

Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act 2015–17 Progress Report



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The Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (EGSPA, also referred to as the Act in this report) became law in Nova Scotia in the spring of 2007.

The objectives of the Act outlined in article 4(1):

4(1) The long-term environmental and economic objective of the province is to achieve sustainable prosperity and to this end to:

1. Establish clear goals that foster an integrated approach to environmental sustainability and economic well-being; and
2. Work towards continuous improvement in measures of social, environmental and economic indicators of prosperity.

The 25 goals and the 2 overarching objectives of the Act aim at achieving sustainable prosperity. This report shows the progress made on each of the goals over the reporting years. As of March 31, 2017, 13 goals were achieved and 12 goals are still in progress, with 9 of these goals having associated targets that extend to 2020. This report presents key achievements towards outstanding goals, a summary report card for all 25 goals, and a final section which highlights other significant contributions to collective effort of supporting sustainable prosperity in Nova Scotia.

In 2017, EGSPA will undergo its second five-year review. In 2018, we hope to once again improve on how we enshrine our commitment and collaboration across government towards sustainable prosperity in Nova Scotia through identifying new ways to focus on supporting a green economy, ultimately leading to the desired outcome of broad engagement and ownership of responsibilities necessary to support a green economy.

EGSPA Goals 2015–17 Progress Highlights

Reporting in this section provides performance reporting for goals that were achieved in 2015–17 or are in progress as of March 31, 2017. For performance reporting on goals achieved in prior years, refer to previous EGSPA reports.

Cleaner energy

- In 2016, Efficiency Nova Scotia energy efficiency initiatives saved Nova Scotians \$110 million on power bills and prevented the release of 590,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Efficiency spending has had a significant impact on the economy. Nova Scotia's energy efficiency industry currently provides over 1,200 full-time jobs, with a total wage bill of over \$62 million. These businesses contribute \$192 million annually to Nova Scotia's economy.
- A new grant program, Connect2, was launched in 2015 to help create connections that allow for use of sustainable modes of transportation in communities across the province. Connect2 completed its second round of funding in March 2017, providing \$1.2 million in grants to 56 active transportation projects in Nova Scotia.
- Electricity from renewable sources accounted for more than 26 per cent of total electricity produced in the province in 2015, up from 24 per cent in 2014. This means that in 2015, the 2015 target was exceeded by more than 1 per cent. Nova Scotia Power announced that on June 24, 2015 between 3 and 4 a.m., 50 per cent of the electricity generated in our province came from wind-generating power — a new record for Nova Scotia.
- The province has demonstrated a commitment to innovation through globally competitive research and development. This commitment has included contributing funding to the Offshore Energy Research Association (OERA) to support research efforts, such as researching in-stream tidal energy development in the Bay of Fundy, funding Marine Renewables Canada's (MRC) Supply Chain Database and sponsoring their Annual Conference, and supporting the Fundy Ocean

Research Center for Energy (FORCE) by jointly funding their environmental effects monitoring program with the OERA. Nova Scotia is committed to developing a sustainable tidal energy industry and this has resulted in co-hosting a workshop with the OERA on environmental effects monitoring; awarding two international research grants under the MOU between government, the OERA, and the United Kingdom; the signing of a MOU between the OERA and France Energies Marines; and recently issuing a Request for Proposal with OERA and Innovacorp to jointly fund innovative research in environmental monitoring technologies and approaches.

Climate change

- Nova Scotia is a national leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The province's GHG emissions for the year 2014 (which is the latest data available) is estimated to have been 16.6 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent. This means that our GHG emissions have continued to decline since 2007, the year EGSPA was enacted. Prior to that year, our GHG emissions had been trending upward.
- In 2014, our progress in annual reduction of GHG emissions attained a landmark sooner than expected. By the end of that year Nova Scotia's GHG output was 17 per cent below our emissions in 1990, the base year for the EGSPA target. This reduction surpasses our EGSPA goal for year 2020, which was to reduce our GHG to a level 10 per cent below 1990 level. Nova Scotia Environment Energy policies on GHG reduction, along with other related government policies including renewable energy and energy efficiency, are now expected to clearly meet or exceed the EGSPA target for GHG reduction in 2020.

Healthy air and water

Several key air emission targets specified for 2015 were achieved including:

- In 2015, Nova Scotia Power emitted 15,026 tonnes of NO_x to the air, which was about a 44 per cent decrease from their 2000 emission levels (of 26,706 tonnes) and under the annual emissions cap of 21,365 tonnes.
- In 2015, total emissions of SO₂ released to the air by Nova Scotia Power and other large emitters (greater than 90 tonnes) in Nova Scotia was 61,200 tonnes, which is below the 2015 emissions target (68,880 tonnes or a 58 per cent reduction relative to the 1995–2005 emission allocation). Nova Scotia Power released 60,608 tonnes of SO₂, and other large emitters released 592 tonnes.
- In 2015, mercury emissions from Nova Scotia Power's coal-fired generation stations totalled 55 kg, which was below the emission cap of 65 kg for the 2014 to 2019 period.

Leadership in sustainable practices

- In 2015, Nova Scotia's disposal rate was 384 kg/person. According to Statistics Canada, in 2014 (the latest results available) Nova Scotia's disposal rate was 45 per cent lower than the Canadian average of 706 kg/person, and the province's diversion rate was 70 per cent higher than the Canadian average. Currently, 17 materials are banned from disposal in Nova Scotia, and 8 product stewardship agreements are in place.

- In November 2016, the Minister's Round Table on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity was given direction to review the EGSPA. In their mandate letter from the Minister, they were asked to look at how EGSPA can evolve to support the transition to a greener economy. The review is scheduled to be completed by the end of August 2017. Nova Scotia Environment and the Department of Business are working together to assist the Round Table with this mandate.
- In 2015, the number of farms registered rose to 2,599. The province continues to work towards the goal of a 5 per cent increase of local farms by 2020 (2,736 registered farms).

Protection of Biodiversity

- The goal of legally protecting at least 12 per cent of Nova Scotia's land mass was surpassed in 2015. That year, designation of 90 new wilderness areas, nature reserves and provincial park sites brought the total to 12.26 per cent. In 2017, the province designated 15 more sites, bringing the current total to about 685,000 hectares or 12.39 per cent.

Additional Sustainable Prosperity Initiatives

Other ongoing government initiatives that support sustainable prosperity:

- Community Forest Pilot Project
- FarmNext
- Agriculture Awareness Program
- Private Land Partnership Projects
- Aboriginal Community Development Fund and Project Funding
- ThinkFarm

EGSPA Goals Report Card

Cleaner Energy Goals	Status
A - The province adopts and implements a framework to support a transition to cleaner sources and sustainable uses of energy to produce greater economic, social, and environmental benefits for Nova Scotians by supporting and enabling (i) energy efficiency and conservation to assist in energy affordability and competitiveness through increased productivity, (ii) sustainable transportation options, (iii) increased renewable energy, (iv) enhanced use of natural gas to displace oil and coal, and (v) enhanced innovation through globally competitive energy research and development.	Ongoing
B - Of the total electricity needs of the Province, (i) 18.5 per cent is obtained from renewable energy sources by 2013, (ii) 25 per cent is obtained from renewable energy sources by 2015, and (iii) 40 per cent is obtained from renewable energy sources by 2020.	Ongoing
C - An updated energy efficiency rating system for new and existing homes is available in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations made under the Building Code Act.	Achieved, 2012–13
D - All new residential dwelling units constructed in the province after January 1, 2011, are required to meet energy conservation measures adopted in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations made under the Building Code Act.	Achieved, 2009–10
E - The province continues to work with other levels of government on national emission standards for greenhouse gases and air pollutants from new motor vehicles, such as the standards adopted by the State of California.	Achieved, 2010–11
Climate Change Goals	Status
F - Greenhouse gas emissions are, by 2020, at least 10 per cent below the levels that were emitted in 1990, as outlined in the New England Governors / Eastern Canadian Premiers Climate Change Action Plan 2001.	Ongoing
Healthy Air and Water Goals	Status
G - Emissions of nitrogen oxides are reduced by (i) 20 per cent by 2009, (ii) 28 per cent by 2015, and (iii) 44 per cent by 2020, relative to emissions in 2000.	Ongoing
H - Sulphur dioxide emissions are reduced by (i) 50 per cent by 2010, (ii) 58 per cent by 2015, and (iii) 75 per cent by 2020, relative to the 1995–2005 emission allocation.	Ongoing
I - Mercury emissions are reduced to no more than (i) 110 kilograms by 2010, (ii) 100 kilograms by 2011, (iii) 85 kilograms by 2013, (iv) 65 kilograms by 2014, and (v) 35 kilograms by 2020.	Ongoing
J - The province meets and maintains the Canada Wide Standards for Particulate Matter (PM) and Ozone established by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment for airborne fine-particulate matter by 2010.	Achieved, 2010–11
K - The province meets and maintains the Canada Wide Standards for Particulate Matter (PM) and Ozone established by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment for ground-level ozone by 2010.	Achieved, 2010–11
L - Municipal public drinking-water supplies meet the province's 2012 treatment standards by 2020.	Ongoing
M - A comprehensive water-resource management strategy is developed by 2010 and implemented accordingly.	Achieved, 2010–11
N - Wastewater treatment facility discharges undergo at least primary treatment by 2020.	Ongoing

Leadership in Sustainable Practices Goals	Status
O - The solid-waste disposal rate is no greater than 300 kilograms per person per year by 2015 through measures that include the development of new programs and product stewardship regulations.	Ongoing
P - Septage treatment facilities are operated in accordance with the Guidelines for the Handling, Treatment and Disposal of Septage as of 2011.	Achieved, 2011–12
Q - A Sustainable Procurement Policy for the province is developed and adopted by 2009 and implemented accordingly, including integrating sustainable procurement criteria into provincial government purchasing and promoting adoption of this approach to the greater public sector in the province.	Achieved, 2009–10
R - A government facility is constructed as a demonstration facility in accordance with leading energy efficient design standards by 2015 and used to foster sustainable building practices.	Achieved, 2012–13
S - The province develops a strategy by 2014 to advance the growth of the green economy, and implements the strategy accordingly.	Ongoing
T - Local food consumption is supported and encouraged, with the goal of 20 per cent of the money spent on food by Nova Scotians being spent on locally produced food by 2020.	Ongoing
U - Local food production is supported and encouraged, with the goal of increasing the number of local farms by 5 per cent by 2020.	Ongoing
Protection of Biodiversity Goals	Status
V - At least 12 per cent of the total land mass of the province is legally protected by 2015.	Achieved, 2015–16
Sustainable Management of Natural Assets Goals	Status
W - Regulatory tools that use the framework within the Environment Act to stimulate redevelopment of contaminated land and contribute to economic development while protecting the environment are brought into effect by 2013 and implemented accordingly.	Achieved, 2013–14
X - A policy of preventing net loss of wetlands is established by 2009 and implemented accordingly.	Achieved, 2011–12
Y - The province adopts a natural resources strategy by 2010, focusing on the areas of biodiversity, forestry, geological resources, and parks, and implements the strategy accordingly.	Achieved, 2011–12

Moving towards sustainable prosperity

In addition to goals identified under EGSPA, government departments and agencies made significant contributions to collective effort of supporting sustainable prosperity in Nova Scotia. This section provides detail on some of these efforts and their impacts towards integrating environmental sustainability and economic prosperity.

Marine Renewable Energy Act: Government passed the Marine Renewable Energy Act on December 18, 2015. The Act serves as the legal framework for how the marine renewable energy industry—including in-stream tidal, tidal range, wave, ocean currents, and offshore wind technologies—will be developed in Nova Scotia. The province is currently developing regulations to accompany the Act, which include a licensing and permitting system that will oversee the development of marine renewable energy projects, as well as the requirements for research and consultation in advance of establishing areas for commercial-scale developments. It is anticipated that the regulations associated with the Act be brought into force in 2017.

Tidal Feed-in Tariff Program: The province established the Developmental Tidal Feed-in Tariff Program in 2014 to attract and encourage the early development of large-scale tidal energy devices. To date, five developers have received approval through the program, for a total of 22 megawatts of electricity. The tidal device deployed at the FORCE site by Cape Sharp Tidal in 2016 represents the first 2 megawatts of 22 megawatts approved by the province and is the first grid-connected in-stream tidal turbine in Canada.

Solar for Community Buildings Pilot Program: Government has launched a program fulfilling a commitment of the Electricity Plan to provide a pilot program to promote the installation of solar panels on community buildings. This program was competitively designed to ensure that the best sites are selected and the greatest value is achieved for ratepayers.

Nova Scotia Smart Energy Innovation Program: The Department of Energy has partnered with Innovacorp to deliver on the Electricity Plan commitment to promote innovation in Nova Scotia's electricity system. The innovation program helps start-up companies advance their products and services, seeks to commercialize research, and funds demonstration projects of innovative technologies and systems in Nova Scotia's electricity system.

Crown Land Forest Management Policy: A Crown Land Forest Resource Management Policy is currently being developed. Replacing the 1986 Forestry Policy, the new policy will reflect the department's knowledge-based approach to landscape-scale planning, using ecosystem-based management. The policy, while binding on Crown land, will provide examples to guide private landowners. Development of the policy is estimated to be complete before the end of 2017.

Protecting Land and Enhancing Tourism along the Eastern Shore: In 2015–16, the province protected more than 400 Atlantic coastal islands as Eastern Shore Islands Wilderness Area. These protected islands, along with several coastal provincial parks and private conservation land, are at the centre of an exciting new tourism development initiative – Wild Islands Tourism Advancement Partnership (WITAP). The community-based partnership was developed with a vision of creating an internationally recognized one-of-a-kind Canadian coastal nature-based destination offering outstanding touring, outdoor, cultural, and culinary experiences.

West River Sheet Harbour Acid Rain Mitigation Program: The province has initiated a collaborative project with the Department of Natural Resources and the Nova Scotia Salmon Association to implement a liming research and restoration project on the West River Sheet Harbour through the use of a lime doser and catchment liming. The program aims to increase the salmon and trout populations of the West River and restore the aquatic and terrestrial ecosystem to the state before acid rain compromised wild fish populations and forest productivity.

Aquaculture Regulatory Framework: New aquaculture regulations were released by government on October 26, 2015, creating a more responsible and transparent approach to aquaculture development. The regulations represent changes to how companies can acquire a license and a lease to operate either fin fish or shellfish farms in Nova Scotia, providing stronger oversight and supporting industry development in an environmentally sustainable and accountable way.



NOVA SCOTIA

