

Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act 2017–19 Progress Report



About This Report

The Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act (EGSPA) was established in 2007 and updated in 2012. It states:

“The long-term environmental and economic objective of the province is to achieve sustainable prosperity and to this end to:

- (a) establish clear goals that foster an integrated approach to environmental sustainability and economic well-being; and
- (b) work towards continuous improvement in measures of social, environmental and economic indicators of prosperity.”

Along with these overarching objectives, the Act includes 25 goals aimed at achieving sustainable prosperity. This report shows progress made on each of the goals. As of March 31, 2019, 15 goals have been achieved and 10 are in progress. Most of the remaining goals have deadlines in 2020.

Beyond the goals and objectives of this legislation, there are many more actions throughout government that are helping us achieve sustainable prosperity in Nova Scotia. This report also highlights some of examples of programs and initiatives that are very much in the spirit of EGSPA.

The following departments contributed to this report:

Department of Agriculture
Department of Business
Department of Energy and Mines
Department of Environment
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Department of Lands and Forestry
Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal
Office of Aboriginal Affairs
Service Nova Scotia – Internal Services

Scorecard

This scorecard shows the status of EGSPA's 25 goals as of March 31, 2019.

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.	Achieved, 2017–18
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 Goal	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.	Achieved, 2014–15
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 Goal	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

Progress Highlights

This section provides some details on our progress to achieve the goals. It emphasizes government's continuous movement toward a greener economy.

Cleaner Energy

- We met the EGSPA goal to have 25% of the province's electricity generated by renewables by 2015. Community-scale projects that participated in the Community Feed-in Tariff (COMFIT) Program helped reach this goal. We are on track to meet the goal of 40% by 2020 with hydro power coming online from Muskrat Falls.
- In 2018, Efficiency Nova Scotia programs saved Nova Scotians more than \$180 million on their power bills and prevented the release of 1,000,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. Investments in energy efficiency also make a significant positive impact on the economy. The energy efficiency industry supports more than 1,400 full-time jobs and contributes about \$233 million annually to the provincial economy.
- The Low Carbon Communities Grant Program began in September 2018 to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The program helps municipalities, Mi'kmaw communities, and not-for-profit organizations create new ideas for clean energy. It invested more than \$562,000 in transit, solar, and other projects in 2018-19, leveraging more than \$790,000 in additional funding.
- Efficiency Nova Scotia runs the SolarHomes program to help homeowners with the cost of installing solar technology. It started in July 2018 through the Low Carbon Economy Fund. Government has invested \$3.5 million in the program to date.
- The Solar for Community Buildings Pilot Program is part of Nova Scotia's Renewable Electricity Plan. When not-for-profit organizations like municipalities and Mi'kmaw communities install solar panels on their buildings, this program helps them sell their solar power to electrical utilities. In the first two rounds, the program supported 45 projects. The third and final round will be completed in 2019.
- The Enhanced Net Metering program allows ratepayers to connect a small renewable electricity project such as a wind turbine or solar panels to the electricity grid through a meter that measures electricity flows in two directions. Producers receive credit for any electricity fed into the grid and are paid for it at the retail class rate.
- Funding and promoting advancements in technology, research, and data collection are critical to understanding the environmental, social, and economic impacts of tidal energy development. The province is working with the Offshore Energy Research Association, the Fundy Ocean Research Center for Energy, Marine Renewables Canada, and other groups to support innovative research and demonstration projects.

- The Connect2 Program is part of Nova Scotia's Sustainable Transportation Strategy. It funds projects that make it easier for people to get around in their communities using active transportation. Connect2 completed its third round of funding in March 2018, providing \$625,500 in grants to 22 sustainable transportation projects.

Climate Change

- We met our EGSPA goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions four years early. The goal was to reduce them by 10% below 1990 levels by 2020.
- Nova Scotia's estimated greenhouse gas emissions in 2016 (latest data available) were 16.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. This means that we were four years early meeting the EGSPA greenhouse gas emission reduction target of 10 per cent below 1990 levels by 2020. By the end of 2016, these emissions were about 18 per cent below 1990 levels, the base year for the EGSPA target.
- We launched the Cap-and-Trade Program in January 2019. More information about the program and other initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is available at climatechange.novascotia.ca.

Healthy Air and Water

- In 2018, Nova Scotia Power Inc. emitted 14,732 tonnes of nitrogen oxides, which is 45% lower than in 2000. The emissions were 6,633 tonnes under the company's annual cap of 21,365 tonnes.
- In 2017, sulphur dioxide emissions from Nova Scotia Power Inc. and other large emitters were 66% lower than their 1995–2005 emission allocation. Nova Scotia Power Inc. released 63,894 tonnes and other large emitters released 703 tonnes.
- In 2018, Nova Scotia Power Inc. emitted 63.4 kg of mercury, just under their 65-kg cap for 2014-19. The cap will lower to 35 kg in 2020.
- Federal, provincial and territorial governments collaborated on new Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards. They replace the Canada-wide Standards for Particulate Matter and Ozone. An average of 2015-17 data show that all four air zones in Nova Scotia met the new standard for fine particulate matter. They are on track to achieve the 2020 targets.
- The Canada-wide Strategy for the Management of Municipal Wastewater Effluent makes secondary treatment the minimum for municipal wastewater. Nova Scotia municipalities are working toward this standard.

Leadership in Sustainable Practices

- In 2018, Nova Scotia's disposal rate was 424 kg/person. That's 42% lower than the national average of 694 kg/ person (according to Statistics Canada's 2016 results, the most recent available). There are 21 materials banned from disposal in Nova Scotia and eight product stewardship agreements.
- In 2017, 15% of money that Nova Scotians spent on food was spent on locally produced food. That is up slightly from 2016. We continue to work towards the goal of 20% by 2020.
- In 2018-19, there were 2,574 farms registered in Nova Scotia. While the total number has decreased, the industry is still growing. Some smaller farms have been consolidated with larger ones and some farmers are choosing not to register. We continue to work toward the goal of 2,736 registered farms (a 5% increase from 2012) by 2020.
- Select Nova Scotia is the provincial "buy local" program. Its goal is to increase consumption of Nova Scotia produced and processed agri-food products. It adds value for local producers, manufacturers, and retailers by helping to create the conditions that will fuel their success and boost economic growth and prosperity in our province. Strong partnerships have been made with retailers, industry associations, farmers' markets, Taste of Nova Scotia, commodity groups, and various government departments. More information is available at www.selectnovascotia.ca.

Protection of Biodiversity

- In November 2018, we announced two new wilderness areas and a nature reserve totaling about 3,000 hectares. These sites as well as newly protected private land bring us to 12.5% of the province being protected. We are prioritizing additional sites for protection.

Sustainable Management of Natural Assets

- The Biodiversity Council was established in May 2018. It met quarterly in 2018-19 to provide feedback on the draft Biodiversity Act and advise on priorities for regulation under it.
- The new Mineral Resources Act and corresponding regulations came into effect in 2018.

Advancing Towards Sustainable Prosperity

In addition to the goals in EGSPA, government departments and agencies have made significant contributions to advance sustainable prosperity in Nova Scotia. This section highlights some of this work.

Nova Scotia Environment

We are working with the Nova Scotia Nature Trust and the Wild Islands Tourism Advancement Partnership on a major project to identify natural and recreational assets on and around conserved islands along the eastern shore. We aim to develop management strategies to ensure that these assets are protected while providing opportunities for recreation and tourism.

We commissioned a study on the commercial benefits of Nova Scotia's protected areas in 2017. This study confirms the economic value and opportunities to enhance commercial benefits associated with protected areas.

We are working with Divert NS and municipal and industrial partners to divert more waste from our landfills. Projects focus on textiles, kitty litter, and drywall, and encouraging the agricultural industry to use more municipally collected compost.

We amended the Solid Waste Resource Management Regulations to reduce barriers for innovative thermal treatment of municipal solid waste.

Service Nova Scotia-Internal Services

Our government procurement staff continue to develop leading environmental criteria in a number of purchasing categories. This division of Service Nova Scotia-Internal Services is a founding member of the Sustainable Procurement Leadership Council and sits on its board of directors and Technical Advisory Committee.

Aboriginal Affairs

Aboriginal Affairs contributes to projects and partnerships through funding and leveraging resources with other departments and levels of government. We fund a wide range of projects in Nova Scotia's 13 Mi'kmaq communities. Examples include environmental programming for youth through the Clean Foundation and strategic studies in areas such as energy conservation, wildlife management, tree restoration, and strategic planning.

The Aboriginal Affairs Community Development Fund and our general capacity funding support community initiatives with economic benefits for the Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq and other

Aboriginal people through cultural, business, social, ecological, and economic development activities.

Energy and Mines

The Marine Renewable Energy Act was proclaimed in January 2018. It serves as the legal framework for developing the marine renewable energy industry in Nova Scotia. Eight in-stream tidal energy testing and demonstration projects have since been approved in the Bay of Fundy.

Under this Act, we issued a series of approvals in 2018-19 for technology demonstration projects in the Bay of Fundy:

- Approved Big Moon Power to test a 100-kilowatt prototype that is not connected to the grid for a 14-month period in the Minas Passage
- Approved an increase in the size of Big Moon Power's project up to five megawatts for a five-year period at 35 cents per kilowatt hour
- Approved Black Rock Tidal Power (now Sustainable Marine Energy Canada) to test a 280-kilowatt tidal energy platform in Grand Passage for a six-month period
- Granted a permit to the Fundy Ocean Research Center for Energy (FORCE) for the subsea cables it has in place at its demonstration site in the Minas Passage

We are working with federal and provincial government and utility partners in the Regional Electricity Cooperation and Strategic Infrastructure Initiative. This project will identify the electricity infrastructure that would best help Atlantic Canada in its transition to a sustainable energy future. Work is ongoing to support this effort. The final report is available here: www.nrcan.gc.ca/sites/www.nrcan.gc.ca/files/energy/clean/RECSI_WR-SPM_eng.pdf.

We continue to run the Energy Training Program and Pengrowth-Nova Scotia Energy Scholarship to help students and young adults pursue energy-related studies and careers. The department also worked with local industry and the Nova Scotia Community College to develop and implement a solar installer training program that aims to train 65 to 90 new installers in 2019.

Business

We sit on the national Working Group on Clean Growth to support the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change. This collaborative plan aims to reduce emissions, build resilience to a changing climate, and enable clean economic growth. The First Annual Synthesis Report was released in December 2017.

In 2017-18, we partnered with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to provide greater support for startups in the ocean and clean technology sectors.

We are responsible for a number of Crown corporations that offer a variety of programs to

help Nova Scotia businesses thrive. They all have potential to help build our green economy. Some provide support that is specifically aligned with sustainable prosperity, such as the following Innovacorp initiatives:

- The Nova Scotia-backed venture capital fund is investing a total of \$1 million in six clean technology companies from 2018 to 2020.
- In 2018-19, Innovacorp helped develop the Canada Cleantech Connect pilot which helps with commercialization challenges facing Canadian cleantech companies. It leverages the strengths of accelerators and industry associations. Innovacorp also signed an agreement with Foresight, a clean technology accelerator in British Columbia, to use its model for innovation challenge programming.
- In 2018, Innovacorp opened Start-Up Yard at Centre for Ocean Ventures and Entrepreneurship, an incubation facility on the Dartmouth waterfront. Companies benefit from acceleration programs, incubation space and services, funding, shared equipment, expertise and mentoring. Innovacorp hosted two cohorts with a total of 13 early stage ocean technology companies.
- In 2018, Innovacorp ran Spark, a Nova Scotia-wide competition for early stage technology companies. Fifteen start-ups were awarded up to \$50,000 and business guidance. Several of the winners were from blue and green sectors.

Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal

Thanks to government's LEED Policy, a growing number of provincial buildings have completed LEED certification. The policy requires buildings to be designed and constructed to certain environmental and energy efficiency standards. It applies to all new buildings constructed by the province and to which the province contributes financially. The province continues to consider sustainable building practices such as updated energy codes in new construction projects.

Fisheries and Aquaculture

We continue to deliver a Wild Atlantic Salmon Enhancement Program. It supplements indigenous salmon populations and allows for a limited catch-and-release recreational fishery, in addition to a First Nations food, social, and ceremonial fishery.

We continue to seek access to lucrative new markets that require products from sustainable sources. The Marine Stewardship Council certification provides an internationally recognized third-party seal of seafood sustainability and traceability. Nova Scotia has access to 12 of more than 315 fisheries worldwide that hold the flagship Marine Stewardship Council seal. Others are expressing interest in the certification process.

The Atlantic Fisheries Fund is a cost shared partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Atlantic provinces to develop a culture of innovation in the fish and seafood industries. The \$421-million fund was announced in 2017 and will operate until March 2024. The federal government has committed to 70% and 30% comes from participating provinces.

Agriculture

FarmNEXT encourages and supports farmers to establish commercial farms in Nova Scotia. Funding helps improve the financial stability of new farm business in the first years of operation. More information is available at novascotia.ca/programs/farmnext.

The Agriculture Awareness Program encourages people, especially youth, to consider careers in agriculture. Attracting new people to agriculture builds sustainability, supports industry demographics, and adds skills and business development in the industry. Program staff work closely with industry, schools, and the public to encourage dialogue and help build public trust in local agriculture.

ThinkFarm helps new farms get started or transition in farming. It works with industry to provide outreach and training that improves knowledge and skills for new and transitioning farmers. ThinkFarm also supports research on topics of significance to new entrants to agriculture. More information is available at novascotia.ca/thinkfarm.

Lands and Forestry

In August 2018, we received the Independent Review of Forest Practices Report 2018 from William Lahey. Government released its response in December 2018 and work began on several initiatives recommended in the report. Please see more information at: novascotia.ca/natr/forestry/Forest_Review/Government-Response-to-Independent-Forestry-Report.pdf.

We released an interim retention guide for Crown land harvesting with an increased focus on multi-aged management practices. This was a first step taken in December 2018 to provide licensees with guidance, while waiting for the longer-term changes to the Forest Management Guide framework which is a priority for 2019-20.

A number of other inter-related projects are underway to support the shift to ecological forestry. These include initiatives on natural disturbance regimes, old forests, high production forestry, small-scale wood energy, species-at-risk, and outcomes-based forestry. More information is available at novascotia.ca/natr/forestry/programs/timberman/pdf/FMG.pdf.

The management plans for the Lawrencetown Coastal Heritage Park System (Lawrencetown Beach and Rainbow Haven Beach) have been completed. Conceptual designs are underway for Lawrencetown, Rainbow Haven, and Clam Harbour.

The interim evaluation for the Medway Community Forest Cooperative was completed. A draft report was shared with the cooperative and its board for review.



NOVA SCOTIA

