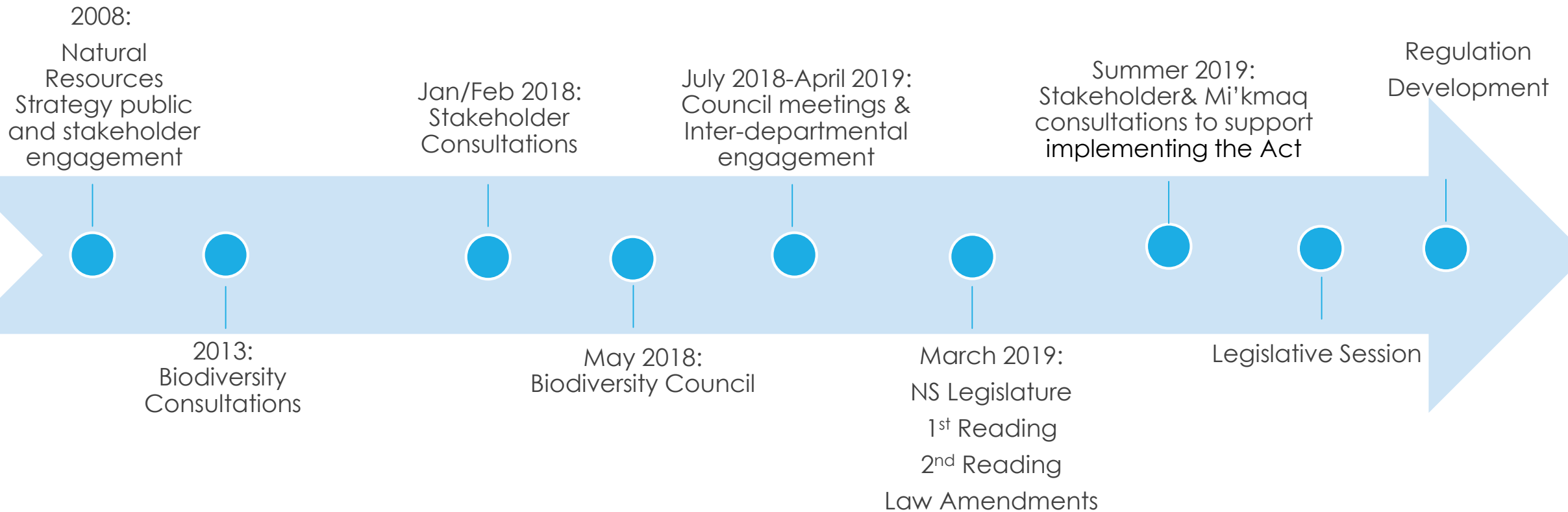
- Biodiversity is all life forms – wild species, genes, ecosystems and habitats – and the processes that link them.
- Nature is facing serious pressures.
- It is the foundation of our livelihood – our environment, our people, our economy
- International and national biodiversity commitments:
 - United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity & Global Biodiversity Targets
 - 2020 Biodiversity Goals and Targets for Canada
- A longstanding government commitment for action through biodiversity legislation, dating back to the 2011 Natural Resources Strategy

Context

- No legislation in N.S. that identifies biodiversity as an overarching objective
- Patchwork of legislation under the *Wildlife Act*, *Endangered Species Act*, *Environment Act*, *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*
- Gaps leave risks to biodiversity unmanaged
- Untapped and unmanaged opportunities for sustainable use of biodiversity and ecological services

Where we have been and where we are going

5



What we heard

- Taking action to conserve and support the sustainable use of biodiversity is a must
- Nova Scotia family forest owners rank improving wildlife habitat and restoring a natural forest ecosystem among the highest priorities
- Landowners play a natural role as stewards of their land
- Applicability to private lands
- Desire for consent and compensation for private landowners
- Penalties in the bill are too onerous
- Broad language in the bill gives the Minister too much power
- Need understanding of how the Act intersects with other legislation and Ministerial mandates

What we heard

- Strong preamble but weak language in purpose section
- Need to set goals, targets and objectives
- Support for improved State of Biodiversity Reporting; concern with timelines
- Extending commitments to share data relating to biodiversity to include access to other information
- Need for increased biodiversity education
- Call for action to assess threats and impacts of invasive species
- Need for public review of regulations
- Set incentives for voluntary engagement
- Ensure mechanisms for collaborative engagement
- Dissatisfaction with the level of consultation before the Act was introduced


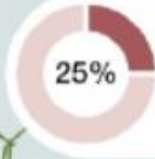
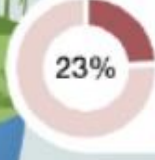
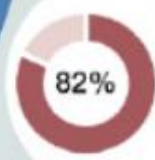

Objectives for today

- Learn more about the new Act's purpose and tools, and address your questions and concerns
- Share your priorities for action under biodiversity legislation
- Provide input on next steps to guide us as we move forward with developing regulations

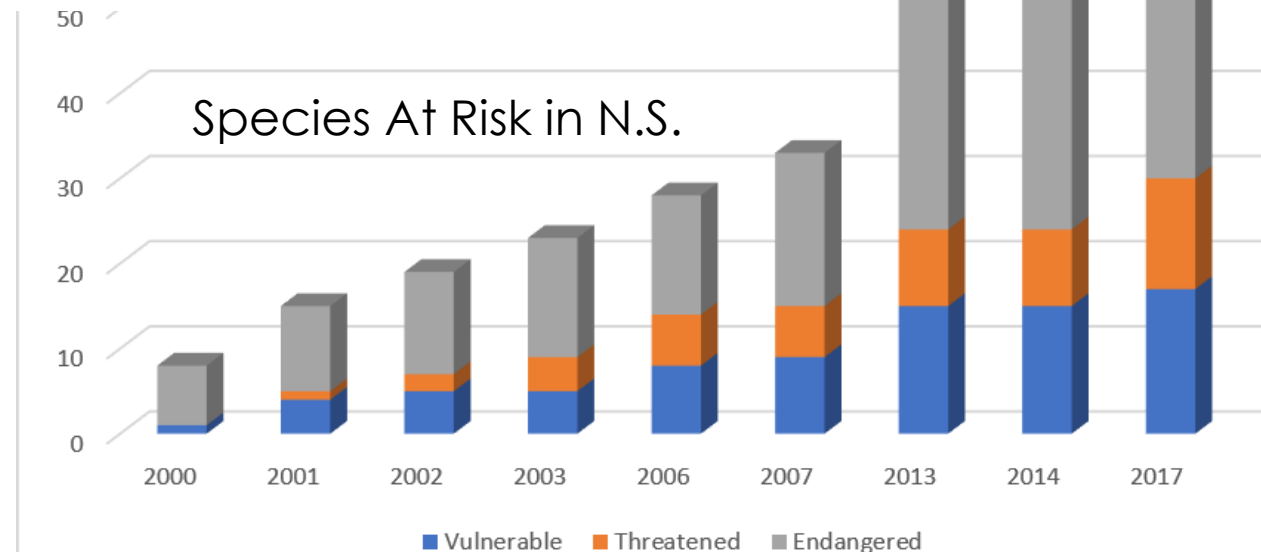
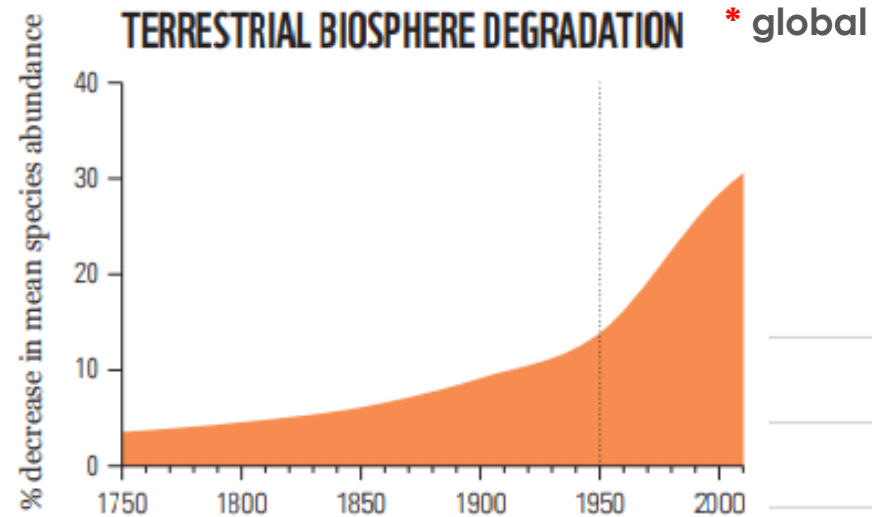
TOOLS & POWERS UNDER THE ACT

Pressures Facing Biodiversity

EXAMPLES OF DECLINES IN NATURE

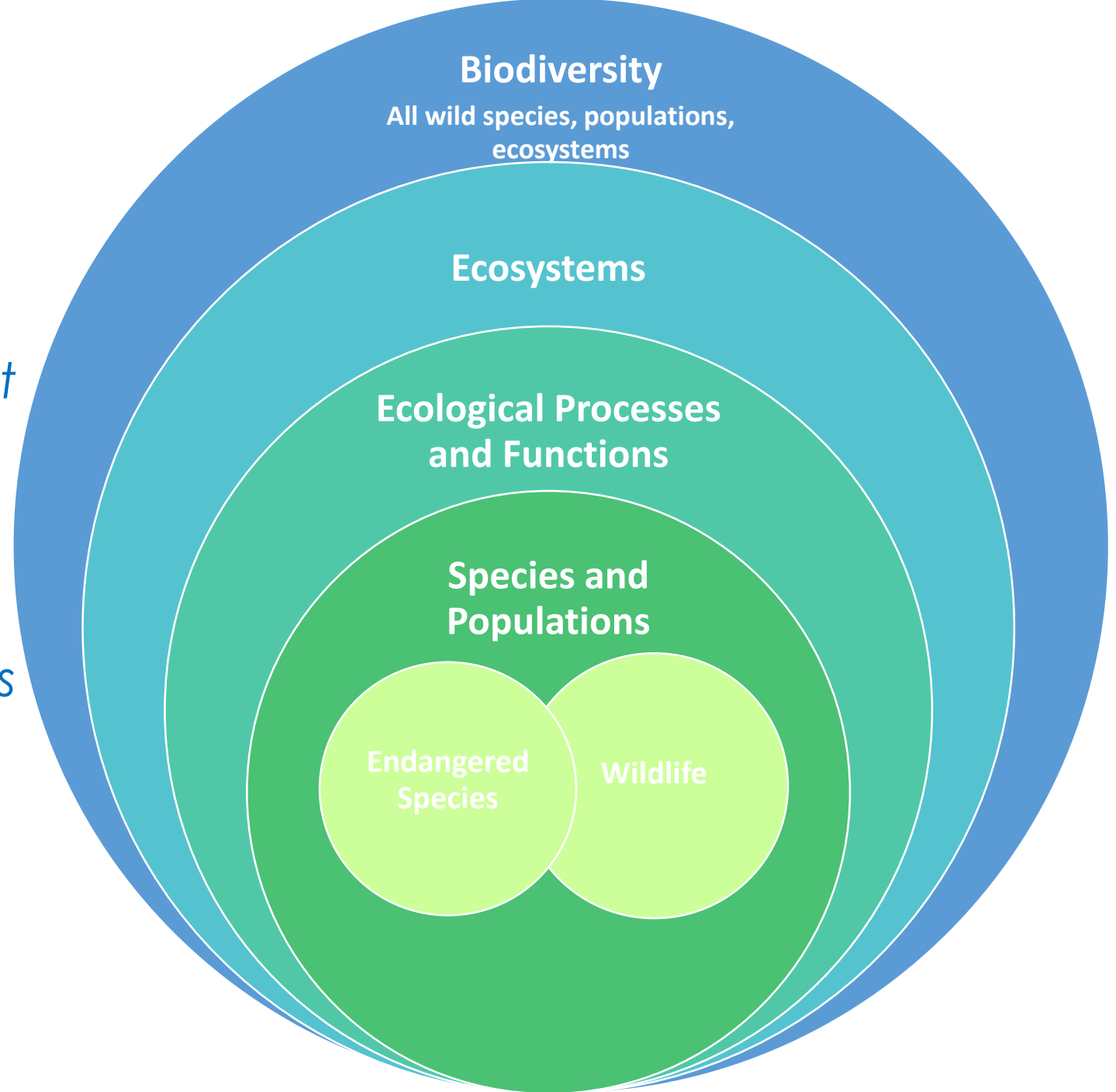
- ECOSYSTEM EXTENT AND CONDITION**

47% Natural ecosystems have **declined by 47 per cent** on average, relative to their earliest estimated states.
- SPECIES EXTINCTION RISK**

25% Approximately **25 per cent of species are already threatened with extinction** in most animal and plant groups studied.
- ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES**

23% Biotic integrity—the abundance of naturally-present species—has **declined by 23 per cent** on average in terrestrial communities.*
- BIOMASS AND SPECIES ABUNDANCE**

82% The global biomass of wild mammals has **fallen by 82 per cent.*** Indicators of vertebrate abundance have declined rapidly since 1970.
- NATURE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

72% 72 per cent of indicators developed by indigenous peoples and local communities show **ongoing deterioration** of elements of nature important to them.

* global * Since prehistory



Existing Legislation, e.g., :

- *EGSPA*
- *Environment Act*
- *Wilderness Areas Protection Act*
- *Special Places Protection Act*
- *Conservation Easements Act*
- *Endangered Species Act*
- *Wildlife Act*
- *Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act*



Key Concepts of the Act

- Defines biodiversity
- Applies to all lands
- Provide for cross-governmental leadership and coordination
 - Powers to coordinate, adopt goals, implement policy, regulate
- Legally allows Government to undertake relevant operations or financially support collaboration
 - Research, education, monitoring, reporting
- Enables the development of tools for risk management, conservation and use through regulation development on priority issues
 - Invasive species, pathogens, management of non-traditional species use
- Provides authority to take action where biodiversity threats or opportunities exist
- Provides modern enforcement & inspection powers

Biodiversity Protection Order

- An emergency measure to manage imminent biodiversity risks
- Ministerial authority to issue an order to take action to stop an activity that poses imminent biodiversity risks
- Appeal process built into the Act
- Examples

Biodiversity Management Zones

- A flexible adaptive management tool for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity
- An area of land managed for a set time period to support conservation or sustainable use of specified biodiversity values
- Can apply to Crown lands, and to private lands with the consent of landowners
- Agreements with landowners could consider compensation
- Examples

Authority to Regulate

- Biodiversity Management Zones
- Possession of Organisms
- Requiring permits for activities affecting Biodiversity Conservation and Use
- Prevention and Management of Threats to Biodiversity
- Restoration of Biodiversity
- Invasive or Alien Species (Import and Export)
- Import and Export of Organisms
- At-risk ecosystems and habitats
- Wildlife and Zoonotic Diseases
- Alternative uses of biodiversity (e.g., genetic resources)

We want to hear from you on priority threats and opportunities to inform regulation priorities...

Offences, Enforcement and Penalties

- Offences under the act:
 - Harvesting, taking, killing of species in excess of that prescribed by the regulations
 - Introducing, spreading, releasing species or pathogens prescribed by regulations
 - Causing the loss of at-risk habitats or ecosystems prescribed by the regulations
- Enforcement authorities appointed to conservation officers are consistent with current best practices
- Penalties are consistent with existing modern legislation and will be further refined

Reporting on State of Biodiversity

- Already report for some groups for which we have good information
- Have released modules on invasive species and species at risk
- Recognize the need for robust state of biodiversity reporting
- Comprehensiveness of the report will require time to prepare
- Report will be produced **within 5 years**
- Feedback to inform a framework for reporting - how and when - will be sought in consideration of:
 - the broad range of species, habitats, and ecosystems that could be included, as biodiversity includes all living things
 - the broad range of audiences and information needs

Mechanisms for Collaboration

- Biodiversity Management Zones
- Agreements for the purpose of implementing the Act, e.g.,
 - Monitoring, research, programs and other measures
 - Education and training programs
- Regulation development and subsequent substantive changes will be done in consultation with the public, including landowners and other stakeholders
- Biodiversity Council & provincial interdepartmental biodiversity committee will continue to play an active role going forward in advising, setting priorities and developing regulations

Feedback and Q&A

Breakout Sessions

1. Which biodiversity challenges do you see as the most pressing for priority action under the Act?
2. How do you see yourself engaging in next steps, including regulation development?
3. How can we work together to build biodiversity awareness?

Next Steps...

- ❖ Evaluation survey will be sent to participants
- ❖ Feedback from the sessions and/or written comments received **by July 29** will be included in a summary of what we heard
 - Submit feedback to StratPolPlanning@novascotia.ca or by mail to:
P.O. Box 698 Halifax, NS B3J 2T9
- ❖ Summary of what we heard will be shared
 - with participants and posted online by August 12
 - with Government for consideration of next steps
- ❖ Further consultation on regulation development with the public, including landowners and other stakeholders

Thank you for your participation today!